

Teacher Motivation towards the Implementation of Bologna Process in Erbil-Kurdistan

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Abstract: The concept of Bologna Process has first been introduced in 2019 in Kurdistan. The lack of research about how the 4-year-old Bologna reform persists in a handful of universities implementing it in Kurdistan made it necessary to conduct the current research. Hence, this study aims to investigate teachers' level of motivation towards the implementation of Bologna Process in Noble Technical Institute-Erbil (NTI) and examine whether there is any difference between the level of motivation of teachers who took Pedagogical Training Course and those who didn't. It further unveils the factors that negatively affect teacher motivation towards the implementation of Bologna Process. To achieve the aims, a mixed methods approach has been adopted. To identify the teachers' level of motivation, a survey questionnaire was distributed to the 50 teachers at Noble Technical Institute. Later, an unstructured interview was carried out as a qualitative research tool to investigate the factors that demotivate the teachers. The results show that teachers at NTI are not motivated to a good extent and there is a significant difference between the motivation level of the trained and untrained teachers. Trained teachers are way more motivated than the untrained ones. Moreover, the findings demonstrate that the factors that negatively affect teacher motivation towards Bologna Process implementation are; lack of training, technological and teaching materials are not well provided, the subjects taught do not ensure students' employability, teachers' fees, lack of promotion of teachers who perform better, fear of teachers for not having their contracts prolonged. The findings will benefit all the trustees, boards and faculty members in institutes and universities in Erbil that implement or aim to implement Bologna Process and want to have their teachers motivated.

Keywords: Bologna Process, Pedagogical Training, Teacher Motivation

1. Introduction

Since the establishment of the first government cabinet in 1992, the education system practiced in the universities and institutes in Kurdistan was an extension to the classical one (Hamarash, 2012). Intriguingly, in the last 4 years, Bologna Process has become a trending topic in Kurdistan. Kurdistan Regional Government, with the aim of creating the implementation plan of the process in 2019, had sent several university professors and directors to Finland, specifically HAMK University of Applied Sciences

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in an effort to train them in a pedagogical Training-Professional Development Programme that was conducted by the university.

Since its declaration in 1999, the main purpose of Bologna Process (BP hereafter) is to establish a common structure of higher education systems across Europe and enhance the quality of European education systems to ensure students' employability after graduation and mobility of the degree programs among the various parts of the world (Klemenčič, 2019). In today's time, intending to achieve the same purpose of BP, several universities and institutes in Kurdistan implement the four-year-old Bologna Process; such as, University of Human Development, Charo University, Soran University, University of Zakho and several other universities in the city of Erbil (viz. Knowledge University, Tishk International University, Erbil Polytechnic University and Cihan University). At institute level, only 3 institutes implement BP in today's time and date in Erbil that are Aynda Private Technical Institute, Gasha Technical Institute and Noble Technical Institute.

A handful of research is conducted about how the process of Bologna Implementation goes on in Kurdistan. Ade (2021) investigated the issues and challenges that are faced during the implementation of Bologna Process in 3 universities in Kurdistan (viz. Erbil Polytechnic University [EPU], Soran University, and Cihan University). A questionnaire was distributed to the academic staff of the named universities to know the challenges they encountered during the ECTS implementation. Furthermore, Amin, et al. (2021) investigated the academic staff's attitudes towards the success of BP and the necessary requirements needed ahead of implementing the process in the University of Garmian.

One of the prominent figures that has hands in the success of this process and act as the gatekeeper of reform is the teacher. Up to date requirements are imposed on the teacher and they are expected to be quick respondents to the innovations and new trends of Bologna Process (Zabelina & Spiriyagina, 2021). Conceptual framework observers of higher education reform state that in the times of transition and reform, not all the teachers react the same way on the shape of the new structures towards which they are meant to implement (Chapman & Austin, 2022). Hence, it is natural if the teachers in Erbil-Kurdistan don't react positively towards BP! Since the teacher has great hands in the success of the process, knowing how motivated the teachers are and the reason behind their demotivation towards Bologna Process helps the organizations ameliorate everything. To the best of the researcher's knowledge, no research has yet been done to know the motivation level of the teachers in the universities of Kurdistan towards the implementation of BP, though university faculty determine the success of modernization of higher education. Hence, the significance of this research is brought into life.

The objectives of this study are to investigate teachers' level of motivation towards the implementation of Bologna Process in Noble Technical Institute-Erbil, examine whether there is any difference between the level of motivation of teachers who took the six-month Pedagogical Training Course and those who didn't, and unveil the factors that negatively affect teacher motivation towards the implementation of Bologna Process.

2. Research Methodology

2.1. Rational for the Choice of Research Methodology

A 'mixed methods' approach has been adopted in this study which can be elucidated as the combination of both quantitative and qualitative data analyses in a single study. The reason why this method has been adopted is the strengths of amalgamation of both quantitative and qualitative research which increases the validity of the research (Dornyei, 2007).

The research questions of the current study are:

1. To what extent the teachers at Noble Technical Institute-Erbil are motivated towards the implementation of Bologna Process?
2. Is there any difference between the motivation level of the trained and untrained teachers towards BP?
3. What are the factors that affect the level of teacher motivation towards BP?

2.2 Hypothesis of the Study

This study hypothesizes that there is no statistically significant difference between the motivation level of the teachers who took the six-month pedagogical training course for BP implementation and those teachers who didn't except for few workshops and seminars.

2.3 Population and Context

This study was undertaken at Noble Technical Institute (NTI, henceforth) that is located in the capital city, Erbil, of Kurdistan Region. The institute offers Diploma degree in 10 different departments. Noble Technical Institute is one among the handful institutes that implement bologna process in Erbil (viz. Gasha Institute and Aynda Private Technical Institute). Among the three, NTI was chosen as the context of the current research because it was ranked as the best private institute in the city by the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Researches-KRG in 2020.

In 2019, NTI has started planning for implementing Bologna Process. For this regard, to familiarize the staff with the process, the new pedagogical approaches and ECTS, a series of workshops and seminars were carried out for the academic staff so as to meet the standards of the process. The participants of the study were 50 teachers at NTI for the academic year 2021-2022. Only the teachers at NTI were chosen as the population of the study because working on all the institutes in Erbil will require extra time and money.

The researcher gathered demographic information of the 50 teachers (as seen in Table 1). The participants were from both genders (32 males and 18 females) and holders of Masters' and PhD degrees with different academic titles (ranks). Their experience in teaching in a Bologna environment ranges from one year to 3 years, though it was the first year for 26 of the teachers to teach in an institute implementing BP.

Table 1: Demographic information of teachers at Noble Technical Institute

No.	Demographic Data	No. of teachers	Percentage
1.	Gender		
	Male	32	64%
	Female	18	36%
2.	Academic titles (ranks)		
	Assistant Professor	7	14%
	Lecturer	7	14%
	Assistant Lecturer	36	72%
3.	Teaching experience at university/institute		
	1-5 years	36	72%
	11-15 years	11	22%
	21 or more	3	6%
4.	Educational degree		
	PhD	10	20%
	Master's	40	80%
5.	Teaching experience in Bologna environment		
	1 year	26	52%
	2 years	10	20%
	3 years	14	28%
6.	Department		
	Petroleum Technology	5	10%
	Survey	4	8%
	Media	4	8%
	Nursing	5	10%
	English Language	7	14%
	Pharmacy Assistant	8	16%
	Management	4	8%
	Accounting	4	8%
	Medical Laboratory Technician	5	10%
	IT	4	8%

7.	Employment status		
	Part-Time	14	28%
	Full-Time	36	72%

The researcher had further asked the participants whether they took the six-month Pedagogical Training Course for Teacher Development in which they take several modules as the preparation for implementing BP, like; Information and communication technology (ICT), student-centered approach, innovative pedagogical approaches, competency-based education, and university work environment cooperation modules. The number of the teachers who took the six-month long training course was 25. The remaining teachers, 25 in number, didn't take the previously mentioned training course except few workshops and seminars provided by NTI to familiarize their staff with the concept of BP.

2.4 Research Instruments and Data Collection

As mentioned in 2.1, a mixed methods approach (i.e. quantitative and qualitative) is adopted in this study. To collect the quantitative data, a survey questionnaire was distributed to the 50 teachers at NTI in order to know the motivation level of the teachers towards BP. Then it was analyzed by using SPSS. The questionnaire was of two parts. The first part asked for the teachers' demographic information (see Table 1) and the second part had 106 statements about the motivation of the teachers at NTI towards the implementation of Bologna Process. The questionnaire statements used in the survey questionnaire were written by the researcher himself and face validity was carried out for the statements and they were revised by 5 professors. For the questionnaire, a five-point likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) was used for all. The teachers were asked to rate from 1 to 5 on the survey questionnaire for each of the 106 statements. Later, to obtain the qualitative data, an unstructured interview was done with 20 of the teachers in order to get a deeper understanding of the factors that affect the teachers' motivation level towards Bologna process in NTI.

2.5 Ethical Considerations

While collecting the quantitative and qualitative data, the foremost aim of the study was explained to the participants. They were informed via a consent form that the study guarantees anonymity and confidentiality. Luckily, all the 50 teachers at NTI agreed to participate and fill out the questionnaire form and 20 of them agreed to do the interview.

2.6 Data Analysis

To analyze the collected data, descriptive statistics were performed using SPSS version 21.0. The reason for performing descriptive statistics is because the research questions can be investigated and analyzed using this type of performance.

3. Analysis of Results and Discussion

After the 50 teachers at NTI answered the questionnaire, the motivation level of each teacher was manually calculated in percentage and later the average of the motivation level of all the 50 teachers was calculated. The results show that the average of the motivation level of the 50 teachers towards BP at NTI was 49%.

Later, to answer the question whether there is any difference between the motivation level of the teachers who took the six-month Pedagogical Training Course for Teacher Development as the preparation for implementing BP and those teachers who were untrained (see 2.3). Among the 50 teachers at NTI, 25 teachers were trained and took the six-month training course, while the other 25 were not trained. Table 2 showcases the motivation level of each trained and untrained teacher towards BP in percentage.

Table 2: The motivation level of the trained and untrained teachers towards Bologna Process at NTI

Teacher No.	Motivation Level of Trained Teachers	Motivation Level of Untrained Teachers
1.	56%	37%
2.	58%	31%
3.	53%	30%
4.	53%	39%
5.	78%	40%
6.	76%	41%
7.	79%	27%
8.	67%	42%
9.	71%	26%
10.	75%	50%
11.	60%	48%
12.	73%	45%
13.	71%	44%
14.	77%	31%
15.	67%	43%
16.	65%	46%
17.	70%	34%
18.	55%	33%
19.	49%	44%
20.	51%	29%
21.	45%	28%
22.	46%	30%
23.	50%	34%
24.	45%	37%
25.	47%	36%

The average of the motivation level of the 25 trained teachers was 62%. On the other hand, the average of motivation level of the 25 untrained teachers was 37%. The result of this shows that the mean of trained group (62%) is almost twice than (higher) the mean of untrained group (37%) as shown in Figure 1.

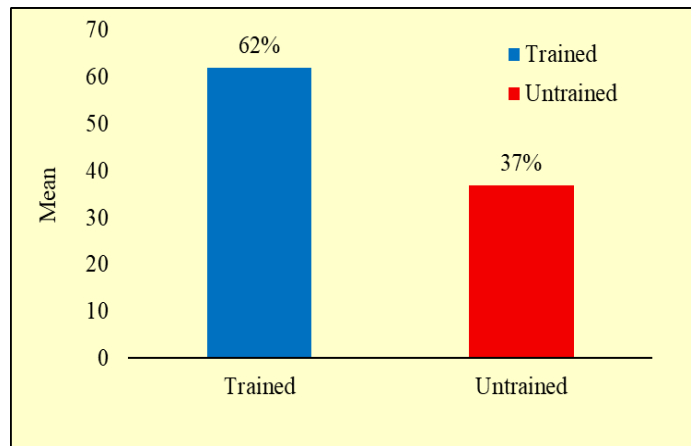


Figure 1: The average of motivation level in trained and untrained teacher groups towards BP

Moreover, an independent sample t test was done to assure whether there is a statistically significant difference between the motivation level of the trained and untrained teachers towards BP. Independent sample t test compares the mean between two variables (Blbas, et al., 2020). Independent sample t-test was used to analyze the relationship between the dependent variables like motivation level and independent variables like case control study (viz. trained and untrained teachers).

As put on view in Table 3, There is a statistically significant difference between the mean of trained and untrained teacher groups for motivation level towards BP because its p-values (0.001) is less than the significance level of $\alpha=0.05$.

Table 3: Independent Sample T Test between trained and untrained teacher groups for motivation level towards BP

	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	t	p-value
Trained	25	62	11.716	8.95	0.001
Untrained	25	37	7.053		

The data collected from the interviews with the 20 teachers also reaffirm the fact that the most prominent factor demotivating the teachers towards BP was lack of training. One of the interviewees who hasn't taken the six-month pedagogical training course claimed:

A handful of workshops doesn't equip me enough to perform well in a BP environment! I have been the authority in my class since I teach! I wonder how I would give authority to my students and make my class student-centered! I don't know how to do it in practice though I know what student-centered means!

One of the dramatic changes required from the teachers in NTI was the shift from teacher-centered to student-centered instruction of teaching. As it can be noticed from the previous interviewee's answer, student-centered instruction as one of the requirements of BP at NTI has added complexity to his working life.

Bearing in mind that digitalization changes the traditional educational mission of the institution, NTI expects the teachers to digitalize a part of their lessons as a BP requirement. It seems from one of the interviewee's claim that digitalizing lessons creates obstacles:

I had difficulty with connecting my laptop to the projector in class! I bought three projector adapters, yet I couldn't fix the problem.

Below is another interviewee's claim:

We don't have internet access all the time while at institute! And the students, as well, don't have internet access! As a requirement of BP, how can we digitalize lessons when there is no access to internet?

Another interviewee built up on the problem by asserting that students face difficulty in doing online quizzes and assignments:

Sometimes I have to spend a lot of time on learning how to use Edmodo and prepare online quizzes! The students also complain about sticking on certain stuff while taking online quizzes and submitting assignments online.

Though, at NTI, considerable changes were done to the curriculum as a plan for BP implementation in the beginning of the academic year, the teachers think that more work needs to be done on the curriculum. One of the interviewee stated:

After BP implementation here, a lot changes were made to the curriculum. But it needs further changes so that all the subjects taught make sure that the students will learn the skills rather than the knowledge.

Another interviewee, in the same regard, claimed:

The subject that I teach which is has nothing to do with today's labor market needs! It doesn't teach the students something that they would get benefit from for their future jobs.

Teachers' income tends to be another factor that demotivates the teachers. One of the interviewees seemed loving teaching and genuinely happy and motivated towards the BP implementation at NTI and said:

I thoroughly enjoy teaching in BP environment. I love staying at NTI and when my lecture ends, I would love to spend more time with my students in class. The students do feel the same and give great feedback, Alhamdulillah! The only problem that I have is... I will tell you a hypothetical number for the fee that I get. Imagine that I get \$500, but the amount of work that I do here is worth \$1000! So I am not satisfied with the amount of money I get and sometimes I feel like... I shouldn't put that much hard work in my teaching.

Another interviewee's claim in the same regard:

Well... I believe the income level of teachers in Europe and Kurdistan are very different. That's one of the reasons that makes it difficult for me to accept educational reform in Kurdistan.

Another interviewee stated:

I believe I am a good BP performer, but I always have the fear of performing bad and not having my contract prolonged for next year!

A unanimous belief among the 20 interviewed teachers was noticed that the time and effort they dedicate to teaching in BP is remarkably greater. They find it necessary to have a rigorous calendar in hand in the beginning of the academic year so that the teachers know what they are meant to do during the year and what responsibilities they would have other than teaching. Here is one of the interviewee's speech:

I am overloaded with organizational work! I just don't know what and which one to do first? Teaching? Organizational work? Or what my wife asks me to buy on my way home?

In their answers, the interviewees mentioned some plus points of Bologna Process at NTI. One interviewee said:

Before BP implementation, number of students at lecture halls were 50, now it is reduced to 30 or 35 in each lecture hall. And ... I find it a much more convenient number. Though they sit on fixed seats in rows in class. But the concept of BP is new and changes would gradually be made Insha'Allah.

Another one claimed:

Though the students are sitting in rows on fixed seats, but that doesn't stop me to assign them group works! I feel super motivated when I see my students standing and trying hard to reach out to their group members in the next row to discuss the topics in class.

4. Conclusion

Bologna Process has completed its fourth year since its introduction in Kurdistan. Now seemed the right time to evaluate the level of motivation of the teachers towards the process since they are the ones who determine the success of BP. The results of the current study show that the motivation level of the teachers at Noble Technical Institute-Erbil towards Bologna Process is moderate. Contrariwise, a statistically significant difference was noticed between the motivation level of the trained and untrained BP teachers. Based on the results, the six-month pedagogical training course for teacher development as the preparation for BP should be provided to all the academic staff equally before the implementation of the process since the teachers who took the training were way more motivated than the ones who did not. Teacher training for BP implementation is one of the prominent factors that boosts teacher motivation and make them construct the meaning of their new role to teaching in the process.

Technological changes and educational digitalization at NTI have lead both the teachers and students to a completely altered scenario. Another factor that demotivates the teachers is that the technological and teaching materials are not well-provided by the institute and along with the teachers, the students also need training for using digitalized platforms in their study.

Low level of teacher remuneration tends to be a further factor affecting teachers' motivation level and leading them to be bad performers of BP.

There is a consensus among the teachers at NTI that the concept of Bologna Process is still new in Kurdistan and great changes were done with its implementation at NTI like, the number of students in lecture halls were reduced to convenient numbers though the problem of fixed seats organized in rows is yet to be solved so that the students can comfortably sit and work in a student-centered class. A unanimous belief among the teachers at NTI makes it evident that considerable changes happened to the curriculum as BP was implemented in NTI but further change is needed in the curriculum to draft the subjects that do not ensure students' employability.

In consequence, NTI and other universities and institutes implementing Bologna Process in Erbil-Kurdistan need to solve these problems in stages before the beginning of a new academic year and setting out future goals so that all the drawbacks that demotivate teachers towards the implementation of Bologna Process will be demolished.

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