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BES-126
Curriculum: Meaning
and its Dimensions

Block

2

UNDERSTANDING CURRICULUM

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BLOCK 2 CURRICULUM: MEANING AND ITS DIMENSIONS

Introduction to the Block

This block

UNIT 5   CURRICULUM: MEANING AND ITS DIMENSIONS

Structure

5.1   INTRODUCTION

Education of individual takes place both in natural and contrived environments. Although, the learner is the key player in any kind of learning environment, the role of both the learner and the teacher assumes greater significance in a contrived environment.

Both the learner and the teacher act equally in the educational process to mediate their interaction with the help of certain pre-decided learning experiences. These learning experiences are usually the third dimension of the teaching-learning process and in pedagogic terms, is called curriculum.

In this unit, we-will understand about this third dimension, its purpose and how it affect students and teachers. Since, this is the first unit of this Block, the concepts discussed herein will set the stage for discussion for the other Units. We will try to understand curriculum through various definitions and also through its approaches, which reflect a person's viewpoint encompassing the foundations of curriculum.

The unit will also emphasize the role of various representative groups in ensuring a socially relevant curriculum. The significance of in-built monitoring and feedback mechanism has been also emphasized.

Hence, in this unit you will gain an understanding of the different interpretations of curriculum, its genesis and growth, and the underlying processes and criteria that facilitate curriculum changes. You will understand the role of curriculum in making education more purposeful and geared to meet ever-changing societal needs, and also to achieve the objectives of teaching - learning.

5.2   OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you should be able to:

- define 'curriculum';

- explain the different interpretations of the concept of curriculum;

- defferentiate between the various approaches to curriculum;

- explain the curricular processes and criteria; and

- illustrate the role of curriculum in effective teaching and learning.

5.3   MEANING OF CURRICULUM

According to Smith (1996, 2001) 'the idea of curriculum is hardly new-but the way we understand and thorize it has altered over the years - and there remains dispute as to meaning'.

The Latin meaning of the term 'curriculum' is a 'racecourse' used by chariots. Hence, it can be understood as any path or course of study which to be undertaken by an educational institution, to be covered in a specified timeframe. The course of events can take place both inside and outside the school. Hence, while defining curriculum as 'course of events', one need to elaborate, 'which course of events'. It encompasses "the total experience provided to the learners in and out of school'.

There are many definitions abound in the literature, which will help in broading our understanding.

Marsh and Stafford (1988) highlight three dimensions of curriculum

- curriculum includes not only list of contents but also the aims and objectives, learning experiences and evaluation;

- curriculum comprises of planning learning; and

- curriculum and instruction can not be separated.

Dewey (1902) defined Curriculum as a continuous reconstruction, moving from the child's present experience out into that represented by the organized bodies of truth that we call studies . . . the various studies . . . are themselves experience— they are that of the race. (pp. 11–12)

Carter V. Good (1959) describes curriculum as "a systematic group of courses or sequences of subjects required for graduation or certification in a major field of study.

According to Wiles and Bondi (1988), "a curriculum can be called as a plan for learning, which contain assumptions about the purpose of education in our society, it also has a definite structure through which the vision of the planners can be translated into learning experiences for the learner. Hence, any curriculum, comprises of two major dimensions: a vision and a structure. Tanner and Tanner (1980) define, "Curriculum is the reconstruction of knowledge and experience systematically developed under the auspices of the school (or university), to enable the learner to increase his other control of knowledge and experience". Doll (1986), defined the curriculum of a school as the formal and informal content and process by which learners gain knowledge and understanding, develop skills, and alter attitudes, appreciations, and values under the auspices of that school.

According to Brown D.F (2006) curriculum include all student school experiences relating to the improvement of skills and strategies in thinking critically and creatively, solving problems, working collaboratively with others, communicating well, writing more effectively, reading more analytically, and conducting research to solve problems.

Thus, a curriculum is neither a document nor a sequence of experiences. It is a plan of facilitating learning for the learner. This plan starts from where the learner is, enumerates all the aspects and dimensions of learning that are considered necessary, gives reasons why such learning is considered necessary, and what educational aims it would serve. The plan also defines stage-specific objectives, what content to teach, and how to organise it. It also recommends general principles of teaching methods and evaluation and criteria for good teaching–learning material. Such a plan, of course, is almost always set in a document or a set of documents and implemented through organised experiences for children under teachers' guidance; but perhaps conceptually the plan should remain in focus, while the document remains a contingent reality and the course of experiences as implementation of a plan. (National position paper, NCERT, 2006 Curriculum).

Beane et. al.(1986) have grouped- most of these definitions under the following four categories, which clear indicate the nature of curriculum , which are as follows:

• Curriculum as a product

• Curriculum as a programme

• Curriculum as intended learning outcomes

• Curriculum as planned learner experiences

Let us understand them.

a) Curriculum as a Product

The definition of curriculum as a product is derived from the idea that the school or university prepares a document which would consist of a list of courses and syllabi of those courses. These documents are the result of curriculum planning and development.

b) Curriculum as a Programme

Here, a curriculum regend as to the courses of study offered by the school. It could also, mean a student's choice of courses within a given program of the school. Such a definition of curriculum is most widely accepted by schools. However, the broader interpretation of this definition relates to the broader purpose of the school i.e. learning and hence here, curriculum is the means of achieving that purpose and it will denote sources of learning other than just the courses the study. It acknowledges the learning that occurs in several school settings like cultural events, sports activities, in the cafeteria, in the bus, in the principal's office, etc. apart from the prescribed course of study that takes place through various activities.

c) Curriculum as Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

Here, curriculum is defined as 'what is to be learned'. This definition of curriculum clearly demarcates what is to be learned from and how it is to be learned. The question of why something is to be learned is not considered. Curriculum in this context refers to knowledge of content, skills, attitudes and behaviour that learners are supposed to learn in school or college. Learners go through planned leaning experiences by interacting with their peer group and teachers in the school environment, in general. However, proponents of this definition believe that such sources of learning then characterize "instruction". There is considerable debate over the meaning of the terms 'curriculum' and 'instruction'. Some curriculum designers see a distinct difference between what and how of learning. Their definition limits the idea of curriculum to the former. Curriculum as intended learning outcomes prescribes the result of instruction and not the means, i.e. the activities, material even the instructional content. The advantages of this definition are:

i) Outcome is directly linked to the objectives, and

ii) The basic plans of learning and its implementation or transaction are kept as distinct entities.

The disadvantage of this definition is that it does not take a comprehensive view of learning. The what and how of learning are treated separately and this leads to fragmented planning.

d) Curriculum as Planned Learning Experiences

The three definitions of curriculum discussed above have in common the idea that curriculum is something which is planned prior to the teaching - learning situations. The fourth category of definitions differs from the above as it refers to curriculum as experiences of the learners which is an outcome of the planned situations. The proponents of this group firmly believe that what happens is not

always in accordance with what was planned. Hence the above definitions, in their opinion, constitute only the curriculum plans, whereas the actual curriculum is the learning that occurs in the students after going through different experiences.

In their opinion the outcomes of the planned situations of the course contents are more important than the course content itself. In other words, learning experiences must be well planned. A curriculum should include as analysis of the learner's learning experiences. To illustrate this definition, imagine that a teacher conducts a monthly project activity, with the goal of fostering team spirit and cooperation among the members. However, every month the teacher assigns poor grades to the shy and quiet members and high grades to the bold, talkative, and dominating members. As a result the former group would gradually get demotivated and resist any such activity. They will also learn that it is the high grades that matter and will not be able to include the intended qualities of team spirit and cooperation. Hence the course of events, which emerges, is different from what was intended. The advantages of this definition are:

i)   It is learner-centric and focuses more on learning than teaching.

ii)   It imparts a complex and comprehensive meaning to the term 'curriculum'.

5.3.1   Differentiating Between Curriculum Framework, Curriculum, Syllabus and Text Books

Most often, there is confusion in the terms curriculum framework, syllabus and curriculum itself. Let us try to understand the difference among these terms.

Curriculum Framework: It is a plan that interprets educational aims vis-a-vis both individual and society in order, to arrive at an understanding about the kinds of learning experiences to be given to the learner in the schools.

Curriculum: You have already studied various definitions as curriculum. It must be clear to you know that of Curriculum is planned activities which are designed to implement a particular educational aim includes the content to be taught and the knowledge, skills and attitudes which are to be deliberately fostered, together with statements of criteria for selection of content, and choices in methods, materials and evaluation.

Syllabus: Refers to the content of what is to be taught and the knowledge, skills and attitudes which are to be deliberately fostered; together with stage specific objectives.

Textbook: When as a teacher, you start working with children in classrooms; you have some 'content' that you have to teach, in other words, you have a syllabus. That syllabus is very often confined in the textbook. Thus, a textbook becomes an embodiment of syllabus—all that is in it has to be taught, and that is all that is to be taught. It becomes a methodological guide for all aspects of classroom practices —i.e. what has to be read, it also becomes the evaluation system—questions at the end of each chapter have to be answered orally and in writing, reproducing the text from the book itself. The possibility of providing enriched experiences to the children gets a little boost when teacher starts using textbooks as reflective guides.

Check Your Progress

Notes : a)   Write your answers in the space given below.

b)   Compare your answers with those given at the end of the unit.

1)   Define curriculum in your own words.

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2)   What are the advantages of accepting the definition of curriculum as a programme of studies?

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5.4   TYPES OF CURRICULUM

Curriculum can broadly be classified into three main categories. These are:

i)   Overt or Explicit Curriculum

ii)   Hidden or Implicit Curriculum

iii)   Null Curriculum

Let us understand each of these categories.

Overt Curriculum

Overt curriculum is also known as explicit curriculum and intended curriculum. This includes all those curricular and co-curricular, experiences, which are intentionally planned by the school, college or university organization to be provided to the learners. It consists of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values, which are overtly to be provided to the learners. Overt curriculum is designed keeping in mind the goals and objectives of the educational system. Thus, it is confined to those written understandings formally designed by curriculum designers and administrators.

Hidden Curriculum

Hidden Curriculum is unintended or unnoticed curriculum which is often unwritten. You know that curricular inputs are implicitly provided to the learner by the organization through various means. Learners learn a lot from the social environment of the classroom and the school. A teacher during her course of interaction with learners provide instructional inputs, which might not be planned and designed by her earlier. Through various non-verbal behaviour like gestures and postures, eye contact, appreciation of learner behaviour by nodding, the teacher conveys many things. A hidden curriculum also includes the value system of the school and its teachers. Hence, a hidden curriculum is as important as the overt curriculum. Learners learn 'appropriate' ways to act at school is the part of hidden curriculum.

Null Curriculum

It is physically not possible to teach everything in the schools, therefore many topics and subject areas are excluded intentionally. Eisner called them as 'Null Curriculum'; For example, life education, career planning, etc. are not fine part of overt curriculum but are important areas.

5.5 APPROACHES TO CURRICULUM

A clear understanding of any kind of curriculum depends on the approach the curriculum designers have adopted. The approach to curriculum provides the broad perspective, orientation or position a particular curriculum is based on.

Ornstein and Hunkins (1988) have provided the following features of curriculum approach:

- A curriculum approach reflects a holistic position, or a metaorientation, encompassing the foundations of curriculum, domain of curriculum, and the theoretical and practical principles of curriculum.

- It expresses a viewpoint about the development and design of curriculum, the role of the learner, teacher and curriculum specialist in planning curriculum, and the important issues that need to be examined.

Very often this broad perspective is based on different theoretical positions pertaining to how educational discourses in a school or college situation have to be designed, developed and implemented. Our intention here is to explicate some of these theoretical positions which have influenced the concept and the process of curriculum.

Although one can find different approaches to curriculum put forth by different authors, in our discussion, we shall touch upon five approaches presented by Ornstein and Hunkins (1988). These are discussed in the coming sections.

5.5.1 Behavioural - Rational Approach

This approach is based on a logical - scientific perspective, which has emerged out of researches done in behavioural sciences and dominated the thinking domain in the early twentieth century. This approach is also known as logical positivist, conceptual, empiricist, and experimentalist, rational - scientific and technocratic. The protagonists of this approach believe that curriculum making is a sequential and structured activity. They emphasize that any kind of activity has to start with goals and objectives, followed by sequencing of content or learning experiences and then evaluation of learning outcomes (student achievement/ performance) based on objectives, content and transaction of learning experiences.

Behaviourial approach is oriented to behaviourial objectives, which means objectives in the observable terms expected from learners after teaching. This approach is also criticised for the reason that precise specification is observable only at the lower level of learning such as addition, memorization etc. however for the higher order thinking skills (eg. critical analysis, sythethik thinking) it is impracticable.

5.5.2   Systems - Managerial Approach

According to this theory, the school is perceived as a social system. There are various components of a school systems which interact among themselves to achieve the intended objectives formulated by the schools. These components are teacher, student, curriculum specialist and others who interact with them according to certain norms and standards. Thus, this approach focuses on programmes, schedules, space, materials, equipment, personnel and resources. Consideration is given to committee and group processes, communication processes, leadership, methods and strategies, human relations and decision making (Ornstein and Hunkins, 1988). The focus of this approach, unlike behavioural-rational, is not on the objectives, contents and evaluation of learning experiences, but on the management and improvement of the school system based on policies, plans and people. It embodies both managerial and systems perspectives in curriculum design.

While the managerial perspective refers to organization of people and policies, the systems perspective looks at three major components i.e. engineering, stages and structures. Engineering constitutes those processes through which engineers like principals, directors, superintendents and coordinators plan the curriculum. Stages refer to development, design implementation and evaluation. Structure constitutes subjects, courses, units and lessons.

5.5.3   Intellectual - Academic Approach

This approach had its genesis in the intellectual work of John Dewey, Henry Morrison and Boyd Bode and became a popular approach during the 1930s and 1950s. It analyses major positions, trends and concepts of curriculum. It looks at schooling and education from a broader perspective and discusses education from a historical and philosophical angle.

It is usually scholastic and theoretical hence also referred to as 'traditional, encyclopedic, intellectual or knowledge - oriented approach (Ornstein and Hunkins, 1993).

5.5.4   Humanistic - Aesthetic Approach

As opposed to the behavioural - rational approach, this approach emphasizes the uniqueness of each child and the curriculum has to be designed and developed based on the needs, interests, and ability of children. It lays stress on self-actualization and self reflectiveness of the learners. Originating in humanistic theories of learning, this approach emphasize on valuing ego identity, freedom to learn and personal fulfillment. The curriculum focuses on active interaction among learners and teachers, on problem solving and on inquiry. Cooperative and collaborative learning, independent learning, small group, learning are some of the curricular strategies which have emanated from this approach. This approach also propagates for curriculum areas in arts, music, literature, dance, etc. which emphasise the development of human side of the learner more than on the development of his intellectual activities.

5.6.5   Reconceptualist Approach

Although reconceptualists have not contributed anything towards 'approach to curriculum' in terms of providing technical knowledge for developing curriculum, they have certainly provided a newer perspective, which is subjective, political, and ideological in nature. This perspective is rooted in the philosophy and social activitism of deconstructionists like Count, Rugg, and Benjamin. They challenge the traditional, scientific and rational views of curriculum and they lay emphasis on moral and ideological issues of education and economic and political institutions of society. A basic principle of reconceptialism is that the more learners understand themselves, the more they will understand their world. Thus, curriculum development must be connected with historical, economic, political and contemporary social frame of reference.

Check Your Progress

Notes : a)   Write your answers in the space given below.

   b)   Compare your answers with those given at the end of the unit

3)   What is null curriculum?

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4)   State the main purpose of the humanistic approach to curriculum development.

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5.6 CURRICULUM AND THE ROLE OF TEACHERS

Teachers determine to a large extent the manner in which the curriculum is executed in the classroom. Their role is defined in respect of curriculum transaction and evaluation. It is also believed that teaching-learning would be more effective if the teacher is involved in the process of the curriculum development. Their role could be instrumental in the overall improvement of the curriculum.

Doll (1996) highlights three reasons why teachers could be effective improvers of the curriculum:

i)   Work in close proximate with the learners

ii)   Engaged in individual study and

iii) Interact with other teachers and share their curricular experiences.

These three factors enable them to develop insights and skills and can thus improve the quality of learning experiences, which they provide to the learners. Teachers strive to fulfill educational objectives by fostering understanding and

tolerance among students, awaken curiosity and stimulate independent thinking. The style of teaching also greatly influences the manner of curriculum transaction. Hence teachers must be involved in the process of curriculum planning, development, delivery, evaluation and review (Dewal, 2004). A teacher's style can either promote role learning, or, alternatively, it can awaken a child's curiosity.

Teacher's involvement and familiarization with curriculum development can make the teaching-learning process more relevant and authentic. Once the basis and the instructional role of curriculum are understood, the teacher can think in terms of alternatives. The evaluation mode and techniques shall, as a result, be more in agreement with the aims and objectives of curriculum.

Once the basis, the instrumental role, of curriculum is understood, the teacher can think in terms of alternatives. The evaluation mode and techniques shall as a result be more in agreement with the aims and objectives of the curriculum. A teacher of English or mathematics shall not limit his vision to mere teaching of the subject. He shall try to give the subject its proper place in the broader framework of a particular level of schooling. If the aim of teaching and learning is to construct meaningful patterns out of experience, then the teacher who believes in it shall help his students evolve a more dependable conception of reality. The teacher's is the central role in excellence in education and his involvement in and clarity about curriculum construction shall stimulate his ingenuity rather than further his indifference.

Check Your Progress

Notes : a) Write your answers in the space given below.

b) Compare your answers with those given at the end of the unit

5) Why should a teacher study the issues related to curriculum planning and development ?

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5.7 LET US SUM UP

In this unit, we dealt with the definitions of the term "curriculum". Various interpretations of the term curriculum were also examined. Depending on the context, curriculum has been interpreted as- a programme of studies, a product, intended learning outcomes, and planned learning experiences .We explained the various approaches to curriculum, which designers adopt.

A curriculum approach reflects a curricularist's holistic perspective and viewpoint about the design and development of the curriculum. The approaches discussed were - Behavioural, Rational, Systems – Managerial, Intellectual - Academic , Humanistic – Aesthetic Reconceptualist

In this unit we also gave you an outline of the curriculum movement and its influence on the concept of curriculum. We further discussed the development of curriculum in the global and Indian perspective. The role of teachers as

executions of the curriculum was also highlighted. The unit ended with a discussion on the process of curriculum as change and how the change could be implemented of revision and improvement of the curriculum. The existence of an in built monitoring mechanism was emphasized to ensure that the curriculum was being transacted **as** visualized.

5.8 UNIT-END EXERCISES

1. Interview teachers, students, educational administrators and parents of students and find out from them what they mean by the word 'curriculum'.

2. Make an analysis of the National Curriculum Framework for School Education (2005) and find out its striking features. Visit http://www.ncert.nic.in for NCFSE (2005).

5.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. It can be defined as set of planned activities which are designed to implement a particular educational aim- set of such aims - in terms of the content of what is to be taught and the knowledge, skills and attitudes which are to be deliberately fostered, together with statements of criteria for selection of content, and choices in methods, materials and evaluation.

2. The advantages of defining curriculum as a programme of studies are:

   a) Curriculum can be described in context terms

   b) Learning occurs in many different setting in the school other than the specified courses of study.

3. It refers to the curriculum, which is not taught. This means curricular matters are not consciously but are taught by our silence.

4. The main purpose of the humanistic approach to curriculum development is to enable the student to apply his knowledge in real life situations. Thus educational experiences gained in the school environment make him an effective human-being.

5. The study of the curriculum process helps the teacher have an understanding of the underlying concept of the curriculum achieve the intended objectives of the curriculum plan teaching-learning activities in more effective ways make his teaching more authentic and relevant.

5.10 REFERENCES AND SUGGESTED READINGS

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UNIT 6   DOMAINS AND DETERMINANTS OF CURRICULUM

Structure

6.1   INTRODUCTION

We have discussed the meaning and concept of curriculum in the previous unit. Having discussed the concept of curriculum, we now come to the foundations of curriculum.

As you know, curriculum can not be constructed/developed in isolation. Issues related to socioeconomic conditions, environmental factors, etc.. helping in a meaningful curriculum. In this Unit, we shall present an overview of all the possible considerations you should keep in mind while planning curriculum for your students

When we develop a curriculum we depend primarily on ideas that stem from three major fields: Philosophy, Sociology and Psychology. These traditional fields are considered the foundations of curriculum and their understanding is crucial for the study of curriculum.

Philosophy deals with the nature and meaning of life. It inquires into the nature of human beings, the values that shape their lives and the role and purposes of education. One's perception of philosophy greatly influences one's views of learners and of various learning activities. A curriculum should also be socially

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relevant. Hence a study of sociological factors is imperative as it provides necessary clues about the characteristics of contemporary and future life of the learner. This helps to make the curriculum socially relevant. Psychology deals with basic human needs, attitudes and behaviours. It helps to understand the nature and characteristics of learners. Psychology thus provides curriculum planner the basis for identifying a curricular arrangement that will most benefit the learners, in terms of their growth and development. In this unit, we shall deal with these foundation areas and understand how each influences curriculum plans, which in turn equip the learner with a wide range of individual and social experiences.

6.2 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you should be able to:

* explain the domains of curriculum;

* explain the interrelationship between the various domains of curriculum;

* describe determinants of curriculum design and planning; and

* analyse the influence of various determinants of curriculum.

6.3 DOMAINS OF CURRICULUM

As mentioned earlier, the four components of a curriculum design are: (i) purpose - i.e. aims, goals and objectives, (ii) design of subject matter (iii) implementation of the learning experiences and (iv) evaluation approaches (Ornstien and Hunkins, 1988). The manner in which these four components are arranged determines the design of the curriculum. Often one component is given more weightage than the others. However, most curricular designs lay more emphasis on context subject matter while others focus on learning activities. The interrelationship among these four components of curriculum design has been given by Giles, et. al. (1942) in a diagram (see Figure 6.1). They have used method and organization instead of learning experiences.
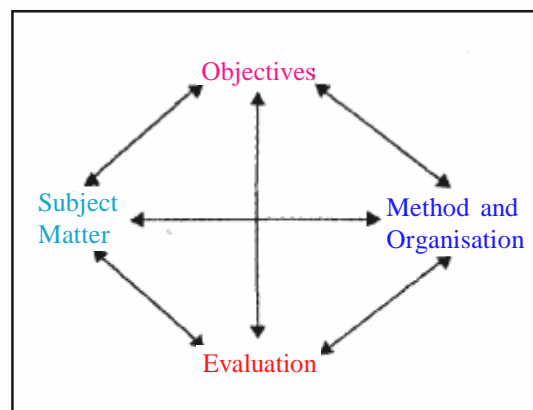

Fig. 6.1: The Components of Designs

Source : Giles, et.al. (1942)

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A curriculum designer is thus confronted with four basic questions: What is expected to be done? What content is to be included? What strategies, resources and activities will be employed? How will the results of such a design be appraised? The paradigm presented by Giles, el. al. (1942) suggests continuous interactivity between the four Components i.e. decisions made about one component will influence the other.

This involves theoritical and practical issues which will influence selection of goals and objectives of education, content and its organization, determine the pattern of delivering the content and also guide their judgment about the evaluation procedures to be adopted.

There are four bases of any curriculum social forces, human development, the nature of learning and the nature of knowledge and cognition. Let us understand the importance and influence of these bases.
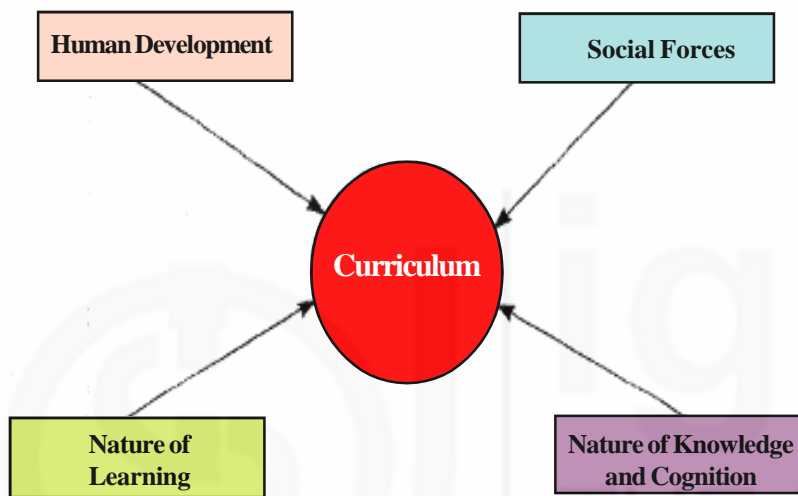
Fig. 6.2: Bases of Curriculum

a) **Social Forces**

The social forces in a society influence the functioning of schools directly as well as indirectly. These social forces are reflected in social goals, cultural uniformity and diversity, social pressures, social change, future planning and concepts of culture. Our country is multicultural and has a long recorded history, the social forces represent a bewildering variety as well as complexity; these social forces determine the social agenda of education. The curriculum reflects contemporary social forces and helps shape the society. National Policy on Education (1986, modified in 1992) is very specific on this aspect:

.."The National System of Education will be based on a national curricular framework which contains a common core along with other components that are flexible. The common core will include the history of India's freedom movement, the constitutional obligations and other content essential to nurture national identity. These elements will cut across subject areas and will be designed to promote values such as India's common cultural heritage, egalitarianism, democracy and secularism, equality of sexes, protection of the environment, removal of social barriers, observance of the small family norm, and inculcation of the scientific temper. All educational programmes will be carried on in strict conformity with secular values." (NPE 1986, 3 - 4).

b) **Human Development**

Various aspects of human growth and development are accomplished partly by the structured curriculum in use in the school and partly by the society. The area of human development has been well researched and studied in detail. These studies have made us think afresh about children, their developmental stages, how they think, their needs and interests. Children are not small adults. They differ from adults in many important ways. Differences across various developmental stages before adulthood are not merely quantitative, they are essentially qualitative. These differences have been admirably described by various child psychologists, chief among these being Jean Piaget. Knowledge about human development can help the teacher develop a curriculum. The curriculum thus developed must include various aspects of development stage not only in terms of age cohorts but also differences among children from the same age cohort.

c) **Nature of Learning**

Various aspects of the learning process have been well researched though we have not been able to reveal the entire process. This has given rise to a number of learning theories chief among these being the behaviouristic theories and the cognitive theories. These learning theories recommend different approaches to the task of curriculum planning. Curriculum specialists cannot ignore the role of these theories because most of these are scientific in their orientation.

d) **Nature of Knowledge and Cognition**

The nature of knowledge and cognition is yet another basis of curriculum. What distinguishes knowledge from information? How do children transform information into knowledge? What knowledge is most worthwhile? What is the nature of thought processes? How are various thought processes and cognitive process skills related to each other? These questions have interested teachers, psychologists, researchers as well as philosophers. Answers to these questions can help educationists organise knowledge in the curriculum. It has been established now that learners have their own preferred learning styles and strategies. A good curriculum should therefore provide alternative paths for learning according to different learning styles of students.

Check Your Progress

Notes : a) Write your answers in the space given below.

b) Compare your answers with those given at the end of the unit.

1) List the components of curriculum design.

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2) What is the role of nature of knowledge and cognition in curriculum planning?

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6.4 DETERMINANTS OF CURRICULUM

Curriculum for any level is determined by many factors. It is important that these factors must be understood as they help in providing direction to curriculum development. Let us have a discussion about these determinants and understand their implications.

6.4.1 Philosophical Orientations

Smith Stanley and Shores (1957) have asserted that philosophy is essesntial when formulating and justifying educational purposes, selecting and organizing knowledge, formulating learning activities.

The aims are the statements of value which are derived from the philosophy; means represents the processes and methods reflect the philosophical choices and the end connote the facts, concepts and principles of knowledge or behavior learnt by the learners.

According to Ornstein and Hunkins (1988), the function of philosophy could be either to serve as the base or starting point of curriculum development or as an interdependent function with other functions in curriculum development. It involves an understanding of the cause and effect relationships, questioning one's point of view and that of others, clarifying one's beliefs and values, and formulating a framework for making decisions and acting on these decisions.

Different proponents have related philosophy to curriculum differently of the first school of thought to which John Dewey belonged contented that "philosophy may be defined as the general theory of education," and that, the business of philosophy is to provide, 'the framework for the "aims and methods of schools". The second school of thought is exemplified by Tyler (1949), according to him, philosophy is one of five criteria influencing educational goals, and is interrelated to the other criteria like studies of learners, studies of contemporary life, suggestion from subject specialists and the psychology of learning etc. Let us how deal with how several different philosophies impact on curriculum.

i) Idealism

Idealism emphasizes that matter is an illusion and moral and spiritual reality is the chief explanation of the world. They consider truth and values as absolute, timeless and universal. The world of mind and ideas is permanent, regular and orderly; it represents a perfect order.

According to idealism, Knowledge consists of rethinking of the latest ideas present in the mind. Hence, it is the teacher's job to bring out this latent knowledge into the consciousness of the child, which would imply that teachers would act as role models of enduring values. The school must be highly structured, advocating only those ideas that demonstrate those enduring values. The choice of instructional materials would depend on the subjects, which constitute the cultural heritage of mankind. According to Ornstein, three essential skills (three Rs) and essential subjects (like English, arithmetic, science, history, and foreign language) must be the part of curriculum.

ii) Realism

Realism believes that human behaviour is rational when it conforms to the laws of nature and is governed by social laws. People perceive the world through their senses and reason, therefore education as a matter of reality rather than speculation. According to realists, curriculum follows a hierarchical order with the abstract subjects at the top and the transitory subjects at the bottom. They stress that a curriculum consists of organized body of knowledge pertaining to specific areas. For example, the history curriculum comprises experiences of mankind. Details related to animals can be studied in zoology. Like the idealist, the realist also stresses logic and lessons and exercise the mind that cultivate rational thought. It is the responsibility of the teacher then, to impart to the learners the knowledge about the world they live in. Logic and the experiences that cultivate human mind are emphasized in curriculum. The three "Rs" (reading, writing and arithmetic) are also necessary in a person's basic education; they also believed that the subject experts are the source and authority for determining the curriculum.

iii) Pragmatism

Pragmatism, also referred to as experimentalism, is based on change, process and relativity. In contrast to the traditional philosophies, i.e., idealism and realism, pragmatism-suggests that the value of an idea lies in its actual consequences. Thus, they believe that learning occurs when a person engages in problem-solving which is transferable to a wide variety of subjects and situations.

It is believed that whatever values and ideas which are upheld currently would be considered as tentative since further social development must refine or change them. For instance, at a particular period of time it was generally believed that the earth was flat, which was subsequently disproved through scientific research.

To consider, therefore, what is changeless (idealism) and the perceived universe (realism) and to discard social and/or perpetual change is detrimental to the overall growth and development of children.

Curriculum, according to pragmatists, should be so planned that it induces teachers and the learners to think critically, rather than what to think. Teaching should, therefore, be more exploratory than explanatory. Learning takes places in an active way as learners solve problems, which help them widen the horizons of their knowledge and reconstruct their experiences in consonance with the changing world. Therefore, the teacher should provide learners learning opportunities to construct their own learning experiences. They stress more on problem-solving using scientific method than acquiring an organized body of knowledge.

iv) Existentialism

According to the existentialist philosophy, learners are thrust into a number of choice making situations. Learners should be given the freedom to choose what to study, and also to determine what criteria to determine these truths. It emphasizes that education must centre on the perceptions and feeling of the individual in order to facilitate understanding of personal reactions or responses to life situations: Of primary concern in this process is the individual. Since, life is based upon personal meanings, the nature of education, the existentialists would argue, should be largely determined by the learner.

Individual learners should not be forced into predetermined programmes of study. Rather learning provisions must be made by the teacher according to choice of the learners.

Ornstein and Hunkins (1988) are of the view that an existentialist curriculum would focus on experiences and subjects that lend themselves to philosophical dialogue and acts of choice making. It would enable activities of self-expression and experimentation. The teacher becomes a partner in the process of teaching-learning, assuming a non- directive role. The teacher is a more of a facilitator enabling the learner to explore and search to develop insights rather than one who imposes predetermined values.

v) Reconstructionism

Reconstructionism laid more emphasis on society-centred education which took care of the needs of society (not the individual) and all classes (not only the middle class). They believe that as the school/college is attended by virtually all the youth, it must be used as a means to shape the attitudes and values of each generation. As a result, when the youth become adults they will share certain common values, and thus the society will have reshaped itself.

The reconstructionist curriculum consists of subjects which promote new social, economic and political education. The subject matter is to be used as a vehicle for studying social problems, which must serve as the focus of the curriculum. Views of some recent reconstructionist have been put forth by Ornstein and Hunkins, (1988) who have given a reconstructionist programme of education which emphasize the following:

- critical-examination of the culture heritage of a society as well as the entire civilization;

- scrutiny of controversial issues;

- commitment to bring about social and constructive changes;

- cultivation of a planning-in-advance attitude that considers the realities of the world we live in; and

- enhancement of culture renewal and internationalism;

Stemming from this view

Reconstructionism expands the field of curriculum to include intuitive, personal, mystical, political and social systems of theorizing. In general, the curriculum advocated by recontructionists, emphasizes sociology, psychology and philosophy, and not the hard sciences. The thrust is on developing individual self realization and freedom through cognitive and intellectual activities, and thus on liberating people from the restrictions, limitation and controls of society. The idea is that we have had enough of discipline-based education and narrow specialization, and we do not need more specialists now, we need more 'good' people if we want to survive.

The reconstructionists, including such recent proponents as Mario Fantini, Iiarold Shane and Alvin Toffler, seek a curriculum that emphasizes, cultural pluralism, internationalism, and futurism. Students should be taught to appreciate life in a world of many nations - a global village - with many alternatives for the future, they advocate.

What we as curriculum specialists need to do is to adopt an eclectic approach, the middle road, where there is no emphasis on extremes of subject matter or socio- psychological development, excellence or equality. We must understand

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that curricularists have to continuously reflect on their curricular decisions, and these should be based on the changing needs of the students and society. Hence a curriculum philosophy should be one that is politically and economically feasible and serves the needs of students and society.

Check Your Progress

Notes : a) Write your answers in the space given below.

   b) Compare your answers with those given at the end of the unit.

3) According to realism, what is the role of teachers?

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4) What do the reconstructionists emphasize with regard to the role of education and curriculum?

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6.4.2 Psychological Considerations

While deciding curriculum, various factors related to growth and development of learners, their Psychological needs, interests and problems are to be kept in mind. Each area of growth and development (such as physical development, emotional development, social development, and intellectual or cognitive development) are marked by distinguished characteristics. The interaction between these four areas are represented in the figure below.
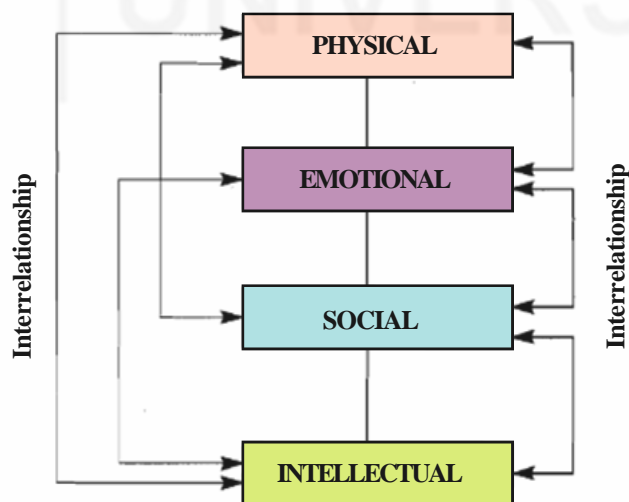
Fig. 6.3: Area of Development and their Interrelationships

It is clear from the figure above that environment around the learner, manipulation of learning experiences to enhance capacity ability to learn, etc.. are other factors which influence the child's readiness to learn. The readiness principle suggests that for learning a particular task or unit, the learner has to achieve a minimum level of maturity. It implies that learning should not be too early, too much or

too fast. However, it must also be noted that readiness to learn does not depend solely on the age and maturity of the child but also on the learning experiences, school environment etc. Hence, what the curriculum has to offer and to whom should be decided by taking into account all these factors and their influence on one another.

6.4.3 Social Considerations

Education of the child is a social undertaking and it is always carried out in a social situation. The social forces in a society also determine the objectives of education, therefore, it is necessary that while planning the curriculum, we must have a through knowledge of those social forces that have a bearing on the educational system of the society. There are several theories that attempt to explain the relationship between the curriculum and the wider social environment.

Apple's (1982) work suggests ideology as the thread that relates the levels of base and superstructure. In order to perceive the organisation and practices of curriculum, it is necessary to investigate the ideological root of what counts as valid knowledge in a given curriculum. Ideology refers to the process of production of ideas and values of a dominant group in social life, and the legitimation and promotion of these in society. It is about how a dominant group uses power to shape its notions into a mainstream trend.

A good curriculum ensures that the unique character and integrity of the society is preserved and the quality of life of social groups is also improved. The social forces influence the decisions regarding what is to be taught, and how it is to be taught. What is to be added to or deleted from the existing curriculum to accommodate the change(s) in society is also decided by social forces. Social forces exert their influence on curriculum through different organisations and groups of people operating at regional, national and local/community levels. These forces are discussed under four categories: governmental forces, quasi-legal forces, professional organisations, and special interest groups operating in a community. Please refer to Figure 6.4.
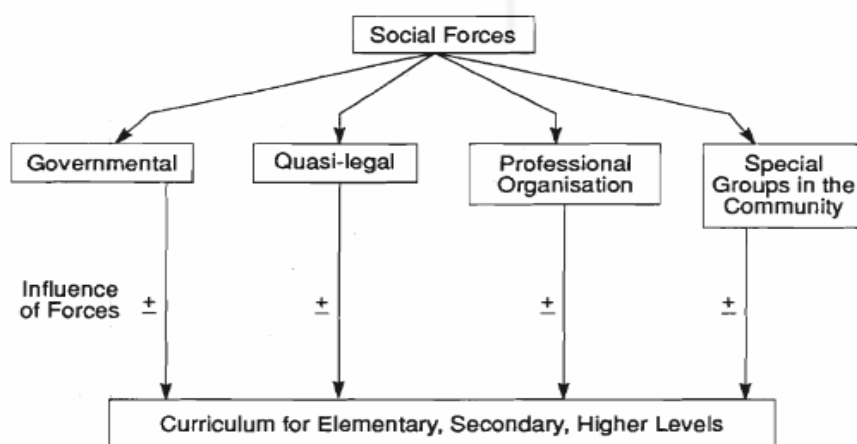

Fig. 6.4: Social Forces Exerting Influence on Curriculum

i) Governmental forces

The government makes policies on education and its curriculum. Direct governmental controls are based on constitutional and statute laws. For example, RTE has given right to children between 6-14 yearss to have free and compulsory

education. For this, government has to make provisions for physical facilities and engagement of teachers. It has develop curriculum and textbooks for the children. Similarly through Acts of Parliament in 1969 and 1986, the Government approved some new education policies which included components of vocational education, moral education, and extended general education upto class X. All these and several similar policy decisions affect curriculum planning. These decisions have led to reformulation of objectives of education and reconstruction of curriculum at different levels of education: primary, secondary and higher education. Another example is the constitution of India enshrines the principles of democracy and secularism which are reflected in the school curriculum and the textbooks based on them.

Another means through which the government influences the school curriculum and in fact, most parts of the school education is the financial support extended by the Central, State and Local governments to educational enterprise in the country. Thus the government is in a position to enforce its rules, regulations and policies regarding curricular activities and experiences to be provided to the students.

ii) Quasi-legal Forces

These forces are not necessarily created by law. These may be created by voluntary organisations, professional bodies and autonomous institutions. These may include universities and colleges, parent-teacher associations (PTAs), textbook writers, publishers, philanthropic organisations, mass media, etc. For example, universities and colleges not only influence the curriculum through teacher education, but also play a significant role in determining the school curriculum. PTAs are the pressure groups through which community views on curriculum and textbooks are. channelled to school, its board and curriculum planners.

Big publishers greatly influence the type of content to be included in the textbooks and the curriculum. Textbooks with sound psychological organisation, stimulating format, appropriate learning activities and relevant and powerful illustrations determine the content and the teaching procedures to be followed in schools. Curriculum makers sometimes pattern the course of study in particular fields according to these well organised textbooks.

iii) Professional Organisations

The professional organisations which influence the curriculum to a great extent include teachers' and teacher educators' associations. For example, National Council of Teacher Education (NCTE) is empowered by the Government of India to design curriculum for teacher education. The teachers organisations not only work for improving the welfare and working conditions of the teachers but also disseminate information about the profession, give suggestions for improving instruction and support research in education and in-service training of the teachers. All these activities affect school curricula. While planning the curriculum, the curriculum planner has to consider the views and suggestions of educational organisations and their well-informed members. Beside teachers' professional organisations. the curriculum planner considers the suggestions and concerns of other related professions.

For example, for planning a good curriculum on commerce and accounting the opinions of the associations of professional accountants, company secretaries,

exporters, etc., should be taken into account. Similarly views, research findings and experiences of subject societies should also be considered while planning the curriculum.

iv) Special Interest Groups in the Community

In every society there are groups or organizations which promote a particular school of thought or areas of special interest. These organisations may include patriotic groups, cultural and religious organisations, civic groups and others representing various interests in the community. The curriculum planner should be interested in having an insight into the beliefs, aspirations and expectations of various groups in the society.

The local education committee which represents the community, governs the schools and caters to the educational interest of the community, usually approves the course proposals and authorises the development of curriculum materials. Through these committees the aspirations, expectations and values of the interested groups are reflected in the curriculum, of course, within the broad frame of state and central education policy. These groups attempt to impress upon the curriculum planner.

Check Your Progress

Notes : a) Write your answers in the space given below.

         b) Compare your answers with those given at the end of the unit.

5) Enumerate the areas of development of a learner.

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6) How do government forces affect the process of curriculum Development?

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7) How professional organisations contribute to curriculum?

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6.4.4 Economic Considerations

Economic considerations basically relate to the practicality of a curriculum. The implementation of a curriculum entails several actions including provision of

physical facilities, development of learning materials and recruitment of untrained teachers. All these provisions involve recurring costs. These costs are borne by the government, and also by the community and other institutions. The planners always weigh the cost of providing certain learning opportunities. The alternative modes of providing educational opportunity have varying cost

A curriculum planner has to ascertain whether the community around the school will be able to bear the expenses of proposed curriculum. In spite of the state's support at all the levels of education, the community too has to bear certain expenses of education. It is the community which will send its children to the school. If the financial condition of the society is not sound enough to share the cost of education. it will not be in a position to serve its people.

The curriculum planner has to keep four kinds of costs in mind while proposing a curriculum. These include initial cost, maintenance cost, supplementary cost and personnel cost. For example, if a vocational course in typing is being proposed, it will involve the initial cost of purchasing typing machines, the cost of maintaining the machines in working order, the cost of supplementary materials like paper, carbon ribbons, etc., and the cost of acquiring a mined teacher well versed in typing.

6.4.5 Environmental Considerations

The environment includes the physical and social conditions around an individual, an institution or a community. The environment is both natural as well as manmade. Human beings' survival and sustained development depends on the sensible and planned development and use of the natural resources and environment. Advancements in science and technology have helped us gain control over the environment and reach unprecedented levels of development. Industrialisation, automation, communication revolution, urbanisation, etc., have posed innumerable challenges for human beings. The revolution in communication technology has transformed the world community into a global village. Science and technology have made a tremendous impact on health and hygiene conditions and have been helpful in controlling many dreaded diseases. However, the advancements in science and technology and consequently their impact on society have also caused serious environmental degradation, depletion of natural resources, expansion of slums. outbreak of new diseases, misuse of new technologies by nations in armed conflicts, etc. The education system through its curriculum should introduce the student with the achievements of human beings.

But at the same time the learner must also be made fully aware of the challenges one has to face due to fast-paced development. The curriculum planners should consider ways and means to equip the student with appropriate knowledge and skills to harness the environment of resources. This wills enable the learner to carve out a place for himself in the world of the future. The most important function of the curriculum in this context is to develop a concern for the environment, human welfare and personal morality that will enable the student to use the resources available for the benefit of mankind. The curriculum of sciences, social sciences and languages can effectively inculcate an attitude of concern towards the environment and mankind, and peaceful co-existence of nations, communities and individuals. The curriculum planner should keep these emerging needs in view while developing a curriculum.

6.4.6 Institutional Considerations

Institutional considerations are especially taken into account when the curriculum planner is given the responsibility to develop curriculum for an institution. As you know, an institution is a unique sub-system of a society for achieving special institutional. objectives. The curriculum planner must keep in mind the nature of the institution, particularly its manifest purposes. The institutional purposes will be helpful in the selection of an appropriate procedure for formulation of course objectives and organisation of content, etc. For example, vocational and technical schools are expected to train students for specific jobs. Hence, for formulating the objectives of a vocational programme the technique of job analysis will be used and these will be helpful in selecting appropriate instructional materials. However, the job analysis technique will not work for an institution with humanistic goals. For formulating objectives for such institutions, another technique which is more consistent with the process of self-actualisation for individuals i.e. learners will have to be used; and curricular materials based on it will be developed. Similarly, while planning a course for a specific institution one has to know the attitude of the school authorities, particularly of those who are involved in planning and management, towards a discipline e.g. attitude towards Commercial Business education as a whole and towards certain business subjects in particular. Availability of necessary facilities, such as library, equipment, staff, space, etc., in the institution should also be considered while taking decisions on curriculum planning in a particular area or discipline.

Check Your Progress

Notes : a) Write your answers in the space given below.

   b) Compare your answers with those given at the end of the unit.

8) What economic considerations should be kept in mind while planning a curriculum?

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9) Why institutional considerations are important in curriculum planning?

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6.4.7 Cultural Diversity

Culture, to the sociologist, is a natural term that includes everything that is learned and man made. Schools are formal institutions specially set up for the preservation and transmission of culture. Schools seek to discharge this function through the curriculum which is the sum total of learning experiences provided through it.

However, it is observed that society is now moving away from a homogenous culture towards one of diversity and plurality. The shift in trend can be attributed to the following phenomena: Diversity in values and lifestyles (being different is now a socially sanctioned idea); Renewed interest in ethnic history (people have developed a new interest in their own history and personal heritage): and Development in tele-communications (people have been reminded of their links with cultures in other parts of the world).

However, the important feature of curriculum development is how the curriculum portrays cultural values. It has been taken for granted that school curriculum represents a class-free, non-controversial fund of knowledge, which is good for all children in that particular school. Certain schools have tried to transmit what they have assumed as "culture free knowledge, language, sciences, mathematics, arts and crafts, physical education", and so on -which is believed to be needed by one and all for the all round development of one's personality. It is also accepted that those who failed to respond to such curricular treatment, either because of poor home background or other socio- economic reason is, should be given compensatory education to make up for their cultural disadvantages and deprivations. Deprivation, it is now argued, can have meaning only as an economic notion and instead of taking a patronizing attitude by labeling working class children as culturally deprived. The schools reorder their curriculum, taking into account the culture richness and energy of the class of children, who are economically deprived. For example, in India, children with diverse cultural backgrounds study in the same class and follow the same curriculum. They speak different languages, have different food habits and practise different religions, etc. Hence, the curriculum planner has to derive a curriculum that cater to the needs and interest of the different sections of people while at the same time pursuing worth while knowledge, values and skills. In a pluralistic society a common culture cannot be forced on all, since it is accepted that one sub culture or culture is as good (or as bad) as any other. Hence we see that social changes have their impact on curriculum planning. As' long as a society is dynamic, the debate over the aims of education will stir up changes, which is the sign of a healthy society. (Beane, et. al. 1986).

6.4.8 Teacher-Related Considerations

The process of teaching is performed by the teacher who transacts a specific curriculum. She) is an integral part of the teaching-learning system. Her functions include interpretation, explanation, demonstration and guidance in various activities and experiences incorporated in the curriculum. Therefore, while planning a curriculum the planner should consider the teacher-related factors as well. Every curriculum will require a certain group of teachers equipped with appropriate education, training and experience to successfully transact the curriculum and to help the students in achieving its (curriculum) objectives. The type and the level of content and activities included in the curriculum will determine the type of teachers, their level of education, and the kinds of teaching behaviour expected of them. Similarly, whether the type of teachers we need are readily available or they have to be prepared or they have to be provided in-service training necessary for working teachers for implementing the curriculum, etc., should be the basis of decisions on curriculum planning. Besides, we have to consider whether pre-service training of the teachers is necessary and what type of training should be provided in order to enable them to transact the curriculum and also how long it will take to develop them. Provision of qualified

and competent teachers, thus, is a basic factor to be considered in curriculum planning. Hence the teacher-related factors must be given due consideration by the curriculum planner.

Check Your Progress

Notes : a) Write your answers in the space given below.

b) Compare your answers with those given at the end of the unit.

10) State the following as 'True' and 'False'.

a) Qualification of teachers is determine by the curriculum. (True) (False)

b) Process of teaching is independent of curriculum.

(True) (False)

6.5 LET US SUM UP

Curriculum is a basic means available to the school for achieving the goals of education. The exercise of curriculum planning is guided by several considerations. Most important among these are the nature of the discipline, growth and development of the child, socio-economic background of the country, society or the school, environment around institutional and teacher-related considerations. The curriculum planner first needs to know the structure and nature of the discipline for which a curriculum is to be planned and developed.d A curriculum is meant for a particular group of students. So their growth and development characteristics in terms of physical, emotional, social and intellectual development should be taken into account by the curriculum planner. S(he) should also be aware of the educational implications (from the point of view of teaching-learning) of the different stages of growth and development.

Since education is a social undertaking, the social forces have a bearing on the planning of the curriculum. Social pressures may be exerted by governmental and quasi-legal agencies, professional organisations and special interest groups in the society. You have studied in this unit that every curriculum entails economic implications for its implementation. It has to be ascertained whether or not the state, the community and/or the institution is able to bear the costs implied by the framed or developed curriculum. The curriculum should also help in developing a favourable attitude of students towards environment and mankind and should generate a feeling of peaceful co-existenance in the family, community, country and the world.

6.6 UNIT-END EXERCISES

1. Discuss the relative influence of various factors related to discipline, learner, teacher and institution on curriculum planning.

2. Take the secondary (10+) level curriculum of your school and try to ascertain the extent to which it has been planned keeping in view:

a) The nature of different discipline;

b) Developmental considerations;

c) Social considerations;

d) Institutional considerations; and

e) Teacher-related considerations.

3. Have a look at both the academic and the vocational sreams courses att the secondary stage (10+) in your state and find out how far these courses are economically cost effective/feasible from the point of view of both the government and the community. Discuss with examples.

6.7 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. Four components are: purpose, subject matter, learning experiences and evaluation.

2. Nature of knowledge and cognition helps in the organization of curriculum and helps to understand the alternative paths for learning.

3. To impart the knowledge about the world in which learners live and to cultivate logical thinking.

4. It must emphasize on the following:

- critical-examination of the culture heritage of a society as well as the entire civilization;

- scrutiny of conroversial issues;

- commitment to bring about social and constructive changes;

- cultivation of a planning-in-advance attitude that considers the realities of the world we live in; and

- enhancement of culture renewal and internationalism.

5. Physical, emotional, social, intellectual.

6. Through constitutional and statute laws, policy decisions, financial support.

7. PTA, textbook writers, publishers, universities and colleges, mass media.

8. The financial consideration ar the costs of physical facilities, learning materials, teachers, initial and recurring costs. These costs should be shared by community and governments.

9. Because in the absence of necessary institutional capacities and resources, the school may not be able to implement die curriculum in the desired manner.

10. (a) True; b) True

6.8 REFERENCES AND SUGGESTED READINGS

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UNIT 7   CURRICULUM DESIGNING

Structure

7.1   INTRODUCTION

In the previous units of the block, you have studied the meaning, bases of and major approaches to curriculum. You have also studied the role of curriculum in effective teaching and learning. In this unit, we shall discuss the process of curriculum design and development in detail.

Curriculum development involves various steps to be followed by those engaged in designing and developing curriculum. As a teacher you are an important agent involved in the transaction of learning experiences to learners. You should have a thorough knowledge of the process of curriculum development. With this understanding you will be able to transact the curriculum more intelligently, with full knowledge of its theoretical background. Moreover, who knows one day you may be one of the team members involved in reviewing, updating and redesigning the curriculum of your school or the State. We hope that because of these reasons you will find the discussion in this unit interesting and useful.

In this unit we shall study how the different curricular components are organised into a meaningful learning package, the different levels of planning and the postulates that guide the process of curriculum planning.

7.2 OBJECTIVES

After going through the unit you should be able to:

- define curriculum designing;

- discuss the various levels of curriculum planning;

- describe the models of curriculum designing;

- analyse the approaches of curriculum designing; and

- describe the process of curriculum designing.

7.3 DEFINING CURRICULUM PLANNING AND DESIGNING

Curriculum planning and designing is a process in which participants at different levels take decisions about the goals of learning, decide about the teaching-learning situations by which these may be achieved and whether the methods and means adopted are effective. The relationship between the terms curriculum planning and development and often instruction has been expressed by Beane, et. al. (1986) as shown in Fig. 7.1.
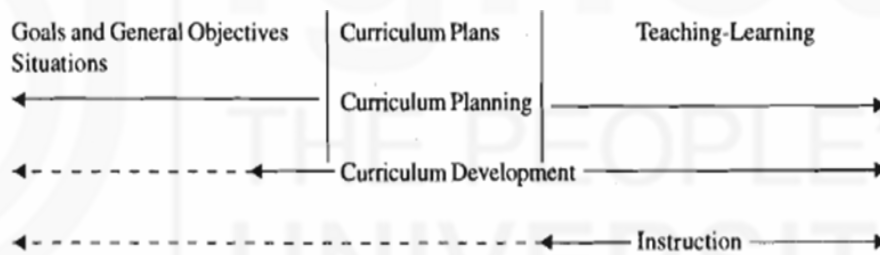

Fig. 7.1: The Relationships among curriculum planning, curriculum development and instruction

(Scource : Beane, et.al., 1986

The above figure explained curriculum planning as a generic concept that may describe activities ranging from the identification of broad goals to the description of possibilities for specific teaching-learning situations. The broad goals translated are into a coordinated and coherent program of learning experiences.

Alexander (1954, p. 245), defined curriculum design as "...the pattern or framework or structural organization used in selecting, planning and carrying forward educational experiences in the school. Design is thus the plan that teachers follow in providing learning activities. Thus, curriculum design becomes the part of curriculum planning.

In 1949, Ralph Tyler summed up curriculum design into four simple steps.For Tyler, the process of curriculum design amounted to a way of resolving four questions, or a rationale:

1. What educational purposes should the school seek to attain?

2. How can learning experiences be selected which are likely to be useful in attaining these purposes?

3. How can learning experiences be organized for effective instruction?

4. How can the effectiveness of learning experiences be evaluated?

5. The planning of the curriculum takes place at many levels. In the following section, let us how planning differs at each level.

7.3.1 Levels of Curriculum Planning

Beane, et. al. (1986) has given seven levels of curriculum planning i.e. at seven levels, the national level, the state level, school-system wide level, building level, teacher team level, the individual teacher level and the classroom level with cooperative planning between learners and teachers. Let us discuss them.

i) National Level

Planning at this level involves experts of various disciplines from across the country to discuss and develop a curriculum that meets the demands. The stages involved in the planning process at the national level are:

* Identifying important subject matter, facts, principles concepts, etc.

* Deciding on a sequence in which the subject matter may be taught-from specific to general or from easy to difficult, etc.

* Recommending activities through which learnersmight best learn the subject matter, including experiments, discussions etc.

* Listing supplementary materials for further studies in the particular subject area, and

* Suggesting tests that learners might take to check their progress.

After curriculum is developed, it is given in the hands of teachers for implementation. The National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), New Delhi, an autonomous organization under the Department of School Education and Literacy of MHRD, is the national level agency involved in selection, and organization of knowledge in schools and bring out as National Curriculum Framework.

ii) State Level

A committee comprising a group of educators (teachers, principles, curriculum coordinators, etc.) under the State Education Department undertakes the task to recommend what ought to constitute the overall curriculum across the State, Keeping in mind, the state requirements. While developing a state level curriculum, guidelines are adapted from National Curriculum Framework.

iii) System Wide Level

It is a district level curriculum planning which is done by the team consists of elementary, middle and high school level teachers and district curriculum coordinator. It reflects on curriculum issues affecting the whole district. The committee considers following questions while finalizing the curriculum:

- What are some present problems or ideas in the district that could be referred to the curriculum planning committee?

- What methods can be used to have a fair representation of various groups such as teachers, administrators and citizens?

- Which issues the curriculum committee could classify as not appropriate for consideration?

iv) **Building or Institution Level**

A group of parents, teachers, administrators, counsellors and learners work together on the personal and social experiences that a student's encounter while undertaking any academic activities. It is also termed as hidden curriculum, since these features do result in learning, they need to be considered in conscious efforts to plan the curriculum.

v) **Teacher-team Level**

Here, a group of teachers representing different subject areas come together to develop a unit. It is also called inter-disciplinary curriculum planning.

vi) **Individual Teacher Level**

In this case, a teacher tries to make a decision about learning objectives - what the teacher would like a group of learners to learn. She develops a set of plans for use on a daily or weekly basis. While designing a plan, following points must be considered, such as the characteristics of the learners, the sequencing of activities, the appropriateness of various learning materials, and the availability of resources.

vii) **Cooperative Curriculum Planning Level**

Here the teacher guides a group of learners to formulate plans as to how they might study a particular topic. The teacher and learners work together to decide any combination of the 'what, how, who, where and when' questions regarding the unit they are working at.

7.3.2 Learner Involvement in Curriculum Planning

Krug (1957) and Waskin and Parrish (1967) popularised the involvement of learner's in curriculum planning and designing but it the critics felt that learners should have no say in the curriculum planning as they are not as knowledgeable and hence cannot participate intelligently. According to Beane, et.al, (1986) presented the possibilities for planning by teachers alone, learners alone or both cooperatively. They have described unit planning as the identification of a variety of possibilities within each component. The teachers may define a range of objectives and number of content items, activities, resources and measuring devices related to them. Learners could then be involved in selecting from any one or more possibilities in each component for-example the selection of objectives and resources could be done by the teachers but the learners could choose the possible learning activities and/or measuring devices. Some teachers even leave the entire process to learners. They may ask learners to decide upon the organizing centres i.e. the title or theme of study and then teachers may help to plan the rest i.e. content, activities, resources related to the organizing centre.

Beane, et. al. (1986) have listed several advantages of teacher student planning as a classroom technique:

- It provides a model of democratic living based on cooperative and participatory decision-making.

- It supports mental health by providing opportunities to have a feeling of belonging.

- It enhances teacher-student relations by the suggestion that learning is a mutual adventure.

- It offers a chance for teachers to know what is important and interesting to learners.

- It enhances social competence by offering opportunities to participate.

- It offers learners a chance to express their own ideas and interests.

However it is noteworthy that teacher-student planning is not merely a technique. Instead it bases the idea of curriculum planning on the concept of democratic participation.

Check Your Progress

Notes : a) Write your answers in the space given below.

        b) Compare your answers with those given at the end of the unit

1) Define Curriculum Planning.

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2) List three basic issues pertinent to curriculum planning at the State level?

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3) Briefly describe curriculum planning at teacher team level?

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7.4 MODELS OF CURRICULUM DESIGNING

Throughout our discussion so far, we have highlighted that a sound curriculum plan is crucial for the attainment of educational goals. For designing a curriculum, there are various models have been proposed. Let us elaborate each type of these models in detail.

a) **Tyler's Model:** According Tyler, those involved in curriculum inquiry must try to define the:

- a purpose(s) of the school;

- educational experiences related to these purposes;

- a organisation of these experiences; and

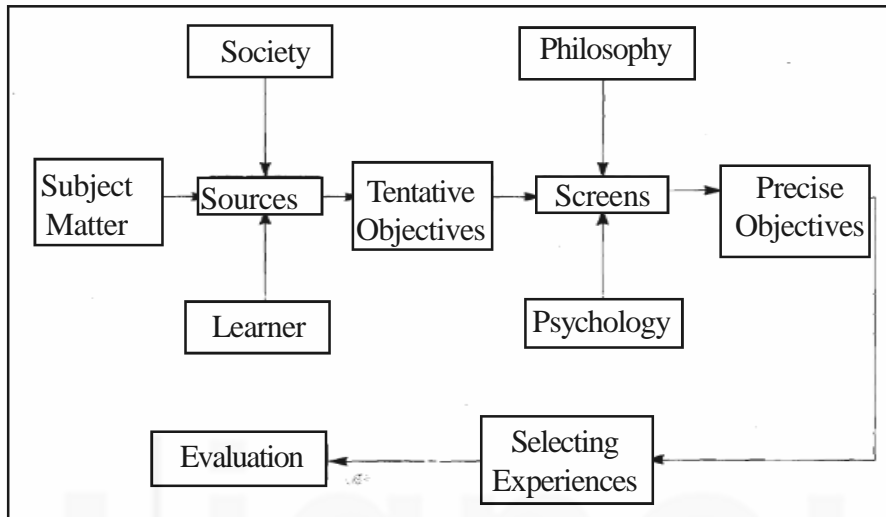- evaluation in terms of attainment of these purposes.

Fig. 7.2: Tyler's Curriculum Development Model

The Tyler's model indicates that in order to identify the Learning objectives we need to gather information from society, learners and subject matter. Then, we need to translate them into precise instructional objectives followed by selection of appropriate learning experiences. The last step is evaluation to provide feedback about whether or not the intended goals have been achieved.

b) **Taba's Model :** According to her, the teachers should create teaching learning materials for their students, by adopting an inductive approach starting with specifics and building up general design, as opposed to the traditional deductive approach. Taba listed following seven steps in her grassroots model of curriculum development in which teachers have to provide major inputs.

- Diagnosis of needs

- Formulation of objectives

- Selection of content

- Organisation of content

- Selection of learning experiences

- Organisation of learning experiences

- Evaluation

Though Taba's model has many merits, some critics maintain that its primary weaknesses are as follows:

- it applies the concept of participatory democracy as a highly technical and specialised process, and

- it assumes that teachers have the expertise and time to engage in such curricular activities.

c) **Saylor and Alexander's Model:** Saylor and Alexander have presented a systematic approach to curriculum development. A self explanatory image is given below:
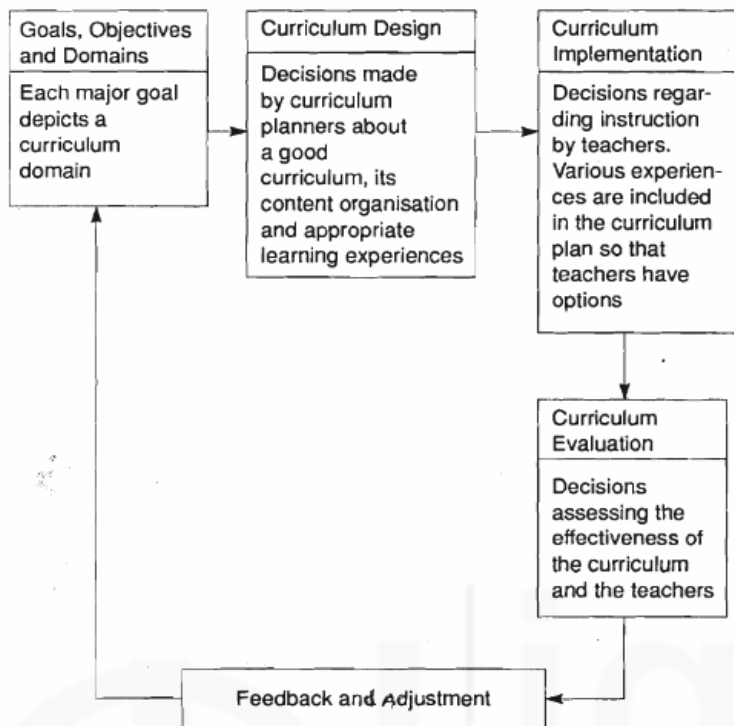

Fig. 7.3: Saylor and Alexander Model

d) **Miller and Seller's Model:** It emphasizes that curriculum development must exhibit atleast the following three orientations towards the purpose of curriculum:

* Transmission position: Curriculum should transmit skills, facts and values to the students.

* Transaction position: Transaction of curriculum can be viewed as a dialogic process (pedagogic interaction) between the learners and the teacher.

* Transformation position: Personal changes and social attitudes can be influenced through curriculum.

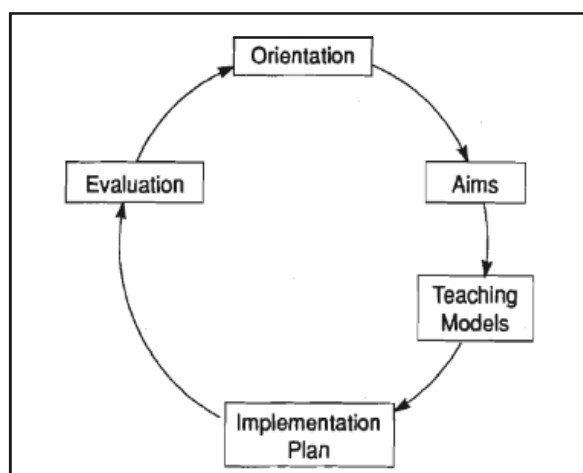Diagrammatically the model can be represented as shown in Figure 7.4

Fig. 7.4: Miller and Seller's Model

Notes : a)   Write your answers in the space given below.

b)   Compare your answers with those given at the end of the unit

4)   What are the weaknesses of Taba model?

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7.5   APPROACHES OF CURRICULUM DESIGNING

A curricular approach is defined as a pattern of organization used in making decisions about the various aspects of a teaching-learning situation.(Beane,et. al. 1986). The choice of a particular approach for curriculum development reflects the following:

i)   The selection of objectives

ii)   The use of subject matter or content

iii)   The type of learning experiences to be provided

iv)   The role of teachers, learners and the organizing center for the teaching-learning situation

v)   The choice of method for providing the learning experiences

These approaches are categorized into four major groups. Let us now discuss the curricular approaches in the order given above:

a)   Subject Area Approach

One of the most widely used curricular approaches is the subject-centered approach. In this design the curriculum is planned around separate subject areas or disciplines. Morrison (1940) felt that such a design could allow a student at the secondary school level to develop interest and competence in one subject area. However, he proposed that a variety of courses should be offered to address the needs of different students. This orientation to subject matter reflected a mental discipline approach to learning thus mastery of subject and skills forms the basis for learning objectives.

b)   Broad Fields Approach

This approach organizes curricular components by combining two or more subjects from related fields into a broader field. The popularity of this approach in recent times is due to the following reasons:

i)   Curriculum is not compartmentalized into rigid subject boundaries. Hence the information becomes more meaningful to the learners.

ii)   Teachers have greater flexibility to choose content.

iii)   Learners can see the interrelatedness of various subject areas in the curriculum. They can generalize knowledge across broad areas.

The criticism to this approach is that learners gain only a superficial understanding of the various concepts in the broad field areas.

c) Problem Centered Approach

The primary objective of using this approach is to create in the learners an awareness of crucial social issues and develop skills to help solve such problems. Some problem centered approaches focus on persistent life situations, others deal with contemporary social problems, some address areas of living and some with the reconstruction of society.

Problem centered curriculum designs are designed to address societal needs that are unmet and also for preservation of culture. For example, courses may be developed on environmental problems, technology, racism, futurology, etc.

d) Learner Centered Approach

It emphasize that all school learning should be geared around the needs, interests and abilities of the learners. The major purpose behind this approach is to help learners come to grips with issues in their lives and be prepared for the present. Much of this philosophy has its origins in Rousseau's book "Emile" published in 1762. He wrote that when a child is nearing adolescence, "much skill and discretion are required to lead him towards theoretical studies." He believed that teachers should provide learners the opportunity to explore nature and learn on their own. "Put the problems before him and let him solve them himself. Let him not be taught science, let him discover it." (Rousseau, 1911). This approach also draws from thoughts of philosophers like Froebel, Pestalozzi, they are proponents of the philosophy of learning by doing. For example to teach geography, the learners should be taken for field trips to teach them map work and by making sketches of landscapes. While the topics of study may be organized and planned by teachers, learning would occur spontaneously from discussions among pupils and teachers. The above child-centered design; which is attributed to Dewey, was actually conceived by Parker. Parker (1894) believed that the method of instruction should be patterned on the child's natural approach to learning.'

Dewey like Parker believed that education was a social process by which an individual could achieve social aims. We have discussed the four major approaches to curriculum design. Let us now study some models of curriculum development.

Check Your Progress

Notes : a) Write your answers in the space given below.

b) Compare your answers with those given at the end of the unit

5) What do you mean by the learner centered approach to curriculum development?

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6) Briefly describe the basic principle of subject-centered approach in curriculum development

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7.6 PROCESS OF CURRICULUM DESIGNING

While going through the curriculum you might have various questions in your mind such as what is the basis of selecting various forms of knowledge in school education? Who selects, legitimises, and organises categories of knowledge in schools? In what form? The answers to these questions will be answered in this section.

Curriculum development is a specialised task which requires systematic thinking about the objectives to be achieved, learning experiences to be provided, and evaluation of changes brought out by the curricular activities and so on. We need to follow the order in which decisions related to curriculum development are made and we have to make sure that all the relevant considerations are taken into account before taking any decision. To arrive at a thoughtfully planned and dynamically conceived curriculum we should follow the steps as follows:

* Assessment of educational needs

* Formulation of objectives

* Selection and organisation of content

* Selection and organisation of learning experience.

* Evaluation

Now we discuss each step in the following sub-sections.

a)   Assessment of Educational Needs

While selecting any knowledge to become a part of Curriculum, need assessment is to be done.

The need assessment helps curriculum developers in following ways:

Learners	• to address the gap that exists between the present status of the learner and the intended one. • Helps them to remain motivated
Society	• In understanding and identifying social function of educational program.
Subject Matter	• Helps in outlining the structure of a subject, including topics to be covered, their order of presentation, and the appropriate grade level for each topic.

b) Formulating Educational Objectives

According to Tyler (1949), stating a list of important objectives help in selecting learning experiences and in guiding teaching. Further, regarding a form of objectives, he stated as follows:

* Any statement of the objectives of the school should be a statement of changes to take place in students;

* Objectives should be stated in listing topics, concepts, generalizations, or

other elements of content that are to be dealt with in the course or courses;

- Since the purpose of a statement of objectives is to indicate the kinds of changes in the student to brought, then the instructional activities can be planned and developed in a way likely to attain these objectives;

- Statements of objectives should be expressed interns of which it identify the kind of behavior to be developed in the student and the content or area of life in which this behavior is to operate.

- It is often useful to employ a graphic two-dimensional chart (the behavioral aspect and the content aspect) to express objectives concisely and clearly.

c) Criteria for Content Selection

Ornstein and Hunkins (2004) explained that content is the "Stuff" of the curriculum. It is the "What" that is to be taught, the "What" that students are to learn. Content refers to facts, concepts, principles theories, and generalizations. The content selection can also be understood as given in the figure below:
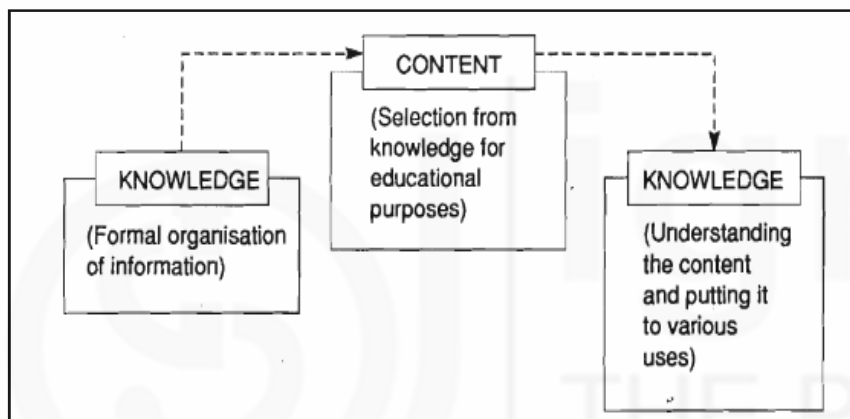

Fig. 7.5: Content Selection

Wheeler (1967), Taba (1962) and Nicholls and Nicholls (1972) forwarded criteria for content selection which include:

- the availability of the subject matter;

- the significance of the subject matters;

- appropriate balance of scope and depth;

- appropriateness to pupils needs and interests;

- the durability of the subject matter;

- logical relationship of the subject matter content to main ideas and basic concepts;

- learn ability of the subject matter;

- possibility of the subject matter to interact with or attract data from other subjects;

- contents that contribute to the development of the society.

d) Organising the Content

According to Tyler (1949), Curriculum Organization is a systematic arrangement of objectives, learning experiences and materials in a unified and consolidated manner. It is a process of putting contents and learning experiences together to form some kind of coherent program.

Similarly, in organizing the curriculum especially in sequencing the contents and learning experiences, it is also essential to identify the organizing principles by which these threads shall be woven together (Tyler, 1949). Some of these organizing principles identified are:

- starting from the simple and proceeding to the complex;
- the whole to the part;
- chronological approach;
- sequence on the basis of concentric circle; and
- sequence based on prerequisite teaching.

Let us now understand them in detail:

i) **Sequencing:** Establishing a sequence in curriculum means putting the content and materials into some sort of order of succession. For this, certain teaching principles such as moving from known to unknown, from simple to complex, from concrete to abstract, etc have to be kept in mind. Besides these principles, the resources that facilitate students' learning have to be arranged.

ii) **Continuity:** The curriculum should provide for a progressively more demanding performance, more complex materials to deal with, a greater depth and breadth of ideas to understand, to relate, to apply and so on. Such cumulative learning can apply to thinking, attitudes and skills.

The learners should be provided with experiences step by step, leading to the examination of more complex forms of criticism and analysis of ideas. For example, a student of grade II may learn the concept of interdependence among family members. She may encounter the same concept in a higher grade but with reference to interdependence of nations, political decisions, etc.

The content of curriculum should provide for continuity in learning and prevent loss through forgetting. You know that disjointed content does not lead the student to the destination i.e. the attainment of the objectives.

iii) **Integration:** It is recognised that learning is more effective when facts and principles from one field can be related to another, especially when applying knowledge. Curriculum planners should attempt to integrate the curriculum by simultaneously establishing relationships between various subjects taught to the target learners. One method can combine related areas into one broad field; for example, combining geography and history into social studies. Correlating two subjects such as Maths and Science is another attempt to integrate content.

It should be clear from the preceding discussion that curriculum organisation should protect and preserve both the logic of the subject matter and the psychological sequence of the learning experiences. In the logical organisation, the planners organise content according to certain rules, to make it more manageable.

In Economics, for example, the concepts of supply and demand are central to the content. Without these, the concepts of capital, labour and market cannot be grouped.

The psychological organisation of the content helps one understand how an individual might actually learn it (i.e. content). Content should be organised in such a way so that the concrete content is experienced before

the abstract content.

e) Selecting Learning Experiences

Learning experiences refers to the teaching-learning process, the methods followed and the activities planned to facilitate the teaching-learning process. There are a few questions which should be addressed before we select learning experiences, which are listed below:

- Do the learning experiences function the way we wish them to in the light of the overall aims and the specific objectives of the curriculum?

- Will the student be able to apply the knowledge gained to practical situations?

- Is, it feasible in terms of time, staff expertise, resources, etc., to learn the content of the curriculum in the specified time.

- Do the learning experiences enable learners to develop thinking skills and rational powers?

- Do the learning experiences stimulate in learners a greater understanding of their own existence as individuals and as members of a group/society?

- Do the learning experiences foster in learners an openness to new experiences and a tolerance for diversity?

- Do the learning experiences allow learners to address their needs and interests?

- Do the learning experiences cater to total development of learners in cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains?

Besides, answering these questions, we should be able to create proper environment: physical and psychological, for optimal learning. The educational environment should address social needs as well as development of awareness, appreciation and empathy for others. It should stimulate purposeful student activity and allow for a range of activities that facilitate learning.

f) Evaluating the Curriculum

The effectiveness of any educational programme is judged by its potential to realise its goals and objectives. The extent to which the objectives are achieved can be assessed through appropriate evaluation procedures. The evaluation of any purposeful activity should have certain characteristics. The important characteristics are as follows:

- Consistency with the objectives of the curriculum

- Sufficient diagnostic value

- Comprehensiveness

- Validity

- Continuity

Evaluation is both qualitative and quantitative, i.e. it may be 'formative' (with the objective improving the process of development) and 'summative' (at the end of the total programme or each phase thereof to judge the effectiveness

of the instructional design). Educational evaluation serves the dual function of guidance and assessment.

We need to employ a variety of appropriate techniques and tools to collect all kinds of evidence required at different stages of curriculum development and implementation. The techniques and tools to be used should be selected in relation to the nature of the objectives or the learning outcomes and the kinds of performance to be assessed or evidence to be collected. The evidence to ascertain the success or the failure of an educational programme can be collected through systematic feedback from the makers and users of curriculum.

From the discussion presented above, you can infer that there are two types of evaluation; viz;

- Student evaluation, and

- Curriculum evaluation

i) **Student evaluation:** Student evaluation aims at assessing the changes in the student's behaviour. These changes in behaviour can be assessed through:

- Oral, written or practical tests.

- Responses during interactive teaching-learning sessions, discussions in different kinds of situations, etc.

- Written products of different kinds, e.g. assignment responses, term papers, project report, etc.

Evaluation of the learners requires sufficient experience and expertise to frame good questions for higher level objectives.

We can prepare observation schedules to validate student performance. These can be applicable to many tasks of the same kind or in the same area. Qualitative criteria can be assigned, so that judgements in the form of rating points (5,4,3,2,1 or corresponding A,B,C,D,E) can be made. The marks or grades awarded for total performance can be explained with a brief descriptive statement.

ii) **Curriculum evaluation:** Student performance is a part of curriculum evaluation. This, however, does not imply that evaluation in education should cover only evaluation of learning, development or achievement of students. In fact evaluation comprises assessment of different aspects of the curriculum as planned, developed and implemented.

We shall touch upon curriculum evaluation briefly here as it has been discussed at length in the next Unit.

Curriculum evaluation refers to the evaluation of different components of curriculum: objectives, content, methods and evaluation procedures for student assessment to determine whether the curriculum caters to the needs and the educational purposes of the target group.

Curriculum components can not be scrutinised in isolation, since each component affects and influences the rest. Since these components are interdependent, each has to be evaluated in conjunction with the others. The overall curriculum evaluation is shown in Figure 7.7.
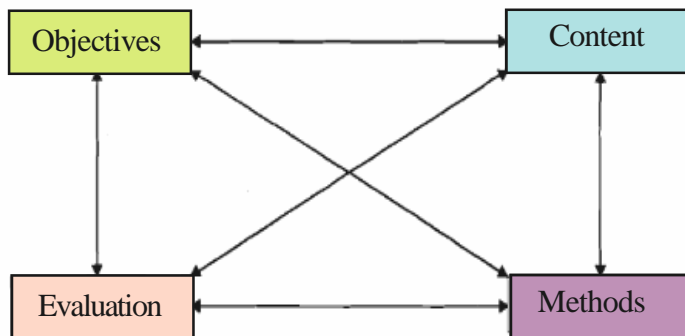
Fig. 7.7 : Interdependent of Curriculum Components

The purpose of curriculum evaluation is to collect and use feedback for improving the curriculum. None of us would dispute the importance of curriculum evaluation, yet we carry it out very rarely. There are two major reasons for this indifference:

- Evaluation results are frequently ignored, and

- Resistance to accept a new pattern despite its potential continues to exist.

Since evaluation data are crucial for the improvement of curriculum, it is essential that we should come to grips with the issues underlying it. These issues have been described in detail in Unit 4 of this Block.

g) Development Try-out

We have mentioned in the preceding sub-section that evaluation can be carried out during the process of curriculum development. This kind of evaluation is called 'formative' evaluation. Curriculum evaluation can be done at the end of development and implementation; this is called 'summative' evaluation.

Development try-out is a formative evaluation which is carried out at every stage of curriculum development. It aims at improving every component of the curriculum during its planning and development. Empirical data are collected so that decisions can be made to revise the curriculum while it is being developed. During the developmental stages of the curriculum, evaluation effort provides frequent, specific and detailed information to guide the persons who are working at the curriculum to take decisions at every stage. It can take place at a number of specified points during the curriculum development process. For example, during a curriculum's creation, the curriculum planners can check whether a particular content is appropriate for the learnersto learn. Depending on the results, the content can either be modified, replaced or even dropped.

Formative evaluation uses the process of feedback and adjustments and thus keeps the curriculum development process on-going.

Check Your Progress

Notes : a) Write your answers in the space given below.

b) Compare your answers with those given at the end of the unit

7) State any three criteria for content selection.

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8)   What is the purpose of curriculum evaluation? Write in brief.

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9)   List two major reasons for the indifference of educators towards curriculum evaluation.

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7.7   ROLE OF TEACHERS IN CURRICULUM DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT

The teacher is such a part of the curriculum that s/he cannot be denied participation in the process of changing or developing curriculum. A teacher should be directly involved with the curriculum planning and development because it is the teacher who implements it and translates instructional plans into action. Teaching is an act of implementing or transacting the curriculum. Teachers should be part of the overall development activity. This implies that

•   teachers should ideally be involved at every stage of curriculum planning and develop ment i.e. from the formation of aims to the evaluation and maintenance of the curriculum.

•   their help should be sought for developing curriculum packages and conceptualizing re-source designs.

•   they can assist in designing supportive educational environment.

•   they can communicate with the general public on new auricular projects and thereby make them more receptive to curriculum change.

7.8   LET US SUM UP

We shall now help you recapitulate what you have studied in this unit. We started our discussion with the definition of curriculum approach which is a plan to make decisions about teaching/learning situations. We discussed the major approaches to curriculum development, issues relating to the approaches and the models of curriculum planning.

We also discussed major dimensions of curriculum development, i.e. aims, objectives, materials, methods and evaluation. These are essential components of curriculum development.

In this unit an extended treatment was given to the process of curriculum development.

7.9   UNIT-END EXERCISES

1.   Identify some emerging areas that could be included in school curriculum. Justify the rationale for their inclusion in school level education.

2.   Usually school teachers are not involved in designing school curriculum. If this is the case, why should they study the concept and process of curriculum development? Give convincing arguments to support your point of view.

7.10   ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1.   Curriculum planning is a process in which decisions are taken at several levels about the purpose of learning, teaching-learning situations, organizing these activities and to ascertain the effectiveness of these activities in achieving the purposes.

2.   Three pertinent issues for cumculum planning at the state level are:

   - The prerogative of local authorities to set up programmes based on local   needs.

   - State level personnel more qualified than local teachers to develop curricular plans.

   - Quality of education for learners across a state to be ensured through state level standards.

3.   Curriculum planning at the teacher team level involves interdisciplinary curriculum planning since teachers from various disciplines contribute their knowledge. Different aspects of the subjects are correlated to evolve a curricular plan.

4.   •   it applies the concept of participatory democracy as a highly technical and specialised   process, and

   - it assumes that teachers have the expertise and time to engage in such curricular activities.

5.   The learner-centred approach to curriculum development focuses on the emerging needs of the learners. It prepares the learners to face the present rather than the future problems in the society. The learning experiences provided through learner -centred curriculum are planned to help the teachers understand the issues relating to the growth and development of the students.

6.   In the subject-centred approach, the content/subject becomes the more important criteria of curriculum development. Learning experiences are organised around the content selected. In this approach, appropriate mechanism to assess the gain/acquisition of subject matter is devised by the curriculum planners,

7.   Availability subject matter, significance, learn ability of subject matter

8. The purpose of curriculum evaluation is to get feedback on various attributes of curriculum and to use the feedback to improve the curriculum

9. Though evaluation is very important in the process of curriculum development, it is not executed because of

   a) non-utilisation of evaluation results

   b) resistance to accept innovative patterns.

7.11 REFERENCES AND SUGGESTED READINGS

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UNIT 8   CURRICULUM RENEWAL

Structure

8.1   INTRODUCTION

In the previous unit, we have discussed the process of curriculum planning and designing in the preceding units. You also studied the constraints which influence the decisions on curriculum development. Thus , so far you might have developed an understanding about the concept and process of curriculum planning and development.

In the previous unit, you came across the expression 'evaluation'. Evaluation is an essential component of curriculum planning and the development process. Curriculum evaluation is a process of delineating, obtaining and providing information useful for making decisions about curriculum development and implementation. In other words, to develop an effective and need-based curriculum you have to base your decisions on empirical evidence.

In this unit we will discuss the concept and importance of curriculum evaluation in the overall process of the development and implementation of curriculum. We shall also discuss various aspects of curriculum evaluation. You will also study the methods of restructuring curriculum. The discussion in this unit will enable you to participate in this regular and meaningful activity. By doing so you will be able to achieve the pre-specified objectives.

8.2 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you should be able to:

● discuss the need for curriculum evaluation;

● identify different sources for curriculum evaluation;

● evaluate a given curriculum or a part of it after considering different aspects; and

● use different methods to evaluate a curriculum depending on the stage of development of the curriculum.

8.3 CURRICULUM EVALUATION FOR RENEWAL

The process of evaluation is undertaken to determine the strengths and weaknesses of an existing or an under-construction curriculum so that curriculum renewal can take place. Curriculum renewal can occur with a regular review and reflection process and will focus on addressing specific identified issues. **Curriculum renewal refers to the process of reviewing the curriculum plan, if it does not prove to be effective on the following questions, then it requires revision.**

● Whether a curriculum is suitable in present context?

● Does it the curriculum as planned is also delivered?

● What the curriculum is good for?

● How far the intended audience/target group is benefited?

● Whether it has included the latest methodologies?

From the above five questions, it is clear that curriculum renewal can only take place when curriculum evaluation is done. Evaluation is an intergral part of curriculum planning and designing. Here, evaluation means both assessment of students to find how much of the intended curriculum has been transacted and also what actually happens in a classroom as experienced by the students when they are involved in learning activities. These experiences of the students need not be confined to the four walls of a classroom and within the stipulated time frame of a rigid school schedule. These could also include activities which form part of hidden curriculum like wearing a school uniform, standing up when the teacher enters the class and helping each other in organising an exhibition in the school. Thus we are interested in looking at evaluation not just as the evaluation of activities inside the classroom but also as the evaluation of the school as a whole against the curriculum issues.

Curriculum evaluation is a process by which we can make decisions about a curriculum in terms of course improvement, individuals involved - teachers, students etc. and administrative effectiveness.

It focuses on discovering whether the curriculum as designed, developed and implemented, is producing or can produce the desired results. It also helps to identify, the strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum before implementation and the effectiveness of its delivery after implementation.

The curriculum evaluation process is schematically represented in Figure 8.1.
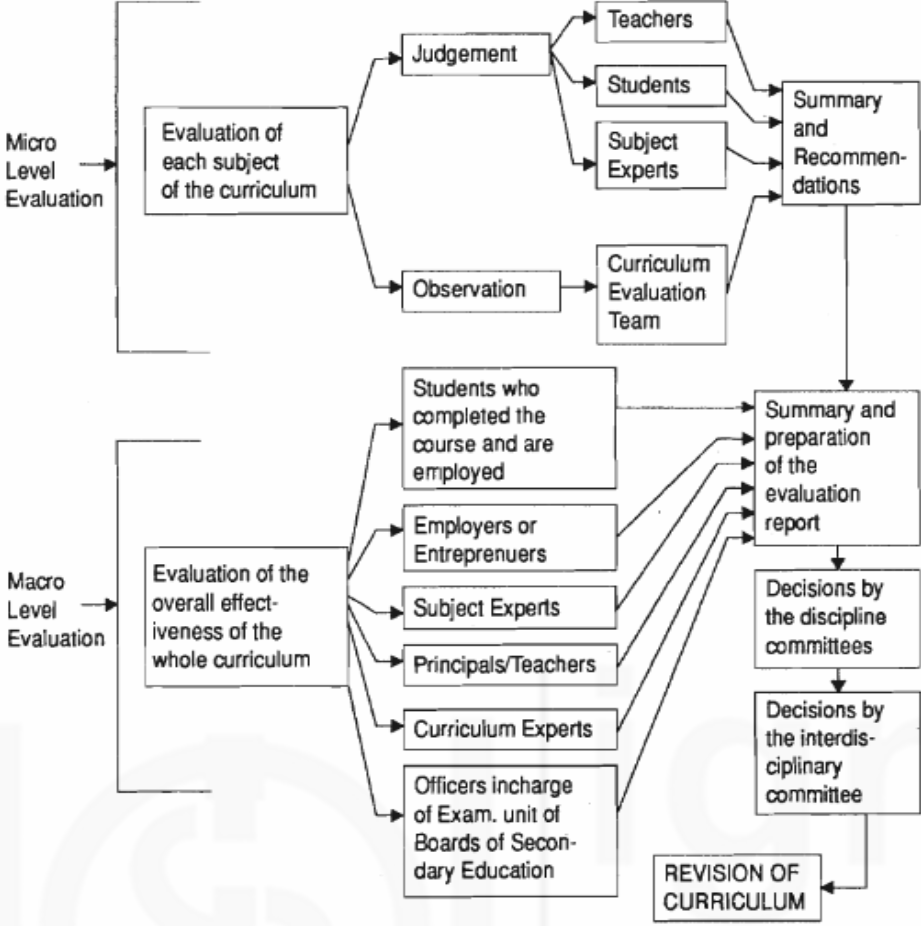
Fig. 8.1: Curriculum Evaluation Process

The curriculum evaluation process is not a one-shot affair. It is rather a dynamic and cyclic process. Curriculum evaluation plays its role in all stages of the curriculum cycle. The curriculum cycle is schematically represented in Figure 8.2.
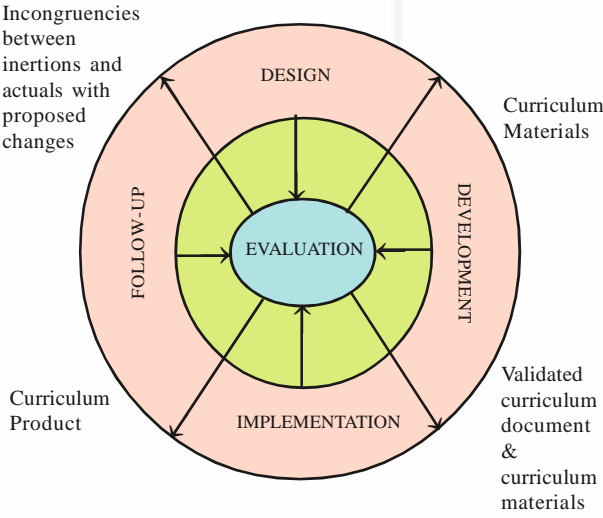
Fig. 8.2: Conceptual Framework of Curriculum Cycle

The curriculum cycle shows that curriculum evaluation is a comprehensive activity. It should be frequent and recurrent. It is needed at almost every stage of curriculum design and implementation. Through frequent evaluation of curriculum we show whether we are really moving towards the pre-fixed goals.

8.3.1 Need for Curriculum Evaluation

Now the question arises "Why do we need curriculum evaluation?" The professional response to this question stresses improvement of student learning, and hence improvement in the quality of education. The following are the main purposes of curriculum evaluation.

i)   To develop a new curriculum

If you wish to develop a new curriculum for a vocational course at the secondary stage, it would be worthwhile to evaluate a current curriculum from a different system before adopting it to our emerging requirements. The usual practice would be to prune an existing curriculum to suit our new requirements because at times the decisions in the planning process can be quite arbitrary. Such a process leads to the risk of overloading the curriculum. To make objective decisions on the development of the new curriculum, evaluation of the existing curriculum is necessary.

ii)   To review a curriculum under implementation

It may be required by policy planners and decision makers to get an immediate feedback on the implementation of a curriculum in order to make amendments if required for effective realisation of all the objectives related to it. A curriculum evaluation exercise would be necessary for this purpose.

iii)   To remove 'dead wood' and update an existing curriculum

It is essential to remove obsolete ideas and practices from a curriculum and include current developments in the curriculum. In order to make objective decisions about inclusion or deletion of content or practices a curriculum evaluation exercise would again be necessary.

iv)   To find out the effectiveness of a curriculum

To make an objective evaluation of the effectiveness of a curriculum in terms of the achievement of its immediate as well as long-term objectives, a curriculum evaluation exercise would be essential. This evaluation is different from the evaluation of the students of a course for the purpose of certification. The difference is that curriculum evaluation is more comprehensive and includes student evaluation plus the feelings generated among the students regarding appropriateness of the various components of the curriculum.

Check Your Progress

Notes : a)   Write your answers in the space given below.

b)   Compare your answers with those given at the end of the unit.

1)   Why do you need to evaluate the curriculum of a particular grade in a school set up?

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2)   What do you mean by curriculum renewal?

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8.4 SOURCES OF CURRICULUM EVALUATION

There are several sources from where meaningful information can be collected regarding a given school curriculum. Major sources are discussed below.

i) **Learners**

The learners of a particular course are the primary and most important source of information regarding how relevant the intended curriculum is and how well it is being implemented. The list of the output specifications can be given to the learners who are undergoing a particular course and detailed information can be gathered in two ways:

- by finding out whether the learners have really achieved the intended output specifications.

- by finding out the perceptions of learners regarding the extent to which they feel they have achieved the objectives of the course. This information is more qualitative in nature as these arc the perceptions of students and they are of immense value from the point of view of revising the curriculum. Such valuable data can be collected even from students who have passed out and who have already learnt through the implementation of the curriculum.

ii) **Teachers and other Subject Experts**

In the process of curriculum renewal, teachers must be involved as they transact the curriculum in the class. They can help in curriculum mapping, which is the process of content alignment in accordance with curriculum goals. The subject experts also helps in curriculum mapping from the discipline point of view.

iii) **Curriculum Experts**

Curriculum experts can provide information on the modem techniques used for developing a curriculum so that it becomes more meaningful from the student's point of view. The age old practice of assembling content points, in a telegraphic language into a syllabus, has become outdated. In the meaningful curriculum the output specifications, are made clear, i.e. the curriculum specifies as to what the students will be able to do at the end of the course, the conditions under which they will be observed and the level of acceptance of errors. Curriculum experts have come a long way since then and their assistance in curriculum evaluation is inevitable. Therefore, curriculum experts are a good source of information for curriculum evaluation.

iv) **Policy Makers**

Policy makers occupying responsible positions in apex bodies like Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), National Council of Educational Research & Training (NCERT), National Open School (NOS) and State Boards of Secondary Education are also excellent sources of information for curriculum evaluation. By virtue of their position they are better informed about the current and the envisaged changes in government policies regarding economy, industry, agriculture and education. All these areas have direct or indirect implications for school curriculum. There have been quite a few instances in the recent past where even the change of governments in a state was responsible for making specific changes in textbooks of

History and Science! Therefore, policy makers can be an important source for the curriculum evaluation.

v) **Community:** The local community where the products (educated/trained persons) of a particular course are to be absorbed can be yet another important source of information for curriculum evaluation. The requirements of the local community can make the curriculum relevant and need-based or otherwise. A curriculum revised on the basis of needs and requirements of the community will be able to serve the cause of the community better in producing better socialised and more responsible citizens.

vii) **Dropouts Sample:** Those students who have dropped out of a particular course can be yet another valuable source of information for curriculum evaluation. These students can pin-point the curricular factors that might have been responsible for their withdrawal from the course. A diagnostic test administered on these dropouts can provide valuable information regarding the misconceptions generated by the present curriculum. This feedback will help in modifying or improving the curriculum.

vii) **Employers and Entrepreneurs:** The opinion of the employers, who have to absorb the products needed by them, will reflect on the strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum. Those who are self-employed, even in the unorganised service sector can provide valuable information on the strengths and weaknesses of a particular curriculum. Such information can help in making the curriculum socially relevant and useful.

Check Your Progress

Notes : a) Write your answers in the space given below.

b) Compare your answers with those given at the end of the unit

3) Why should the reactions of dropouts on curriculum be sought?

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4) Why should the reactions of employers on curriculum be sought?

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8.5   METHODS OF CURRICULUM EVALUATION

Curriculum evaluation can be done by an external agency or by insiders (those who are involved in the planning and development of the curriculum) or by a combination of both the groups. A combination of outsiders and insiders would be preferable to get a comprehensive and objective evaluation. The methods of evaluation vary from a questionnaire based evaluation to evaluation based on unstructured interview. The method of collecting information would depend on the objective of evaluation. When we require more qualitative descriptions of the implementation of the curriculum, unstructured or structured observations can be used. When we require quantitative data regarding various aspects of

a curriculum being designed, a check-list can also be used. Similarly many other techniques can be used depending on the purpose of evaluation and the stage of evaluation i.e., whether evaluation is being done at the development stage or at the implementation stage. Curriculum evaluation at the planning stage is mostly confined to job analysis or task analysis. Similarly the content analysis that follows also requires the support of formative evaluation. These exercises are usually not practiced in schools and so the curriculum suffers from several drawbacks. A well prepared school curriculum should accommodate an evaluation cycle at the planning stage also.

8.5.1 Evaluation during Curriculum Development

One of the major tasks during the development of a curriculum is to prepare an exhaustive list of specific objectives to be achieved through the curriculum. Once the list is prepared, it has to undergo an evaluation cycle. The list may be supplied to a set of practicing teachers for their specific comments, additions and deletions, if any. In addition to working teachers, information from other individuals like prospective employers of the products, the next higher grade teachers, a group of prospective students, planners and administrators, etc., can be sought to check whether the entry behaviour of their grade suits the output specifications. Based on the feedback collected from the evaluators the objectives can be modified.

A second major task which requires the support of an evaluation exercise during the development of a curriculum is the instructional materials that have been prepared to achieve the objectives. These materials have to be tried out on a sample of students for their feedback on their learning routes and difficulties. A field tryout with a small sample is ideal in getting adequate evaluation information from a sample. This can be used for further improvement of the material. Data collected from the inbuilt evaluation exercises of the learning material can also be used in modifying the learning material. Curriculum material here refers to all learning materials which includes textbooks, self-learning text, audio and video programmes, teacher's manual, assignment questions, project work, etc. Similarly, the evaluation procedures to be adopted during curriculum development also need a tryout and possibly further modification based on data collected through the tryout.

8.5.2 Evaluation during Curriculum Implementation

After the curriculum has been tested and the curriculum materials are duly modified, it is important that the teachers and administrators are oriented and trained for proper implementation of curriculum. To implement curriculum without introductory or supporting courses would be quite a severe risk; it may lead to the use of new materials in unsatisfactory ways. Training of the personnel involved and the provisions of all necessary facilities and resources are essential for successful implementation of any curriculum.

Evaluation is necessary at the time when curriculum is implemented as well as after each offering of the course. The purpose of evaluation at this stage is two-fold (a) to find out the areas of support needed for effective implementation of the curriculum in schools; and (b) to control the quality of the product i.e. the educated person. Important information to be collected at this stage includes:

The existing situation: All aspects of curriculum according to the curriculum plan need to be studied in order to identify the missing features of the curriculum

being implemented in the schools. A check-list which gives all the features of the objectives and the content of the curriculum, students' characteristics necessary to begin the teaching-learning process, teachers' characteristics necessary for implementing the curriculum, basic assumptions regarding how teaching and learning should take place to ensure active participation of the students, additional materials required to implement the curriculum, organisation of the curriculum with respect to time requirements and the order in which the activities and the materials are to be processed, methods of implementation of the curriculum and evaluation of students' performance can be used to assess the discrepancies or the gaps in the implementation of different aspects of curriculum.

i) **Effectiveness of the curriculum:** The crucial question in determining the effectiveness of curriculum is to determine the extent to which the students attain the standards or achieve the objectives as described in curriculum planning. Thus the effectiveness of curriculum reveals whether curriculum is able to achieve objectives set by the social system.

Since it is not possible that cent per cent students achieve all the objectives of the content, the question of concern is whether the minimum expected number of students achieve the minimum specified number of objectives according to the criteria. The criteria for judging the effectiveness of the programme should also provide feedback from the employers and ex-students. Effectiveness may also be considered in relative terms i.e., whether the new curriculum is more effective than the previous one. For this a time series study may be most appropriate.

ii) **Acceptability of the programme:** In addition to assessing the effectiveness of the curriculum it is also important to assess its acceptability. Acceptability here means whether the people involved in implementing the programme like it or do not To get an insight into the acceptability of the programme, the perceptions of students, teachers and the supervisors/administrators of the school should be ascertained.

iii) **Efficiency of the programme:** The expressions - effectiveness and efficiency - are used for specific purposes. The efficiency of curriculum indicates whether curriculum is able to achieve objectives in the most economic way in terms of minimum cost, time and energy. The effective curriculum ensures that pre-fixed objectives are achieved irrespective of the amount of time and/or money spent. Effective and efficient curriculum will ensure that objectives are achieved with minimum resources efforts and money. Efficiency means the ratio between the output and the input of energy and resources. It is very easy to calculate efficiency of a machine in absolute terms. However determining programme efficiency is extremely difficult in the case of any social system, like education. Valid assessment of an educational programme is indeed very difficult. Controlled experiments can be of great help here but it is difficult to control the significant variables. Nevertheless, it is important to assess the programme efficiency relative to those of other programmes in the light of achieved effects. The major questions posed in judging the efficiency of the programme are as follows:

- Do the outcomes of the programme justify the expenditure on the total resources?

- Is the given curriculum more efficient than the previous one?

- Is there any wastage of student time, teacher time or of materials and resources?

- Are equipment and personnel under-utilised?

- How can programme efficiency of a given programme be improved?

8.6 MODELS FOR CURRICULUM EVALUATION

There are many proposed model for curriculum evaluation such as :

a) Tyler's Model

b) CIPP model

c) Stake's Model

d) Kirkpatrick's Model

e) Scriven's Model

Let us discuss the following two models briefly.

a) Tyler's Model

It is one of the most popular planning model developed by Tyler in 1949. May (1986) defines that Tyler's model considers three primary sources of curriculum-students, society, and subject matter in formulating tentative general objectives of the program that reflects the philosophy of education and the psychology of learning.
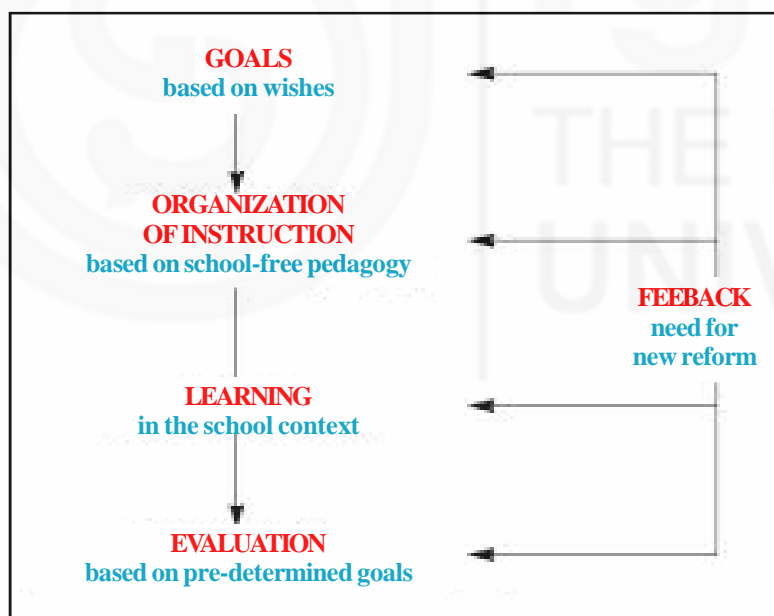

Figure 8.3: The vicious circle of educational reform discourse

Tyler's 1949 curriculum model is a four part linear model that consists of objectives, instructional strategies and content, organization of learning experiences, and assessment and evaluation that was designed based on four questions:

1. What educational purposes should the institution seek to attain? (Objectives)

2. What educational experiences are likely to attain these objectives? (Instructional strategies and content)

3. How can these educational experiences be organized effectively? (Organization of learning experiences)

4. How can we determine whether these purposes are being attained? (Assessment and evaluation)

b) CIPP Model

It was developed by Daniel Stufflebeam and colleagues in the 1960s. CIPP is an acronym for Context, Input, Process and Product. CIPP is an evaluation model that requires the evaluation of **context**, **input**, **process** and **product** in judging a programme's value. The model defines evaluation as the process of delineating, obtaining, and providing useful information for judging decisionalternatives.

Figure 8.4: CIPP Model of evaluation

These four aspects of CIPP evaluation assist a decision-maker to answer four basic questions:

-   **What should we do?**

This involves collecting and analysing needs assessment data to determine goals, priorities and objectives. For example, a context evaluation of a literacy program might involve an analysis of the existing objectives of the literacy programme, literacy achievement test scores, staff concerns (general and particular), literacy policies and plans and community concerns, perceptions or attitudes and needs.[1]

-   **How should we do it?**

This involves the steps and resources needed to meet the new goals and objectives and might include identifying successful external programs and materials as well as gathering information.

-   **Are we doing it as planned?**

This provides decision-makers with information about how well the programme is being implemented. By continuously monitoring the program, decision-makers learn such things as how well it is following the plans and guidelines, conflicts arising, staff support and morale, strengths and weaknesses of materials, delivery and budgeting problems.

- **Did the programme work?**

By measuring the actual outcomes and comparing them to the anticipated outcomes, decision-makers are better able to decide if the program should be continued, modified, or dropped altogether. This is the essence of product evaluation.[

Check Your Progress

Notes : a) Write your answers in the space given below.

b) Compare your answers with those given at the end of the unit

5) What is evaluation during curriculum implementation?

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6) What are the four components of Tyler's model?

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8.7 RESTRUCTURING CURRICULUM

Any given curriculum needs restructuring prior to its implementation. This restructuring can be done at a macro-level and at a micro-level. At the macro-level obsolete elements may be removed, recent developments in the field may be added and the sequence of content may be rearranged. At the micro-level, a teacher may find the sequence of content suitable for a presentation. But if (s)he wishes to have participative techniques of teaching, the sequence may not be suitable and so (s)he would like to reorganise the sequence of the content to suit her mode of presentation. Such micro-level reorganisation is often done by teachers who are innovative in their teaching approach. There could be as many ways of micro-level reorganisation of curriculum as there are teachers.

Pre-testing of restructured curriculum: Macro-level restructuring when carried out on an existing curriculum requires to be pre-tested prior to implementation. This testing would reveal whether the envisaged changes have the desired effect or whether the curriculum still needs modification. It is preferable to do such restructuring under actual teaching-learning conditions.

Search for affirmative models for curriculum revision: The techniques of curriculum revision described in this unit have been in use since long and more dynamic models are being developed by professionals in various fields. Some of the relevant points of such models developed in technical and vocational education, medical education, etc., could be of interest to those who are involved in curriculum revision even at the school level. There should be a constant search for such models, by educational planners and implementors at the school level. Perhaps, for secondary education a suitable and dynamic model could be developed by those concerned with secondary curriculum development.

Notes : a) Write your answers in the space given below.

b) Compare your answers with those given at the end of the unit

7) What is micro and macro level planning?

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8.8 LET US SUM UP

In this unit you have studied five reasons that may necessitate a curriculum revision exercise, viz., i) to modernise a curriculum, ii) to remove 'dead wood* from a given curriculum, iii) to make a curriculum more efficient, iv) to reduce the gap between what is intended and what is actually realised, and v) to realise the latent curriculum which may not be so tangible. You have also studied four purposes of curriculum evaluation viz., i) to develop a new curriculum programme based on the evaluation report of an existing curriculum, ii) to review an ongoing programme, iii) to remove obsolete material from a curriculum and update it with recent developments in the field, and, iv) to study how effective an ongoing programme is.

You have studied a variety of sources from where useful data for curriculum revision can be collected e.g. learners, teachers, subject experts, curriculum experts, policy makers, responsible members of the community and even a sample of dropouts of a programme. Besides these, you have studied different aspects of curriculum evaluation. You have studied the various methods used for curriculum evaluation and the phases during which these methods have to be adopted. The methods discussed may not appear comprehensive enough in view of the pace at which curriculum revision should be taking place as against the pace of developments in various fields. Therefore, it is recommended that more comprehensive curriculum evaluation methods should be developed by practitioners in the field.

The last section of this unit was devoted to restructuring the curriculum at the macro and micro-levels. Macro-level restructuring is required to make the curriculum suited to the approach adopted by an individual teacher for transacting it in the classroom. Micro-level restructuring by one teacher can be different from that of another teacher who takes a different approach about the same curriculum.

8.9 UNIT-END EXERCISES

1. Take up a secondary school subject that you have been teaching in your school. Collect relevant information that you may require to evaluate the

curriculum according to the suggestions given in this unit. Analyse the results and find out whether the subject curriculum requires any updating. If 'yes' suggest appropriate actions to be taken. If 'no' give reasons and justify the same.

2. On the basis of your experience as a teacher, identify a unit which according to your students is very difficult to learn. Plan and prepare instructional material for its remedial teaching. Try out the material on a sample of students and study the effectiveness of the materials prepared by you.

8.10 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. The need to evaluate a school curriculum arises out of the following reasons:

   ● to cope with the recent advancements in the field of knowledge,

   ● to remove redundant material from the curriculum which has become obsolete,

   ● to identify the gap between the requirements of the next grade and the objectives of this grade and to fill in these gaps with appropriate learning experiences,

   ● to make the curriculum more efficient in achieving the envisaged objectives, and

   ● to assess the extent to which the latent curriculum has been achieved (in terms of developmental objectives).

2. Learner will answer as per their understanding.

3. The drop-outs have actually been exposed to the curriculum; hence, they can reveal the weaknesses of the curriculum. The reasons for their withdrawal from the course can also throw light on the effectiveness of the curriculum.

4. Employers' reactions on curriculum are sought because they are the consumers of the products of a particular curriculum. They are, therefore, the best judges to point out the strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum. The employers will also be able to tell where the students are able to use the knowledge acquired in the schools in practice. Their feedback can make the curriculum more meaningful and need-based.

5. Evaluation during implementation has two fold purpose: (a) to find out the areas of support needed for effective implementation of the curriculum in schools; and (b) to control the quality of the product i.e. the educated person.

6. Objectives, instructional strategies and content, organization of learning experiences, and assessment

7. At the macro-level restructuring, obsolete courses elements are removed and they are substituted by recent/update content. At micro-level the teacher does not change the existing curriculum. S/he adopts various innovative/ appropriate teaching techniques in arranging and transacting curriculum. At micro-level the teacher uses his/her resourcefulness in transacting curriculum.

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