

Chapter 4

Advancing SoTL in Pakistan Through Cultural Humility, Reflection, and Student Voices

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ABSTRACT

This chapter explores the author's efforts in implementing and supporting the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) at Lahore University of Management Sciences (LUMS) in Pakistan. Reflecting on a classroom-based SoTL project, the author examines the role of cultural humility, respect, and reflection in developing new initiatives to engage faculty and students in SoTL. The chapter presents strategies for navigating cultural and institutional complexities, including hierarchical educational structures prevalent in Pakistan to foster collaboration and innovation in SoTL. Insights from students' voices in the author's SoTL project underscore the importance of incorporating students' perspectives to enhance teaching practices. Overall, the chapter offers key insights into promoting and sustaining SoTL in hierarchical contexts, stressing the importance of culturally responsive approaches and initiatives that consider faculty readiness and development to advance SoTL practices in diverse educational settings.

INTRODUCTION

When I was in graduate school, I was often asked about the focus of my research, as many students are, during that formative time. My responses were always variations of the same statement: *I'm interested in teaching and learning in higher education*. I tried to hide my confusion about how these interests fit into the faculty of education where I was studying. At the same time, I was obviously revealing my intellectual wandering and search for a scholarly home. Like many new Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) scholars in the past decade, I came to the field as a *Generation Two SoTL Scholar* (Bunnell et al.

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2024). Although my background includes experience as a K-12 educator before pursuing my master's and doctorate, my scholarly work was and continues to be firmly rooted in SoTL.

My introduction to SoTL began as a first-year master's student in adult education. I joined a university committee as a research assistant (RA), tasked with developing an institutional teaching and learning plan. The committee chair, one of my professors and a true SoTL pioneer at our institution, was working to expand SoTL among faculty and students. He was aware of my research interests, and he invited me to participate in the committee. Despite my lack of RA experience and limited theoretical knowledge of SoTL and higher education pedagogy at the time, I accepted his invitation. He recognized a spark for SoTL in me and supported my involvement in the committee and my future thesis work, helping to ignite that spark even further.

During the committee meetings, I listened to professors passionately discuss teaching and the various debates about its status within their disciplines. They expressed frustration with the challenges of driving change and promoting excellence in an institutional reward system that prioritized research, leaving little time or incentive for teaching improvement. They used SoTL to explore and communicate a vision for institutional change. I saw committee members act as translators of SoTL work for their colleagues, and I was inspired. Together, they leveraged their theoretical and practical teaching knowledge to contextualize institutional teaching and learning data and develop a university-wide strategic plan for teaching excellence. I sensed that our committee's work was somewhat on the fringes of typical university activities, and I loved it.

This committee experience opened several doors to SoTL for me, revealing its power and potential to drive institutional change and teaching excellence (Gauthier, 2016). It also served as a catalyst for my future PhD research on teacher learning and development in higher education. I had finally found a scholarly home! Over the years, I have been fortunate to have excellent mentors in teaching and learning centers who welcomed me into their SoTL communities. It has been in these communities where I found a place for my ideas and questions about post-secondary learning and teaching. Some doors to SoTL were opened for me during my career, and I opened others myself (Gauthier, 2016). SoTL was also my pathway to educational development, faculty, and administrative work, which I have been engaged in since 2014 and across several institutions in Canada and internationally.

From my early years of engagement in SoTL communities, scholarship, and events, I discovered spaces to explore both the intimate and broader cross-cultural/disciplinary questions that I had about teaching excellence, the improvement of teaching, and the shaping of student learning experiences. I continue to find great value in the boundless potential of SoTL for exploring teaching and learning. Importantly, SoTL offers numerous opportunities to weave together the diverse narratives that shape education. These narratives provide rich opportunities to inquire more deeply into teaching, learning, and education. However, these opportunities are also complex and open to interpretation, varying significantly depending on the educational contexts in which we work and learn.

Charting New SoTL Pathways in Pakistan

In 2019, my career took an unexpected and exciting turn when I accepted an educational consultant position at Lahore University of Management Sciences (LUMS) in Pakistan. LUMS is a not-for-profit private university with around 5,000 students across five schools including business, education, law,

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