

# Curriculum Development in Higher Education

A Case Study of Faculty's Engagement in the Department of History,  
University of Dhaka

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Master of Philosophy in Higher Education

Department for Educational Research  
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# Abstract

This study is about curriculum development in higher education. Previous studies have shown that curriculum development today is exposed to different pressures to respond to demands in labour markets and in society at large. Less is known about how faculty members engage in curriculum development and how their ways of engaging are related to their understandings of curriculum, and their teaching and research experiences. This research investigates how curriculum is understood in history as a discipline and how the faculty members engage themselves in its development. It also seeks answer of how faculty members' understandings of curriculum, and their teaching and research experience influence their curriculum development work. History is an interesting discipline in this regard because there are debates in history about chronological and thematic organization of content; political history vs. social, economic history; local history vs. world history; and inclusion of new fields in history, i. e., gender history, environmental history etc. Moreover, history curriculum is likely to change according to the changes happen in the state and society.

This research adopts a case study design. The case in focus is the Department of History in the University of Dhaka (DHDU), Bangladesh. The data is mainly derived from open-ended interviews of the faculty members at DHDU. Six faculty members were interviewed considering their expertise in three periodic lines – ancient history, medieval history and modern history. An interview guide was prepared to address the concepts used in the analytical framework based on insights and questions developed through the literature review. Interview data is supplemented by the documents and online resources. Data were analyzed qualitatively.

The findings of this study show that the faculty members in this history department mainly understand curriculum as syllabus. Thus, the curriculum development in history is centered to the content of the curriculum. It also seems to be a barrier for developing curriculum as an Academic Plan that includes purposes, content, sequence, learners, instructional resources, instructional processes, evaluation and adjustment. This study also reveals that in a university with an autonomous status, faculty members' understandings of curriculum and experiences significantly influence the ways of their curriculum development work. The study underlines the importance of stimulating wider and varied pedagogical experiences among faculty members to support fruitful curriculum development for future.

*Key words:* Curriculum, Curriculum Development, Academic Plan, Faculty Members, Higher Education, Teaching Experience, Research Experience, History, University of Dhaka, Bangladesh.



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# Abbreviations

AC: Academic Council

ACD: Academic Committee of the Department

AP: Academic Plan

CC: Committees of Courses

CU: University of Chittagong

DH DU: Department of History in the University of Dhaka

DU: University of Dhaka

JU: Jahangirnagar University

RE: Research Experience

RU: Rajshahi University

TE: Teaching Experience

UC: Understandings of Curriculum

UCE: Understandings of Curriculum and Experiences

UGC: University Grants Commission

UiO: University of Oslo



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# 1. Introduction

This research is about curriculum development in higher education. Curriculum is the most precious thing that the teachers and students encounter in higher education. The term ‘curriculum’ though familiar in higher education, remains contentious in its meaning and understanding. Lattuca and Stark (2009) notice the differences about understanding of curriculum from both teachers’ and students’ perspectives. From the perspective of the teachers, when faculty members, deans, academic vice presidents, instructional development specialists, institutional researchers discuss for developing curriculum, these individuals argue from varied definitions and assumptions without making them explicit and clear. On the other hand, from students’ perspective, curriculum is a set of courses or experiences required to complete a college degree. Some students see it as total set of courses offered by a college while others limit it to the set of courses students take. Few students go beyond the catalog of courses attributing informal experiences to the meaning of curriculum. Some may add teaching methods when they define curriculum while others may not. In order to provide an inclusive and shared vocabulary as the basis for curriculum development, Fraser and Bosanquet (2006) suggest the importance of knowing the variations in how curriculum is conceived in higher education.

Traditionally, curriculum deals with the knowledge and skills. But world today is replete with supercomplexity. In such a world, as Barnett (2009) argues, a genuine higher education cannot be occupied only with the knowledge or skills, or even with both. Neither knowledge nor skills can equip a person to face this situation. Knowledge is always insufficient for explaining unstable situation and skills are only good at known situation. But the world today is full of unforeseen situations that cannot be addressed only by knowledge and skills. Barnett (2009) proposed ‘being’ as a component of curriculum that can show person how to live amid supercomplexity. Higher education curriculum has to do with being as this is the ‘being’ that is fundamentally challenged in and by this world of supercomplexity. The concept of ‘being’ is, however, still in its formation stage and yet to be proved effective towards the world of supercomplexity. Learning more about curriculum development in specific disciplines and organizational contexts is important to facilitate reflections on what students today are introduced to and how educational quality can be enhanced.

## 1.1 Aims and Research Questions

This study investigates the understandings of curriculum by the faculty members in a specific discipline and the engagement of faculty members in curriculum development of that discipline. The study further explores the influences of faculty member’s understandings of curriculum and

experiences (UCE) on the ways of their engagement in curriculum development. Therefore, my research questions are as follows.

1. How is the curriculum understood by the faculty members in higher education history department?
2. How do faculty members engage themselves in curriculum development?
3. How do the faculty members' different understandings and experiences influence their ways of engaging in curriculum development?

Although this study investigates the influences of faculty members' UCE on curriculum development, it acknowledges that a number of external as well as internal influences may render influence on the curriculum development process, as conceptualized by Lattuca and Stark (2009). The major external influences include market forces, government, accrediting agencies, disciplinary associations, and the major internal influences include college mission, resources, governance, discipline and characteristics of students and teachers (Lattuca & Stark, 2009). In this study, I also argue that the relationship between these (internal and external) influences and curriculum is largely mediated by the faculty members involved in curriculum development.

I seek answers to these questions in the context of the Department of History in the University of Dhaka (DHDU), Bangladesh. Exploring history as a discipline is interesting because of its nature. There are debates in history curriculum about chronological and thematic organization of content; political history vs. social, economic history; local history vs. world history; and inclusion of new fields in history, i. e., gender history, environmental history etc. Moreover, history curriculum is likely to change according to the changes happen in the state and society. For example, a huge upheaval against apartheid regime and the entrance of a bulk of black students into the university were the influencing contextual factors behind the changes happened in history curriculum in South Africa (Shay, 2011). It is also interesting to see how history curriculum changes to fit with the job market where application of knowledge is mostly required.

The universities in Bangladesh seem to be suitable for exploring my research questions as they enjoy autonomy in preparing their own curricula. The University of Dhaka (DU) is the oldest and the largest university of the country. Popularly known as the 'Oxford of the East', the university enjoys the reputation of the most prestigious academic institution in the country (Miah, 2012). The University of Dhaka is an autonomous institution, and enjoys sufficient autonomy in academic affairs. Particularly, academic departments in the university design their own curricula and are responsible to implement them (University of Dhaka, 2004, p. 22). The Department of History is also as old as the university and is the largest among history departments of all universities in Bangladesh. In this research, I investigate the understandings of curriculum (UC) by the faculty members, their



engagement in curriculum development process and the influence of their UCE on curriculum development by interviewing the faculty members involved in curriculum development at DHDU. I also consult with the syllabi they offer to the students and other documents available within and outside university.

I adopt a case study design for this study as it aims to understand a particular phenomenon by way of 'how' questions (Yin, 2009). Open-ended interviews were conducted to reveal the experience of the faculty members who are directly involved in curriculum development at DHDU. Six faculty members were interviewed considering their expertise in three periodic lines – ancient history, medieval history and modern history. An interview guide was prepared to address the concepts used in the analytical framework based on insights and questions developed through the literature review. Data derived from the interviews were analyzed thematically.

## **1.2 Context of the Study**

This section introduces the higher education system in Bangladesh and the curriculum development process at DU within which the faculty members of DHDU take part in curriculum development.

### **1.2.1 Higher Education in Bangladesh**

The emergence of modern higher education in Indian sub-continent can be traced back to the establishment of universities in Bombay, Calcutta and Madras in 1857 by the British Government in India (Deka, 2000).<sup>1</sup> The land, now known as Bangladesh (then East Bengal), experienced modern higher education in this sense, when British Government in India established the University of Dhaka in 1921. It remained as the only university in East Bengal until British left India by creating two independent states India and Pakistan in 1947. East Bengal became the part of Pakistan and renamed as East Pakistan in 1955. Rajshahi University, the second university in East Bengal was established in 1953. Subsequently four more universities were established in East Pakistan – Bangladesh Agricultural University (1961), Bangladesh University of Engineering & Technology (1962), University of Chittagong (1966) and Jahangirnagar University (1970) before its independence from Pakistan to form Bangladesh in 1971.

After independence, the number of universities in Bangladesh increased significantly to reach the current number 34 (UGC, 2012). In the mean time, higher education in Bangladesh faced a remarkable change in 1990s. Considering the increasing demand of higher education in the country, government promulgated Private University Act 1992 to facilitate the access to higher education and to create a class of skilled persons. This Act allowed private sectors participation in higher education

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<sup>1</sup> Before Company rule in India, higher education was centered round in religions. Hindus used to receive higher education in Tols and Pathsalas whereas Buddhists in Monasteries and Muslims in Madrasas. After coming of the Europeans Christian missionaries started to impart modern education by establishing schools and colleges (See Deka, 2000 and Jayapalan, 2005).

(Government of Bangladesh, 1992). As a result, North South University, the first private university of Bangladesh established in 1993 and within a short span of time the number of private university increased dramatically to reach the number 77 in 2014 (UGC, 2014a). Currently, 111 universities (34 public and 77 private universities) are providing higher education in Bangladesh. Despite dramatic increase in the number of universities the gross enrollment ratio is still very low. According to the UNESCO Institute of Statistics (2011) only 13.15% of total higher secondary graduates enroll to the higher education institutions in Bangladesh which places the higher education of the country in an elitist system.<sup>2</sup>

Governance of Higher education in Bangladesh is largely embedded with the University Grant Commission (UGC) established in 1973, an autonomous body that oversees all universities of Bangladesh. According to 'The University Grants Commission of Bangladesh Order 1973', UGC assesses the needs of the university education and formulates plans for the development of such education (Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs, 2010). It determines the financial needs of the university and receives funds from the government to allocate and disburse to the universities for their maintenance and development. It has the right to examine all kinds of university development plans. The UGC may evaluate the programmes under implementation for development of university teaching departments, institutes and other constituent institutions. This Order also empowers UGC to visit the universities or to have them visited by teams of expert as and when necessary for evaluating their programmes and assess their needs and requirements. The UGC has the authority to withhold the grants proposed to be made from its fund, if any university fails to comply with the recommendation of the UGC.

After independence of Bangladesh, state refrains itself from direct intervention to the activities of academics with the assumption that this would help to foster knowledge production. Thus, UGC was established as an autonomous body to oversee the higher education in Bangladesh. The formation of UGC clearly indicates the prominence of academics in the governance of higher education in Bangladesh. According to the University Grants Commission of Bangladesh Order, 1973, UGC consists of a Chairman, two full time members and nine part-time members. Chairman and full-time members are appointed from the eminent educationalists or extensively experienced university administrators or from the persons who have achieved academic distinction. Government officials are not eligible to be appointed as chairman or full-time members of UGC. Part-time members of the Commission are three Vice-Chancellors of the universities, three Deans or Professors from the universities whose Vice-Chancellors are not member of the Commission and three nominees of the government – Secretary, Ministry of Education, a member from Planning Commission and a representative from the Ministry of Finance not below the rank of a Secretary (Ministry of Law,

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<sup>2</sup> Countries develop a system of elite higher education able to provide places for 0-15% of the age grade whereas a system of mass higher education provides places for 16-50% and a system of universal higher education provides places for over 50% of the age grade (Trow 2006).

Justice and Parliamentary Affairs, 2010). The clause related to the number of permanent members has been changed by an amendment. It states that Commission can be formed by at least two and not exceeding five permanent members (Government of Bangladesh, 1998). As a result, currently UGC consists of five permanent members (UGC, 2014b). Prominence of academics as well as depending on the state for funding locate higher education system in Bangladesh in the corner of academic oligarchy of Clark's (1983) triangle of coordination with a slight move towards state authority corner.

In early 1990s state policy changes in favor of market economy as private sector was allowed to play role in higher education. This policy could not bring public universities into market competition because of continuous state funding to these universities but it created a competitive market with in private sector which definitely affected the higher education system as a whole. It indicates that the higher education in Bangladesh is having a trend towards market corner of the Clark's triangle of coordination. Finally, it can be argued that higher education in Bangladesh is still dominated by the academics with a little influence of state and market.

Apart from supervision of the UGC, universities in Bangladesh operate under their own Order or Act. It brings both substantive and institutional autonomy for the universities as proposed by Bredahl (1990). Substantive autonomy allows universities to develop their own curricula according to the University Order or Act. It may vary across the universities as well as the departments within a university. The next section discusses how academics enjoy this autonomy with regard to the curriculum development at the University of Dhaka.

### **1.2.2 Curriculum Development in the University of Dhaka**

The University of Dhaka (DU) develops its own curriculum and this curriculum developing process is defined in the Dhaka University Order, Statutes, Ordinance and Regulations.<sup>3</sup> The Dhaka University Order 1973 (mentioned as 'University Order' or 'Order' hereinafter), issued by the President of the Peoples Republic of Bangladesh, empowered the university to make decision regarding courses and curriculum by formulating University Ordinances and Regulations (University of Dhaka, 2004, p. 6).

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<sup>3</sup> The Dhaka University Order 1973 was issued by the President of the Peoples Republic of Bangladesh as his Order No 11 of 1973. This Order is expedient to re-constitute and reorganize the University of Dhaka for the purpose of improving teaching, research and administration of the university (University of Dhaka, 2004, p. 1). The first Statute was passed by the parliament along with the Order whereas the university is authorized to formulate other Statutes if it may require (personal communication, A. K. Manwar Uddin Ahmed, September 2014). University Ordinance is made by the Syndicate of the university to regulate the duties and the residence of the employees of the University (University of Dhaka, 2004, p. 43). Syndicate of the university makes Regulations regarding any matters which are not otherwise provided by the Order, Statutes and University Ordinances (University of Dhaka, 2004, p. 43).

The University of Dhaka has ten authorities of which three deals with curriculum directly.<sup>4</sup> These three authorities are the Academic Council (AC) on the top, the Faculties in the middle and the Committees of Courses (CC) at the bottom. (See the organizational structure of DU in Appendix A). The responsibilities of curriculum development are assigned to these three levels of the institutional hierarchy.<sup>5</sup>

*First*, the AC is responsible for maintenance of standards of, instruction, education and examination within the university (University of Dhaka, 2004, p. 19). Curriculum of the university requires approval of the AC prior to its implementation (Dean of Arts Faculty, 2010).

*Second*, subject to the control of the AC, each Faculty is in charge of teaching and courses of study (University of Dhaka, 2004, p. 21). Faculty determines the structure of the educational programmes. For example, recently Faculty of Arts introduced semester system instead of the traditional annual system and letter grades instead of numerical grades for B. A. Honours Programme in the academic year 2006-2007. It fixed the duration of the undergraduate programme, week-wise breakdown of each semester; total courses, marks, credits and grade; and framework for teaching and evaluation of the courses etc. (Dean of Arts Faculty, 2010).

*Third*, the Committees of Courses develop curriculum within the structure provided by the faculty.<sup>6</sup> The CC is of two kinds – the first kind of CC is for the courses to be offered by the departments of the university and the second kind of CC is for the courses to be offered by the affiliated colleges (University of Dhaka, 2004, p. 22).<sup>7</sup> The analysis in this study is concerned with the first kind that deals with the curriculum of the various departments of the university. According to the Order, the CC is responsible for preparation of courses and syllabi and such other works that may be assigned to it by the Statutes and the University Ordinances. This first kind of CC consists of all the teachers of the department concerned (University of Dhaka, 2004, p. 22). The Chairman of the department presides over the CC. The CC recommends to the faculty regarding courses of study, Syllabi including list of recommended books, correlation between related courses of studies, and the panel of examiners of various examinations (University of Dhaka, 1997, p. 29). The Academic

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<sup>4</sup> The ten authorities are the Senate, the Syndicate, the Academic Council, the Faculties, the Committees of Courses, the Board of Advanced Studies, the Finance Committee, the Planning and Development Committee, the Selection Boards; and such other authorities as may be declared by the Statutes to be authorities of the University (University of Dhaka, 2004, p. 13).

<sup>5</sup> Hierarchy of these authorities is defined in the Order (University of Dhaka, 2004, p. 13).

<sup>6</sup> In reality, Academic Committee consists of all teachers deals with the Syllabus and teaching-learning of the department in the name of Committee of Courses. The decision of the Academic Committee regarding curriculum development is recorded as if the decision was taken by the Committee of Courses (personal communication, Sharif Ullah Bhuiyan, August 2014).

<sup>7</sup> At present 74 colleges and institutes are affiliated with the University Dhaka of which 22 government and 52 non-government. Of these colleges and institutes 61 impart education in medical sciences, 4 in Home Economics and 9 in Engineering and Technology (University of Dhaka, 2014a). Previously, colleges that imparted general education in the regions adjacent to the university were also affiliated to Dhaka University. After the establishment of the National University in 1992, the only affiliating university of Bangladesh, all colleges of Bangladesh that impart general education were affiliated to this university (National University, 2014).

Committee of the department (ACD) organizes the whole curriculum development activities within the department in the name of CC (personal communication, Sharif Ullah Bhuiyan, August 2014). One of the important responsibilities of the faculty members is to assist the department in preparing courses and syllabi being the members of this CC (University of Dhaka, 2004, p. 102).

In sum, curriculum of the university is mainly developed by the three authorities of the university. First, the AC is the supreme authority that deals with curriculum policy. Second, the Faculty is concerned with the structure of the curriculum. Third, CC develops curriculum and implement it after approval of the Faculty and AC. This context makes it especially interesting to look into how faculty members engage them in curriculum development and how their understandings of curriculum and experiences influence their ways of engaging in curriculum development.

### **1.3 Thesis Outline**

This thesis contains five chapters organized as follows:

In chapter 1, I present the introduction of this research. I raise the contemporary debates on the understandings of curriculum and its development to identify research problem. I formulate three research questions to explore in the context of the DHDU. In this chapter, I also provide the contexts within which these questions were explored.

In the chapter 2, I review the global academic literature that shed light on various concepts of curriculum, its development, and influences of faculty members UCE on curriculum development. At the end of this chapter, I develop an analytical framework based on the insights developed in the literature review section. The analytical framework generates a number of assumptions which I examine in this study.

Chapter 3 of this thesis develops the methodology of the research. In this chapter I discuss about the methodological approach, interview guide and interviews, ethical considerations, and reliability and validity. In this chapter, I also operationalize the major concepts used in the analytical framework.

In chapter 4, I analyze the data mainly derived from the interviews of faculty members of the DHDU to examine the research questions and the assumptions developed in chapter 3 (analytical framework).

In chapter 5, I discuss the major findings of this study in relation with the research questions, literature and analytical framework. I also make some concluding remarks in this chapter.

## **2. Literature Review and Analytical Framework**

In the previous chapter, I introduced the research problem and formulate my research questions. I also provided some information about the contexts in which these questions will be explored. In this chapter, I review curriculum literature and provide an analytical framework drawn from this literature. In section 2.1 of this chapter, I review the works of the prominent scholars who focused on higher education curriculum. I further divide this section into sub-sections where I review the literature on faculty member's understandings of curriculum (UC), faculty member's engagement in curriculum development and the influences of faculty member's understandings of curriculum and experiences (UCE) on curriculum development. I conclude this section by making some general observations about what is known about curriculum, its development and the relationship between UCE and curriculum development. In section 2.2, I use the insights of this literature to develop an analytical framework to address the research questions.

### **2.1 Literature Review**

In this section, I review curriculum literature in accordance to the research questions. The section is divided into three sub-sections. Sub-section 2.1.1 focuses on the literature related to understandings of curriculum by the faculty members. The sub-section 2.1.2 focuses on the literature related to curriculum development in higher education and faculty member's engagement in it. This sub-section also emphasizes on curriculum development in a specific discipline, especially in history as a discipline. The sub-section 2.1.3 focuses on the influences of faculty member's understandings of curriculum and experiences (UCE) on curriculum development.

#### **2.1.1 Faculty Member's Understandings of Curriculum (UC)**

Faculty member's understandings of curriculum (UC) are about their beliefs regarding curriculum. Curriculum may take different forms relative to its underlying beliefs about knowledge, teaching-learning activities etc. In this sub-section I will review literature on faculty member's understandings of curriculum and how these understandings influence curriculum development.

Beliefs of the faculty members appear in the literature as one of the most studied faculty characteristics (see Prosser & Trigwell 1999; Stark 2000; Toohey 2000; Minor, Onwuegbuzie, Witcher & Terry 2002; Lattuca & Stark 2009; O'Neill, 2010; and Shay 2011) but not clearly defined.

The term 'beliefs' here concern about faculty member's ideas of knowledge, about how learning occurs, learning goals, content, instructional processes, instructional resources and utility of assessment (Toohey 2000; Ravindran, Green & DeBacker 2005). Faculty member's beliefs about teaching influence how they plan their courses (O'Neill 2010; Stark 2000; Toohey 2000). Faculty beliefs also act as an intervening factor in the relationship between teaching and learning (Prosser & Trigwell 1999, O'Neill 2010). Shay (2011) considers faculty members as re-contextualizing agents who play an important role in the curriculum formation process. She argues that faculty beliefs influence the purpose of the curriculum. Following Minor et al. (2002), a number of empirical studies provide evidence that teachers' beliefs drive instructional pedagogy (e.g. Pajares 1992; Richardson 1996; Thompson 1992). This, understandings of curriculum by the faculty members are based on the belief that also influences their decisions while preparing the plans for courses. I now move on to the understandings of curriculum as presented in the curriculum literature.

Since the emergence of curriculum study, the term 'curriculum' has received multiple meanings (Schubert 1986; Barnett & Coates 2005; Fraser & Bosanquet 2006; O'Neill 2010).<sup>8</sup> Traditionally, curriculum is understood in terms of two models – product model and process model. The emergence of product model can be traced back to the 1950s and the proponents of these models are the curriculum theorists Bloom, Englehart, Faust, Hill and Krathwohl (1956); Gagne (1967); Kerr (1968); Mager (1962); Tyler (1949); and Wheeler (1967). They believe knowledge as something that is shaped to a manufactured product. They consider students as 'raw materials' since they (students) know nothing before starting schooling. Through teaching they are 'processed' to become 'finished product' ready to be 'consumed' at the end of the study as they are capable to take action with the acquired knowledge (Ababio, 2013, p. 287). Curriculum is developed and organized here as perfectly as possible to maximize its effectiveness. The aim is to produce 'close curriculum packages' that include everything considered important with precise objectives and assessment methods (Rulcher, 1991 cited in Ababio 2013, p. 286). Behavioral objectives are the foundation of this curriculum and the intended outcomes (the products) of learning experience is prescribed beforehand (Sheehan J., 1986). These pre-defined learning outcomes include knowledge of certain facts, mastery of specific skills and competencies, and acquisition of certain attitudes and values (FEU, 1980 cited in Ababio, 2013). These objectives are achieved through prescribed curriculum materials (e.g. syllabi, teachers' guide, text book etc.), organization of teaching, sequencing of learning activities and the time allotted to each topic (Rulcher, 1991 cited in Ababio, 2013).

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<sup>8</sup> The emergence of curriculum study is attributed to Ralph W. Tyler (1949). He defines curriculum in his book *Basic Principles of Curriculum and Instructions* by four parts which is known as Tyler rationale – defining appropriate learning objectives, establishing useful learning experiences, organizing learning experiences to have a maximum cumulative effect, and evaluating the process and revising the aspects that were not effective. This definition of curriculum becomes so prominent in the field of curriculum studies that it has been considered as a point of departure for a long time (for details see Pinar, W., Reynolds, W., Slattery, P., and Taubman, P. 1995).

In contrast to the product model of curriculum, the concept of process model emerged in 1970s and 1980s. The proponents of this model are the curriculum theorists Bruner (1972); Stenhouse (1975); Eisner (1967); FEU (1980) etc. Learners in this model are not considered as objects to be acted upon. Rather, they are actively involved in the teaching learning process. This model primarily focuses on the activities that happen inside the classrooms where teachers act as facilitators encouraging conversations with and among the students. Through interactions among teachers, students and knowledge, both the teachers and students evaluate the process and the resulted outcome (Ababio, 2013). Emphasis is given to continuous development, and outcome is perceived in terms of certain desirable processes and potentialities, for instance, the ways of thinking, acting and feeling that enable learners to use them for their own purpose (FEU, 1980 cited in Sheehan, J., 1986).

Curriculum of various disciplines can be understood by these two models described above. Fraser and Bosanquet (2006), for example, used these models to address the question of how faculty members of various disciplines understand curriculum. In a phenomenographic study of various disciplines in an Australian university, they come up with four categories of description derived from the data in which the curriculum is conceptualized - Category A: The structure and content of a unit (subject); Category B: The structure and content of a program of study; Category C: The students' experience of learning; Category D: a dynamic and interactive process of teaching and learning.

In category A, Fraser and Bosanquet (2006) conceptualized curriculum as the structure and the content of a unit (subject). Here curriculum is defined as content or a course outline of an individual unit or subject. In their study, some faculty members interviewed by Fraser and Bosanquet also include how this content is delivered, i.e., through readings, through lectures – once or twice a week or over a semester. These interviewees admit that curriculum is influenced by both external and internal factors such as the needs of professional bodies, the content offered by other universities, resources, number of staffs, personalities and personal interests. Curriculum is considered here as a product and students are its consumers. In this category, some academics who share teaching with others on a given part of a unit, perceive curriculum as a constraint without having much room to maneuver. Some, on the other hand, think students, though not instrumental, can influence in changing curriculum through their feedback questionnaires. In this Category, curriculum is developed narrowly by changing text book, adding power point support etc.

In category B, Fraser and Bosanquet (2006) conceptualized curriculum as a program of study consists of multiple units rather than a single unit or course. The structure of curriculum lies on the decision regarding compulsory subjects, elective subjects and the sequence of the subjects. Curriculum is considered as product in this category too. It is influenced by the professional requirements, changing nature of the disciplinary knowledge and the research in the discipline. In this category, academics develop curriculum in line with the changing nature of the discipline. They prescribe the content and connect it to the structure of the program. Students may play role in changing the content



and the mode of delivery but not in the construction of curriculum actively. Curriculum development in this category is limited to adding extra units to the programme as electives or introducing online delivery to increase flexibility.

Fraser and Bosanquet's (2006) category C considers curriculum as a process that facilitates student learning. The content and delivery of a unit within the structure of a programme are considered as essential parts of the curriculum but only one part of a broader process. In this category, teacher defines the process of learning within a theoretical framework that emerges from the research within the discipline, educational philosophy, pedagogical research and social change. Teacher and students negotiate the curriculum within this framework through an ongoing dialogue without posing significant challenge to existing product and structural understandings of curriculum.

In category D, Fraser and Bosanquet (2006) conceptualized curriculum as a collaborative process of learning where teachers and students act as co-constructors of knowledge. Academics in this category reject to accept curriculum as document such as a unit outline or a description of a programme. They understand curriculum as an interaction of knowledge, a shared process of change or a journey of learning that transforms the world views. It fundamentally challenges the concept of structural and content based curriculum. In this category, the structure of learning is not pre-determined; it emerges from the needs of the students, and from the interactions between students, teachers and colleagues or the community of scholars. The major goal of this curriculum is to provide effective members to the society by empowering students with different world views. Curriculum development in this category is constrained by the institutional structure and culture, peoples' personalities and mental models, and the agenda and paradigm of the discipline.

Fraser and Bosanquet (2006) connect these categories to other curriculum concepts. Such as, they conceptualize these categories under two curriculum orientations – product orientations (category A and B) and process orientation (categories C and D). They further interpret these categories in light of philosophical underpinnings by the Habermas' (1972) theory of 'knowledge-constitutive interests'. This theory consists of three fundamental human interests – technical interest, practical (communicative) interest and emancipatory interest. Curriculum from a technical interest defines and controls student learning by focusing on the structuring as well as managing objects and environment. Curriculum with a practical (communicative) interest aims to provide an understanding that enables students to take appropriate action. Curriculum from an emancipatory interest focuses on the emancipating nature of the curriculum such as critical learners that develop through dialogic relationship between teacher and students. I operationalize these interests in Chapter 3. Fraser and Bosanquet (2006) relate categories A and B to what Habermas calls a technical interest while category C reflects a more practical interest and category D incorporates emancipatory interest. The latter is very close to the Barnett's (2009) concept of 'being' that he proposed to supplement the idea of 'performativity'. I explore the concept of 'being' to have further insight on faculty member's

understandings about curriculum in the following texts. Before going that I feel it necessary to explain the idea of performativity.

In the context of changing world phenomena, curriculum is understood as a living thing. It can no longer be remain static. Barnett et al., (2001) argue that in response to the world contexts, the curriculum is changing towards performativity, though vary according to the values and practices of the different disciplines. The idea of performativity is associated with the increased emphasize on ‘efficiency’, ‘output’, and ‘use-value’. In the context of higher education it is connected with the labour market. Emphasize is given on doing, rather than knowing, and performance rather than understanding. Changes in the undergraduate curriculum are related to these performative shifts. Barnett et al., (2001) termed this trend as ‘emerging curricula’ whereas the point of departure is ‘traditional curricula’ (p. 437). I operationalize both traditional and emerging curricula in Chapter 3.

Some authors believe that even though curriculum is shifting towards performativity, it seems inadequate as the world is changing more rapidly. Barnett (2009) in his philosophical study goes beyond the concept of performativity and brings forward the concept of ‘being’ in higher education curricula. He states that it is now evident that higher education has been shifting from dogma of knowledge to dogma of skills; knowing student has been replaced by the performative student. But even if both knowing and skills are held together, still they are unstable in this rapidly changing and super complex world. A third pillar is required and that is ‘being’, capability with which the graduate can engage purposively with the world.

It is necessary to be familiarized with some concepts before going how curriculum is understood from the perspective of being as its major component. These concepts may also play an important role in forming the philosophical background of any curriculum development work. Barnett (2009), however, states that these concepts may play out differently in different countries across different institutions and disciplines. Now, I present these concepts on the basis of some educational principles for the curricula and pedagogy that capture the being as a component.

Barnett (2009) argues that coming to know or knowing has person-forming properties and it has implications for becoming. These implications may be understood in the formation of dispositions and qualities in the different fields of knowledge. Dispositions are the tendencies of human beings to engage in some way with the world around them. Human beings become a ‘being’ by the dispositions of willingness to learn and to engage, preparedness to listen and to explore, and determination to keep going forward. Dispositions are universal and student cannot sustain and significantly progress in any discipline without having dispositions be formed. Dispositions cannot show themselves if they are not characterized by various qualities – courage, resilience, carefulness, integrity, self discipline, restraint, respect for others, openness, generosity and authenticity. But the priority of quality differs across the disciplines. Different disciplines may characteristically require a particular mix of qualities for different forms of knowing. These two facets (dispositions and qualities) of human beings are

essentially implicated in a pedagogical relationship in higher education. Different fields of study require particular combination of dispositions and qualities for proper understanding. The learners get authentic appropriation of knowledge in higher education to form understanding. Through the course of study knowing endeavors place students into a process of becoming, the students' being transforms and they become a new self. The educators in higher education face a lot of challenges in forming human beings with genuine understanding. I operationalize 'being' as a component of curriculum in chapter 3.

In addition to the concepts of product and process models, four categories of Fraser and Bosanquet, three curriculum interests, emerging and traditional curricula, I will also use 'being' in my analytical framework to understand faculty member's understandings of curriculum at DHDU. It will also help me to answer my question of how faculty member's understandings of curriculum influence their ways of engagement in curriculum development.

In sum, first, curriculum is understood from various perspectives by various curriculum theorists. Traditionally it is understood in terms of two orientations – product and process models. These two models are inclusive in nature and fit across the disciplines. Second, curriculum is understood as four categories of Fraser and Bosanquet. Third, curriculum is understood in terms of three fundamental human interests – technical interest, practical interest and emancipatory interest. Fourth, curriculum is understood by the performative shifts in the context of changing world phenomena. In other words curriculum can be understood as 'traditional' and 'emerging' curricula. Fifth, the concept of 'being' has been employed to understand curriculum in the domain of higher education. The idea of understanding curriculum in terms of being as its' major component is still in the formation stage and belongs to the arena of theoretical discussion. All these ways of understanding curriculum will be investigated empirically in this study. The next sub-section reviews the literature related to curriculum development in higher education and the engagement of faculty members in it.

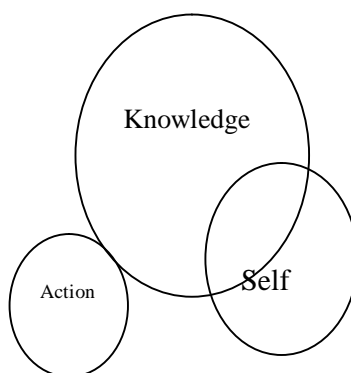
### **2.1.2 Curriculum Development and Faculty Engagement**

It is evident from the previous sub-section that curriculum theorists understand curriculum from different perspectives and it has implications for the curriculum development itself. I suggest that it is necessary to understand curriculum from disciplinary perspectives as it has also implications for curriculum development in that specific discipline. I now present how curriculum development varies across the disciplines in terms of changing world phenomena.

In the context of changing world phenomena, curriculum of every discipline is at stake. In response to the changes in the contemporary world, curriculum is also changing. Barnett et al., (2001) focus on this issue by proposing three curriculum models under the broad categories of science and technology subjects, arts and humanities subjects, and professional subjects in order to examine the changing patterns of curriculum. The proposed models are based on the concept of modern curricula

forming identities embedded in three domains – knowledge, action and self. The knowledge domain refers discipline-specific competences that creates subject specialists, for instance, a ‘historian’ or a ‘nurse’. The action domain refers competences acquired through doing, for instance, an oral presentation in art history and clinical practice of a nursing student. The self domain forms identity related to the subject areas, for example, history students are likely to become ‘critical evaluators’ while students in nursing studies are encouraged to become ‘reflective practitioners’. The weight and integration of the domains vary across the disciplines. The knowledge domain in the arts and humanities curricula is heavily weighted with a little integration with self domain while action domain in these curricula is separate. Figure 1 shows this nature of arts and humanities curricula.

Figure 1 Curriculum: Arts and Humanities Schema



Barnett et al. (2001) suggest that curriculum formation at any levels including course, department, institutions and national policy levels should be understood as embracing the three domains - knowledge, action and self. They argue that, changes within each domain also vary across the disciplines. I suggest that curriculum developers of a specific discipline should also consider the changes happening in that particular discipline. Following Barnett et al. (2001), I present how changes happen in each domain of history curriculum.

In the knowledge domain changes happen in three forms. Firstly, the structural change in the knowledge fields in the arts and humanities happens internally, for instance, history has become more sociological in character. Secondly, new topics may emerge within the knowledge fields, such as Women’s history emerged within history. Thirdly, it is not necessary to use computer to be a historian but using computer is being increased in historical modes of inquiry. The space of personal interpretation of a knowledge field is wide in the curricula of humanities than science-based and professional subjects, for instance, in history, choice of topics and modules and their stability depend on the professional interests of the faculty members (Barnett et al., 2001). The changes in the action

domain are likely to happen when the changes happen in the world of work. Though, history as a subject is not oriented towards 'use-value' which is related to the world of work, recently the idea of 'transferable skills' referring the capacity of interpretation, analysis and scholarly presentation are appropriate for variety of occupations. The self domain is still in the developing stage but its' appearance is obvious in the professional fields. In the humanities it is comparatively unidentifiable as an explicit component of curriculum (Barnett et al., 2001). Now, I discuss the evolutionary nature of the history curriculum.

The history curriculum has an evolutionary nature and it changes over time because of prevailing new ideas over the old ones and the socio-cultural context. Shay (2011) shows the evolution in the history curriculum in the context of South Africa. She attempts to provide finer-grained theoretical and analytical tools for the analysis of the diverse and changing forms of educational knowledge in order to understand the formation of higher education curricula. She historically analyses the formation of undergraduate history curriculum at the University of Cape Town. She suggests three periods of curriculum formation: history as canon, history as social sciences and history for the market. She focuses the formation of curriculum up to 1998 which covers the former two periods: history as canon and history as social sciences. I am now presenting her findings in these two periods as I use them in chapter 3 (table 4).

*History as canon vs social science:* History as canon curricula focuses on key historical events sequenced chronologically with a geographical focus. As Shay (2011) explains, there is an assumption that all graduates must know the canon of knowledge (key historical events) before they go into the world. Examination questions in this period require descriptive answer about particular events, periods and places. The aim of the examination is to assess the acquisition of a particular body of knowledge. She argues, though there are scopes for the students to be critical and to show their ability, this curriculum was rather narrow as it aimed to constitute an objective history. The basis of validity of knowledge is what students know and how they know rather than who they are as historians. The statement about who were the historiographers and what they did to generate this knowledge was completely absent. The students were not required to acquire historical method or to deal with historical data analysis.

History as social science curricula, on the other hand, focuses on places as parts of the world. It also emphasizes on themes instead of chronology. According to Shay (2011), the emphasis on a particular place is still evident in this curricula but it is situated within world history interacting with other parts of the world. It suggests the concept that emergence of a civilization cannot be looked at in an isolated way. The sequencing of the course shifts from its chronological nature to broader themes of economic, social and political organization, culture and consciousness that shape the modern world. The exam questions become more focused on theoretical and methodological knowledge, women and

other social classes such as peasants and slaves, and comparative approach. She refers to Iggers (1997) who termed this as 'social science'. According to Iggers (1997), the object of the history shifts from the event of past to 'broad principles' by which society operates, how human behaves. The focus of historical object also shifts from the political history (great men, great political events) or 'history from the above' to social history (women, lower classes) termed as 'democratization of history', or 'history from the below' by Iggers (1997).

The above discussion suggests that curricula in higher education are changing across the disciplines according to the disciplinary nature. In case of history curriculum, it has been observed evidently in the knowledge domain and to some extent in the action domain but yet to be visible in the self domain. It is also observed that there is a shift happening from canon curricula to social science curricula in history discipline. This distinctive nature of history as a discipline will help me when I will operationalize the faculty engagement in curriculum development in the methodology chapter. Now I will focus on curriculum development as proposed by Lattuca and Stark (2009).

Lattuca and Stark (2009) provide a comprehensive framework to understand curriculum and its development for all levels of education that include a single lesson, a single course, a programme, a school and a college or a university as a whole. They provide a working definition of curriculum that fits with today's diversified higher education system characterized by diverse programmes and institutions as well as different students requiring different needs. They propose curriculum as an 'academic plan' in order to address the lack of comprehensive definition of curriculum. An academic plan consists of eight elements – purposes, content, sequence, learners, instructional processes, instructional resources, evaluation and adjustment (please see chapter 3 for definition of these elements).

According to Lattuca and Stark (2009), the development of academic plan is affected by external and internal influences. The external influences such as market forces, government, accrediting agencies and disciplinary association that exist outside colleges and universities may affect academic plan. They consider external groups such as employers having strong ties with academic programmes in community colleges, for-profit institutions, and some professional fields (e.g. accounting). Internal influences may also have strong effect on curricula as they are embedded within the institutional environment where the curriculum is designed. Lattuca and Stark (2009) discuss the effect of the internal influences in two phases – institutional and unit levels. Institutional-level influences come from organizational infrastructures, such as, college mission, financial resources, opportunity for faculty development and renewal, and governance arrangements of the universities and unit-level influences include faculty (faculty's understanding of curriculum and experiences), discipline (nature of the discipline) and student characteristics (capability and interests of the students). In this model Lattuca and Stark (2009) argue that interactions between these influences create an educational environment in which the curriculum is developed and implemented. The

educational process and educational outcomes are placed outside the educational environment but embedded within the larger socio-cultural context which includes but not limited to political movement, language, family structures, television, internet and computer technologies. Lattuca and Stark (2009) present this framework in a model embedded into a socio-cultural context. I provide this model in Appendix B.

In sum, this sub-section discussed curriculum changes within knowledge, action and self domains proposed by Barnett et al. (2001). An evolutionary process of understanding history curricula has been discussed based on Shay (2011). History curriculum, in this process, is understood in terms of 'history as canon' and history as 'social science'. Finally, the section finishes by reviewing Lattuca and Stark (2009) who provided a comprehensive framework for understanding and developing curriculum in a socio-cultural context.

In the next sub-section, I review literature on the UCE and its relationship to the curriculum development. I will now review the literature on faculty experience to have a complete sense of the term 'understandings of curriculum and experiences' (UCE) by the faculty members. It will also help me to address my question of how UCE influences the ways of faculty engagement in curriculum development.

### **2.1.3 Influences of Faculty Experience on Curriculum Development**

Fraser and Bosanquet (2006) argue that the recognition of the various ways in which academics conceptualize curriculum is an important initial step in this process for more affluent discussion and research on curriculum visioning, change and development. Faculty experiences affect curriculum development in various ways. According to Ornstein and Hunkins (2009), curriculum development encompasses planning, implementation and evaluation of curriculum including the kind of people, processes and procedures are involved. I will now review the literature on curriculum that indicates the influence of the faculty experiences on the curriculum development process.

The curriculum literature indicates that faculty experiences influence various elements of curriculum (e. g. Sherman and McLeod 1979, Lattuca and Stark 2009). Studying curricular programmes designed for police officers' training in the USA, Sherman and McLeod (1979) highlight the importance of educational qualifications of the faculty members in predicting course content in college programmes for police officer: the more educated the faculty, the higher the level of conceptual abstraction in the curriculum. Their empirical analysis shows that 'better' faculty members would produce a 'better' curriculum. Lattuca and Stark (2009) argue that faculty members' disciplinary training and background have strong unit-level influence on the academic plan. The unit level influences indicate the influences of faculty experiences such as instructors' backgrounds and disciplinary training and these experiences may have strong influence on curriculum. O'Neill (2010)

and Stark (2000) argue that the faculty members' disciplinary socialization, a unit level factor, influence how they plan their courses.

Mayhew and Grunwald (2006) argue that faculty members' participation in diversity related workshop and activities influence them to incorporate diversity-related materials in their course content. These workshop and activities inspire faculty members to incorporate diversity-related materials into their courses. Faculty members participating diversity related workshops and activities may be more likely to have positive interactions with diverse peers. These interactions may connect faculty members to a supportive network for expressing shared commitments to promoting diversity as an important educational outcome. They may also learn about innovative pedagogies for incorporating diverse materials into the curriculum from the materials or testimonies presented at the workshop.

Academic credential and scholarships are considered to be important experiences of faculty members. Parther and Smith (1976) shows relationships between faculty experiences, subject fields, and course grading patterns. Rodgers (2005) argues the relationship between professors' scholarship and course content. He suggests that creation of course content should be an integral part of the professor's scholarship. He recommends that professors should integrate their own research into their course lectures. The above discussion shows that the UCE of the faculty members has profound influence on the curriculum development process.

To sum up this sub-section very briefly, I reviewed the literature regarding faculty experiences and their influence on curriculum development. Faculty member's experiences, such as educational qualification and scholarship, participation in workshop influence various elements of curriculum. Most scholars talking about this issue express their view in a general manner that may be true for various disciplines. They, however, did not investigate how the UCE influences the curriculum development process in a particular academic discipline that is what I am interested in. I draw on these concepts and the perspectives above and integrate these in an analytical framework for this study.

## **2.2 Analytical Framework**

In the previous section, I reviewed major literature on curriculum, its development and the influences of faculty members' understandings of curriculum and experiences (UCE) on curriculum development. In the current section, I draw on this literature to develop an analytical framework for my study which will be operationalized in the next chapter. The analytical framework addresses the research questions how curriculum is understood in a specific discipline, how faculty members engage in curriculum development and how UCE influences their role in curriculum development process. Before presenting UCE as part of the analytical framework, it is necessary to frame understandings of curriculum (UC) by the faculty members in light of theoretical proposition.



History as a soft pure discipline (Biglan, 1972) has its own characteristics distinct to the other disciplines. In the analytical framework, I consider the nature of history as an academic discipline. I use the categories of Fraser and Bosanquet (2006) - Category A: The structure and content of a unit (subject); Category B: The structure and content of a programme of study; Category C: The students' experience of learning; Category D: a dynamic and interactive process of teaching and learning to reveal how faculty members of DHDU understand curriculum (see the sub-section 2.1.1 for details). I also use two traditional curriculum approaches – product and process models where categories A and B fall under the product model and categories C and D fall under the process model. These categories also incorporate the three fundamental human interests - technical interest, practical (communicative) interest and emancipatory interest. Here, categories A and B fall within the technical interest. Category C falls under practical interest and category D falls under emancipatory interest (please see the sub-section 2.1.1 of this chapter for details).

Technical interest of curriculum can be compared with traditional curriculum where emphasize is given mainly on cognitive knowledge (please see the review of Barnett et al. 2001 in the sub-section 2.1.1 of this chapter). Practical interest of curriculum focuses on the aspects of curriculum that enable students to take action in an appropriate manner. In this respect category C can be interpreted by the characteristics of emerging curricula moving towards performativity. Barnett et al. (2001) explain these performative shifts by the action domain of curriculum (please see the section 2.1.1 of this chapter for details). Emancipatory interest of curriculum is similar to the Barnett's (2009) concept of being as a major component of curriculum where curriculum brings forward such human qualities that emancipates people from dogmas of the world (please see the section 2.1.1 of this chapter). I use all these concepts to frame the understanding of curriculum by the faculty members of DHDU.

To investigate how the faculty members at DHDU engage themselves in curriculum development and how UCE influences their role in this development process, I use the theoretical framework of Lattuca and Stark (2009) with some modifications. According to Lattuca and Stark (2009) an academic plan (curriculum) is developed in a socio-cultural context where various external and internal influences affect the elements of an academic plan. They provide a framework for curriculum development process and argue that academic plan (curriculum) and the process of planning (curriculum development) is distinct but related to each other. The decisions related to the elements of academic plan are parts of this process. These decisions are influenced by the external and internal influences in a specific disciplinary setting. I now present the points associated with each element where decisions need to be taken.

1. Purposes: choosing educational goals and objectives
2. Content: selecting subject matter

3. Sequence: organizing content appropriately
4. Learners: accommodating characteristics, goals and abilities of learners
5. Instructional resources: selecting learning materials and technologies
6. Instructional processes: developing learning and teaching activities
7. Evaluation: assessing student outcomes as well as learner and teacher satisfaction with the plan
8. Adjustment: improving both the plan and the planning process (p. 15).

The box in the analytical framework containing ‘curriculum development’ indicates that curriculum is developed through a decision making process where decisions are taken on points associated with the eight elements of an academic plan. These elements are - purposes, content, sequence, learners, instructional processes, instructional resources, evaluation and adjustment. I conceptualize these elements in the section 3.3 of the next chapter. Instead of using elements of the academic plan proposed in the framework of Lattuca and Stark (2009), I use the key decision points associated with the elements. The purpose of using these points is to explore how faculty members engage themselves in this decision making process. Lattuca and Stark (2009) state that

Defining a curriculum as a plan calls attention to the need for a planning process, helps to identify parts of the plan that are subject to specific influences, and reveals intervention points for productive curricular change. Each of the eight elements of the plan implies an associated decision (p. 15).

I modify their framework on the basis of this statement. This statement implies that there must be somebody or some people who are responsible to take the decisions. I argue faculty members are such type of decision making people. I give them a status of decision making authority that are responsible for developing curriculum and I put them in a separate box along with their UCE in my analytical framework whereas Lattuca and Stark (2009) consider faculty members as one of the unit level influences.

In this study, I am interested in faculty members’ ways of engagement in curriculum development at DHDU. More specifically, how they take decision regarding the points associated with the elements of an academic plan. In exploring the key decision points associated with the elements of an academic plan, I will consider the nature of history as an academic discipline. For example, decisions regarding the point ‘choosing educational goals and objectives’ associated with the element ‘purposes’ will be examined by the concepts of ‘history as canon’ and ‘history as social science’ provided by Shay (2011). In addition, other historical language will be used to explore the points associated with the elements of an academic plan. This will help me to get interviewees more comfortable in their discussions. I also investigate the influence of UCE on the ways of their engagement in curriculum development. Here, I go beyond the statement of Lattuca and Stark (2009) who state that the external and internal influences affect the elements of an academic plan. I argue

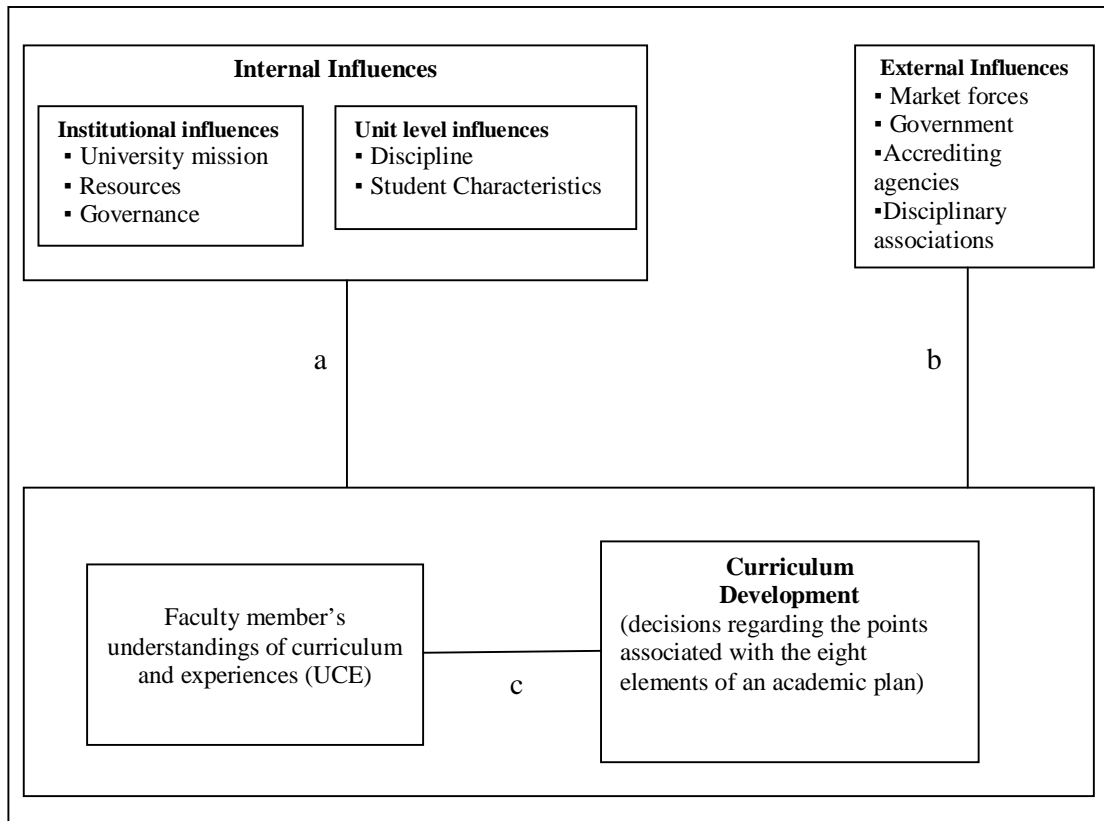
external and internal influences shape faculty belief and their experiences in a way that ultimately influence their decision making process in curriculum development. Faculty members in this way translate or mediate the external and internal influences. Of course, I admit external and internal influences may directly affect the various elements of an academic plan.

I operationalize faculty experiences in terms of three components – teaching experience, exposure and consultations or network. Teaching experience includes faculty members’ length of teaching at university level, number of courses taught and training on teaching methodology; exposure includes teaching learning experiences abroad, number of publications; consultation or network includes interaction with colleagues, curriculum experts, students, professional bodies and other organizations. Literature regarding faculty experiences is presented in the sub-section 2.1.3 of this chapter. In the next chapter, I will operationalize each of these components to examine their influences on curriculum development. Now I present the analytical framework of my study in Figure 2.

In this framework, I put UCE and curriculum development in two separate boxes. I place them within a bigger box to argue close interactions among these two boxes. Faculty members’ UCE is related to the curriculum development in a sense that faculty members develop curriculum according to how they understand it and what experiences they bring forward when they engage in curriculum development.

The box containing faculty UCE, indicates the engagement of faculty members in curriculum development and the influences it render to the ways of their engagement. I argue that this is a direct relationship. Academic autonomy in higher education allows faculty members to make their own curricula. They play a central role in designing curricula. Most of the influences that have potential to affect curriculum development come through faculty members. Effects of external and internal influences, in general, are not likely to reflect on the curriculum development directly until and unless respective faculty members are convinced and willing to make change in the curriculum. Mayhew and Grunwald (2006, p. 165) also argue that faculty members operate as a ‘gatekeeper’ or ‘filter’ in the relationship between the contextual factors and curriculum development. According to Sherman and McLeod (1979), an academic plan may be influenced by various external and internal factors, but the “nature of the faculty is generally thought to be the most important factors of all (p. 252)”. Shay (2011) presents a specific example in line with the above statements. She argues that particularly in the context of teaching history at the university level, faculty members make choices about what counts as historical educational knowledge. Faculty members selectively take cues from the external and internal factors, which particularly guided by their UCE, to work on various aspects (or elements, as noted in the framework) of their academic plans. I connect the two lower boxes of my analytical framework with a straight line to address my second question of how faculty UCE influences the ways of their engagement in curriculum development.

**Figure 2 Analytical Framework: Factors that Influence Curriculum Development**



In the framework, following Lattuca and Stark (2009), I also argue that faculty members engage in curriculum development in the context of a number of broader contextual factors. These factors are identified into two distinct set of influences – external and internal influences. External influences include market forces, government, accrediting agencies and disciplinary associations. Internal influences are divided into two groups – institutional-level influences and unit-level influences. Institutional-level influences include college mission (university mission in the framework), resources and governance whereas unit-level factors include faculty, discipline and student characteristics. I, however, separate faculty members along with their UCE based on the literature to facilitate my research questions. In figure 2, the lines ‘a’ and ‘b’ indicate the effect of external and internal influences on the curriculum development. It indicates that I admit the influences of external and internal factors on curriculum development. Putting the box containing UCE and the box containing curriculum development into one box indicates their close interactions. I connect the boxes by straight line ‘c’ because I am interested in how the faculty members of DHDU engage in curriculum development and how their UCE influences their role in curriculum development.

In sum, I use categories proposed by Fraser and Bosanquet (2006) along with subsequent categories proposed by various curriculum theorists to open up for analysis the different understandings of faculty (the lower left box of figure 2). The decisions regarding the points associated with the elements of academic plan proposed by Lattuca and Stark (2009) is used to open how faculty members engage themselves in curriculum development by looking into what they attend to and what they do not engage in developing curriculum (the lower right box of figure 2). The wider parts of Lattuca and Stark's (2009) framework about internal and external influences are taken as contextual factors for faculty engagement in curriculum development. In the following chapter, I identify possible sub-components and aspects to turn them into specific questions. I used these questions to develop an interview guide to examine the theoretical claims made above.

## 3. Methodology

The study is of qualitative in nature. The aim here is to explore the phenomena of understandings of curriculum by the faculty members, their engagement in curriculum development, and influence of their understandings of curriculum and experiences (UCE) on curriculum development in the context of the Department of History in the University of Dhaka (DHDU), which are important but under-researched areas. In this chapter, I present methodological approaches of this study in section 3.1 and I operationalize the concepts used in the analytical framework in section 3.2.

### 3.1 Methodological Approaches

The aim of the study is to answer the questions of how faculty members at DHDU understand curriculum, how they engage in curriculum development and how their understandings of curriculum and experiences (UCE) influence the ways of their engagement in curriculum development. Note that the emphasis of the questions on ‘why’ and ‘how’ of contemporary events that cannot be controlled for experimental observation. The nature of such questions and paucity of existing data needed to answer the questions demands a qualitative research method (Yin, 2009). As data of this study is mainly derived from the interviews, no control of behavioral events has occurred. Moreover, this study deals with the contemporary curriculum development activities at DHDU rather than its historical evolution. Thus, this study used a case study design.

The case in focus is the Department of History in the University of Dhaka, Bangladesh. I considered the geographical location, state of research and accessibility to the data in selecting this case. It seemed feasible for me to work on higher education in Bangladesh as I am from the same country. Like other developing countries, higher education in Bangladesh still remains under-researched. I feel it is worthwhile to work on this less explored research area. Moreover, as I have been working with DHDU for more than a decade, I considered the faculty members of DHDU would be most accessible for me than any other case of such kind.

The Department of History in the University of Dhaka is part of the universe of cases that include all the history departments in public universities in Bangladesh. There are 34 public universities (UGC, 2012) six of which have History departments.<sup>9</sup> Prominent ones are the History Department of the University of Dhaka, History Department of the Rajshahi University (RU), History department of the University of Chittagong (CU) and History department of the Jahangirnagar University (JU). I have chosen the DHDU as my case to be studied qualitatively in this research due

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<sup>9</sup> I got this information by searching websites of all public universities in Bangladesh.

to its preeminence not only in the university but also in the country as a whole. The DHDU is one of the oldest academic departments in the country. The department is one of the twelve original departments of DU (Miah, 2012).<sup>10</sup> Currently, the department hosts 651 students and 30 teachers (Department of History, 2012).<sup>11</sup> Since the independence of Bangladesh in 1971, many important national personalities came out of this department including Presidents, Prime Ministers, Chief of the caretaker government, Speaker of the parliament and chief justices (Kawser, 2006).<sup>12</sup> Within the university, the faculties of the department also served in various leading positions such as the positions of Vice Chancellor, Pro-vice Chancellor of the DU and other public and private universities of the country.<sup>13</sup>

Among the public universities DU is the oldest (established in 1921), the first university in this land now known as Bangladesh. The University of Dhaka is the largest university of the country. The current number of students and teachers are 33,112 and 1805 respectively (University of Dhaka, 2014b) which is the largest in the country considering both the public and private universities. It has conferred certificates upon more than 1.6 million graduates between 1921 and 2012 (University of Dhaka 2014c). The university is also considered the most prestigious academic institution in the country. Alumni of the university have been playing an important role in the political, economic, social and cultural life of Bangladesh. Public and private sectors' job market are still dependent on this university. The University of Dhaka provides a kind of platform to the findings rather than a focus of interest in its own right. So the focus is very much on the responses of the interviewees than their location.

I selected faculty members as the unit of analysis. Faculty members play crucial roles during curriculum development process in the DHDU. Focusing on their understandings of curriculum, engagement in curriculum development and influence of their UCE on the ways of engaging in curriculum development is critical in understanding the entire curriculum development process in the Department. Currently thirty faculty members teach courses in the department. To address the research questions, I purposively selected six faculty members as unit of analysis for the study. The levels of sampling consist of sampling of context and sampling of participants. The sampling of context is

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<sup>10</sup> The other eleven departments were Sanskrit and Bengali, English, Education, Arabic and Islamic Studies, Persian and Urdu, Philosophy, Economics and Politics, Physics, Chemistry, Mathematics, and Law (Miah, 2012)

<sup>11</sup> In 2012 there were 651 students studying at the History department of which 159 in 1<sup>st</sup> year, 106 in 2<sup>nd</sup> year, 104 in 3<sup>rd</sup> year, 131 in 4<sup>th</sup> year, 139 in Master, 9 in M.Phil and 3 in PhD (Department of History, 2012).

<sup>12</sup> Caretaker government in Bangladesh is formed to hold a free and fair national election and to hand over power to the newly elected government. Chief of this interim government is nominated by the major political parties. But recently the system has been abolished by the parliament.

Presidents of the People's Republic of Bangladesh Syed Nazrul Islam, Abdur Rahman Biswas and Zillur Rahman, Prime Minister Kazi Jafar Ahmed, Chief of the Caretaker Government Justice Habibur Rahman, Speaker of the parliament Barrister Zamiruddin Sircar and several ministers, members of the parliament, Justices, bureaucrats and prominent cultural personalities studied in this department (Alumni Association, 2010, 2011 & Kawser, 2006)

<sup>13</sup> Three Vice Chancellors of DU and a number of Vice Chancellors of other public and private universities were the faculty members of the DHDU. ( Alumni Association, 2010, 2011 & Kawser, 2006)

determined by the very nature of the discipline. History as a discipline emphasizes on the three periods of studies – ancient, medieval and modern. All these periods have their lines rooted in the undergraduate level where students prepare themselves for their possible masters programme. Consequently, expertise of academics develops according to these periodic lines. In this context, I selected two faculty members from each of the periodic lines. I ensured the combination of experience, gender and age to get variations and useful information from the interviewees.

An additional group of interviewees was identified through ‘snowballing’. For example, the interviewees referred to some key players with regards to curriculum development at DU. The Chairman of DHDU and Dean, Faculty of Arts were most referred. One of the interviewees referred to some other faculty members who are well informed about university rules and regulations. Among them a former Dean of Social Sciences was the prominent one. I have had informal conversations with all of them on several occasions.

The strength of the above ways of collecting data is that it affords to deal with variety of evidences – documents, interviews, and observations (Yin, 2009). Triangulation of these evidences strengthens the validity of analysis (Bryman, 2012). The data corpus of this research consists of data derived from open-ended interviews and documents from various sources. The interview data came from qualitative interviews of a group of faculty members who teach various history courses in the Department of History. The documents used for this study derived from university and government policy documents. The study also used official documents available at the DHDU and Faculty offices that include resolutions of the Academic Committee of the Department (ACD) and the Faculty meeting, official letters exchanged between the department, faculty and the university etc. Government policy documents were collected from the websites of Ministry of Education of Bangladesh and University Grants Commission of Bangladesh (UGC). In my assessment these documents meet the four quality requirements proposed by Scott (1990). These requirements are (1) Authenticity: genuine and unquestionable origin (2) Credibility: free from error and distortion (3) Representativeness: typical of its kind (4) Meaning: clear and comprehensible. Moreover, internet played a substantial role in providing data for this research. In addition to the websites of the Ministry of Education of Bangladesh and University Grants Commission of Bangladesh, I explored the websites of all public universities in Bangladesh. Information derived from these sources was mainly used to present the contexts in which the DHDU operates. Documents were also used to supplement the interview data.

### **3.1.1 Interview Guide and Interviews**

The concepts used in the analytical framework were addressed in my interview guide. I identified various aspects of these concepts and turned them into questions for the interview guide (see Appendix C for the interview guide). The interview guide was prepared in English but I went to the



interviewees with a translated version in Bengali, the native language of Bangladesh. This translated version of interview guide was also formatted as a note pad that helped me to take notes during interviews. Prior to using this interview guide I conducted two pilot interviews to see how it works.

I conducted the interviews in the interviewees' workplaces in DHDU. I got 100% response from the interviewees as nobody refused to be interviewed. I used my interview guide for conducting face-to-face open-ended interviews that allowed interviewees to elaborate their experience in the curriculum development process at DHDU. The interviews were based on open ended questions. I recorded interviews using a digital audio device and nobody refused to be recorded. During interviews, I also took notes about interview features and situation. Most of the interviews were taken in Bengali but one of the interviewees seemed to be more comfortable in English. When I realized this, I took rest of the interview (more than half of the interview duration) in English. The interviews were conducted from 23 March 2014 to 26 May 2014. The duration of the interviews lasted from 55 minutes to 1 hour 30 minutes. Table 1 presents the profiles of the interviewees.

**Table 1 Profiles of the interviewees at DHDU**

	Years of teaching at University level	Number of courses taught	Training on teaching methods	MA/Mphil/PhD at home or abroad	Number of publications (national/international)	Participation in seminar and workshop (home/abroad)
Interviewee 1	16 years (14.5 years at DU)	7	Yes	BA, MA, Mphil (home) PhD (abroad)	40 articles (4 international) 5 books	35 (15 abroad)
Interviewee 2	23 years	5	No	BA (abroad), MA, PhD (home)	18 articles	16 (10 abroad)
Interviewee 3	15 years	12	No	PhD (abroad)	16 articles (1 international) 1 book	13 (4 abroad)
Interviewee 4	24 years	14	Yes	PhD home	12 articles	14 (7 abroad)
Interviewee 5	38 years	4	No	BA, MA (home), MA (abroad), PhD (abroad)	9 articles (4 international) 2 books	19 (16 abroad)
Interviewee 6	27 years	7	No	BA, MA, PhD (abroad)	12 articles	10 (5 abroad)

Note: In this regard, see also table 2.

Table 1 demonstrates various important experiences of the interviewees. Column 1 of this table listed the number of interviewees started from Interviewee 1 to Interviewee 6. As shown in the column 2, the years of teaching of the faculty members at university level ranges between 15 and 38 years with an average of 23.88 years of teaching experiences. Column 3 listed the number of courses taught by the faculty members ranges between 4 and 15 with an average about 8 courses. Column 4 shows that the most faculty members have not received any training on teaching methods while only

two received such training. Column 5 shows that the most faculty members received their PhD abroad while only two received at home. Number of articles listed in the column 6 ranges between 9 and 40 with an average of 18 articles. The same column shows that only two faculty members published books. The column 7 listed the number of workshop and seminar participated by the faculty members ranges between 10 and 35 with an average of 18 workshops and seminars.

As I mentioned earlier, I took the interviews mostly in the native language to receive comprehensive information. As a result, transcribing interviews from Bengali to English appeared a daunting task. After completing each interview, I transcribed the record before going for the next interview. I simultaneously translated and transcribed the audio records from Bengali to English that produced about 55 pages of English texts.

The data were coded in three major categories according to my three research questions. These were (1) data pertaining to the understanding of curriculum by the faculty members (2) data pertaining to faculty engagement in curriculum development (3) data pertaining to influence of faculty understandings of curriculum and experience (UCE) on their role in curriculum development. I qualitatively analyzed the interview data guided by the theoretical expectations presented in Chapter 2 (analytical framework).

As an insider at DHDU, I had every access to the documents available at the department. I also had the full access to the documents preserved at the office of the Faculty of Arts. But I had to face problem at the faculty office as documents were not systematically preserved there. Even many documents were not found there that were supposed to be found. It would be helpful if I had an easy access to the documents available at DU Registrar's office. As some frown faced officials of the administration maintained a typical bureaucratic attitude that discourages researchers, I could not use certain documents available at that office. I, however, bypassed this challenge by consulting documents that came to the department and Faculty from the university authority.

### **3.1.2 Ethical Considerations**

This study addressed ethical issues as suggested by Kvale and Brinkmann (2009, p. 63). Purpose of the study was to offer insights about the curriculum development in history department in higher education. I provided participants with a consent letter ensuring them about the confidentiality and anonymity of their data (see Appendix D). I made the data anonymous by leveling the audio files and transcripts with Interviewee 1 to Interviewee 6. I also maintained this anonymity during the analysis of the data. I informed participants that after a reasonable period data would be discarded to prevent from falling into the hands of other researchers and from misuse. Transcripts of interview records and draft of the study report were also sent to the interviewees for approval as well as withdrawal (if they want). Moreover, I got support from the department leadership to undertake this research.

### 3.1.3 Reliability and validity

Considering reliability and validity as the most important criteria for evaluating the quality of quantitative research, a number of qualitative researchers argue for a new vocabulary and rhetoric to discuss reliability and validity (Mishler, 1986 cited in Seidman, 2006). Lincoln and Guba (1985), for example, use the word 'trustworthiness' to substitute the notion of 'validity' (cited in Seidman, 2006). Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) criticize this alternative stance in relation to reliability and validity. As they argue,

Some qualitative researchers have ignored or dismissed questions of validity, reliability, and generalization as stemming from oppressive positivist concepts that hamper a creative and emancipatory qualitative research (p. 244)

They retain the traditional concepts of reliability and validity for evaluating the quality of qualitative research too. They argue that the reliability is concerned about the consistency and trustworthiness of the research findings while the validity is concerned about truth, correctness and strength of the statement. In line with Kvale and Brinkmann (2009), I addressed the reliability and validity issues at different stages of this study.

To ensure the reliability of this research I sent interview transcript and draft report of this study to all of my interviewees to provide them with the opportunity to check translation and interpretation of the data. Moreover, based on these interview data, I presented a paper in a seminar on 'Contextualizing Curriculum in Humanities: A Case Study of the Department of History in the University of Dhaka' in a workshop arranged to draw critical attention to the current state of tertiary education in Bangladesh, with particular reference to Dhaka University. This workshop was held under the project on Tertiary Education & Democratization of the State and Society: Challenges and Opportunities in Student Politics and Youth Leadership jointly conducted by the Department of International Relations and Department of History, University of Dhaka in collaboration with Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung. Some of my interviewees were present there. Thus, I had the opportunity to check that my interpretations were in line with their understanding.

My position as an insider in this research may raise the question of objectivity from the traditional point of view. I, however, believe that it did not influence the findings of this study. I would like to argue that my relationship with the faculty members whom I interviewed, deepen and strengthen the quality of my data. It allowed me to build trust, to raise informed follow up questions and to get in-depth information. Considering me as one of them, the interviewees fully opened up before me. A sign of this is that they talked extensively and that the interviews lasted up to 90 minutes. They knew that I was also well informed about the contexts within which the curriculum developed. Hence, they provided me with the correct information. This, to some extent, ensures the validity of this

research. Generally, outsiders come, interview and go. The interviewees do not even know the findings of their research. But it worked in other way around for me. My interviewees were comfortable to share their experience and expressed their keen interest to know about the findings of this research. They even hoped that this research would have a positive impact on curriculum development at DHDU. I also argue that it would be quite difficult for an outsider to get such access to the same people and ask the same questions. Thus, it would be difficult for outsiders to be able to conduct the same piece of research. Considering these advantages of being an insider, I selected faculty members at DHDU as the unit of analysis.

Now I operationalize various concepts used in the analytical framework. I identify the aspects of these concepts and turn them into questions to prepare an interview guide.

### **3.2 Operationalization of Concepts Used in the Analytical Framework**

In this section, I operationalize various concepts used in the analytical framework. In sub-section 3.2.1, I operationalize the understandings of curriculum by the faculty members. In sub-section 3.2.1, I argue faculty experiences consist of their teaching experiences, exposure and consultation. Here, I operationalize these concepts. In sub-section 3.2.3, I operationalize the concept used to investigate the faculty engagement in curriculum development.

#### **3.2.1 Operationalization of Curriculum Understandings**

In the analytical framework, I used faculty members' understandings of curriculum and experiences (UCE) to investigate their engagement in curriculum development and the influence of UCE on curriculum development. In this sub-section, I operationalize faculty member's understandings of curriculum (UC) that includes four categories of Fraser and Bosanquet (2006) along with categories proposed by Habermas (1972), Barnett et al. (2001), Barnett (2009) and traditional approaches, such as, product and process model to investigate faculty belief or their understandings of curriculum. The categories of Fraser and Bosanquet (2006) are - Category A: The structure and content of a unit (subject); Category B: The structure and content of a program of study; Category C: The students' experience of learning; Category D: a dynamic and interactive process of teaching and learning. The categories proposed by Habermas (1972) are – Technical interest, Practical interest and Emancipatory interest. The categories of Barnett et al. (2001) are - Traditional curricula and Emerging curricula. The component proposed by Barnett (2009) is the 'being'. And the traditional categories of curriculum are - Product and Process models as proposed by various curriculum scholars. I present them in table 2 at the end of this sub-section.

*Categories of Fraser and Bosanquet (2006)*

*Category A: The structure and content of a unit (subject)* It is evident from the name of this category that faculty members primarily understand curriculum as a structure and content of a unit or a subject. They consider the ways of delivery of the content is an essential part of curriculum. It may be delivered through lecture or reading and once or twice a week or throughout the semester. Curriculum change in this category happens narrowly by changing the textbooks and adding power point presentation in the classroom. Curriculum is developed and implemented by the teachers, and students are considered as its consumers. The aspects of this category include (a) structure and content of a unit are considered as important parts of curriculum (b) the ways of delivery of the content is considered as an essential part of curriculum (c) there is a little scope for curriculum change (d) developed and implemented by the teachers, where students are the consumers of the curriculum.

*Category B: The structure and content of a program of study* The name of this category indicates that faculty members understand curriculum as the structure and content of a programme consists of multiple units. Structure of the curriculum is related to its sequence, compulsory subjects and elective subjects. The content is fixed and the way of its delivery is prescribed beforehand. Curriculum is changed by adding extra units as electives and introducing internet as a means of delivery. Curriculum is developed and implemented by the teachers, and students are considered as consumers. The aspects of this category include (a) curriculum is understood as structure and content of multiple units (b) fixed content and ways of delivery (c) little scope of curriculum change (d) developed and implemented by the teachers and students are the consumers of the curriculum.

*Category C: The students' experience of learning* In this category, curriculum is primarily understood as the experience of learning. The structure and content, and the way of its delivery are considered as parts of the learning process. Curriculum is changed through negotiation between teachers and students within a framework. The aspects of this category include (a) experience of student learning (b) structure, content and ways of delivery (c) within a framework teachers and students negotiate curriculum change.

*Category D: A dynamic and interactive process of teaching and learning* Curriculum in this category is understood as collaborative process of learning. Faculty members reject curriculum as a document and are informed only the course title. Learning happens through interaction between teachers, students and the knowledge. Curriculum is developed through the interaction between students and teachers without any framework and it aims towards the needs of the students. The aspects of this category include (a) collaborative process of learning (b) no fixed content and way of its delivery (c) teachers and students negotiate curriculum change without any framework.

*Habermas' (1972) technical, practical and emancipatory interests*

The technical interest of curriculum refers students learning controlled by a structure. It includes specific objectives and outcomes of the curriculum. The aspects of this category include (a) a structure that controls teaching-learning (b) an outline of the course (c) visible mechanisms to measure outcomes of the curriculum. The practical interest of the curriculum enables students to apply their knowledge appropriately. The aspect of this curriculum mainly includes the appropriate action taken by the students based on acquired knowledge. The emancipatory interest of the curriculum develops critical learners through participation of both teachers and students. It includes the aspects (a) developing as critical evaluators (b) interactive teaching.

*Barnett et al.'s (2001) traditional and emerging curricula*

Traditional curricula mainly emphasize what students know. It assesses students through their ability of written communication. These curricula also develop disciplinary skills to the students. The aspects of these curricula include (a) transmission of knowledge (b) written assessment of the students (c) developing disciplinary skills. Emerging curricula, on the other hand, are presented as alternative to the traditional curricula. These curricula emphasize on how to know. It assesses students on the basis of their ability in oral presentation and aims to develop transferable skills to the students. These curricula include the aspects (a) the process of acquiring knowledge (b) oral presentation as one of the methods of students' assessment (c) developing transferable skills to the students.

*Barnett's (2009) being*

This component of curriculum is relatively new. Barnett (2009) brings it to supplement knowledge and skills in the context of changing world phenomena. The major aspects of being include (a) ensuring flexibility in curricula rather than structuring (b) presenting contrast insights and perspectives (c) developing self discipline to the students such as presence and commitment (d) engaging students with each other (e) encouraging students to go ahead and encounter new experiences (f) developing a will to engage students in a situation they may find themselves.

*Product and process models*

Curriculum in product model is considered as a closed package. It includes the aspects (a) precise objectives (b) prescribed curriculum materials (c) predefined assessment methods (d) predefined learning outcomes. Process model focuses on the activities that happen inside the classrooms. This is somewhat opposite to the product model as it includes (a) no predefined objectives (b) no predefined learning outcomes (c) instead of being instructors, teachers take the role of facilitators (d) both teachers and students evaluate the process.

I keep these categories as matters of empirical observation. In section 2.1 of the previous chapter, I argue that categories of Fraser and Bosanquet (2006) are comprehensive in nature that include all categories described above. My analysis of the interview data will reveal whether faculty member falls into one of these categories. I operationalize faculty understandings of curriculum on the basis of these categories in table 2 below.

**Table 2 Operationalization of Understandings of Curriculum**

Understandings Of Curriculum	Fraser and Bosanquet (2006)	Habermas 1972	Barnett et al. 2001/ Barnett 2009	Traditional approaches
	Category A: The structure and content of a unit (subject)	Technical interest	Traditional curricula (Barnett et al., 2001)	Product model
	Category B: The structure and content of a program of study			
	Category C: The students' experience of learning	Practical interest	Emerging curricula (Barnett et al., 2001)	Process model
	Category D: The students' experience of learning	Emancipatory interest	Forming being (Barnett, 2009)	

It is evident from the above table that categories provided by the Fraser and Bosanquet (2006) are inclusive in nature and various aspects of understanding curriculum can be captured by these categories. Categories A & B are similar to Habermas' (1972) Technical interest, Barnett et al.'s (2001) Traditional curricula and Product model. Category C, as part of Process model, is similar to Habermas' (1972) Practical interest and Barnett et al.'s (2001) Emerging curricula. Category D, as part of Process model, is similar to Habermas' (1972) Emancipatory interest and Barnett's (2009) forming being. I investigate faculty members' understandings of curriculum at DHDU with this comprehensive framework.

**3.2.2 Operationalization of Faculty Member's Experiences**

I define faculty experiences in terms of teaching experience, exposure and consultation. I derive these components of faculty experiences from the works of Ornstein and Hunkins (2009); Stark (2000); Toohey (2000); Sherman and McLeod 1979; Mayhew and Grunwald (2006); Prosser and Trigwell 1999; O'Neill 2010; Shay 2011; Ravindran et al., 2005; Pajares 1992; Richardson 1996; Thompson 1992; and Parther and Smith 1976. They present the various aspects of faculty experiences in a scattered manner. In this section, I define them in a coherent way by adding some ideas to the concept developed in the literature. Later in this section, I operationalize the key aspects of faculty

experiences in table 3. The concept is listed in the first column, components are listed in column two and the corresponding aspects to each of the component are listed in the third column.

*Teaching Experience:* I define experience as the teaching experience of the faculty members and having training on the teaching methodology. It includes the aspects of (a) length of teaching at the university level (b) the number of courses an individual faculty taught. For example, faculty members may teach courses in many sub-fields in their whole teaching career. In the History Department an individual faculty may teach courses like History of Bengal, History of Middle East and History of Civilization (c) Faculty members' training on teaching methodology.

**Table 3 Operationalization of the Faculty Members' Experience**

Concept	Components	Aspects
Faculty experiences	Teaching Experience	Years of teaching at university level at home and abroad.
		The number of courses (sub-fields) taught throughout the career.
		Training on teaching methods.
	Exposure	Education received at home and abroad.
		Number of published articles in national and international journal.
		Participation in seminar and workshop at home and abroad.
	Consultation	Discussion with colleagues in developing curriculum.
		Consultation with professional curriculum developers during curriculum development.
		Discussion with students in curriculum development process.
		Networks with professional bodies and other organization.

*Exposure:* I define exposure of the faculty members by their teaching-learning experience abroad and the number of publications. It includes the aspects of (a) teaching-learning experience of faculty



members outside the country. I assume that this aspect exposes teachers to an international teaching learning environment (b) the number of research publications in national and international journals. This aspect will indicate whether the teacher is exposed to the literature of his or her field.

*Consultation:* I define consultation by the interactions with colleagues, curriculum experts and students and having external networks. It includes the aspects of (a) discussions with the colleagues during curriculum development (b) discussion with professional curriculum experts during curriculum development (c) discussion with students in developing curriculum (d) having networks with professional bodies, research organizations and other external organizations.

### **3.2.3 Operationalization of the Faculty Engagement in Curriculum Development**

In my analytical framework, I use the elements of Academic Plan (AP) provided by Lattuca and Stark (2009) to investigate how the faculty members engage in a curriculum development process. In other words this is about how faculty members make decisions about the various key decision points of the elements of an academic plan. For example, choosing educational goals and objectives is a key decision point of the ‘purposes’, the first element of the academic plan provided by Lattuca and Stark (2009). Faculty members involved in curriculum development process need to take decision about specific knowledge, skills and attitudes to be selected to achieve the purposes of the academic plan. Before defining these key decision points associated with various elements of the academic plan, I will present the definitions of the elements themselves. Later in this section, I will provide the key decision points with their aspects in the table 4. Now the elements of an academic plan are defined below.

*Purpose:* Lattuca and Stark (2009) define purposes as ‘intended outcomes’ of an AP. Instructors want their students to acquire certain skills and develop certain attitude towards the subject matter of instruction, and to this goal, they define the boundaries of knowledge for their students. According to Lattuca and Stark (2009) this process reflects the planner’s academic view or approach.

*Content:* The content of an AP implies the “subject matter” of the course concerned (Lattuca and Stark 2009). In other words, it includes topical elements that constitute the structure of the AP. Content has two sub-dimensions: first, the design of the AP that is done in a way that advances the purpose of the course. The second sub-dimension is the relative emphasis on topics given by faculty members.

*Sequence:* Lattuca and Stark (2009) define sequence as the way of arranging subject matters in an AP. Sequence reflects the assumption of instructors regarding how knowledge is conveyed and learned. For example, historical materials can be arranged chronologically or thematically (or both) depending on the planner’s views.

*Learners:* Successful academic plans generally address specific needs, previous preparation and goals of the students. In other words, a quality plan allows instructor to marshal materials those are suitable for the ability of the learners and accommodates the latter's objectives of enrolling in the course. In this way the 'expectation of the learner' is reflected in the AP, and the AP is designed to accommodate the students based on their capacity to learn the materials provided in the course and their preparation to handle the material at the courses' given level of difficulty.

*Instructional processes:* Lattuca and Stark (2009) include instructional processes as part of an academic plan because 'the method of instruction influences student learning'. Instructional processes include student activities equipped by the instructors as part of the learning process. Instructional process can be divided into two basic styles: instructor focused and student focused. The former style indicates that the instructor uses most of class time in lecturing, while the latter style indicates that most of the class time is filled with student activities such as workshops, discussions, debates, or presentations.

*Instructional resources:* Lattuca and Stark (2009) propose learning materials such as text books and media, and learning setting such as class room and laboratories as instructional resources. For example text books may help instructors in sequencing subject matters. The important question here is whether the instructor makes the teaching materials such as textbooks and media available for the student. Another important matter of instructional resources is instructional setting – e.g. classroom facilities, classroom size. Class size can also help instructors to determine the teaching strategies such as how to discuss, whether the class should be divided into small groups.

*Evaluation:* Usually curriculum is evaluated through the review of a program and the assessment of student outcome in specific courses. As the assessment of student outcome is embedded into the structure of the programme, I focus on two other aspects: evaluation of the AP and evaluation of teaching. The evaluation of the AP can be done both by the instructor and the department, while the evaluation of the faculty member's teaching can be done by herself, by her department, and the students of the course.

*Adjustment:* A successful academic plan incorporates a system of feedback allowing the plan to evolve over time. The feedback process begins with formal and informal evaluations of the plan as well as the instruction based on it. Evaluation of an academic plan helps to know the planners whether the intended outcomes are fulfilled. The process ends with adjustments of the plan by the instructors. In

chapter 2, I mentioned the key decision points associated with each element where decisions need to be taken. I will use the language from the history discipline to define these key decision points.

*Choosing educational goals and objectives (Purposes)* The purposes of learning history is to achieve specific knowledge, skills and attitudes. Decision regarding knowledge can be taken from the perspective of history as canon where students are prepared to reproduce the knowledge or from the perspective of history as social science where students are prepared to produce knowledge and think themselves as historians. Historical skills are not directly related to the job market but they are becoming transferable now a days. However, historical skills include reading, writing, analysis and problem solving based on historical experience. Decision regarding skills is about what kinds of skills are given priority in the curriculum. The attitudes of a curriculum can be characterized by the ability of thinking critically which is consists of the logical foundation, attention to evidence and authenticity. Logical foundation indicates students' thinking about the causation of history in analyzing any historical event. Attention to evidence indicates students' tendency to present an event with evidence. Authenticity is about students' consciousness about the reliability of the evidence. Incorporation of these three dimensions of critical thinking can be considered as decision-making points.

*Selecting subject matter (Content)* The selection of the subject matter can be seen from two dimensions whether it facilitates purposes of the curriculum and how it is selected.

*Organizing content appropriately (Sequence)* The content of the curriculum can be organized chronologically or thematically or both chronologically and thematically.

*Accommodating characteristics, goals and abilities of learners (Learners)* The decisions here is about the reflection of learners' views, needs and abilities. It needs to be decided whether these issues are considered in the curriculum development.

*Developing learning and teaching activities (Instructional processes)* These points are related to the decisions to be taken about the ways of instruction. The subject matter of a curriculum can be delivered various ways. Two common ways of conveying subject matters are – teacher focus instruction and student focus instruction. In the latter way, teachers act like a facilitator rather than controlling the learning process. Interactions between teachers and students happen frequently in the classroom. In the former way students are considered receivers of the subject matters in such a class where teachers control the learning process. Students play a passive role and most of the time learning happens without any interaction between teachers and students. Instruction becomes monologue rather than dialogue.

*Selecting learning materials and technologies (Instructional resources)* These points are about taking decision regarding the learning materials for instances, books, articles etc. and the technologies used to facilitate learning for instance using multimedia projector in the class, providing reading materials online etc.

*Assessing student outcomes as well as learner and teacher satisfaction with the plan (Evaluation)* The decision regarding these points can be characterized by two dimensions – evaluation of the plan and evaluation of the teaching. Individual teacher can evaluate the plan by himself or it can be evaluated by the department. On the other hand, instruction of an individual teacher can be evaluated by the teacher herself, colleagues and students. This is a matter of decision which system will be incorporated into the curriculum.

*Improving both the plan and the planning process (Adjustment)* On the basis of evaluation an academic plan and the teaching method can be adjusted. It is matter of decision about who are responsible for this adjustment and how it is materialized. It may be adjusted by the individual teachers, peers and department. On the other hand in can be a continuous process happen throughout the semester or summative which happen at the end of the semester. I operationalize these decision making points in the table 4 below.

In the first column, I put the concept ‘engagement of the faculty members in curriculum development’, in the second column I list the dimension ‘elements of an academic plan’, in the third column, I list the ‘key decision points, in the fourth column, I list sub-dimension of each point, in the fifth column, I list sub-sub dimension of the points and in sixth column, I list aspects of each point.

**Table 4 Operationalization of the Faculty Members' Engagement in Curriculum Development**

Concept	Elements of an AP	Key decision points	dimensions of the key decision points	Sub-dimensions of the key decisions points	Sub-sub-dimensions of the points	Aspects of the points
Faculty members engagement in curriculum development	Purposes	Choosing educational goals and objectives	Knowledge	Knowledge	History as canon	Reproduction of knowledge
					History as social science	Production of Knowledge
			Attitudes	Critical thinking	Logical foundation	Historical causation
					Attention to evidence	Emphasize on source
	Skills	Practical skills useful for market	Authenticity	Reliability of source		
			Skills (writing, reading, analysis, problem solving)	Kinds of skills are given emphasize		
	Content	Selecting subject matters	Subject matters selected to convey specific knowledge, skills and attitudes	Design	Content that advances the purposes of the course	Relation of content with the purposes
					Selection of content	Ways of content selection
	Sequence	Organizing content appropriately	Arrangement of subject matters and experiences lead to specific outcomes for learners	Arrangement of subject matters and experiences lead to specific outcomes for learners	Arrangement of subject matters and experiences lead to specific outcomes for learners	Chronological or thematic sequencing, or both
	Learners	Accommodating characteristics, goals and abilities of learners	How the plan address a specific group of learners	Addressing a specific group of learners	Expectations of the learners	Incorporation of learners views and needs
					Suitability (capacity and preparation)	Considering the capability of the learners
	Instructional processes	Developing learning and teaching activities	Instructional activities by which learning may be achieved	Center of focus	Instructor focused	Role of teachers in the class
					Student focused	Role of students in the class
	Instructional resources	Selecting learning materials and technologies	The materials and setting to be used in the learning process	The materials and setting to be used in the learning process	Reference materials	Books, articles etc.
					Technology	Multi-media projector, internet etc.
	Evaluation	Assessing student outcome as well as learner and teacher satisfaction with the plan	The strategies used to determine whether decisions about the elements of the academic plan are optimal	Plan	Evaluation system	Department or self, both
				Teaching	Evaluation system	Self, department, peer, students, or combined
	Adjustment	Improving both the plan and planning process	Enhancements to the plan based on experience and evaluation	Enhancements to the plan based on experience and evaluation	Authority	Self, peers, department
Nature					Continuous or summative	

In the above table, I listed possible aspects of each point that are associated with the elements of an academic plan. These aspects help me to prepare the interview guide to get information regarding the engagement of the faculty members in curriculum development.

In sum, in this chapter, I discuss the methodology of this research in section 3.1. In section 3.2, I operationalize three concepts of this study – faculty beliefs, faculty experiences and their engagement in curriculum development. In the sub-section 3.2.1, I operationalize faculty beliefs or understanding of curriculum. I operationalize faculty experiences in the sub-section 3.2.2. In the sub-section 3.2.3, I operationalize the engagement of faculty members in the curriculum development based on the works of Lattuca and Stark (2009). I prepare the interview guide in light of these operationalizations drawn from the literature and the analytical framework. In the analytical framework, I talk about external and internal influences where I argue these influences may also affect curriculum development. I keep them in my framework to make a complete sense. As my study is not primarily focusing on these influences, I do not operationalize them in this chapter. It is also noted that the tables of operationalization are meant as guiding tools for me to understand data and not as mapping everything listed in the tables. For example, I investigate the elements of an academic plan and the key decision points listed in the table 4. I use other columns of this table to see how faculty members differ in their ways of engaging in curriculum development.

## 4. Analysis

In chapter 2, I reviewed literature on curriculum development and developed an analytical framework to investigate how faculty members at the Department of History in the University of Dhaka (DHDU) understand curriculum, how they engage themselves in curriculum development and how their understandings of curriculum and experiences (UCE) influence their curriculum development activities. In chapter 3, I operationalized various concepts to employ them in the analysis. This chapter analyzes the interview data and other official documents to answer the research questions.

The chapter is divided into five sections. Section 4.1 discusses about the curriculum development process at DU, Section 4.2 discusses how individual faculty members play the key role in curriculum development at DHDU. Section 4.3 explores how the faculty members at DHDU understand curriculum. This section answers the first question of the study. Section 4.4 answers second question of how the faculty members engage themselves in curriculum development. It also addresses how faculty member's understandings of curriculum influence their role in curriculum development which is also the first part of the third question of this study. Section 4.5 explores the second part of the third question of how does the faculty experience influence curriculum development.

### 4.1 Curriculum Development Process at DU

Curriculum development at DU can appear both as top-down and bottom-up processes that generally involve three curriculum authorities of the university – Academic Council (AC), Faculty, and Committees of Courses (CC) (see section 1.1 of Chapter 1 and Appendix A for details of these authorities).<sup>14</sup> Starting from AC, the top-down process trickles down to CC through the Faculty. Starting from CC, the bottom-up process goes to AC through the Faculty. In both processes, Faculty acts as an intermediary authority between AC and CC. In this section, I analyze interview data and other official documents to see how these process works at DU.

*Top-down and bottom-up processes:* The process starts when AC, the highest curriculum authority of the university, decides to initiate changes in the existing structure of the curriculum. The Faculty is supposed to comply with the decisions taken by the AC. As the Dean, Faculty of Arts (personal communication, Sadrul Amin, August 2014) informed,

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<sup>14</sup> According to the Order (1973) Committees of Courses (CC) is the curriculum authority at the department level. In reality it is synonymous to Academic Committee of the Department (ACD) as both of them consist of the same members (University of Dhaka, 2004).

The decision regarding introduction of semester system instead of course system was not made by the faculty. We just followed the instructions came from the above and brought changes in the structure of the curriculum.

The term 'above' in the quoted statement indicates the highest curriculum authority AC. Documents found at the office of the Dean also reveal that the decision regarding semester system was taken by the AC. These documents, however, do not suggest anything about why and how AC took this decision. Probably, AC took this decision either considering the opinion of its members or following the proposal that came from outside the University. For example, the members of the AC might have proposed semester system for the Faculty of Arts following the Faculty of Business Studies or the world trend.<sup>15</sup> Or, the AC might have accepted the proposal which came from the University Grant Commission (UGC). Whatever the external influences (UGC or world trend), it must come through the AC and AC must agree upon the proposal before its implementation.

Once the AC agrees to bring changes in the curriculum, the Faculty needs to adapt with this decision. According to Dean of Arts, Faculty decides about structural changes, such as, changes in the duration of the programme, total courses, marks, credits, grades, evaluation system etc. Faculty decides on these issues by consulting all Chairmen of the constituent departments. For example, Dean of Arts invited all Chairmen to a meeting to decide about the structure of the semester system. A committee consists of six faculty members from various departments was formed in this meeting to propose a structure (Resolution, 2006). The Dean of Arts sent the proposed structure to the Chairmen of all departments to get the opinion of the Academic Committee of the Department (ACD) (Letter, 2006). Chairmen of the departments invited all members of the ACD to give their opinion regarding the proposed structure of the semester system. After its approval ACD asked faculty members to fit their curriculum with the proposed structure. A syllabus committee was formed to suggest changes in the existing curriculum. As one of the faculty members that I interviewed, informed,

Before introducing semester system, the Academic Committee of the department (ACD) formed a Syllabus Committee to fix what courses would be taught in which semester, what would be the length of that courses what would be the time frame. The Syllabus Committee also considered whether the department had teachers to teach the courses. Finally, it was approved by the ACD and the proposed curriculum was sent to the Faculty to get approval of the Academic Council (Interviewee 6).

The above statement indicates that the faculty members at DHDU decide collectively to adjust with the structural changes proposed by the Faculty of Arts. They revised the curriculum, i.e. inclusion and exclusion of courses and evaluation system to fit with the structural changes. The ACD as a

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<sup>15</sup> Faculty of Business Studies at DU started semester system many years ago. The AC members from the Faculty of Arts might have followed the system already introduced by the Faculty of Business Studies. It might also have happened that they were influenced by the world universities where semester system exists for a long time.



collective body takes decision regarding curriculum in the name of the Committees of Courses, one of the curriculum authorities in DU (see section 1.2.2 of chapter 1).

Chairmen of the departments sent the decisions of the ACD to the Faculty. One of the letters from the Chairman of DHDU to the Faculty of Arts suggests this process – “Your letter dated 28 November 2006 regarding semester and letter grading has been approved by the ACD on 20 January 2007” (Letter, 2007). In the same letter the department also proposed a list of courses to be taught under the semester system. Considering the opinion that came from all the departments, Faculty of Arts decided to introduce semester system and forwarded it to the AC for approval (personal communication with Dean, Faculty of Arts, August 2014). The AC approved the structure of the semester system and letter grading on 18 February 2007 (Syndicate Resolution, 2007).

The above analysis suggests that curriculum development at DU both as top-down and bottom-up process. Both of these processes become visible when decision regarding structural changes is taken by the AC. The AC asks Faculty to formulate the structure and to get opinion of the departments prior to sending it back to the AC again. Apart from this, the process may also appear as other way around. The ACD of an individual department can also propose changes in the curriculum to the Faculty. If other departments of the Faculty agree upon this proposal, it is sent to the AC for approval. If the AC approves, it comes to the department for implementation through the Faculty (Interviewee 5).

The analysis also reveals that curriculum development may appear as a result of external influences (UGC, World trend). External influences render structural changes in the curriculum through internal authorities. They activate the internal authorities to take initiatives accordingly. It indicates that the external influences may render indirect effect to the curriculum development. I put them in a separate box in my analytical framework (see figure 2).

Analysis in this section also suggests that the faculty members as the members of the AC, play an important role in this highest curriculum authority to change the structure of the programmes offered by DU. Faculty members also play an important role in designing the structure of the curriculum at the Faculty level. They take decision about the changes to be made in the structure of the curriculum in Faculty meeting where all professors and Chairmen of the constituent departments are members. At the department level, it is again the faculty members being the members of the ACD who get the opportunity to comment on the decision taken by the AC and the Faculty. They collectively suggest the courses to be taught at undergraduate and graduate levels considering the structure of the curriculum. Apart from these collective bodies, faculty members also play an important role individually in curriculum development. Assuming this role of the faculty members, I separated them from the internal influences and placed them in relation to curriculum development activities in a separate box. The next section analyzes the data related to this assumption.

## 4.2 Faculty Members: the Key Actors in Developing Curriculum

In this section, I will analyze the role of the faculty members in curriculum development at the department level. One of the interviewees explained how individual faculty members play role in curriculum development.

Those who come after completing their degrees from abroad, normally lead the process. Then a peer group is created who make pressure. If they give proposal to the department, usually Academic Committee forms a committee with relevant people to look into the proposal. They see how far the proposal is justified whether it is of importance in our country, do we really need this course or do our students demand it. It is not necessary that somebody tells something and it is implemented. If we see somebody went abroad and studied the history of Brazil. After his coming back he argues that a Brazilian History course needs to be introduced. It is not so that somebody says something and we respond. We need to scrutinize it by an expert committee and see the relevance with the department and then go through due process (Interviewee 5).

Faculty members, who are interested to propose a new course, usually convince their peers to support her at the ACD. The ACD may form another committee to review this proposal. This interviewee refers it as an expert committee. Usually, senior faculty members become the members of such committee. The decision of the committee is influenced by the student's interest and regional focus of the curriculum. Students become interested in a new course if it has some sort of market value. For example, studying history of China as an emerging economic power and history of Middle East as a most unstable region of the world have some market value since competitive job exams test student's knowledge about such economically and politically important state or region of the world.<sup>16</sup> The committee also considers the regional focus of the curriculum at DHU. Based on local history, such as history of Indian sub-continent or history of South Asia, the focus of the DHU curriculum is extended to global, such as, history of South-east Asia, Far East, Middle East, Europe, USA and Africa depending on the relevance of these regions in the context of Bangladesh. For example, history of Europe is probably included because of its century old connection with Indian sub-continent as colonizer or trader, or because of its political and economic importance in the contemporary world. In this consideration, history of Latin America and probably history of Scandinavia might appear less relevant and is not included to the curriculum of DHU. Another statement of the same interviewee reveals the importance of the role of faculty members in introducing new courses.

Many courses are now taught which were not taught before. The courses, we used to study, were revised to gear up local needs. Perhaps there was a kind of demand during Pakistan and these demands

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<sup>16</sup> Territorial disputes, uranium enrichment, and internal conflicts caused instability, conflicts and civil war in the end earned the reputation of 'most unstable region of the world in 2013' for Middle East (VOV5/VOV online 2014).

were changed during Bangladesh period.<sup>17</sup> For example, a strong pressure was there after liberation war to incorporate the courses like History of Bengal or Bangladesh Studies. There was a kind of thinking at that time that we should give a lot of focus on our own history. For this change somebody has to take initiative (Interviewee 5).

By 'somebody', this interviewee probably refers to the faculty members who must take initiative to include any new course to the curriculum. This statement also reveals that the faculty members may propose to introduce a new course influenced by the socio-cultural contexts. It is, however, not clear how these socio-cultural contexts influence faculty members to propose new courses.

In addition to proposing new courses, individual teachers also play the key role in curriculum development. They apply their own judgment in developing the curriculum. All faculty members that I interviewed agreed that usually nobody interferes with their curriculum development activities. The department, faculty, university authority, UGC or ministry never interferes with this. Inclusions of new ideas, market oriented issues and outcomes of new research totally depend on the course teachers. Based on their statements, it can be argued that developing curriculum internally by the individual teachers is a sign of freedom. A specific example of this freedom can be drawn from the statement of one of the interviewees. She along with her co-teacher revised a course thematically and focused on social evolution, gender perspective etc. After two years, her co-teacher left the course and she got a new co-teacher who previously taught this course. He discarded the thematic organization, social and gender perspective to teach political history chronologically as before (Interviewee 4). Some of the interviewees informed that the individual teachers play a vital role to some extent cent percent in curriculum development. One of them argued that the department is a collective body and most of its functions depend on the activities of individuals. The collective body actually leaves it to the individuals and they have the freedom in developing their own curricula (Interviewee 1).

The findings reported in this section support Shay's (2011) ideas of considering faculty members as key re-contextualizing agents as they play important role in the curriculum formation process. Based on this idea, I placed faculty members in a direct relationship with curriculum development process in my analytical framework separating them from other internal influences (see figure 2). It also places them in a position to make decisions on key decision points that I argued in section 2.2 of chapter 2.

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<sup>17</sup> British left India in 1947 by creating two independent states India and Pakistan. India was formed by mostly Hindu populated regions of British-Indian Empire whereas Pakistan was formed by mostly Muslim populated regions of the North-East and Eastern parts of the Empire. The land, where Bangladesh is located now, joined with Pakistan as a province named East Pakistan. After a long nationalist movement against West Pakistan, the then East Pakistan got independence in 1971 to form the new state Bangladesh.

This section also suggests students as one of the internal influences that play role in the changes of the curriculum. Moreover, socio-cultural influences seem to play role in curriculum change. Both students and socio-cultural influences as proposed by Lattuca and Stark (2009) affect curriculum development through the faculty members. In the next section, I will analyze interview data to address my first research question of how faculty members understand curriculum.

### **4.3 Understandings of Curriculum by the Faculty Members of DHDU**

Previous sections situate curriculum development by the faculty members in a broader context that justify the structure of my analytical framework where I put internal and external influences in separate boxes and place faculty members in a direct relationship with curriculum development process to decide on key decision points. In this section, I will explore how faculty members understand curriculum to answer my first question. It will also help in the next section to explore a portion of my third question of how the understandings of curriculum (UC) by the faculty members influence their engagement in curriculum development.

According to the interview data, the understandings of curriculum by the faculty members of DHDU broadly fall under the product model proposed by several curriculum theorists. The aim of curriculum in this model is to produce ‘close curriculum packages’ that include everything considered important with precise objectives and assessment methods (Rulcher, 1991 cited in Ababio, 2013, p. 286, see chapter 2). To be more specific, curriculum under this model is understood by the faculty members at DHDU both in restricted sense as syllabus and in an extended sense as syllabus. Faculty members at DHDU understand curriculum as syllabus. Within this understanding most interviewees seem to understand curriculum in a restricted sense as syllabus whereas one interviewee understands curriculum as syllabus in its extended sense. Drawing upon the interview data, these understandings of curriculum are presented below.

#### *Curriculum in a restricted sense as syllabus*

Faculty members, who understand curriculum in a restricted sense as syllabus, generally refer curriculum to the syllabus or the course outlines. One of the interviewees argued,

The meaning of the curriculum as syllabus is perhaps true even in the context of Bangladesh. That is why, when people say about the revision of curriculum, they essentially focus on designing the syllabus (Interviewee 5).

This interviewee held many important positions in higher education in Bangladesh. He made this statement probably from his own experiences. It indicates that curriculum is understood as syllabus not only at the DHDU but also in the higher education of Bangladesh. It is, however, not clear from his statement whether he understands syllabus as structure and content of a unit or of a

programme of study. Another faculty member that I interviewed is more specific about her understanding of curriculum. She informed,

I think we consider it as syllabus. We do not single out this syllabus. We assume that syllabus of undergraduate first year to Masters final year is curriculum. A course is a part of a curriculum. I guess this is an accepted concept of curriculum in our department (Interviewee 2).

It seems she understands curriculum as the syllabus of the whole programme. This understanding of curriculum can be referred to the Category B of Fraser and Bosanquet (2006) where they conceptualized curriculum as a program of study consists of multiple units rather than a single unit or course. In line with the above understandings another interviewee argued,

If we want to acquire knowledge on any subject and do not limit the boundary of the knowledge, it becomes unmanageable. Especially, when we teach young people and we do not focus on a particular body of knowledge; they will lose themselves (Interviewee 4).

This statement suggests curriculum as the limitation of knowledge in the form of course outline(s) or syllabus. According to this interviewee curriculum restricts the education. It draws the boundary to education. She critiques this concept of curriculum as it confines education within a boundary but at the same time she admits the necessity of having a syllabus.

This understanding of curriculum can be further interpreted in light of philosophical underpinnings by the Habermas' (1972) technical interest that provides students with a pre-existing unit (subject) outline and programme structure where outcomes of the curriculum can be viewed as tangible products (see section 2.1.1 of chapter 2). This understanding of curriculum is close to the some characteristics of traditional curricula proposed by Barnett et al. (2001), such as 'knowledge-based learning', 'proposition based learning' etc. (p.437). [see section 2.1.1 of chapter 2]

One of the faculty members that I interviewed understands curriculum as syllabus but he seemed to be aware of other elements of the curriculum proposed by Lattuca and Stark (2009). For example, he informed that curriculum is primarily based on syllabus but there should be some other things too, such as, what will be taught and how, should be part of the curriculum. He, however, does not include this element (instructional processes) to his understanding of curriculum (Interviewee 6).

### *Curriculum as syllabus in an extended sense*

Curriculum has an extended meaning at DHDU rather than understanding it as merely a syllabus. One of the faculty members that I interviewed understands curriculum beyond the syllabus. According to this faculty member,

I am conscious about what curriculum means, how many lectures I will deliver on what, what may be given. I think there should be a structure but in some places it can be discussed much more on some issues. For example, I discuss some issues in details where I see the students are interested in or if I see that critical discussion will develop critical mind of the students. In that case I do not see curriculum as a structure. I consider it as humanly constructed or sub-structure (Interviewee 1).

It indicates that this interviewee includes instructional processes to his understanding of curriculum. This statement is somewhat close towards the ‘Academic Plan’ proposed by Lattuca and Stark (2009). It is also evident that this understanding of curriculum is conceptualized by only one faculty member. Hence, it cannot be considered a general understanding of curriculum at DHDU.

In sum, faculty members of DHDU understand curriculum as syllabus or course outlines both in its stricter and extended sense. These content based understandings of curriculum fall under category B, technical interest, traditional curricula and product model of the table 2. It is also noted that understandings of curriculum as structure and content of a unit is not clearly visible. Moreover, no example is found about understandings of curriculum according to category C & D that also include practical interest and emancipator interest, emerging curricula, being as a component of curricula and process model.

This section answered my first question of how faculty members of DHDU understand curriculum. It will help me address the first part of my third question of how the understandings of curriculum by the faculty members influence the ways of their engagement in curriculum development. The next section deals with this question along with my second question of how faculty members engage themselves in curriculum development.

## **4.4 The Engagement of Faculty Members in Curriculum Development**

Section 4.1 of this chapter showed that the curriculum development process is involved with three curriculum authorities and these collective bodies actually leave curriculum development activities to the individual faculty members. It can also take a more continuous and incremental manner driven by internal forces and practices such as faculty’s efforts to update the content and teaching approaches. I will now analyze the data to address my second question of how faculty members engage themselves in curriculum development. I organize the analysis under four sub-headings that are derived from Lattuca and Stark (2009) – the purpose of the curriculum, selecting and organizing content, instructional processes and resources, and evaluation and adjustment procedures. At the same time, I will also explore the first part of my third question how the understandings of curriculum by the faculty members influence their curriculum development activities.

### **4.4.1 Different Purposes of the Curriculum**

All faculty members that I interviewed have some purposes for their curriculum. They usually know the purposes of the curriculum before they engage themselves in curriculum development. One of the interviewees informed,

As a teacher of the department, I am part of the collective body (Academic Committee) where decision is taken regarding the introduction or revision of a new course and its rationales. As I am informed

beforehand, the objectives of the course are clear to me and if I am given responsibility to design a course, I try to keep these objectives in my mind (Interviewee 6).

The above statement indicates that the decision regarding the introduction of new courses or revision of the existing courses is taken in a collective body where individual teachers are members. They come to know the general purposes of the curriculum before they engage themselves in the curriculum development. Analysis of the interview data reveals that some interviewees make the purposes explicit in the instructional processes and they use instructional processes to achieve these purposes. One of the interviewees informed,

I personally keep these purposes in my mind; I am determined that whatever the topics are in the syllabus, I will try to achieve my purposes through teaching. I also let students know the purposes of my curriculum (Interviewee 3).

It reveals the fact that the curriculum at DHDU is not explicit in its purposes. All faculty members that I interviewed seem to keep the purposes in their mind. They do not prepare any written statement of the purposes of their curriculum to let students or other people know about this. I also did not find any written form of curriculum available at the office of DHDU that clearly states the purposes. Moreover, as an insider, I have never seen such written form of purposes. It is also not clear whether purposes of the curriculum are implied or to some extent, are taken for granted. However, interview data reveals that very few faculty members sometimes inform students about the purposes of the curriculum in the class. The data derived from interviews suggest that in general, the interviewees set three purposes of curriculum at DHDU – 1. Preparing students for teaching history 2. Preparing students for job market and 3. Preparing students for historical research. Among these purposes only the first one varies according to the understandings of curriculum by the faculty members. There are variations in the latter two purposes too but these variations do not follow the line of understandings of curriculum.

#### *Preparing students for teaching history*

Faculty members that I interviewed aim to prepare their students for teaching history by ‘disseminating knowledge’ though they differ in using the term. For example, they use ‘giving basic idea about a course’ (Interviewee 5) or ‘giving students a broad idea and then focus on important aspects’ (Interviewee 6) to mean the term ‘disseminating knowledge’. They consider some local contexts in adopting this purpose of their curriculum.

First, they consider the timeframe of the programme before they set this purpose.<sup>18</sup> Considering this context they choose to transmit the knowledge rather than going for any in-depth discussion. One of the interviewees argued,

What we teach is basically may be the tip of the iceberg because in four months time it is not possible to teach very much in-depth or at length but we try to encourage them to study in-depth on their own (Interviewee 5).

It indicates that the faculty members adopt knowledge transmission as the purpose of their curriculum considering the contexts within which curriculum is implemented. Among these contexts the structure of the curriculum is the most referred one. Another context which is also referred by some interviewees and that is the size of the class. According to them, due to a large number of students, it is not possible to go for in-depth discussion in the class.

Capability of the students also appears as one of the contexts considered by the interviewees in adopting knowledge transmission as the purpose of their curriculum. One of them informed,

We need to keep in mind that for some courses we get students with no background in history related to these courses.<sup>19</sup> For example, students come to study European history having no idea about Europe. So we have to start from the scratch even at the university level. It was not the same when we were students. Eighty to ninety percent of the students used to come with an idea about history at their secondary and higher secondary levels. So, now we have to teach them such things that are considered as landmarks in the history of those particular regions (Interviewee 5).

It indicates interviewees consider student's background in history at secondary and higher secondary levels during they select knowledge transmission as the purpose of their curriculum. In addition to disseminating knowledge, one of the interviewees who also understands curriculum as syllabus in an extended sense, emphasizes on bringing intellectual change of the students. This intellectual change occurs when students encounter a body of knowledge that is specifically designed for this purpose. This interviewee argued,

I include some new ideas - power question, subaltern historiography or Edward Said's orientalism into my curriculum to bring intellectual change and familiarize students with the world literature (Interviewee 1).

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<sup>18</sup> During the course system, a course was taught for one year which is now six months in the semester system. Most of the courses have been squeezed to fit with the newly introduced semester system (Interviewee 3). As a result scope to go for in-depth study of the course content also squeezed.

<sup>19</sup> About 20% of refreshers come to DHDU with no background in history (Department of History, 2013a). They get admission through the Faculty of Social Sciences that deals with students of Science and Business background who are interested to study in various disciplines of humanities and social sciences (Faculty of Social Science, 2014). The remaining refreshers come from humanities through the Faculty of Arts on the condition that they studied one or more than one subjects among history, English, Bengali, Economics, Islamic History, Civic, Geography, Logic, Social Welfare and sociology at their higher secondary level (Faculty of Arts, 2014). So refreshers who get into the DHDU may not have background in history.



This interviewee seems to be aware of bringing intellectual changes to the students by disseminating a particular body of knowledge. It indicates that the purposes of curriculum vary according to the understanding of the curriculum by the faculty members. Those who understand curriculum as syllabus seem to prepare students for teaching by disseminating knowledge but the faculty member who understands curriculum as syllabus in an extended sense seems to prepare students for teaching by disseminating knowledge as well as by bringing intellectual change in the students. This purpose of preparing students for teaching history can be considered as reproduction of knowledge. Table 4 in the chapter 3 contains this aspect under the sub-sub dimension ‘history as canon’ as proposed by Shay (2011).

#### *Preparing students for the job market*

Some faculty members that I interviewed consider preparing students for the job market as one of the purposes of their curriculum. For example, one of them designed her course titled “Gender History” keeping in mind that the NGOs (Non Governments Organizations) will be interested to the students of this course. She consciously kept contemporary theories in this course (Interviewee 4). Another interviewee prepares students for the job market by including practical knowledge in his curriculum. He informed,

When I studied European History, Commercial Revolution was not given emphasize but now we are giving emphasis on Commercial Revolution. We teach background of the capitalism, background of banks, money economy, stock market, joint stock companies that are tied up with the Commercial Revolution. Knowledge about these things is needed in the practical world (Interviewee 5).

It indicates that considering market value of the curriculum, this interviewee includes topic that has ‘use value’ (Barnett et al., 2001, p. 436) in the world of work. Some of the faculty members that I interviewed also aim to instill some transferable skills to the students. For example, considering the necessity and the importance of knowing English in the job sectors, most interviewees aim to improve the proficiency of English language of the students. One of them informed,

I try to develop their (students) skill in English. I want them to practice English. I sometimes deliver lecture in English and sometimes in Bengali. I refer English books and insist them to read these (Interviewee 3).

It seems knowing English language is a skill and this interviewee considers this to facilitate the purpose of preparing students for the job market. Some other interviewees seem to consider transferring a group of transferable skills as the purposes of their curriculum. They argued,

Attending class regularly and taking lecture notes develop some skills – listening, comprehending and putting it into writing. These skills are very important no matter the types of professions students will go for. They will have to attend meeting, have to listen, note down and deliver their speech in an

organized way. Class lecture can be a nice training for these skills and it happened automatically if teachers are aware of them (Interviewees 3 & 6).

It indicates that they consider ‘listening, comprehending and putting into writing’ as a group of skills that can be developed through instructional processes. These quoted statements reveal the existence of ‘action domain’ (Barnett et al., 2001) in the form of transferable skills in history curriculum. Table 4 in chapter 3 contains this as ‘skills’. Few interviewees consider developing analytical power and capability of independent thinking of the students as the purposes of their curriculum. They also consider these as transferrable skills that are appropriate for various professions. To develop analytical power one of them asks students to relate cases with the given theories (Interviewee 4). Another interviewee wants students to develop capability of independent thinking by giving them some issues to think and draw a conclusion in their own ways (Interviewee 6). These two purposes – developing analytical power and capability of independent thinking- are those components of curriculum that form the ‘self domain’ of the history curriculum as proposed by Barnett et al. (2001). They argued that these components develop subject specific educational identity such as history students learn to think themselves as critical evaluators.

#### *Preparing students for historical research*

Preparing students for historical research as a purpose of history curriculum is not overt. The contents of the undergraduate curriculum show that the students get some basic ideas about historical research in a course titled ‘Introduction to History’ during their first year. In this course, they learn the importance of sources for historical research, authenticity of sources, cause and effect etc. theoretically (Department of History, 2014a). Few interviewees, who want their students to be researchers, employ their course content and instructional processes to make students understand about how history is constructed and reconstructed based on sources, how to select authentic sources and; how to think about the cause and effect of historical events. Now I analyze how the faculty members attempt to prepare students for the historical research.

*Sources:* The most common way of focusing on sources can be found in the course outlines where course teachers refer students to books, articles etc. Perhaps this approach is common in all disciplines. But the interviewees who want their students to be researchers often talk about sources of the historical events at the beginning of the course. For example, one of them introduces students with the sources at the very beginning of his course (Interviewee 3). Few interviewees include one or more topic regarding historical sources in the content of the curriculum. For example, one of the interviewees (Interviewee 3) kept “Dearth of literary sources leads to our reliance on epigraphic sources; copper plates; how do they help? Coins; resultant characteristics of history” at the beginning

of his course no. 113 titled “History of Bengal up to 1204” (The Department of History, 2014a). These indicate that they want their students to become aware about the sources of history.

*Authenticity of sources:* Faculty members that I interviewed informed that they refer students to many historical sources. Considering internet as one of the very important historical sources some of them encourage students to collect information using internet. They, on the other hand, make students aware about the authenticity of sources collected from the internet. For example, one of them warns students to be aware about the Wikipedia as a source (Interviewee 4). Another interviewee gives students some reliable web links and tells them how to select real information from misinformation and disinformation (Interviewee 6). These indicate their consciousness about the authenticity of sources that they want to develop in their students.

*Cause and effects:* Some of the faculty members that I interviewed seem to be conscious about the importance of cause and effects in historical research. They refer the term ‘historical causation’ (I used in table 4 in chapter 3) to mean ‘cause and effects’ and seem to want their students to be aware of this nature of history as a discipline. As one of them informed, ‘When I teach history of Ideas, I discuss the causes behind nationalism and what were the effects – why these states emerged?’ (Interviewee 1). The reflection of the cause and effect can be also found in the content of the curriculum. For example, course no 121 titled ‘History of the Indian Subcontinent (1206-1707)’ contains ‘Causes of the decline of the Sultanate of Delhi’ and ‘Impact of Muslim rule upon India- social, cultural and religious’ under the topic ‘Overview of the Sultanate Period’ (The Department of History, 2014a).

*Make students curious:* Some interviewees want their students to be curious and they consider curiosity as one of the most important elements that stimulates historical research. One of them informed that her curriculum makes students curious. After her lecture on gender issues, students become curious to know more about how women are treated in the society, why women are subordinate. They want to understand sub-ordination of women and gender inequalities in society (Interviewee 4).

*Seeing events from different perspectives:* Some interviewees argued that seeing events from different perspectives is important for historical research. One of them informed,

I try to tell the students, for example, Mahatma Gandhi, on the one hand, was talking about Hindu Kingdom and emancipation for all, on the other. Could you see any contradiction here? Or, only Muslim League was responsible for communalism? How much was Congress responsible? I try to discuss these issues with the students (Interviewee 1).

In addition to constructing and reconstructing history this interviewee considers ‘seeing events from different perspectives’ as an important aspect of historical research. Based on Lattuca and Stark

(2009) in table 4 in chapter 3, I put historical causation, sources and reliability of sources under the dimension of attitudes assuming that history teachers will aim to develop these as attitudes to the students. The interview data, however, reveals that the interviewees consider these aspects under knowledge dimension which is more close to the aspect ‘production of knowledge’ in the same table. These characteristics of history curriculum can also be interpreted as the components that form ‘knowledge domain’ proposed by the Barnett et al. (2001). Moreover, the analysis reveals two new components of this domain – curiosity and seeing events from different perspectives.

In sum, faculty members engage themselves in formulating the purposes of the curriculum in three ways - *First*, preparing students for teaching history is the most common purpose of the curriculum in DHDU. Interviewees prepare students for teaching history by disseminating knowledge and bringing intellectual change to the students. *Second*, some interviewees instill transferable skills to the students as one of the purposes that prepare students for the job market by developing their analytical power; enabling them to think independently; improving their English language proficiency; and making them capable of listening comprehending, writing and presenting speech in an organized way. *Third*, few interviewee consider preparing students for historical research as one of the purposes. They make students aware of sources; authenticity of sources; cause and effect; curious; and encourage them to see events from different perspectives. Among these purposes only the first one varies according to the understandings of curriculum by the faculty members.

Interviewees seem to keep these purposes of the curriculum in their mind when they develop it. It is not likely that the whole content of the curriculum is selected to achieve the purposes. One of the interviewees informed,

I actually did not make this syllabus following any scientific methods or experiments so that I could know how much of this syllabus reflects these purposes. The department did not even instruct me to do so in this way (Interviewee 3).

It indicates, in addition to the purposes of the curriculum, faculty members consider some other things when they select the content of curriculum. It requires further investigation about how they select the remaining content of the curriculum that apparently less relevant to the purposes. The analysis below focuses on these issues.

#### **4.4.2 Selecting and Organizing Content**

This sub-section addresses the aspect of ‘ways of content selection’ that I put in table 4 in chapter 3. According to the interview data, faculty members select the content of curriculum in four ways - 1. Considering importance of the events 2. Considering the context 3. Consulting curriculum at home and abroad and 4. Consulting with co-teacher and subject experts. Some interviewees, however, combine more than one ways of content selection.

*Considering importance of the events:* Important events in history are the events those are transitional in nature (Interviewee 3) and shape the history of that period. Most faculty members that I interviewed select the content of the curriculum considering the importance of the events and link between them. For example, in the course titled 'History of Far East' one of the interviewees selected topics for the history of China considering their importance in the Chinese history as well as Asian and World history. For instance, he selected 'Taiping Rebellion' as it was the strongest resistance against the Chinese Feudal Lord as well as western powers which lasted for 15 years. He then selected other important events considering links between them (Interviewee 1).

*Considering the contexts:* Some interviewees select the content of the curriculum based on local and world contexts. For example, they consider the capability of the students about how much they can receive (Interviewees 3 & 4). One of the interviewees seems to consider the interest of the students in selecting the content (Interviewee 5). Another interviewee argued that the timeframe of the courses is also important in deciding the volume of content so that teachers can cover all of them within the timeframe (Interviewee 3). Some of the interviewees consider the availability of course materials in selecting the content of the curriculum. In this regard, they refer the reading materials available to the students at the department and university libraries (Interviewees 4 & 5).

In addition to the local contexts mentioned above some interviewees also consider global contexts in selecting the content of the curriculum. For example, one of them informed,

I think, if this curriculum is seen by other universities such as UK or other European universities what they will think about this. I keep in mind about what may be their impression (Interviewee 2).

*Consulting curriculum at home and abroad:* Most interviewees consult with existing curriculum of DHDU as well as curriculum of other universities at home and abroad in selecting content of their own curricula (Interviewees 2, 3, 4).

*Consulting with co-teacher and subject experts:* Most interviewees consult with their co-teachers and other subject experts during curriculum development. One of them argued that consultation with co-teachers is very important for the curriculum making. He thinks that two minds are always better than one (Interviewee 5). Another interviewee informed that consultation with others helps him get different perspectives. He prepares a draft and let them see. He argued that it is not necessary that somebody comments and he accepts but he gets an idea about how other people see it. Then he thinks whether the comments are rational and whether he should incorporate them in the content of the curriculum (Interviewee 6). One of the interviewees consults with his co-teachers and senior teachers who previously taught the same course. He informed,

I always consult with my senior teachers. I never do it without consulting them. I select topics, make sub-sections and let them see. I include and exclude topics according to their suggestions, if I am convinced logically (Interviewee 3).

The above statements indicate that the faculty members consult with the subject experts and senior teachers in selecting the content of the curriculum. It helps them to include or exclude topics to or from the content of their curriculum.

After selecting the content of the curriculum interviewees concentrate on its organization. Now I analyze the interview data to explore how the faculty members organize the content of the curriculum. It addresses the aspect of 'chronological or thematic sequencing or both' of table 4 in chapter 3. According to the interview data, faculty members organize content of the curriculum in two ways – chronologically and thematically.

*Chronological organization:* Most faculty members that I interviewed organize the content chronologically. They argued that the time of the event is as important as the place where it occurs. History is all about chronology. Even if a course is designed thematically it may be sequenced chronologically. For example, one of them integrates chronology within thematic approach. When he teaches history of a country or a region, it may go thematically but he sequences the themes chronologically. He applies chronological approach in a course consists of several themes. He mentioned some themes from his 'Socialist History' course and these are utopian socialism, revolutionary socialism, Marxism. As chronologically utopian came first and Marxism came later, he keeps utopian first and then the Marxism. Moreover, he organizes different variants of a theme chronologically. For example, Bolshevism and Maoism are the different variants of revolutionary socialism. He brings Bolshevism first and then Maoism as the former happened earlier than the later. He argued that as a historian chronology is very important to him because there is a logic why one happened earlier than another. The event happened earlier that was supposed to be happened earlier and did not happen incidentally (Interviewee 6).

*Thematic organization:* Few interviewees organize the content of their curriculum thematically. They consider the structure of the programme, nature of the course and interest of the students in organizing the content thematically.

*First*, some faculty members organize the content of the curriculum to fit with the programme structure. One of them informed,

Shift from the yearly system to semester system squeezed the duration of the course but the content of the curriculum remained the same. As a consequence, teachers went for thematic approach to make it manageable (Interviewee 1).

In line with this reason, another interviewee argued that studying history year by year might require reading many things which are not of that relevance. Thematic approach focuses on important themes rather than dates though dates are there and history is all about dates (Interviewee 5).

*Second*, one of the interviewees sequences the content thematically considering the nature of the courses. For example, he argued that the chronology has nothing to do with purely theoretical courses i. e. ‘Introduction to History’. In such courses he goes logically and organizes the topics hierarchically as it is necessary to understand the previous topic in order to understand the latter. He keeps the topics at the beginning that students need to know before going the next. As he argued, in ‘Introduction to History’, definition of history comes first than different characteristics of history. In this case, logic shall prevail, not chronology (Interviewee 6).

*Third*, one of the interviewees considers the interest of the students in organizing the content of the curriculum. She argued that chronological history does not do justice to the history because social and economic changes do not follow chronology. She thinks that chronological history is the least interesting part of history. She consciously follows thematic approach for the precise reason of making history interesting to the students (Interviewee 4).

It requires further investigation how students encounter content in the classrooms. In other words, what methods faculty members follow in their instructional processes and what resources they use in the classroom.

#### **4.4.3 Choice of Instructional Processes and Resources**

This sub-section analyzes the instructional processes adopted and instructional resources used by the faculty members at DHDU. Faculty members that I interviewed adopt both instructor-focused and student-focused instructional processes. Now I analyze the interview data to explore these two methods of instructional processes.

*Instructor focused teaching:* Most interviewees seem to follow instructor-focused teaching at DHDU. One of them informed,

I encourage students to ask questions but not in the middle of my lecture. I advise them to write down the points where they could not understand and ask me after the lecture. In most classes there is no question (Interviewee 3).

He delivers lecture, students listen and write down. There is limited scope for students to discuss or ask questions in the middle of the lecture. Another interviewee allows students to interrupt in the middle of the lecture if they have any question. He lets them raise their hands and ask questions or contribute something. Students sometimes do it. He also keeps sometime at the end of the class to answer this type of question but not that much (Interviewee 6). These statements indicate that the

teaching at DHDU is still instructor-focused and interviewees acknowledge this in their statements. One of them informed,

I will not say that I follow a modern interactive method. I believe I follow a very traditional method. I am the sole speaker of the class. I do not introduce any radical new method (Interviewee 4).

The analysis of the interview data also reveals the reasons behind this non-interactive method of teaching. These reasons are embedded in the context. All interviewees who follow instructor-focused method identify the structure of the programme and size of the class as the reasons for adopting this method. According to them, in the semester system, the duration of the semester is decreased to six months from one year but the volume of the content remained almost the same. This prevents them to be interactive in the class. Some identifies the huge number of students in the class as the barrier to be interactive. The nature of the students also appears as a reason in this regard. One of the interviewees informed,

The basic nature of the students is withdrawn type. They are not that much comfortable no matter how free the teacher is, still they do not ask questions (Interviewee 5).

According to this interviewee, nature of the students is not suitable for the teachers to become interactive in the class.

*Student-focused teaching:* One of the interviewees seems to follow student-focused teaching method. He welcomes discussion during the lecture. Sometimes he gives students few topics to study and allocates one or two classes only for discussion. For example,

In one or two classes, I let students talk. I tell them that you are the speakers for today and I am the listener (Interviewee 1).

The ways of understanding curriculum in a stricter or extended sense by the faculty members seem to influence their choice of instructional approaches. All interviewees who understand curriculum as syllabus in a stricter sense seem to adopt instructor-focused method of teaching whereas the interviewee, who understands curriculum as syllabus in an extended sense, seems to follow student-focused method of teaching. It also indicates that student-focused teaching is possible despite the structure of the programme, big size of the class and withdrawn type nature of the students. The above analysis addressed the sub-sub dimension 'center of focus' in table 4 in chapter 3. Now I will analyze the interview data to reveal what instructional resources faculty members use to facilitate their instructional processes.

Faculty members that I interviewed use both non-technological and technological instructional resources no matter how they understand curriculum. Most of them seem to use non-technological resources and few of them use technology in addition to non-technological instructional resources.



*Non-technological instructional resources:* Most of the interviewees use books, articles, newspaper, handouts, classical literature, archival documents and white boards. Among these resources most of them mainly use books and whiteboard. A very few of them occasionally use the other instructional resources.

*Technological instructional resources:* In addition to the non-technological instructional resources some interviewees use technologies that include microphone, multimedia and internet. Microphone is the most commonly used technology by the teachers. One of the interviewees informed,

I am not a technology-heavy teacher in this sense that I do not want to take the assistance of computer. A microphone is good enough for me (Interviewee 5).

In addition to microphone, some interviewees use multimedia to show maps and related video clips but all of them use internet and encourage students to use internet. Now I will analyze the interview data to know how curriculum is evaluated at DHDU.

#### **4.4.4 Evaluation Procedures and Adjustment**

This sub-section addresses how curriculum is evaluated at DHDU. The analysis reveals the existence of two ways of evaluations - assessment of the student outcomes and evaluation of the teaching.

*Assessment of the student outcomes:* A few interviewees assess students according to the purposes of the curriculum. They set exam questions to see whether purposes of the curriculum are achieved. For example, one of the interviewees sets the exam questions in a way that requires students to think independently rather than answering them from memory (Interviewee 3). He also assesses students' knowledge on sources through the exam questions. For example, he put a question in the exam "Reconstruct Gopal's coming to power on the basis of the information of the Khalimpur copper plate and Taranatha's account" (The Department of History, 2013b). Another interviewee assesses students' knowledge in historical causation through exam question. For example, he (Interviewee 1) put a question in the exam "Analyze the causes behind the Sino-Japanese War of 1894-95. What were the consequences of this war for China?" (The Department of History, 2014b). These exam questions show the connection between purposes and assessment but it seems that interviewees are not aware about the connection of purposes with the assessment of student outcomes.

*Evaluation of the Teaching:* According to the interview data, faculty members at DHDU experienced two types of teaching evaluation. These are – teaching evaluation by the department and teaching evaluation by the individual faculty members.

*Evaluation by the department:* At the time of conducting this research, there was no teaching evaluation by the department but some of the interviewees experienced it in the past. According to them, it was the only initiative that department took over the past few decades. The ACD decided to conduct this evaluation in all courses of third year undergraduate programme. A committee was formed to make the questionnaire and to conduct the evaluation. At the end of the year, one of the committee members went to the class rooms of all courses and distributed the evaluation forms to the students to fill up instantly and collected them. One of the interviewees informed,

One of my colleagues had entered into my class and I left. They distributed the questionnaires to the students to fill up.... faculty members had to do it manually which was time consuming and tiresome.<sup>20</sup> As a result it was stopped (Interviewee 4).

This statement indicates that the department formally evaluated the teaching and it was stopped due to lack of any permanent set up. This interviewee identified another reason that seems to be a barrier in introducing teaching evaluation. She informed,

I knew from some colleagues of other departments that when they introduced teaching evaluation, some naughty students wrote naughty stuffs in their evaluation forms and that were very undesirable (Interviewee 4).

One of the interviewees argued that the context of the public university is not suitable for introducing teaching evaluation. Here teachers have to deal with students on many occasions outside the class. This system brings forward personal considerations during the evaluation (Interviewee 5).

*Evaluation by the individual faculty members:* A few interviewees formally evaluated their teaching by their own initiatives more than a decade ago. It was happened on two different occasions. First, one of the interviewees along with his some young colleagues proposed to introduce teaching evaluation in the ACD but senior teachers argued that it would create nuisance as student would bring personal considerations and might also comment from a political point of view. The ACD, however, suggested that faculty members can do it voluntarily at individual levels but it would not be mandatory.

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<sup>20</sup> This initiative was taken by the then Chairman of the department. He raised this issue in the Academic Committee and managed to convince all teachers in favor of teaching evaluation. An evaluation committee was formed and this author was member of that committee headed by a senior teacher. Committee prepared a questionnaire and the author was given responsibility to find a way of analyzing the data. He contacted with a faculty member of Institute of Information Technology (IIT) of the same university and made software compatible to the data derived from the questionnaire. He then along with another committee member put the data into the software. Data was presented in pie charts showing the level of satisfaction of the students to the teaching of individual teachers and the report was submitted to the chairman. Inputting data manually was tiresome and time consuming. In the next meeting of the academic committee it was reported and the committee decided to give administrative and other supports to make this job convenient the next time. In the mean time the then Chairman completed his three-year tenure and the new Chairman took over. The evaluation process that was decided to be continued was stopped.

Following this decision, this interviewee along with one of his colleagues started formal evaluation of their teaching individually.<sup>21</sup> As he informed,

That was a wonderful experience. We used to do it at the end of every year and read it. Students evaluated very wonderfully. Whether I was punctual, what was my strength, whether I am able to make them understand, whether I study, what more should I do, whether I should use more equipment, what are my weak points, what are my good/positive points etc. But I stopped it after my colleague had stopped (Interviewee 3).

It indicates that this interviewee found teaching evaluation interesting and useful to his instructional processes. Probably this enthusiasm did not last as other colleagues did not join or it might seem to be tiresome to manage individually.

Another example of formal teaching evaluation by the individual teachers can be drawn from the statement of one interviewee. He informed, some young teachers of the department evaluated their teaching in collaboration with some other young teachers of the Faculty of Social Sciences more than a decade ago. For example, he evaluated his teaching along with 15 faculty members from various departments of Arts and Social Sciences.<sup>22</sup> It was stopped when this interviewee and some other faculty members went abroad for higher studies (Interviewee 1).

Apart from these formal evaluations, one of the interviewees evaluates his teaching informally. As he informed,

Sometimes I want feedback from the students. Some of them give feedbacks in written form. I keep them. If you want I can show you. Sometimes they appreciate and sometimes point out the lacking. They even sometimes make comments about how I should have delivered the lecture for better understanding. These are very interesting (Interviewee 1).

This interviewee evaluates his teaching personally in an informal way by asking students about their opinion on his teaching. He also evaluates the appropriateness of the content of his curriculum informally. For example, he asks students about the content of the curriculum whether any topic should be included or excluded. Students give their opinion verbally. He also asks students who have already graduated with good grades to give their opinion on the curriculum (Interviewee 1). It indicates that he also evaluates his curriculum informally.

This interviewee adjusts the outcomes of these evaluations informally. First, based on informal feedbacks of the students he adjusts his teaching methods accordingly. Second, he also adjusts the

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<sup>21</sup> Here formal evaluation means such evaluation that requires a questionnaire to be filled up by the students whereas in an informal evaluation teachers invite students to comment on their teaching verbally.

<sup>22</sup> The departments of the Faculty of Arts and Faculty of Social Sciences are located in the Arts Building. There is a common place called 'Teachers Lounge' where teachers of both faculties pass their leisure time and have interactions on many issues. This inter-faculty initiative for teaching evaluation was probably derived from these interactions. It is, however, noted that recently some departments of the Faculty of Social Sciences have shifted to newly built Social Sciences Building.

content on the basis of comments he receives from the students. For example, in his course 'History of Ideas' in MA First Semester, globalization is taught as a topic. The same topic was also taught in the MA second semester in the course titled 'Imperialism, Nationalism and Globalization'. He came to know this repetition from the students and dropped this topic from the 'History of Idea' course (Respondent 1). This interviewee understands curriculum in an extended sense as syllabus. It indicates that interviewee who understands curriculum in an extended sense as syllabus at least evaluates teaching and curriculum informally and adjusts accordingly.

To summarize this section, faculty members that I interviewed engage themselves in curriculum development with some purposes in their mind. These are - preparing students for teaching history, preparing students for the job market and preparing students for historical research. They prepare students for teaching history by transmitting knowledge and bringing intellectual change in the students. They instill some transferable skills such as improving English language proficiency, capability of listening, comprehending, writing and presenting, analytical power, independent thinking to the students to prepare them for the job market. They make students aware of historical sources, authenticity of sources, historical causation to prepare them for historical research. They also make students curious and capable of seeing things from different perspectives to achieve this purpose. Some reflection of these purposes is evident to their content of curriculum, instructional processes and assessment of the students.

Interviewees select content of their curriculum considering the importance of the events, capability of students, timeframe of the course, availability of reading materials, consulting with the curriculum at home and abroad, and consulting with co-teacher and subject experts. They organize the content both chronologically and thematically. Most of them adopt instructor-focused methods of teaching while one of them adopts student-focused method of teaching. All interviewees seem to use non-technological instructional resources, such as books, articles etc. while some of them also use technological instructional resources such as internet, multimedia etc. Most of them do not evaluate their teaching and curriculum while one of them evaluates his teaching and curriculum informally and adjust accordingly.

The analysis of the data reveals that faculty member's understandings of curriculum influences their ways of engagement in curriculum development. Faculty members who understand curriculum in its stricter sense as syllabus prepare students for history teaching through transmission of knowledge while faculty member who understands curriculum in its extended sense prepares students for teaching history by bringing intellectual change to them in addition to mere transmission of knowledge. The former types of interviewees seem to follow chronological sequence in organizing the content of their curriculum and instructor-focused teaching methods while the latter seems to follow thematic organization of the content and student-focused teaching methods. Moreover, the latter informally evaluates his teaching and curriculum by the students and adjusts accordingly.

The next section deals with the second part of my third question of how faculty member's teaching and research experiences influence their engagement in curriculum development at DHDU.

## **4.5 The Influence of Faculty Member's Experiences on Curriculum Development**

The previous sections answer the questions of how faculty members understand curriculum, how they engage themselves in its development and how their understandings of curriculum influence their curriculum development activities. This section answers the second part of my third question of how the experiences of faculty members influence their ways of engaging in curriculum development. The section is divided into two sub-sections. In sub-section 4.5.1, I analyze the data to examine how faculty member's teaching experiences and their training on teaching methods influence their curriculum development. In sub-section 4.5.2, I analyze how their research experiences influence their curriculum development activities at DHDU.

### **4.5.1 Influence of Teaching Experience and Training on Curriculum Development**

This sub-section is further divided into two parts. The first part focuses on the influence of teaching experience on curriculum development and the second part focuses on the influence of training on teaching methods on curriculum development.

*Influence of teaching experience on Curriculum Development:* According to the interview data, teaching experience (TE) helps teachers to contextualize curriculum. Experienced teachers are more likely to contextualize curriculum by taking into account the capability of students, their interests, and probable reaction of students to the curriculum and the learning experience of the students. Contextualizing curriculum, in this sense is important for developing an effective curriculum (Fernandes et al., 2012). Now I will analyze interview data to explore how faculty members contextualize curriculum based on their teaching experiences.

*First,* One of the interviewees argued that TE helps faculty members to measure the capability of the students and develop the curriculum accordingly. As she informed,

I consider capability of my students, their age, in which semester they are studying etc. I consider for whom I am making the syllabus (Interviewee 2).

During curriculum development, this interviewee probably thinks how much of the content will students be able to receive.

*Second*, according to some interviewees, faculty members get the opportunity to know the interests of the students over the years. It helps them to develop curriculum based on the interests of the students. One of them informed,

From my long teaching experience, I know that students do not like political history and they become bored out of it. I consciously try to include social movements, social changes in my curriculum. My teaching experience also tells me that students get really bored studying chronological history. That is why I introduced thematic approach in my curriculum (Interviewee 4).

It indicates that the teaching experience helps her to know the interests of the students and develop the content of her curriculum and its organization accordingly.

*Third*, few interviewees argued that the experienced teachers can assume how students will take the curriculum. It helps them to develop curriculum that will be acceptable to the students. For example, one of them argued that the person who never taught, it is difficult for him to guess the reaction of the students but the person having teaching experience for many years, can visualize how the students will receive the curriculum. He can assume whether the curriculum will be student friendly, whether student will understand it, whether they will be interested in it (Interviewee 6).

*Fourth*, some interviewees argued if a teacher teaches a topic for a long time, he gets the opportunity to observe about how students learn. As a consequence, he can improve the response of the students to this topic. For example, one of the interviewees modifies content of the curriculum on the basis of his teaching experience. He focuses one aspect of the topic instead of another aspect and it benefits students and makes it easy to go for analytical approach (Interviewee 3).

*Influence of training on teaching methods on curriculum development*: Faculty members who received training on teaching methods are more likely to be capable of enhancing learning experiences of the students than those who have not received any training on teaching methods. Interview data reveals that the training on teaching methods influences the purposes of the curriculum, instructional processes and attitude of the teachers to the students.

*First*, Training on teaching methods makes faculty members conscious about the purposes of the curriculum. As a result, they keep purposes of the curriculum in their mind when developing curriculum. For example, one of them received training on teaching methods at Institute of Education and Research (IER) of the University of Dhaka. She learnt to introduce topics that would make students curious, that would be appealing to the students and would help them in the job market. She designed her courses titled ‘Gender Studies’ and ‘Arms Resistance Movements’ keeping in mind that students have to be made curious, teaching has to be interesting and students have to have some benefits in the job market (Interviewee 4).

*Second*, Statement of the same interviewee reveals that training on teaching methods affects the instructional processes in various ways. For example, she learnt many techniques from the training that are helpful to make instruction effective to the students. She learnt the importance of visual effect for the students. She shows relevant video clips in her class. She learnt that the attention span of students or any person is very short. So variations have to be introduced to keep students attentive to the lecture. For example, variation of voice, it cannot be monotonous. The lecture has to have different pitches - a high pitch, a middle pitch and a low pitch. She tries to follow these during her lecture. She also learnt to tell interesting anecdotes in the class to give students a short break. Following these techniques she sometimes asks questions to the students, sometimes tell some anecdotes when she feels the subject is too heavy and students are becoming restless. In this way she tries to keep the attention of the students. She was also taught to introduce movements into the class, not to stand in one place or not to stand rigidly. Even if she does not move physically, at least she moves her hands. She argued that these hand gestures and facial expression are very important for visual effect. She tries to apply all of these in her class.

*Third*, Faculty members training on teaching sometime changes the attitude of the teachers towards the students. For example, one of the interviewees informed that he came to know from the training about how to be a good teacher. He used to lose temper but after receiving a training on teaching method, he has overcome this problem. He informed,

If a student does not understand, there may be two causes. One is she may be inattentive or she may feel boring. I now motivate students to be attentive and try to make the lecture interesting instead of loosing temper (Interviewee 1).

It indicates that training on teaching methods influences the instructional processes. It helps teachers to identify the problems of the students and teach accordingly.

#### **4.5.2 Influence of Research Experience on Curriculum Development**

According to the interview data, faculty member's research experiences, such as their research degrees; participation in seminars and workshops; and publications influence their curriculum development activities. Data also suggest that faculty members who have these experiences are more likely to develop their curriculum in different ways than the faculty members who do not have these experiences. Now I analyze how research experiences of the faculty members influence their curriculum development activities.

*Influence of research degrees on curriculum development:* According to the interview data, faculty member's research degrees may have direct and indirect influences on their curriculum development activities. *First*, if PhD or Master thesis of a faculty member is related to a specific course, it will have

a direct impact on the content and instructional processes of curriculum. They select content of the curriculum related to their PhD or Master thesis. For example, one of the interviewees read Foucault for his PhD thesis. After coming back home he included Foucault's Idea of Power in the content of the curriculum of the course titled 'History of Ideas' (Interviewee 1). It supports Rogers (2005) who argued the relationship between scholarship of the faculty members' and the course content. The PhD or Master thesis also influences instructional process of the faculty members as they can deeply discuss a topic related to their research. For example, one of the interviewees wrote his thesis on 'Some Aspects of Bengali Muslims: Social and Political Thought'. It helps her to go in-depth when she teaches history of Bengal. She can go for both extensive and intensive approaches in the class (Interviewee 2). Another interviewee informed that doctoral research enabled him to take students into the depth of a topic. It also enabled him to present thing critically (Interviewee 3).

Second, some interviewees argued that faculty member's research degrees may not have direct influence on any specific course but they somehow influence the curriculum development activities. As one of them argued that through the process of thesis writing, one sharpens her capability and research ability. Writing thesis does not mean only knowing a specific subject deeply. It also trains how to do research, how to think, how to give this thinking a written form. These will have imperceptible reflections on any work in future though it is not always possible to specify what influences what. He gave an example from his own experience. He wrote his PhD thesis on Soviet Historiography. He had to know historiography as a whole for his thesis and it helped him when he designed the Historiography course at DHDU (Interviewee 6).

The interview data also reveals that faculty member's degrees abroad impact curriculum in two ways. *First*, they know the context of that country which influences their teaching if they teach history of that country. As one of the interviewees argued, if a faculty member, for instance, goes to a foreign country to pursue higher studies, she gets the opportunity to know the history and culture of that country from a closer look. On her back home, she can use this experience in curriculum making which is related to the history of that country. She may revise her curriculum on the basis of her experience and may share her practical experience with the students in her classroom teaching (Interviewee 1). *Second*, education abroad provides faculty members with an international community. Living in an international community helps them gather first hand information from the international students of different countries and it influences their teaching related to the history of those countries. For example, during his study in UK, one of the interviewees got the opportunity to interact with his fellows from different countries. One of his fellows was from Japan with whom he talked about Japanese history and came to know many things that are not in the text books. On his back home this information influenced the instructional process of his curriculum. He blends this first hand information with western literature when he teaches history of Far East at DHDU (Interviewee 1).



*Influence of the participation in seminars and workshops:* Interviewees agreed that the faculty member's participation in seminars and workshops gradually improve their knowledge which influences the content of the curriculum. They change the content of the curriculum to accommodate their achieved knowledge. For example, one of them participated to seminars and workshops on post-colonial historiography in UK. He changed the content of his curriculum on the basis of his insights developed through these seminars and workshops (Interviewee 1). It supports Mayhew and Grunwald (2006) who argued that participation in diversity-related workshops and activities influence faculty members incorporate diversity-related materials in their course content. This experience also influences the instructional processes as faculty members can insightfully discuss topics with the students. For example, one of the interviewees informed that participation in seminars and workshops enabled her to present different aspects of an event before the students (Interviewee 2). Another interviewee argued that presenting papers in seminars and workshops improves the quality of teaching because after presentation there is a discussion on the paper. Questions come and presenter needs to answer. Critiques come and presenter needs to defend. In doing so, she can see her shortcomings and gets the opportunity to overcome these. Through this orientation, she develops a habit of talking logically and thinking about the probable reaction of her speech and how she could respond to it. It helps to develop her oral presentation in the classroom (Interviewee 6).

*Influence of research publications:* Some of the interviewees argued that the research publications strengthen analytical power and consolidate the thinking of researchers. Any research work of the faculty members will have an effect on curriculum. It is difficult to relate concretely that what experience influences what but overall the process of research stimulates the innovative and analytical ideas. They also argued that even the entries in Banglapedia and Cultural Survey though not considered as research publications because of their descriptive essay type nature, influence the curriculum. For example, one of them informed that she had to read a lot to write these entries and these readings now help her while she teaches relevant topics (Interviewee 2). Another interviewee also mentioned about his entries in Banglapedia which gave him the opportunity to know many things that finally influences his teaching (Interviewee 3).

In sum, this section suggests that teaching and research experiences influence the content and instructional processes of the curriculum. Teaching experience helps them to measure the capability of students, know interests of the students, know probable reactions of the students and know how students learn. Based on these information and assumptions, faculty members select the content of their curriculum and plan the instructional processes. Training on teaching methods equips faculty members with some techniques that also influence the instructional processes of curriculum. Faculty members know how to make the instructions effective and how to keep students attentive in class. Research experiences also render influences to curriculum development. Faculty members tend to

include new knowledge in the content of their curriculum. They can present different aspects of an event in their instructions. Faculty members staying abroad also influences the content and the instructional processes of curriculum according to their experience.

## 4.6 Chapter Summery

In this section, I summarize the findings derived from the above sections. Section 4.1 suggests curriculum development at DU is both top-down and bottom-up processes that involves three curriculum authorities where faculty members take decision collectively. It also suggests that the external influences may affect the curriculum development at DU but not directly as proposed by Lattuca and Stark (2009). External influences rather affect curriculum development through curriculum authorities, such as, AC, Faculty and CC or ACD. External influences activate curriculum authorities to initiate and accomplish curriculum development activities. The curriculum authorities mainly deal with the structure of the curriculum and they approve the curriculum developed by the individual faculty members.

Section 4.2 shows the key role played by the individual faculty members in curriculum development. Individual faculty members enjoy freedom in developing curriculum within the structure fixed by the collective bodies. It supports my assumptions that the faculty members are the key actors who play vital role in curriculum development.

Section 4.3 suggests that the faculty members that I interviewed understand curriculum as syllabus in both stricter and extended sense. These understandings of curriculum broadly fall under product model, traditional curricula (Barnett et al., 2001), Technical interest (Habermas, 1972) and Category B of Fraser and Bosanquet (2006).

Section 4.4 suggests that the curriculum development activities of the faculty members at DHDU, to some extent, comply with the 'academic plan' proposed by Lattuca and Stark (2009). They have purposes of curriculum in their mind and they select part of the content and employ their instructional processes to achieve some of these purposes. It indicates the relationship of the purposes with the content and instructional processes of the curriculum. But they do not make these purposes explicit in a written form. They select the content of the curriculum considering some contextual factors such as structure of the curriculum, nature of the discipline, interests of the students etc. Faculty members that I interviewed, mostly organize the content of the curriculum chronologically than thematically. Most of them follow instructor focused teaching methods while only one interviewee follows student-focused instructional method. Faculty members use both technological and not technological instructional resources . Most of them do not evaluate their teaching and curriculum by the students and therefore the adjustment in their curriculum is not evident. Only one of them evaluates his teaching and curriculum informally and adjusts accordingly. This section also

suggests that the curriculum development activities, to some extent, vary according to the understandings of curriculum by the faculty members. Faculty member who understands curriculum as syllabus in its extended sense differs in the ways of approaching to the purposes of curriculum. He also follows student-focused instructional process and evaluates his teaching and curriculum informally. It helps him to adjust the teaching and curriculum accordingly.

Section 4.5 suggests that the teaching and research experiences of the faculty members influence the content and instructional processes of the curriculum. Faculty members who have long teaching experience can contextualize curriculum effectively. They select content of the curriculum according to the interests of the students. The training of teaching methods seems to improve the quality of teaching. Faculty members research experience (RE) also impact the content and instructional processes of the curriculum. It has direct impact on these two elements of the curriculum if the courses are related to the RE of the faculty members.

## **5. Discussion and Conclusion**

In this chapter, I summarize the main findings of this study in relation to the research questions of how faculty members understand curriculum, how they engage themselves in curriculum development, and how the understandings of curriculum and experiences (UCE) influence curriculum development. Here, I also reflect back on the literature and the analytical framework as presented in chapter 2 and discuss the way by which this research project contributes to the broader literature on curriculum development. I also present some of the strengths and weaknesses of the Department of History in the University of Dhaka (DHDU) with regard to curriculum development. The chapter ends with some concluding remarks and suggestions for the future curriculum development in DHDU and other soft pure disciplines in higher education in Bangladesh.

### **5.1 Main Findings of the Study**

One major finding of this study is that in common understanding the term ‘curriculum’ is often equated with the idea of syllabus. Faculty members at DHDU who were interviewed for this study revealed this tendency. They use the term ‘course outline’ to refer to syllabus. The analysis showed that the faculty members at DHDU generally understand curriculum in a rather restricted sense as syllabus, without including other elements of the academic plan although in some cases they include instructional processes as part of the curriculum and understand it in an extended sense as syllabus.

The curriculum serves specific purposes for faculty members. The major purposes of history curriculum include preparing students for teaching history, for doing research in history and for the job market. The various purposes activate different relationships which potentially can lead to different considerations about content and assessment of student learning. I will discuss these relationships later in this chapter in the context of faculty engagement in curriculum development (see pages 73-74). Faculty members mostly organize the content chronologically as opposed to thematically. Instructor-focused teaching method is predominant in the history curriculum rather than student-focused teaching methods. Faculty members at DHDU, also consider the interest of the learners during curriculum development. They use both technological and non-technological instructional resources. The use of technological instructional resources is mostly found in the instructions of comparatively junior faculty members. Faculty members evaluate the curriculum through student assessment following the structure determined by the Faculty. There is no formal teaching and curriculum evaluation exists in

the DHDU. They rarely evaluate, although informally, their teaching as well as curriculum. In such cases, the results of the evaluation do help modify teaching and curriculum.

Faculty members' understandings of curriculum seem to be related to the ways of their engagement in curriculum development. The understandings of curriculum seem to be related to the purposes, organization of the content, instructional processes, evaluation and adjustment of the curriculum. Faculty members who understand curriculum in a restricted sense as syllabus seem to prepare students for teaching history. They attempt to achieve this goal through transmitting the knowledge to the students. Faculty members, who understand curriculum in a more extended sense, seem to prepare students for teaching history not only by transmitting knowledge but also by bringing intellectual change in the students. The former type of understanding curriculum leads faculty members to organize the content chronologically while the latter type of understanding leads to adopt thematic organization of the content. Faculty members, who understand curriculum as implying the former type, seem to adopt instructor-focused teaching methods whereas the latter type of understanding may lead faculty members to adopt student-focused teaching methods. Moreover, the former understanding of curriculum does not lead faculty members to evaluate their teaching and curriculum whereas the latter understanding may lead faculty members to evaluate their teaching and curriculum informally and adjust accordingly.

The analysis also showed how faculty members' teaching and research experience may influence their ways of engaging in curriculum development. Teaching experience helps faculty members to take local contexts into consideration during curriculum development. Experienced teachers are more likely to take into account the capability of the students, their interests and probable reaction to the curriculum. They are also more likely to enhance learning experience of the students by presenting different perspectives on a topic. Faculty members' training on teaching methods seems to significantly influence their ways of engaging in curriculum development. Faculty members having training on teaching methods are more likely to be conscious about the purposes of curriculum. They are likely to select the content of the curriculum considering the job market. Training on teaching methods also significantly influences the instructional processes of the faculty members. They know the techniques to make their instructions effective.

Faculty members' research experience, such as, having a PhD and other research degrees and research publications, and participation in seminar and workshop influence the content and the instructional processes of the curriculum. They tend to select the content of the curriculum in relation to their research experiences and this allows them to go for in-depth discussion in the classrooms. In addition, as the research training sharpens one's intellectual capability, it has an imperceptible influence on curriculum development no matter whether they are related to the courses or not. Faculty members' education abroad may also influence the curriculum development in an interesting way. Staying in an international community provides them with the opportunity to know the history and

culture of different nations from different perspectives. After coming back home they blend their experience with existing literature which ultimately influences the instructional processes of the curriculum.

## **5.2 Understanding the Findings in Light of Literature and Analytical Framework**

The major findings of the study discussed above, suggest that the faculty members understand curriculum as syllabus. They engage themselves in curriculum development with some purposes in mind. Some other elements of curriculum are also seemed to be addressed by the faculty members though these are not included in their understanding of curriculum. Their understandings of curriculum and the experiences (UCE) seem to influence various elements of the curriculum. These findings addressed the two lower boxes of the analytical framework presented in chapter 2 about understandings of curriculum and the experiences (UCE) of the faculty members, and curriculum development by the faculty members. The findings also addressed the relationships between these two boxes that I indicated by using a straight line. The two upper boxes of the analytical framework indicate internal influences and external influences assuming that these influences may render indirect effect on curriculum development. This section also briefly discusses these influences to understand the findings of the study.

*Understandings of curriculum by the faculty members:* The faculty members at DHDU understand curriculum as syllabus or course outline of multiple units. This understanding of curriculum falls under the category B proposed by Fraser and Bosanquet (2006). According to this category, curriculum is understood as a program of study consisting of multiple units or courses. This understanding of curriculum can be interpreted as ‘technical interest’ proposed by Habermas (1972) as this interest provides students with pre-existing course outline and program structure that includes specific objectives and outcomes. This can also be interpreted by the traditional curricula proposed by Barnett et al. (2001). Traditional curricula develop disciplinary skills through knowledge transmission (content) and emphasize on written assessment of the students. Above understandings of curriculum broadly falls under product model in a sense that this model produces ‘close curriculum packages’ that include everything considered important with precise objectives and assessment methods (Ababio 2013, p. 286). Faculty members of DHDU, however, do not include objectives and assessment methods as parts of their understanding curriculum though they have purposes of curriculum in their mind and the assessment methods exists in the structure of curriculum determined by the Faculty.

Overall, the understanding of curriculum mostly complies with the upper half of the table 2 that includes categories A and B, technical interest, traditional curricula and product model. The

lower half of the table that includes categories C and D, practical interest, emerging curricula, emancipatory interest, forming being and process model seem to be absent in the understanding of curriculum by the faculty members at DHDU. It is noted that this division of understanding curriculum does not indicate dichotomous positions. A clear line of demarcation cannot be drawn between upper and lower portions of the table 2 because analysis of the interview data regarding curriculum development reveals the presence of some characteristics that are associated with the lower half of the table.

What, then, can be possible reasons for the rather restricted notions of the curriculum among faculty members at DHDU? *First*, the evolution of history as a discipline takes place differently in different parts of the world. In the context of South Africa, Shay (2011) identified three periods of evolution – History as Canon Curricula, History as Social Science Curricula and History for the Market. In her empirical study she focuses on former two periods. The History as Canon Curricula that focuses on the canon of knowledge (key historical events or the content) to produce history teachers is embedded into the traditional historiography of early nineteenth century and was devoted to construct an accurate account of the past. History of Social Science Curricula that focuses on knowledge production to produce historians is embedded in the historiography of early twentieth century and was devoted to the process of knowledge production. It can be argued that the history in the context of Bangladesh primarily remain in the period of History as Canon Curricula as the main focus of teaching history at undergraduate level is to transmit knowledge. This is why the understanding of curriculum as syllabus is still dominant at DHDU. It is, however, noted that few characteristics of History as Social Science Curricula and even of History for the Market are evident in the context of Bangladesh but they are yet to prevail over History as Canon Curricula. *Second*, faculty members at DHDU lack pedagogical training and therefore are less familiar with the curriculum literature. As a result, they are not informed about various curriculum concepts such as product and process models, traditional and emerging curricula, and technical, practical and emancipatory interests of the curricula. This can be considered as one of the reasons for understanding curriculum only as syllabus. *Third*, history as a soft pure discipline (Biglan 1972) heavily weighted in its knowledge domain (Barnett et al. 2001) and because of this nature of the discipline, faculty members might understand curriculum as syllabus.

*Faculty engagement in curriculum development:* The findings showed that the faculty members differed in their ways of engaging in curriculum development and their forms of engagement seemed related to how they understood the purposes of their courses. To discuss this further, I will bring in Barnett et al. (2001) concepts of knowledge, action and self domains.

Faculty members who aim to prepare students for teaching history emphasize on historical knowledge and transmit basic knowledge to the students. Faculty members who aim to prepare students for historical research emphasize on developing disciplinary skills, such as sources,

authenticity of sources and historical causation through transmission of Knowledge. Both purposes – preparing students for teaching history and preparing students for historical research – concentrate on the knowledge domain of the model proposed by Barnett et al. (2001) as they emphasize on transmitting historical knowledge and developing disciplinary skills. This domain seems to be heavily weighted and it characterizes the curriculum of DHDU as traditional curricula because traditional curricula emphasize on ‘knowing that’, ‘disciplinary skills’ ‘knowledge-based’, and pure (Barnett et al., 2001, p. 437). Some characteristics that form the action domain as well as self domain are also found in the history curriculum.

Faculty members who prepare students for the job market seem to emphasize on developing transferable skills to the students. Among these skills, developing English Language proficiency, computer literacy, and reading, writing and oral presentation skills are prominent ones. It indicates the presence of action domain in history curriculum. It also indicates an initial shift towards emerging curricula from traditional curricula because emerging curricula emphasize on ‘knowing how’, ‘transferable skills’, ‘task-based’ and ‘applied’ (Barnett et al., 2001, p. 437) . These characteristics of curriculum also comply with the practical interest of Habermas (1972) as it enables students to take appropriate action.

Very few characteristics of self domain are also found in the curriculum developed by the faculty members at DHDU. Some faculty members aim to develop analytical power and capability of independent thinking of the students. These purposes of the curriculum develop subject specific educational identity such as history students learn to think themselves as critical evaluators. It indicates the existence of components that form ‘self domain’ of the model proposed by Barnett et al. (2001). These characteristics of curriculum can also be interpreted with an emancipatory interest (Habermas 1972) as this curriculum focuses on the emancipation of the students through becoming critical learners by developing dialogic relationship between the teacher and students (see sub-section 2.1.1 of chapter 2). To some extent, a sign of forming ‘being’ (Barnett, 2009) is found in the history curriculum because students become critical evaluators through knowing endeavors (disposition) and authentic appropriation of knowledge (quality) [see sub-section 2.1.1 of chapter 2 for disposition and quality]. The analytical power and capability of independent thinking are developed through a process of interaction where teachers act as facilitators encouraging conversations with and among the students which is also a characteristic of process model (see sub-section 2.1.1 of chapter 2).

The above discussion suggests that curriculum at DHDU is heavily weighted in its knowledge domain. But recently some components of curriculum that form the ‘action’ domains are also found at DHDU. These two domains provide students with knowledge and skills. Barnett (2009) argued that only knowledge and skills are insufficient to live amid the supercomplexity of the world. A third component is needed and that is ‘being’. History curricula seem to form ‘being’ through its self domain though not yet clearly evident.



Changes within the knowledge, action and self domains are also evident in history curricula. The undergraduate as well as graduate curriculum is moving towards socio-cultural history from political history. History curriculum is now focusing on other classes of the society. For example, new courses, such as Gender History has been included to the history curriculum at DHDU. It indicates the changes in knowledge domain. Action domain is also experiencing changes in DHDU curriculum. In addition to traditional reading and writing skills, English language proficiency and computer literacy are being given emphasis in this curriculum. The self domain is still in its forming stage though few components of this domain are being visible. Changes in this domain are not yet clear.

When we relate the findings to the overall framework of the academic plan (Lattuca and Stark, 2009), we see that among the eight elements only the content of the curriculum is given emphasis during curriculum development at DHDU. The possible reason for doing this in such way can be the understanding of curriculum as 'syllabus'. This content based understanding of curriculum leads faculty members to concentrate on the content of the curriculum during curriculum development. They also consider some other elements of the academic plan but not as the part of curriculum. As a result, connections between purpose, content, evaluation and adjustment are not clearly found. Moreover, one of the aspects of evaluation is absent in the curriculum at DHDU. For example, no teaching evaluation exists as part of the curriculum.

What, then, can be possible reasons for not introducing teaching evaluation at DHDU? The context in which this curriculum is implemented plays an important role in this regard. One of the major contextual factors is the assumption, especially, among the senior teachers. They assume that political affiliation of teachers and students would negatively influence the evaluation system. Students would bring personal considerations when they evaluate teachers as maturity of the students has not been reached to such a level that they can give an objective and unbiased report on their teachers. Students may easily swayed by personal considerations. If they (students) do not like a teacher for any other reason they may rank that teacher very poor and may even lie. The fear of indecent comments from the students is also a reason for not introducing evaluation system at DHDU. Some teachers of the department though not experienced this personally, heard from their colleagues of other departments where the evaluation system was introduced and some students were not decent in their comments. Another contextual factor can be the governance of public universities which is not suitable for introducing evaluation system. For example, the collegial decision making system at DU lets faculty members decide according to their assumption regarding teaching evaluation. The contextual differences between public and private universities play an important role in taking decision regarding teaching evaluation. Students at the private universities do not have any other stake with the teachers. That is why there is no reason for the students to go against the teacher at personal

level.<sup>23</sup> The lack of technical and administrative support is also a reason for not introducing the evaluation system at DHDU. Analysis of the interview data revealed that the DHDU introduced the teaching evaluation once, where two faculty members were responsible to collect the evaluation forms from the students of all courses and to insert the data manually into computer for getting the report. In addition to the teaching and research, this responsibility appeared as a tiresome job to them. As a result, the evaluation process was stopped.

*Influence of UCE on curriculum development:* The autonomous status of the University of Dhaka places its faculty members in a position to develop their own curricula. As a result, the understandings of curriculum by the faculty members and their teaching and research experience significantly influences their ways of curriculum development. Moreover, faculty members may experience a different curriculum abroad and this may lead them to rethink about their own. For example, at DHDU, teaching of a course is shared by two teachers. They teach simultaneously, one starting from the beginning and another from the middle of the course content. As the content of most courses are organized chronologically, students and teachers face problem in experiencing these courses. Students are supposed to read Mughal period before they finish Sultanate period or they are supposed to read July Revolution (French Revolution of 1830) before they finish French Revolution (1789-1799). Moreover, students have to attend classes for many courses simultaneously and appear in the exams for all courses at the end of the semester. This system also engages faculty members in teaching and assessment of the students for the period of whole semester leaving no room for research. This author shared his experience from the University of Oslo (UiO) with some of his colleagues. In Higher Education programme at UiO, courses are divided into units. Instructions are given unit after unit. As a result, students do not have to concentrate on multiple units at a time. Students even do not have to concentrate on multiple courses at a time. Moreover, students appear in the exams just after they finish a course. Faculty members also benefit from this system as they become free from teaching and assessment after few rigorous weeks of work. The author found some of his colleagues very encouraging to this system as it seems to be useful in addressing the problems that the students and

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<sup>23</sup> The absence of teacher's and student's politics in private universities, and their non-residential nature provide suitable environment for teaching evaluation. The scenario of public universities is completely different. Several student wings are at play in the public universities. Teachers are also affiliated with different political ideologies. Moreover, they are involved with extra-curricular activities and some administrative duties in the students' dormitory where they have to deal with the students from a close range. As a result, personal like or dislike for the teacher is created and that may reflect on the evaluation system. Because of these contextual factors, teachers of public universities are reluctant to introduce teaching evaluation. They however, as part-time teachers in the private universities go under teaching evaluation. The top-down governance in private university is also suitable for introducing teaching evaluation whereas bottom-up collegial governance in public universities gives faculty members the authority to decide on their own. It gives them the opportunity to consider the contextual factors in this regard.

teacher are facing now at DHDU. If this idea gains ground at DHDU, it may influence the curriculum development of the department.

*External and internal influences on curriculum development:* In the two upper boxes of my analytical framework, I put university mission, resources, governance, discipline and students' characteristics as internal influences while market forces, government, accrediting agencies and disciplinary associations as external influences assuming their indirect influence on curriculum development. The findings of this study suggest that the external influences do not play direct role in curriculum development. They rather render curriculum change through curriculum authorities of the university where faculty members decide collectively. For example, any proposal from the University Grants Commission or the government must come through the Academic Council, Faculty and the Academic Committee of the Department before implementation. Some internal influences, however, may directly affect instructional processes of curriculum. For example, the huge number of students in the classrooms compels faculty members to adopt instructor-focused teaching methods.

The freedom of the faculty members in curriculum development and the lack of general regulations in the department allow faculty members to develop their own curricula without any interference. As a consequence, understanding of curriculum by the faculty members and their experiences play an important role during curriculum development. Moreover, students as one of the internal influences also affect the curriculum development process. As seen in the analysis, faculty members consider the capability and interest of the students during content selection and its organization. As seen in the text above assumptions about students' characteristics also play an important role for not introducing teaching evaluation at DHDU. So it can be argued that the curriculum development in a university with autonomous status is not directly affected by external influences but by the internal influences.

### **5.3 Strengths and Weaknesses**

The Department of History in the University of Dhaka has both strengths and weaknesses with regard to curriculum development. The strengths of the department include faculty members' freedom in curriculum development, a group of young teachers who are ready to welcome change, consultation among colleagues, and the foreign exposure of the faculty members. The department has the authority to develop its own curricula according to the University Order (1973). It allows the department to leave the curriculum development activities to the individual faculty members. Faculty members enjoy a substantial amount of freedom in curriculum development and generally nobody interferes with their work. As a result, faculty members have the scope to introduce new concepts of curriculum development in the department even if the rest of the university follow the traditional one. Faculty members consult with their peers and colleagues during curriculum development. It helps them to

incorporate different perspectives in their curriculum. If the department takes initiatives, they can also involve students, job recruiters and other stakeholders with the curriculum development.

The department has a group of young faculty members who are enthusiastic to bring changes in the curriculum to meet the demands of society. For example, some of the young faculty members proposed in the Academic Committee of the Department (ACD) to introduce teaching evaluation at DHDU. They started to evaluate their teaching by themselves after rejection of their proposal. It indicates their willingness to change the existing curriculum at DHDU. Another strength of the department can be its widely experienced faculty members. Approximately two-third of the faculty members has the experience of staying abroad for their higher studies. Most of them acquired higher degrees from reputed western universities. It provides them with the experience of different curriculum and the experience of staying in an international community. They are informed about contemporary societal development and needs. The department can utilize their experience in an organized way.

Apart from these strengths, some weaknesses are also found at DHDU that include academic inertia, absence of organized initiatives by the department and the lack of pedagogical training. These weaknesses appear as challenges towards an organized way of curriculum development. Academic inertia seems to be a barrier for curriculum change. Some of the senior faculties of the department often prefer to stay with the traditional curriculum. As a result, any initiative towards curriculum change has to face academic inertia . In addition, faculty members at DHDU do not involve students and other stakeholders of the curriculum to their curriculum development process. The department hardly takes any initiative in this regard. Thus, curriculum at DHDU is developed without involving the students, professional bodies and job providers. Curriculum development activities also lack the expertise from professional curriculum developers. Moreover, faculty members rarely receive any training on teaching methods. As a consequence, they follow the traditional way of delivering lecture to the students. They are less conscious about the purposes of curriculum and most of them adopt instructor-focused teaching methods.

The study reveals faculty members as 'key actors' in curriculum development at DHDU. Thus, their conceptions of the curriculum and their experiences seem to be significant for how they engage in curriculum development. Faculty members at DHDU understand curriculum mainly as syllabus. Thus, the curriculum development in history is centered to the content of the curriculum. It also seems to be a barrier for developing curriculum as an academic plan as proposed by Lattuca and Stark (2009). This study also suggests that in a university with an autonomous status, faculty members' understandings of curriculum and experiences significantly influence the ways of their curriculum development work.

The study may have implications that are broader than its current scope. Faculty members at DHDU will be directly benefited from this study. It will help them come out from the content based

understanding of curriculum and develop curriculum as an academic plan. Other soft-pure disciplines of DU may also find this study useful in developing their curricula because DHDU does not exist in isolation – it reflects the general trends and culture of its counterparts in the Faculty of Arts and the Faculty of Social Sciences. The History Departments of other public universities in Bangladesh such as Rajshahi University, University of Chittagong, Jahangirnagar University and Jagannath University may also be able to use the findings of this study in developing their curricula. Soft-pure disciplines in higher education institutions in Bangladesh, in general, may also be benefited from this study. The finding of this study also can contribute to the field of curriculum development in higher education more generally.

In line with previous studies, this research also found faculty's understandings of curriculum and experiences (UCE) significantly influence the curriculum development in higher education. Faculty's UCE can play a more crucial role in curriculum development in the context of Bangladesh since higher education institutions as well as their faculty members enjoy sufficient autonomy in developing their own curricula. Thus, the study underlines the importance of stimulating wider and varied pedagogical experiences among faculty members to support fruitful curriculum development for future.

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### **Personal Communication**

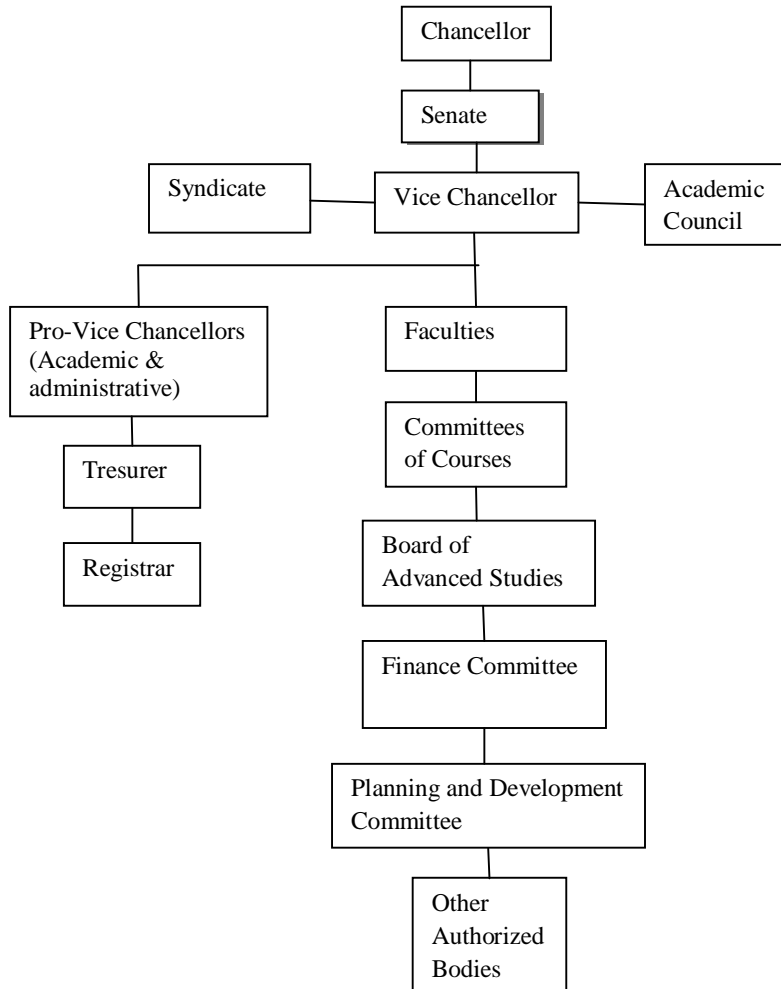
A. K. Manwar Uddin Ahmed, Professor of Economics and former Dean, Faculty of Social sciences, University of Dhaka. September 2014.

Sharif Ullah Bhuiyan, Professor & Chairman, Department of History, University of Dhaka August 2014.

Sadrul Amin Dean, Faculty of Arts, University of Dhaka , August 2014.

# Appendixes

## Appendix A: Organizational Structure of the University of Dhaka



**Chancellor:** According to the University Order, the President of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh is the Chancellor of the university (University of Dhaka 2004, pp. 8-9).<sup>24</sup> Apart from recruiting the Vice-Chancellor from a panel of three persons nominated by the senate, presiding over the convocation, dealing with the appeals for justice or mercy from the university personnel and settling some occasional cases of controversy regarding the appointment of teachers and officers, the Chancellor is not empowered to interfere in the

<sup>24</sup> University of Dhaka (2004). *University of Dhaka: The Calendar, Part I, President’s Order No. 11 of 1973, The Dhaka University Order 1973 with subsequent amendments*. Dhaka: University of Dhaka.

university affairs (Ahmed A. Jamal,1993).<sup>25</sup> Thus, the position of Chancellor is rather symbolic and honorary.

**Senate:** The Senate is the highest legislative authority of the university consists of 105 elected and nominated members. One of the most important functions of the Senate is to nominate three persons for the post of Vice-Chancellor to be considered by the Chancellor (The Dhaka University 1997, p. 19).<sup>26</sup> This system of nominating the candidates for the post of Vice-Chancellor is a sign of compromise between university autonomy and state authority. Senate restricts government's option to choose the Vice-Chancellor from a limited number of candidates. Government, on the other hand, retains its control over the appointment in two ways – (1) by influencing the nomination of the candidates through the nominees of the government and the Chancellor, and (b) by selecting a more acceptable person from the panel proposed by the Senate (Jamal, A. A. 1993). According to the University Order, Senate also approves the budget of the university and ratifies the statutes on the proposals of the syndicate (The University of Dhaka 2004, p. 14). Though all authorities of the university are technically accountable to the Senate, such accountability is rather formal and Senate does not have any mechanism to watch over the execution of its decisions (Jamal, A. A. 1993).

**Vice-Chancellor:** The Vice-Chancellor is the fulltime principal executive and academic officer of the University. He exercises the real executive power as prescribed by the University Order. Though Vice-Chancellor convenes and presides over the meeting of syndicate, senate, and academic council, he is also accountable to these three authorities (The Dhaka University 1997, p. 9). Moreover, if the members of these authorities are driven by the different interest groups than that of Vice-Chancellor, he has to face problem running the university smoothly. He is also accountable to the Chancellor for his deeds and to the University Grants Commission (UGC) for financial matters.

**Syndicate:** The syndicate is the most powerful executive authority of the University that consists of 18 members. The Vice-Chancellor and two Pro-Vice Chancellors are ex-officio members of the Syndicate. The remaining 6 members are elected by the teachers among themselves, 3 members are nominated by the Senate, 3 by the Chancellor, 2 by the Academic Council and 1 by the government. The Syndicate regulates and determines all matters concerning the University in accordance to Order, Statutes and Ordinances (The Dhaka University 1997, p. 18). Such mixture of elected and nominated members indicates the compromise between the university autonomy and state control. Though teachers members of the syndicate are instrumental in taking decisions, government can exercise its control through nominated members as well as the ex-officio members (Jamal A. A. 1993).

**Academic Council:** The Academic Council is the supreme authority with regards to the academic affairs of the University. It is the largest among all authorities of the university

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<sup>25</sup> Ahmed A. Jamal (1993). *Corporate Public Accountability: A Case Study of Dhaka University*. Unpublished report submitted to Asia Foundation Bangladesh.

<sup>26</sup> University of Dhaka (1997). *The Calendar Part II, Dhaka University Ordinances & Regulations as amended up to September 1997*. Dhaka: University of Dhaka.

consists all professors and some ex-officios, nominated and elected members. It is responsible for maintenance of instruction, education and examination of the University. It has the right to advise the Syndicate on any academic matters (The Dhaka University 1997, p. 18). Syndicate, on the other hand, reserves the power to ratify the resolutions of the Academic Council. In reality, it becomes a formality to have approval from the Academic Council. Sometimes departments implement their curricula right away and have approval from the Academic Council later. Moreover, environment of the Academic Council is not suitable for any in-depth discussion because of its hundreds of members with hundreds of agendas. It basically checks whether the title of the courses and their content fit with the nature of the discipline.<sup>27</sup>

**Pro-Vice-Chancellors:** Pro-Vice-Chancellors are appointed by the Chancellor. The Pro-Vice-Chancellors are ex-officio members of all three authorities described above. Until recently, there was only one Pro-Vice-Chancellor in the University who presided over the Finance Committee and the Selection Board for appointing Lecturer, Assistant Professor and other non-teaching staffs of similar ranks (The University of Dhaka 2004, p. 11). Recently, the university has got two Pro-Vice Chancellors – Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Admin) and Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Academic). As a result, they now share the responsibilities. For instance, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Admin) presides over the Finance Committee and the Selection Board for appointing non-teaching staffs equivalent to the post of Lecturer and Assistant Professor. Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education), on the other hand, presides over the Selection Board for appointing Lecturer and Assistant Professor. Apart from these responsibilities, the University Order is rather vague about the duties and responsibilities of the Pro-Vice-Chancellors. In practice, they share the burden responsibilities of the Vice-Chancellor.

**Treasurer:** The Treasurer is appointed by the Chancellor to exercise general supervision over the funds of the university and to advise regarding the financial policy of the university. One of the major tasks of Treasurer is to present annual budget before the Senate (The University of Dhaka 2004, p. 11). He also presides over the Selection Board for appointing university staffs below the rank equivalent to the lecturer.

**Registrar:** The Registrar is appointed by a Selection Board headed by the Vice-Chancellor. He acts as a chief administrative officer of the university though no such status has been attributed to him by the University Order (Jamal, A. A. 1993). The Registrar acts as Secretary of the Senate, the Syndicate and the Academic Council (The University of Dhaka 2004, p. 12).

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<sup>27</sup> An agenda discussed recently in the Academic Council where some departments of the Faculty of Business Studies were opposing the introduction of two courses titled “Islamic Banking” and “Islamic Law” by the Department of Islamic Studies. Members from Faculty of Business Studies argued that courses introduced by the Department of Islamic Studies do not fit with the nature of the discipline. The latter introduced these courses to attract students for its evening program and one of these courses has the potential to attract prospective students of the evening programme offered by the Faculty of Business Studies (personal communication with the Dean, Faculty of Arts 2013).

**Faculties:** The Faculties consist of the Professors and Chairmen of its constituent departments as well as the members nominated by the Academic Council. Faculties act as intermediaries between the Academic Council and the departments. They are in charge of teaching, research and courses of the study of the departments. The decisions taken by the faculties are submitted to Syndicate through the Academic Council for implementation. The Dean is the executive officer of the Faculty and elected by the teachers of the constituent departments for two academic years (The University of Dhaka 2004, p. 21).

**Committees of Courses:** The Committees of Courses consist of all teachers of the department. They are responsible for preparation of courses and syllabi of the department (The University of Dhaka 2004, p. 22).

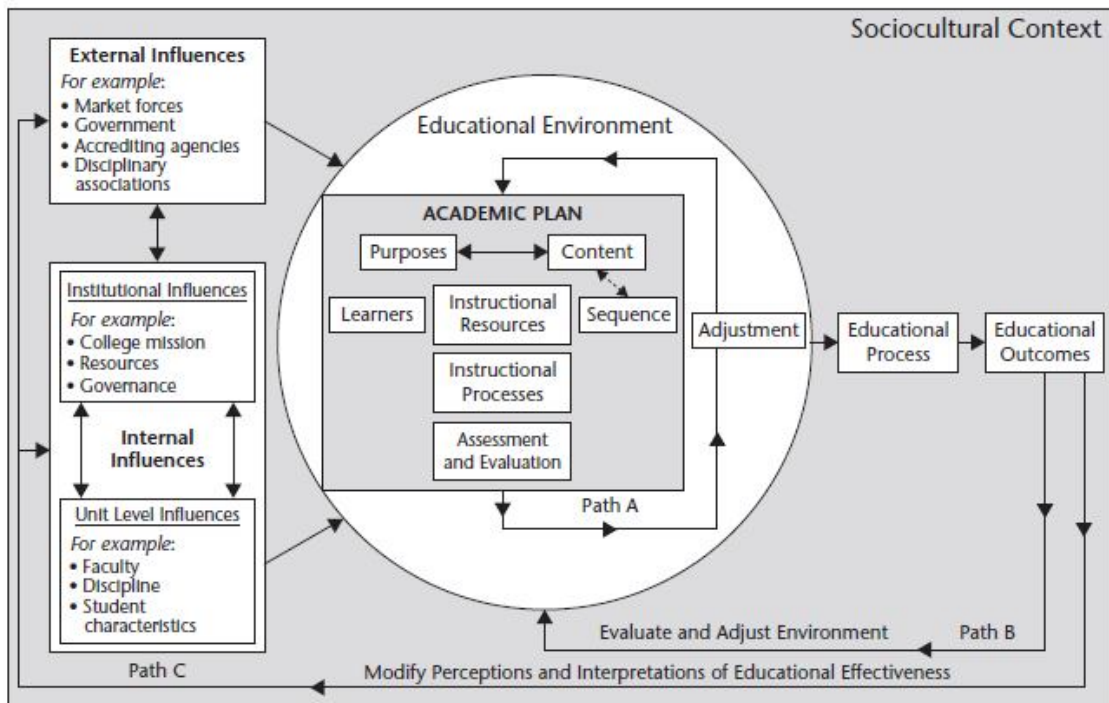
**Board of Advance Studies:** The Board of Advance Studies is an academic body that organizes post graduate studies in the university as prescribed by the Statutes (The University of Dhaka 2004, p. 22).

**Finance Committee:** The Finance Committee consists of eight members. It supervises the income and expenditure of the university. It also advises the Syndicate on all financial matters relating to accounts, property and funds of the university (The University of Dhaka 2004, p. 23).

**Planning and Development Committee:** The Planning and Development Committee consists of Vice-Chancellor, Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Treasurer, four Deans of the Faculties (by rotation), one architect, one engineer, one financial expert nominated by the Syndicate. It examines all development plans and schemes of the university and advises the Syndicate accordingly (The University of Dhaka 2004, pp. 24-25).

**Other Authorities:** The Statutes declares some other bodies to be authorities of the university and their powers and duties ((The University of Dhaka 2004, p. 25).

## Appendix B: Academic Plans in Sociocultural Contexts





## Appendix C: Interview Guide

Questions	Sub-questions and descriptions
<p>1. I have been working with you for more than ten years, but never had a chance to talk about your academic, research and professional background. For this project it would be helpful if you please allow me to discuss them.</p> <p><i>Could you please tell me about your educational, research and professional background?</i></p>	<p>(Dimensions covered: “Professional background” and “exposure”, Table 3).</p> <p>I will prompt the following questions if the interviewee misses them in his or her response to question number 1 in the left column.</p> <p><b>Educational Background</b></p> <p>1. From where did you receive your undergraduate and graduate degrees?</p> <p><b>Research Background</b></p> <p>2. How many articles have you published in national and international journals? How many published books do you have?</p> <p>3. Did you attend seminar and workshop at home and abroad?</p> <p><b>Professional Background</b></p> <p>4. How many years have you taught at the university level? Where?</p> <p>5. How many courses have you been involved in teaching so far?</p> <p>6. Did you receive any training on teaching?</p> <p>7. Could you please name any professional association you are involved with?</p>
<p>2. The term “curriculum” varies across the disciplines and persons. For example, it may mean course description, syllabus, structure of teaching and learning activities etc. So there may not be a single definition or understanding of this term. Considering that your opinion regarding curriculum may be one of these variations, I am interested to know.</p> <p><i>Could you please discuss how you perceive the term “curriculum”? You can take a little time to think.</i></p>	<p>(Dimension covered: “understandings of curriculum”, Table 2)</p> <p>I give a description of various understanding of the term “curriculum” in order to emphasize that there is no universal or specific answer to this question. This, I believe, will allow them to talk about their perception of the term freely.</p>
<p>3. (a) <i>Could you please tell me how curriculum is developed in your department?</i></p> <p>(b) <i>Could you please tell me for how many times have you experienced curriculum development process in the department?</i></p> <p>(c) <i>How much it is seen as a responsibility for the individual teacher?</i></p>	<p>Interviewees may talk something about external and internal influences which will generate information for the boxes of Figure 1.</p>
<p>4. <i>What is your role in the curriculum development process or how do you engage yourself in the process?</i></p>	<p>(Dimensions covered: “Consultation” Table 3; Key decision point covered: “Accommodating characteristics, goals and abilities of learners” Table 4; and Box covered: “External Factors” Figure 1)</p> <p>I will prompt the following questions, if the interviewee misses them in his or her response to question number 4 in the left column.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do you consult/discuss with students, peers, colleagues, and professional curriculum developer in curriculum development (CD)? How do you do this?</li> </ol> <p>This question will generate information for the dimension “Consultation”, Table 3, Key decision point “Accommodating characteristics, goals and abilities of learners” Table 4.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do you have networks with professional association, research and other organizations? Do you discuss with them during CD. What you discuss in this regard? How do you incorporate their opinions in your curriculum?</li> </ol> <p>This question will generate information for the dimension “Consultation” Table 3 and for the box “External Factors” Figure 1.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How far are you allowed to develop your own curriculum? In other words, to what extent you get freedom for developing your own curriculum?</li> </ol>

Questions	Sub-questions and descriptions
<p>5. I am now interested to know your opinion about some specific elements of a curriculum.</p> <p>What purposes/objectives do you want your students to achieve from the curriculum that you make?</p> <p>In other words what would you like the students to achieve from your course?</p>	<p>(Key decision points covered: "Choosing educational goals and objects" Table 4)</p> <p>I will prompt the following questions, if the interviewee misses them in his or her response to question number 5 in the left column.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How do you want your students to deal with the knowledge after they complete your course? (Whether you want students to be able to reproduce knowledge being a teacher, or produce knowledge being a researcher or historian?)</li> </ol> <p>This question will generate information for sub-sub-dimensions "History as Canon" and History as Social Science" under the dimension and sub-dimension of key decision point "Knowledge" Table 4.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. What types of disciplinary attitudes do you want your students to achieve after they complete your course? (Whether they want students to achieve the attitudes of (i) Historical causation (ii) Emphasizing on sources (iii) Considering the reliability of sources?) If the interviewees name one or more of these three attitudes, I will ask how they make their efforts to this end.</li> </ol> <p>This question will generate information for sub-sub-dimensions "Logical foundation", "Attention to evidence" and "Authenticity" under the dimension of key decision point "Attitude" and sub-dimension "Critical thinking", Table 4</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. What kinds of skills do you want your students to achieve from your course? (Whether they give importance to writing, reading, analysis, problem solving?)</li> <li>4. How your curriculum reflects these aims?</li> </ol> <p>This question will generate information for sub-sub-dimension "Skills" (writing, reading, analysis, problem solving) under the dimension of key decision point "Skills" and sub-dimension "Practical skills useful for market", Table 4.</p>
<p>6. <i>How do you select the content of the curriculum? Why?</i></p> <p><i>Could you please elaborate with some specific examples from one of your courses?</i></p>	<p>(Key decision points covered: "Selecting subject matters" Table 4)</p> <p>I will prompt the following questions, if the interviewee misses them in his or her response to question number 6 in the left column.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Do you select content to facilitate the purposes of the curriculum? How do you think content of a particular course is facilitating the purposes or objectives?</li> </ol> <p>This question will generate information for the sub-sub-dimension "Content that advances purposes of the course" under the dimension of the key decision point "subject matters selected to convey specific knowledge, skills and attitudes"</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. How do you select topics for the content of the curriculum? (For example, considering important events of history, what seems important for the students to learn, following standard text books, existing curriculum content, curriculum of other universities at home and abroad etc.). Why?</li> </ol> <p>This question will generate information for the sub-sub-dimension "Selection of content" under the dimension of the key decision point "Subject matters selected to convey specific knowledge, skills and attitudes" and sub-dimension "Design" Table 4.</p>

Questions	Sub-questions and descriptions
7. How do you organize the content of the curriculum? Why?	<p>(Key decision point covered: "Organizing content appropriately", Table 4)</p> <p>I will prompt the following question, if the interviewee misses them in his or her response to question number 7 in the left column.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Do you organize the content chronologically, thematically or both? What is the reason for choosing one of these ways?</li> </ol> <p>This question will generate information for dimension, sub-dimension and sub-sub-dimension of the key decision point "Arrangement of subject matters and experiences lead to specific outcomes for learners" Table 4.</p>
8. Organizationally what does your class look like? In other words, can you please elaborate the roles your students and you play in a typical class hour?	<p>(Key decision point covered: "Developing learning and teaching activities" Table 4)</p> <p>I will prompt the following questions, if the interviewee misses them in his or her response to question number 8 in the left column.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What is the role of students in the class?</li> </ol> <p>This question will generate information for the sub-sub-dimension "student focused" under the dimension of key decision point "Instructional activities by which learning may be achieved" and sub-dimension "Center of focus", Table 4.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. What is your role in the class?</li> </ol> <p>This question will generate information for the sub-sub-dimension "instructor focused" under the dimension of key decision point "Instructional activities by which learning may be achieved" and sub-dimension "Center of focus", Table 4.</p>
9. <i>What types of instructional resources do you use?</i>	<p>(Key decision point covered: Selecting learning materials and technologies" Table 4, Box covered: Internal factors Figure 1)</p> <p>I will prompt the following questions, if the interviewee misses them in his or her response to question number 9 in the left column.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What types of instructional materials do you use? (Books, articles, classical literature, archival documents etc.)</li> </ol> <p>This question will generate information for the sub-sub-dimension "Reference materials" under the dimension and sub-dimension of key decision point "The materials and settings to be used in the learning process" Table 4.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. What types of technology do you integrate? (Multimedia projector, internet e.g. group email etc.)</li> </ol> <p>This question will generate information for the sub-sub-dimension "Technology" under the dimension and sub-dimension of key decision point "The materials and settings to be used in the learning process" Table 4.</p>

Questions	Sub-questions and descriptions
<p>10. <i>How do you determine that the planned curriculum is able to achieve its aims and objectives? In other words, Curriculum and teaching can be evaluated in various ways. So far I know there is no standard evaluation system at DHDU. Do you happen to allow your students, peers, colleagues, or department to evaluate your curriculum and teaching? How?</i></p> <p>If the respondent says yes to the above question, the follow up question will be:</p> <p><i>Why is this important to do?</i></p> <p><i>Why you have chosen to include or not to include these actors in evaluation?</i></p> <p>If the respondent says yes to the above question, the follow up question will be:</p> <p><i>If you do not have any evaluation method, how does your curriculum and teaching reflect on emerging demands of your students, peers, colleagues or department?</i></p>	<p>(Key decision point covered: "Assessing student outcomes as well as learner and teacher satisfaction with the plan", Table 4)</p> <p>I will prompt the following questions, if the respondent misses them in his or her response to question number 10 in the left column.1.</p> <p>1.How curriculum is evaluated by the department, colleagues or peers or students or combined?</p> <p>This question will generate information for the sub-dimension "Plan" under the dimension of the key decision point "The strategies used to determine whether decision about the elements of the academic plan are optimal" Table 4.</p> <p>2. How teaching is evaluated by the department, colleagues or peers or students or combined?</p> <p>This question will generate information for the sub-dimension "Teaching" under the dimension of the key decision point "The strategies used to determine whether decision about the elements of the academic plan are optimal" Table 4.</p>
<p>11. <i>If you happen to rely on some evaluation methods, do you adjust your curriculum and teaching methods according to the evaluation results? How?</i></p>	<p>(Key decision point covered: Improving both the plan and planning process, Table 4)</p> <p>I will prompt the following questions, if the respondent misses them in his or her response to question number 11 in the left column.</p> <p>1.Who is the authority for this adjustment – department, self, peers, colleagues or combined?</p> <p>This question will generate information for the sub-sub-dimension "Authority" under the dimension and sub-dimension of the key decision point "Enhancements to the plan based on experience and evaluation", Table 4.</p> <p>3.What is the nature of the adjustment – continuous or summative?</p> <p>This question will generate information for the sub-sub-dimension "Nature" under the dimension and sub-dimension of the key decision point "Enhancements to the plan based on experience and evaluation", Table 4.</p>
<p>12. A few minutes ago, we talked about your education, publications and participation in seminar and workshop. <i>How do any of these experiences help you in developing curriculum?</i></p>	<p>This question is related to my second research question of how faculty beliefs and experiences influence the ways of faculty engagement in curriculum development.</p>
<p>13. <i>Do you find your teaching experiences and training on teaching helpful when you develop curriculum? How do they help you?</i></p>	<p>As Above</p>
<p>14. (a) <i>A few minutes ago we discussed about your ways of consultation with others. In light of that discussion could you please highlight again on the major stakeholders of your curriculum and teaching?</i></p> <p>(b) <i>Do you find consultation with students, colleagues, peers and ther stakeholders helpful when you develop curriculum? How they help you?</i></p>	<p>As Above</p>
<p>15. Thank you very much for giving me time. I will provide you the transcript of this interview that I will use in my analysis.</p>	<p>It will give me the opportunity to get back to the respondent and ask questions which may arise during transcription and was not covered by this interview.</p>

## Appendix D: Letter of Informed Consent

I am Mohammad Abul Kawser, your colleague at the Department of History, University of Dhaka (DHDU), Bangladesh. Currently I am writing a thesis titled “Curriculum Development in Higher Education: A Case Study of the Department of History, University of Dhaka, Bangladesh” towards fulfilling the requirement of my M Phil thesis at the Department of Educational Research, Faculty of Educational Sciences, University of Oslo, Norway. Data needed for my thesis come from the DHDU faculty member’s opinion on their curriculum and teaching practices.

In order to collect the information systematically, I have developed this interview guide. If you agree, I would like to use this guide to have a conversation with you that will take about an hour of your time. The information derived from our conversation will be used only for my thesis, and no other purpose. The confidentiality of our conversation and information derived out of it will be strictly maintained. Your participation is voluntary. You may skip one or more questions if you wish.

I, however, request you to share your opinion as frankly as possible, and answer to as many of these questions as possible. I would really appreciate your cooperation. If you have questions and concerns about my project or any part of it, you can ask me or my thesis supervisors without hesitation.

If you are ready, can we begin our conversation?

Date: \_\_ / \_\_ / \_\_\_\_