

Evaluation of Interdisciplinary Readings: M.Ed. First Semester Course Using CIPP Model

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Abstract

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This study evaluates the M.Ed. First semester course 'Interdisciplinary Readings' offered by Tribhuvan University using Stufflebeam's CIPP evaluation model (1971). The study was carried out using a qualitative research design. We collected the information through semi-structured interviews with four participants who were selected using the purposive sampling method. Among them, two were the lecturers who taught the course, and two were the students who completed it at a constituent campus of Tribhuvan University in Dang District, Lumbini Province, Nepal. We asked interview questions based on the CIPP evaluation checklist (2002) on the context, input, process, and product, the four elements of the CIPP model. Each interview lasted for approximately one hour. We strictly followed the ethical guidelines, including obtaining informed consent from all participants, ensuring confidentiality and anonymity, and allowing voluntary participation and withdrawal at any point without consequence. The result indicates that the course has realistic objectives. Similarly, the study also reveals that the course demands effort, interaction, and active participation from students as a part of the learning process. However, irregular class attendance among students hinders the intended objectives of the course. Although the course advocated student-centered approaches and methods, the teachers could not come out of stereotypical teaching pedagogy, which brought a sort of disappointment regarding the course implementation and its outcome. Therefore, the study highlights the value of applying the CIPP model for program evaluation, offering insights for improvement and future planning.

Keywords: CIPP model, interdisciplinary readings, evaluation, program evaluation, Tribhuvan University

Introduction

Evaluation is the process of determining the extent to which objectives are attained. It is concerned not with the appraisal of achievement but also with the improvements (Aziz et al., 2018). An evaluation is a set of data continuously, systematically, and carefully collected and analyzed to define program performance and effect, sustain liability, and identify extents that require changes or modifications, as well as development (Wall & Solutions, 2014). The process of determining the extent to which objectives have been met is known as evaluation (Thiede, 1964). Essentially, evaluation is carried out to identify the scope of which a program is beneficial and to assist in reaching a compromise by systematically collecting data that is evaluated and presented to partners interested in the movement being evaluated (Dermot, 2000).

Course evaluation is important in education sector as it provides useful feedback to curriculum developers and decision-makers. However, this practice remains somewhat neglected in the context of Nepal. At the school level, there is a provision to revise curriculum and textbooks in every five years, and a complete update is expected within ten years (National Curriculum Framework, 2019). In the same line, Tribhuvan University, Faculty of Education, updated the curriculum of M.Ed in 2021 which was developed and applied in semester system for the first time in 2014. Courses should be changed over period of time as the contents and contexts of learning have been changed over short time.

This study aims to evaluate M.Ed. First semester course entitled 'Interdisciplinary Readings (Eng. Ed. 517) from the perspectives of course instructors and students using context, input, process and product framework of the CIPP model developed by Stufflebeam (1971). This paper focuses on understanding the students' and course instructors' perceptions and practices about the course and their competencies after the program. Using this study, the researcher aims to suggest relevant directions for improving this course. The course under evaluation, currently being taught in the first semester of the M.Ed. Program under Tribhuvan University and it is a theoretical course.

CIPP Evaluation Model

Different influential scholars have developed various program evaluation models to access and improve ongoing programs. One widely recognized is the *Logic*

model. This model evaluates a program by assessing four distinct measurements. They are: inputs, activities, outputs and outcomes. This model seeks to find out the cause-effect relationship between the resources invested in executing the program and effect on the desired outcomes from them (W.K. Kellogg Foundation, 2004). This model demonstrates how program's inputs, activities and output are logically connected in order to achieve specific results.

The Kirkpatrick Model evaluates a program's effectiveness at four levels: reaction, learning, behavior, and results. Relevance is measured by participants' satisfaction, learning is assessed by focusing on the knowledge acquired, behavior is measured by the practical skills developed, and results are measured by the tangible outcomes or impact of the training. This approach helps assess the effectiveness of a program (Kirkpatrick, 1994). This model is particularly suitable for evaluating training program and is valuable in understanding how training programs affect participants' skills and behaviors and the broader organizational impact.

CIPP model is an evaluation model for curriculum evaluation given by Stufflebeam in 1971 which includes four elements: C- Context, I- Input, P- Process and P- Product (Aziz et al., 2018). This model can be effectively used for evaluating the quality of education at educational institutions. Context includes the goals, objectives, history and background of the school, inputs refer to material, time, physical and human resources needed for effective working of the school. Process includes all the teaching and learning processes and product focuses on the quality of teaching learning and its usefulness and the potentials that benefit society (Stufflebeam, 2003). Overall, evaluation of programs is important as it aids in forming a clear understanding of the program's intended results and student needs, as well as an analysis of its success.

The CIPP model can be used for both type of evaluation, summative and formative (Aziz et al., 2018). The most striking point about this model is that it provides the holistic view of every element by evaluating context, input, process and output from each and every angle. With the help of this model, evaluation can be done systematically, fulfilling the general needs of evaluation (Aziz et al., 2018). The important element which makes this model different from other models is that it focuses on the context for the evaluation of teaching learning and development process (Stufflebeam & Shinkfield, 2007)

Context evaluation helps to assess the needs and opportunities within a defined context or environment (Stufflebeam & Shinkfield, 2007). It focuses on assessing the environment in which the program operates. This evaluation model helps identify the needs, problems, and opportunities that the program aims to address. Stufflebeam (2003) argues that context evaluation provides the foundational understanding necessary to align the program's objectives with the broader social, educational, and organizational environment. By analyzing the context, evaluators can ensure that the program is relevant and tailored to the needs of its target population.

The second component is input evaluation, which examines the resources, strategies, and plans in place for the program's implementation. According to Stufflebeam (2002) input evaluation includes available and existing resources for attaining objectives and fulfilling needs. The purpose of this type of evaluation is to provide information for determining the resources used to meet the goals of the program (Khawaja, 2001). It involves evaluating the appropriateness of resources such as curriculum, teaching materials, faculty, and administrative support. This step assesses whether the program's design is feasible and if the resources allocated are sufficient to meet the intended goals. It also provides insight into whether the program is properly planned and whether the necessary expertise and materials are available for effective execution.

Process evaluation focuses on the running of the program and teaching learning processes (Aziz et al., 2018). It is the third component of the CIPP model, which evaluates how the program is being implemented. In this phase, implementation decisions are taken (Patil & Kalekar, 2014). Processes evaluation of the school includes systematic approaches, teaching learning activities, parent teacher meetings, annual functions, co-curricular and extracurricular activities; it also includes student's board examinations based on both summative and formative assessment (Print, 1993).

The final component, product evaluation, focuses on assessing the outcomes or results of the program. The focus of this stage is not on the students' achievement of grades but the skills, attitudes, knowledge, learning and abilities they attain which the student is going to use in life to benefit society (Aziz et al., 2018). Similarly, A product evaluation assesses outcomes and outputs, short and long term, intended and unintended, which not only keeps track but also focuses on the fulfillment (or not) of

objectives (Stufflebeam, 2003). It is essential for determining the overall success and impact of the program on the target population (Cousins & Whitmore, 1998). By evaluating the product, stakeholders can assess the program's impact and decide whether it is meeting its goals, as well as identify areas for further improvement. Thus, the CIPP model offers a comprehensive framework for evaluating all stages of a program, from its planning through implementation to outcome assessment. This model deals with products or outcomes not only at the end but also at different points during the beginning, implementation and designing of the programme.

Course Introduction

In Nepalese context, the interdisciplinary texts based on literary genres have been a part of course in English in grade XI and XII. In the preface of *Mosaic*, a textbook for grade XI major English, Lohani and Adhikari (2004) write that the present textbook *Mosaic Readings in the Genres* deals with some of the most burning themes of present day existence and treats them with incisive perception. Realizing the changed socio-political context of Nepal after 2007 A.D., Tribhuvan University, Faculty of Education has revised the courses to address all the necessary change. Highlighting the essence of a textbook *Expanding Horizons in English* for B.Ed major English, Awasthi et al. (2010) view that this textbook provides the students with current information on various disciplines: politics, economics, culture, art and music, literature, language and education.

After launching these courses having the trademark of interdisciplinary, the new course, Interdisciplinary Readings for M.Ed. English (semester programme) has been designed and the textbook has also been prepared to establish the vertical linkage and to expand the horizons of knowledge and advanced skills (Regmi, 2016). The main motive behind such a selection of different topics (writers) is to show our students a sample of variegated world ideas that interact with each other (Bhattraï & Bhandari, 2021).

Interdisciplinary Readings is a course which is introduced for the first time in semester under Tribhuvan university for the students of masters level in English language education. It is a thematically organized course that introduces students to content knowledge and language resources used in communicating with a wider readership (TU, 2021). Philosophy, humanity and creativity, education, vision, and

critical thinking; democracy and freedom; linguistics, politics, and identity; sports, adventure, and entertainment; science, technology, and the environment; post-modern realities; anthropology and culture; and population and economic development are among the disciplines that contribute to content knowledge of the course. This course investigates cross-disciplinary connections and their applicability in the modern world (TU, 2021).

This course includes ten units, each consisting of different genres including essays, stories, novels, critical theories, write-ups and articles. Altogether, 35 reading texts along with two novels have been incorporated into this. The main motive behind such a selection of different topics (writers) is to show students a sample of variegated world ideas that interact with each other (Bhatrai & Bhandari, 2021). The main goal is to help students improve their English language skills by reading texts from different fields. In addition, the course aims to build students' ability to think critically and creatively while reading and writing in English for academic purposes (TU, 2021). It also focuses on developing students' skills in reading and writing across different subjects. The course content and units were carefully chosen to meet these goals. Moreover, it gives students a chance to learn about literature from various fields like Philosophy, Humanism, Science, Sports and Adventure, Economics, and Creativity. The inclusion of two novels *Jonathan Livingston Seagull* by Richard Bach and *Black Beauty* by Anna Sewell adds a special touch to the course. Its interdisciplinary nature helps students explore different areas of knowledge, encouraging them to think more broadly about education.

Methodology

We used CIPP model to analyze a course offered in the first semester of the M.Ed. program under Tribhuvan University. We carried out this research within the interpretive paradigm of qualitative research. We collected data through semi-structured interviews with four participants; two teachers who taught the course within the program, and two students who completed the same course. The teachers and students were given pseudonyms. We selected participants intentionally based on the convenience and feasibility for both the researcher and the participants. The first author conducted interviews both in person and virtually, as some participants were unavailable

for in-person meetings by asking interview questions based on the CIPP evaluation checklist (2002) on the context, input, process, and product, the four elements of the CIPP model. Each interview lasted for one hour. The first author recorded the interviews on a mobile phone with the consent of the participants. Before the interviews, the participants were informed about the study's purpose, and their consent was obtained to record the interviews. However, the participants who were not allowed to record, as they were not comfortable with recording, had their responses recorded through note-taking.

Once the data collection was completed, we transcribed the interviews into English as the interviews were taken in Nepali. We adapted the qualitative content analysis procedures outlined by Schreier (2012) and the thematic analysis approach proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006) in order to analyze the data. The initial codes were categorized, and themes were identified and organized to align with the four components of the CIPP framework (Stufflebeam, 1971). This approach allowed for a systematic interpretation of the data within the context of the model.

Results and Discussion

Evaluation acts as a tool for ensuring quality, to enhance teachers' performance. To clarify the evaluation results, we applied the four components of the CIPP model. The context component examined the classroom environment and its readiness. The input component assessed whether the prescribed course contributed to achieving the program's goals and objectives. Similarly, the process evaluation focused on evaluating the effectiveness of the planning and its execution. Finally, the product evaluation measured both the explicit and implicit outcomes of the program.

1. Context Evaluation

According to Stufflebeam (2002), context evaluation is defined as assessment of the needs, problems, opportunities and problems which can be addressed in a particular environment. Furthermore, Asadi et al., (2016) assert that context evaluation addresses important issues, owing to which many scholars emphasize using context evaluation for school curriculum and textbook appraisal. Context evaluation helps assess the needs and opportunities within the school's environment (Stufflebeam, 2003). From the review of the campus document, the evaluator found that this course was introduced at this

college after the semester system launched out of valley in 2017. This course is one of the major course under M.Ed first semester, specialized in English. The nature of the course is interdisciplinary.

One of the lecturers, Shyam Adhikari (pseudonym), observed that the course seemed similar to the expanding horizons course offered in the second year of the bachelor's program. He praised the course despite its challenges, noting that it is well-designed and its content supports the objectives of the curriculum. He further observed,

I heard many rumour in the market that students of education faculty lack sufficient knowledge of literature, and this course helps fill the existing gap to some extent. The course is thematically structured and interdisciplinary in nature including contents from different fields. This course expose students content knowledge and linguistic resource. By completing these courses, M.Ed. students will gain comprehensive knowledge of literature and develop their language.

Another lecturer, Sita Thapa (Pseudonym) has shared her experiences as:

In the beginning, I faced many difficulties to deal the course. I used to teach in the annual system, so adapting to the semester system was quite challenging for me. The course load is also quite heavy, and we are expected to complete it within just six months. Since I had studied under the annual system myself, the concept of internal evaluation in the semester system was unfamiliar to me. This caused a lot of stress during the initial phase. However, after completing two semesters successfully, I became more comfortable managing the course. Compared to other courses, this one is particularly demanding because it encompasses a broad range of topics from various disciplines, requiring teachers to be knowledgeable in everything from philosophy to science.

Bhattraai and Bhandari (2021) view that the texts for interdisciplinary readings are organized thematically and they expose students to content knowledge, linguistic resources employed in communication to the wider readership. Similarly, it also enriches students' lifelong learning habits, academic skills and personal growth (Regmi, 2016). Lecturer Shyam agreed with this and further said that;

This course doesn't have any practical consideration like the teaching practicum course. This doesn't mean that this course is useless. It requires students to engage in activities such as searching for information, reading, writing, and

presenting in class. This practice helps them to develop their reading and analyzing culture, which is almost lacking in our students, especially after COVID-19. The course is philosophical and contributes to the personal transformation of the students.

Students have positive responses to the nature of the course as well. S1, who is also working in one of the renowned private schools of Dang district, states that this course is far better than the practicum course offered at the bachelor's level. Both of the students agreed that the course offered student-centered approaches and methods. Similarly, the presentations they did in the class helped them to cope with the challenges that they faced in the real classes. They further agreed that this course helped them a lot to build their confidence level. Ont only presentation skills, this course also offered varied topics which help them to strengthen their knowledge on different subject matters.

Based on the study's interview results and participant experiences, it can be said that, although the texts for interdisciplinary readings have rich contents and provide language teaching learning with interesting resourceful materials to develop students' skills: analyzing, evaluating, synthesizing, interpreting, for teachers such texts are difficult to handle in classroom because of difficult and varied contents and inherited complex vocabularies (Regmi, 2016).

2. Input Evaluation

According to Stufflebeam (2002), input evaluation includes available and existing resources for attaining objectives and fulfilling needs. The campus records indicate that there are sufficient teachers available to manage the course in proportion to student enrollment. The enrolment in the program increased from 22 students in 2022 to 35 students in 2023. One of the challenges identified by the evaluator is the limited availability of resources on campus. Both lecturers confirmed that the college library lacks the two novels recommended by the course. Purchasing books individually would be expensive, and they also mentioned that these books are not easily available in the local market. Regarding this, lecturer Shyam shared his experiences thus,

In previous years, I faced significant challenges in handling this course due to a lack of adequate resources. The campus library had no supporting materials, and

the recommended novels are still unavailable. Most of the texts of this course are extracts or chapters from books or novels. To give comprehensive knowledge of the texts and chapters, the teachers have to consult original books which are not available in the campus library. The main problem lies here.

The students participant, S2 indicating the limited availability of reading resources, said:

I joined this college with the expectation that a private college would provide the necessary books and materials to support the course, but the reality was quite the opposite. Our campus library is lacking even the prescribed textbooks. The real challenge was that these textbooks are also not easily available in the market. During the first semester, all of us had to request a bookstore in Kathmandu to send us the course books. Unfortunately, digital versions were not available either. We students from outside of valley struggled lot to manage books and materials. As a result, we are totally dependent on teachers notes. Thankfully, I managed to pass the exam with good grades.

According to Thapa (2017), the CIPP model is utilized to make teaching relevant by using reflective discussion and questioning methods in the class. However, the evaluator noticed that lecturers did not conduct activities like seminars, conferences, or course-related workshops, even though these are included in the curriculum. The lecturers primarily focused on completing the course content, which resulted in the core purpose of the course being overlooked.

Motivation plays crucial role in language learning. On this point, both lecturers agreed that their students are indeed motivated and show a genuine interest in learning the textbook contents. However, a major issue at this level is irregular class attendance, as many students are employed in different institutions. They further explained that there are times when classes are almost empty, requiring them to contact students or even their parents. Lecturer Sita added that while the course is designed to foster creativity in students, achieving this goal is very difficult without their consistent presence in the classes.

Both lecturers stated that their campus classes are equipped with modern technology, as it is a prominent private college in Lumbini Province, Nepal. The classrooms have projectors, and the entire campus has Wi-Fi access. Lecturer Shyam

mentioned that each block has its own Wi-Fi facilities for both teachers and students, a point Lecturer Sita also confirmed. However, both lecturers pointed out that they had not received any specific training related to this course.

3. Process Evaluation

The basic purpose of process evaluation is to provide description related to all the activities in the program (Stuffelbeam, 1971). Similarly, process evaluation, which Sophia and Nanni (2019) refer to as the plan execution phase, focuses on putting the teaching and learning processes into practice. The program's operations to accomplish its goals are discussed, and any issues or difficulties encountered by any parties throughout the course are noted. According to (Stuffelbeam, 2002), it evaluates the delivery process and looks for implementation problems and changes that should be made to the future work plan.

The courses in the semester system need both internal and external evaluation. The nature of internal assessment is formative in nature. This system needs 80% mandatory attendance as a part of formative assessment. Both lecturers agreed that they are following the internal assessment format as given in the course syllabus and evaluating students accordingly. Both of them keep the attendance and classroom participation record of students properly. Similarly, students are also evaluated based on the presentation they made in groups and individual. For this formative assessment, both of the lecturers prepared a detailed course plans including students' presentations schedules and other activities which are supposed to be completed by students as a part of the course.

Both of the students shared similar pain dealing with the course. They said that as a part of internal evaluation, teachers provided lots of presentation tasks which demand their time and effort. Sometimes they have to write write ups and reviews of articles as well. The number of assignments is quite more in comparison to other subject, both noticed. In the similar vein, they have to face internal examinations as well. After the internal examination, their teachers provided individual feedback, which is the best part of this course as reported by both of the students. In their view, balancing work and study in semester system is quite difficult but in real these practices help them a lot to grow them personally and professionally.

All of my participants agreed that they have strong communication skills and a good rapport with teachers and students. The communication between teachers and students is effective. S2 reported that his teacher has created google classroom and messenger group to communicate and share materials and notes. Process evaluation also examines the use of methods and techniques to deal the course. This course suggested students centered techniques and approaches so we are doing accordingly reported both of the lecturers. Regarding this Lecturer Madhav said that “ though our college is one of the rich and resourceful , we are not getting any training and workshops related to the course. But, we are doing our label best to adopt those techniques and approaches as suggested by course”.

The findings from the data revealed that there is an effective two-way communication between teacher and students. Teachers are updating themselves rather getting help form the institutions. They are lacking training and workshops which are essential for their professional growth and development. It is also revealed from the data that the teachers even didn't get any orientation programme for the course from TU deans office. Semester system education should be delivered through lecture, discussion, group-work and project works where students' role should be dominant. This scenario indicated the urgency of participatory active teaching techniques to enhance students' engagement. The governing bodies must think for training and seminars to teachers to run the program effectively.

4. Product Evaluation

Product evaluation includes the outcomes of the institutions. The focus of the product is not on the student's achievement of grades but the skills, attitudes, knowledge, learning and abilities they attain which the student is going to use in life to benefit society (Aziz et al., 2018).The aim of the school is to make the students productive so that they can stand on their feet in society. (Scriven, 1994). According to the data given by Lecturer Shyam from his college exam unit, 2023, the pass rate of the students in this course was 71%. Some of his students are placed in a very good institution and have started working as teachers. Both of the lecturer suggested that it could be more effective if the campus administration could play the role to stop the irregularity and absent rate of students. However, student participants expressed their

opinions differently. According to both of them, exam-oriented teaching of their teachers made them inactive throughout the semester that should be discarded by implementing the formative assessment as suggested by the course.

The objectives of the curriculum are to assist the students develop linguistic skills by reading interdisciplinary texts and develop their critical and creative reading and writing abilities in English for academic purposes (TU, 2021). Regarding the course outcomes, lecturer Sita shared her views as follows:

The aim of the course is to enhance students' interdisciplinary reading and writing skills, which has been successfully achieved. The reading texts included in the course undoubtedly broaden students' capacity for creative reading.

Likewise, various writing tasks used for formative assessment have significantly improved their writing abilities. One of my female students was inspired by Govinda Raj Bhattarai's poem "You Can Create When Your Heart Longs for Singing" and began writing poems herself. As a course instructor, I really do hard labour to fulfill the objective of the course from my side.

By analyzing the data from the participants, it can be said that the intended goals and intention of the course objectives are partially fulfilled. To meet the curriculum objectives and goals, teachers should avoid lecture-based and exam focused teaching; instead, they should always be ready to adopt new activities and pedagogy in teaching from the relevant example (Warju, 2016). A learner-friendly environment, well-equipped classrooms, and effective interaction between teachers and students are the pivotal elements to enhance quality education where rigorous internal assessments and attendance should be well considered as an evaluation process, and that can be well counted for the final examination.

The final evaluation is supposed to be taken by the Examination Division, Office of the Dean, and Faculty of Education at the end of the semester. The score division for grading students' achievement is highly scientific. However, the students do not seem satisfied with the internal assessment. Students who didn't come to class regularly getting better internal marks than regular students of the class, claimed both of the students. Students are unsure about receiving the actual grade despite the labor they paid for the learning. The accountability and transparency of the teachers' internal grading system have been questioned by the students.

Conclusion

This study evaluated the M.Ed. First semester course 'Interdisciplinary Readings' using the CIPP model. The findings show that the course has clear objectives. It encourages students' engagement through interactive learning methods. The incorporation of various instructional techniques, such as mini-projects, group discussion, reflective writing and presentations, promotes active engagement, critical thinking and creativity among students. Similarly, students are exposed to different academic languages and methods, enabling them to understand the value of interdisciplinary dialogue, which is highly relevant in today's interconnected world. However, challenges such as irregular attendance and a lack of teacher training affect its effectiveness. This course helped students to deepen their content knowledge as they studied different texts from diverse fields. The course seems strong. Yet, internal assessments need more transparency to ensure fairness. Teachers should receive proper training to adopt student-centered approaches, and institutions must provide necessary resources. Overall, the CIPP model was useful in identifying strengths and weaknesses. By improving teacher training, ensuring resource availability, and making assessments fairer, the course can better achieve its goals and benefit students more effectively.

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