

Curriculum - Definitions, Concepts and Theories

Contents

Introduction

1.1 Definitions and Concepts of Curriculum

1.2 Curriculum Theories

Summary

Objectives

Introduction

What is taught? What ought to be taught? These are the questions which Taylor and Richards (1985) identify as two fundamental concerns of studies on curriculum in their Introduction to Curriculum Studies. The great educators from Plato to Dewey have been concerned with what is taught and what should be taught. However, the use of the term ‘curriculum’ to refer to these questions has been of recent origin. Taylor and Richards (1985) explaining why it is worthwhile to study ‘curriculum’ state that:

‘Curriculum is at the heart of the educational enterprise. It is the means through which education is transacted. Without a curriculum education has no vehicle, nothing through which to transmit its messages, to convey its meanings, to exemplify its values. It is because of the crucial role which curriculum plays in educational activities that it is worthy of study.’

The term curriculum has been defined in a variety of ways in the literature. The changes that have occurred with respect to the nature of knowledge, the conception of the learner and the demands of social life during the twentieth century have resulted in changes in the conception of curriculum. Although the definition of curriculum has undergone marked changes it is difficult to find in the literature a definition which is widely accepted by the curriculum scholars. The definitions available in the literature appear to vary with the concepts that researchers or practitioners use in their curricular thinking or work.

This first Essential Reading of the course on ‘The Teacher Educator as a Curriculum Developer’ will discuss briefly different concepts and resulting definitions of curriculum. This will be followed by a brief presentation of curriculum theories put forward by selected curriculum writers.

1.1 Definitions and Concepts of Curriculum

The word ‘curriculum’ comes from a Latin root which originally meant ‘a course to be run’, that is, a course in the sense of ‘race-course’. Curriculum has emerged as a field of educational studies in the United States from the last decades of the nineteenth century. The growing interest in the purpose and content of school curricula in that period has resulted in a number of important publications on ‘curriculum’ in the post-World War I years. However, most of these publications have emphasized the administrative and

managerial aspects of curriculum and not the intellectual and academic aspects. It was in the post-world War II years that the analytic and systematic study of the curriculum really started. A number of important works of American authors such as R. Tyler (1949), J.S. Bruner (1960), and H. Taba (1962) had a strong influence on later developments in the field in United States and England. British work in the field emerged much more strongly in the 1960s and 1970s.

Many of the conceptions of curriculum contained similar elements and phraseology. Several efforts have been made to classify these conceptions and resulting definitions. Lewis and Miel (1972) classified definitions of curriculum under the following categories:

- Course of study;
- Intended learning outcomes;
- Intended opportunities for engagement;
- Learning opportunities provided;
- Learner's actual engagements; and
- Learner's actual experiences.

Lewis and Miel (1972) defined the term 'curriculum' as a "set of intentions about opportunities for engagement of persons-to-be-educated with other persons and with things (all bearers of information, processes, techniques and values) in certain arrangements of time and space."

Tanner and Tanner (1975) who traced the history of curriculum definitions showed that curriculum has been variously defined as:

1. The cumulative tradition of organized knowledge;
2. Modes of thought;
3. Race experience;
4. Guided experience;
5. A planned learning environment;
6. Cognitive/ affective content and process;
7. An instructional plan;
8. Instructional ends or outcomes; and
9. A technological system of production.

Above definitions of curriculum were criticized as conveying only a partial description of the term 'curriculum' in relation to its actual function in the real world of the school. It was argued that if the curriculum is conceived of as all learning activities under the auspices of the school, it fails to indicate how school learning activities differ from those derived from non-school sources.

If the definition of curriculum is to convey the full meaning of the term, it should be sufficiently specific and comprehensive so that it clearly conveys its key interacting elements and indicates the unique role of the school as an educative agency. In view of the limitations of definitions of curriculum discussed above Tanner and Tanner (1975) proposed a more comprehensive, tentative, working definition as follows:

“Curriculum is the planned and guided learning experiences and intended outcomes, formulated through the systematic reconstruction of knowledge and experience, under the auspices of the school, for the learner’s continuous and willful growth in personal–social competence.”

This definition highlights the fact that the curriculum must take into account not only established knowledge but also emergent knowledge. According to this definition the curriculum while transmitting the cumulative tradition of knowledge also concerns with the systematic reconstruction of knowledge in relation to the life experience of the learner. Provision of systematic reconstruction of knowledge for the learner’s continuous and willful growth in personal-social competence entrusts the school with a unique function. This definition recognizes that the curriculum must be related to the learner’s stages of growth and development. It also recognizes that future possibilities for the development and uses of knowledge reside with today’s pupil population. Less formal or informal learning activities that are planned and guided by the school are not precluded from this definition.

An analysis of past and present concepts of the curriculum by Saylor, Alexander and Lewis (1981) used the following categories, which are somewhat different from those given earlier:

- Subjects and Subject Matter;
- Experiences;
- Objectives; and
- Planned opportunities for Learning.

During the early years of the twentieth century the dominant concept of the curriculum was that of subjects and subject matter set out by teachers for students to cover.

Caswell and Campbell (1935) gave wide exposure to the experiences concept of the curriculum in their work titled 'Curriculum Development' holding the school curriculum "to be composed of all the experiences children have under the guidance of teachers."

The scientific management approach used in business and industry in the early twentieth century encouraged Bobbitt (1918) to apply scientific principles to the curriculum field. Accordingly, Bobbitt determined curriculum objectives based on skills and knowledge needed by adults. Bobbitt defined curriculum as "that series of things which children and youth must do and experience by way of developing abilities to do things well that make up affairs of adult life; and to be in all respects what adults should be."

Tyler (1949) contributed a model that systematized this approach through the Eight-year Study of School-College relations and his later publications. The concept of the curriculum as objectives to be achieved made a profound impact on education. It provided the rationale for competency-based education, which has historically served as the model for vocational education. A broad definition offered by Tyler in 1956 defined curriculum as "all of the learning of students which is planned by and directed by the school to attain its educational goals". According to Tyler, this definition includes educational objectives, all planned learning experiences (including extraclass and learning activities in so far as they are planned and directed by the school to attain its aims), and the appraisal of student learning. One criticism about this definition was that, like earlier definitions that see curriculum as planned learning experiences, it gives no indication of how school learning experiences differ from those that are not under the purview of the school. Another objection to broad definitions of curriculum as school learning experiences was that they fail to differentiate between the intended and the unintended learning opportunities and experiences that occur in the school setting.

In contrast to those curriculum writers who conceive of curriculum as process - whether
‘guided learning’,
‘guided living’,
‘interaction of various elements in the school environment’,
‘all experiences or processes that learners have under the auspices of the school’;
or
‘the planned learning experiences provided in the school setting’

there are curriculum writers who conceive of curriculum as an instructional plan.

Taba (1962) is of the view that the very breadth of some of the above definitions make them nonfunctional. Taba defines curriculum as ‘a plan for learning’.

Beauchamp (1972) offering a similar definition defines curriculum as “a document designed to be used as a point of departure for instructional planning”.

One difficulty with these definitions is that a lesson plan or a unit plan may also be considered as ‘a plan for learning’ or ‘a document for instructional planning’. Lesson plans and unit plans are mere instruments of a curriculum. Another problem was whether the processes of putting such plans into action will be considered as something outside the curriculum.

It should be noted here that there are many curriculum writers who maintain that instruction is separate from curriculum. Macdonald (1965) is one such writer who defines curriculum as “those planning endeavors which take place prior to instruction”.

Saylor et al. (1981) define curriculum as “a plan for providing sets of learning opportunities for persons to be educated.” The provision of ‘sets of learning’ in this definition could include a subject-centered curriculum, or a competency-based curriculum or an experience type of curriculum. Saylor et al. want the term ‘plan’ in this definition to be viewed as an intention rather than a blueprint. They point out that:

“An effective teacher works with a plan in the same sense that an artist starts with an image of a landscape to be painted or a head to be sculpted.

As the artist works to embody this image, the image may vary. Similarly, as effective teachers embody the curriculum plan through instruction, they may vary the original plan as appropriate. Too often, ineffective teachers “plow ahead” with their plans, ignoring the learners and their interaction with the material. Curriculum plans should free teachers to be creative, not lock them into unproductive lessons”.

Curriculum as “a plan for providing sets of learning opportunities” has no impact until it is set in motion. Thus learning opportunities remain only learning opportunities until learners become engaged with opportunities. Learners are actually engaged with planned learning opportunities through instruction. Therefore without a curriculum or plan, there can be no effective instruction, and without instruction the curriculum has no meaning.

Richmond (1971) lists following four definitions selected at random from the Journal of Curriculum Studies (Britain) to indicate the contemporary movement of ideas and wide differences of opinion that prevailed in England:

1. All learning which is planned or guided by the school, whether it is carried out in groups or individually, inside or outside the school.
2. That the curriculum consists of content, teaching methods and purpose may in its rough and ready way be a sufficient definition to start. These three dimensions interacting are the operational curriculum.
3. A programme of activities designed so that pupils will attain, as far as possible, certain ends or objectives.
4. The contrived activity and experience - organized, focused, systematic-that life, unaided, would not provide. It is properly artificial, selecting, organizing and speeding up the process of real life.

Definitions (1) and (3) above make no mention of organized knowledge. Definition (2) incorporates the processes of instruction with content and goals; the use of the term “content” here is not clear. Definition (4) regards curriculum as artificially divorced from life and as mere preparation for life.

Marsh and Stafford (1988) reviewed the limitations and emphases of various definitions and interpretations of the term ‘curriculum’ and defined it as:

‘an interrelated set of plans and experiences which a student completes under the guidance of the school’.

Marsh and Stafford go on to explain their definition with an illustration (Figure 1) as follows:

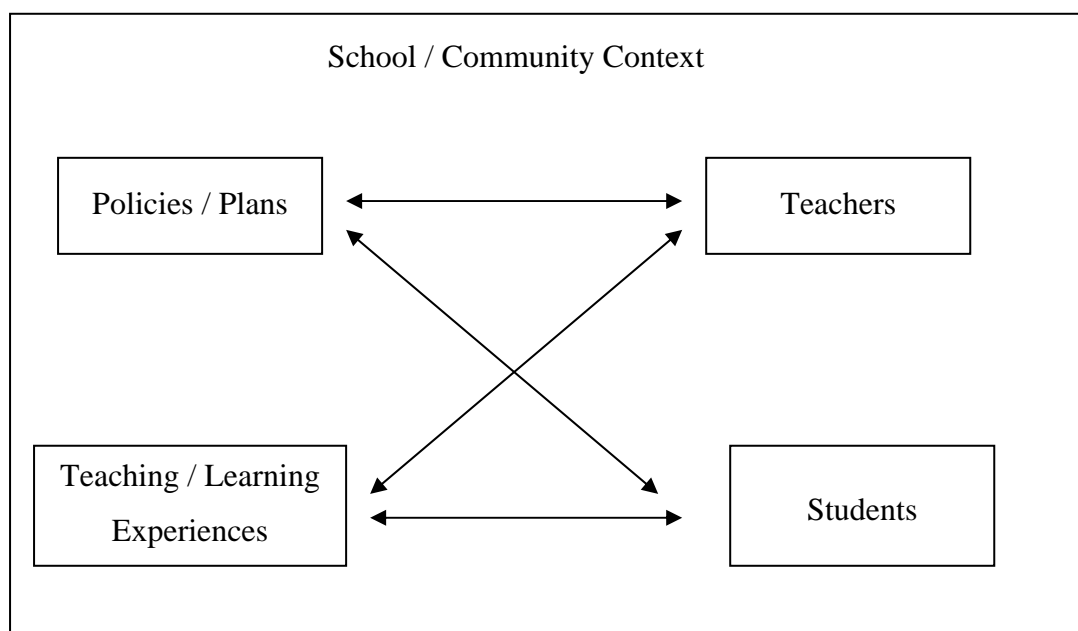


Figure 1. An illustrative definition of curriculum.

The phrase ‘interrelated set of plans and experiences’ in the definition points out that the school curricula are typically planned in advance and that, however, unplanned activities also occur. Therefore the actual curricula which are implemented in the classroom comprise an amalgam of plans and experiences (unplanned happenings). The curriculum which is experienced in the classroom is generally not a one way communication of ideas and information from the teacher to a group of passive recipients but a series of communications, reactions or exchanges between both groups. The time element of every curriculum is emphasized in the phrase ‘which a student completes under the guidance of the school.’ This assumes that students will complete certain tasks and activities over a period of time. All persons associated with the school, for example, school personnel, researchers, academics, administrators, and other interest groups who can provide some input into the planning of curriculum are covered by the phrase ‘under the guidance of the

school.’ This definition presupposes the possibility and desirability of some conscious planning in regard to curriculum and the existence of some important elements which are common to any planning activity irrespective of the particular value orientation. It also assumes that the learning activities experienced by students in classroom settings are managed and mediated by teachers thus enabling reconciliation of intended outcomes with practical day-to-day restrictions.

However, it has to be noted that there are also learnings from the hidden curriculum which are not intended by teachers. The hidden curriculum or the ‘unofficial’ curriculum is implicit within regular school procedures, in curriculum materials, in social messages, the roles and the norms of the classrooms and in communication approaches and mannerisms used by staff. The socialization process that comes from the school itself, as a community, is a significant part of the hidden curriculum. M. Apple (1979) defined the hidden curriculum as “the tacit teaching to students of norms, values and dispositions that goes on simply by their living in and coping with the institutional expectations and routines of schools day in and day out for a number of years.”

An interesting interpretation of the term ‘curriculum’ by Costa and Liebmann (1997) is given below:

‘Curriculum is the pulse of the school; it is the currency through which educators exchange thoughts and ideas with students and the school community. It is the passion that binds the organization together. Curriculum, in the broader sense, is everything that influences the learning of students both overtly and covertly, inside and outside the school.’

Michael Young (1998) looks at the ‘curriculum’ as ‘socially organized knowledge’. Young says:

“..... academic curricula are as much the products of people’s actions in history as any other form of social organization. They are not given, nor, in today’s language, do they represent an unchanging gold standard. They can therefore be transformed. The issue is one of purposes and the extent to which the existing curriculum represents a future society that we can endorse or a past society that we want to change.”

According to young, the history, the social divisions and the many competing interests and value systems found in a modern society are expressed in the school curriculum as much as they are in its system of government or its occupational structure. Likewise, curriculum debates, implicitly or explicitly are always debates about alternative views of society and its future. Curriculum is always a selection and organization of the knowledge available at a particular time.

A definition of curriculum that flowed from the concept of curriculum as guided living and presented by H. O. Rugg (1947) is as follows:

“Curriculum is the life and program of the school ... an enterprise in guided living; the curriculum becomes the very stream of dynamic activities that constitute the life of young people and their elders.”

John Quicke (1999) in his work titled ‘A curriculum for life – Schools for a democratic learning society’ defines curriculum as follows:

“A curriculum provides a framework for learning. It suggests that of all the things that could be learned these particular things have the most value; and; it does this with reference to the educational needs of the students to be taught and the social and political context in which teaching and learning take place. In its broadest sense, the curriculum includes the ‘how’ and the ‘what’ of learning which occurs formally and informally inside educational institutions as well as outside such institutions.”

Before the conclusion of this section on definitions and concepts of curriculum, it is pertinent to make a distinction between curriculum and syllabus. Syllabus is the vehicle through which organization and structure of intended leanings are communicated from teacher to teacher and teacher to learner. The common framework of a syllabus includes the provisioning of curriculum constructs. Not all of the curriculum components are provisioned in every syllabus but there are implicit assumptions as decisions are made on the way subject matter and leaning activities are organized in a unit of instruction.

From this analysis of the concepts of curriculum and the definitions which flowed from these concepts we will next discuss the different theories associated with curriculum.

1.2 Curriculum Theories

1.2.1 Bobbitt's Curriculum Theory

Franklin Bobbitt introduced the scientific or analytic aims approach to curriculum development in early 20th century. In 1918 Bobbitt published his work titled 'The Curriculum'. In The Curriculum Bobbitt approached curriculum development scientifically and theoretically as follows:

- Study life carefully to identify needed skills;
- Divide these skills into specific units;
- Organize these units into experiences; and
- Provide these experiences to children.

He argued that educational theory is not so difficult to construct as some believe and that curriculum theory can be derived logically from educational theory. In 1918 Bobbitt wrote that:

“The central theory is simple. Human life, however varied, consists in its performance of specific activities. Education that prepares for life is one that prepares definitely and adequately for these activities. However numerous and diverse they may be for any social class, they can be discovered. This requires that one go out into the world of affairs and discover the particulars of which these affairs consist. These will show the abilities, habits, appreciations, and forms of knowledge that men need. These will be the objectives of the curriculum. They will be numerous, definite, and particularized. The curriculum will then be that series of experiences which childhood and youth must have by way of attaining those objectives.”

Six years later Bobbitt (1924) operationalized his theoretical assertions and demonstrated how curriculum components, especially educational objectives were to be formulated.

1.2.2 Tyler's Rationale for Curriculum

Rationale for constructing curriculum developed by Ralph Tyler (1949) too placed great importance on the specificity of objectives. During the first half of the twentieth century an effort toward formulating a systematic rationale for curriculum development and

research was made under the Eight-Year Study (1933-1941) sponsored by the Progressive Education Association in the United States. This was a large-scale longitudinal study to determine how graduates of progressive secondary schools, who had been exposed to new curricula, would compare in college achievement with graduates from more traditional schools. It aimed to ascertain whether the usual college-entrance requirements are essential for college success. Ralph W. Tyler who served as research director for this Study published, in 1949, a syllabus for a course he was teaching at the University of Chicago. This syllabus was titled 'Basic Principles of Curriculum and Instruction.' It was intended to represent 'a rationale for viewing, analyzing and interpreting the curriculum and instructional program of an educational institution' (Tyler, 1949). Tyler's formulation occupies a focal position in the field of curriculum theory even today.

Tyler's rationale for analyzing and developing the curriculum seeks, at the outset, to answer four fundamental questions, namely,

1. What educational purposes should the school seek to attain?
2. What educational experiences can be provided that are likely to attain these purposes?
3. How can these educational experiences be effectively organized?
4. How can we determine whether these purposes are being attained?

Tyler's questions essentially represent the following four-step sequence:

1. Identifying objectives;
2. Selecting the means for the attainment of these objectives;
3. Organizing these means; and
4. Evaluating the outcomes.

The key elements of the Tyler's rationale have been derived from progressive educational thought during the 1930's and 1940's.

One striking feature of Tyler's rationale is that his questions relate to Dewey's essentials of reflection. Dewey (1916) saw reflective thinking as the means through which curricular elements are unified. According to Dewey, reflection is not merely confined to specialized domains of knowledge but is extended to social problem solving. Dewey identified the following as essentials of reflection:

1. The pupil has a genuine situation of experience - there will be a continuous activity of interest to him for its own sake;
2. A genuine problem develops within this situation as a stimulus to thought;
3. The pupil possesses the information and make the observations needed to deal with it;
4. Suggested solutions occur to him which he shall be responsible for developing in an orderly way.
5. He may have the opportunity and occasion to test his ideas by application, to make their meaning clear and to discover for himself their validity.

Dewey was careful to point out that the phases or steps in reflective thinking are not rigid or uniform.

In regard to Tyler's rationale discussed above it needs to be pointed out that Tyler (1977) later emphasized the importance of learner participation in the planning and evaluation of the curriculum. Tyler (1977) commented as follows:

“I would give much greater emphasis now to careful consideration of the implications for curriculum development of the active role of the student in the learning process. I would also give much greater emphasis to a comprehensive examination of the nonschool areas of student learning in developing a curriculum”.

1.2.3 Kliebard's Curriculum Theory

Kliebard (1977) identified four problems that arise in finding answers to the central curriculum question: 'what should we teach?' The four questions are:

1. Why should we teach this rather than that?
2. Who should have access to what knowledge?
3. What rules should govern the teaching of what has been selected?
4. How should the various parts of the curriculum be interrelated in order to create a coherent whole?

Kliebard attempted to develop a theory that can guide in solving the above problems. Kliebard concluded that it may be possible to develop a curriculum theory taking the word 'theory' to mean “a systematic analysis of a set of related concepts”. He made the

following comments on Dewey's writings to show that Dewey's ideas may provide the basis for his theory:

‘Through the concept of experience, Dewey hoped to tie together the two elements that constitute the heart of any curriculum theory: the child, on the one hand with its crude, unsystematized, concrete forms of experience; and on the other, the abstract, highly refined, and systematically organized experience of the human race.’

In searching for a theory of instruction, Bruner (1966) acknowledges that “a curriculum reflects not only the nature of knowledge itself but also the nature of the knower and the knowledge-getting process”, and he concludes that, “knowledge is a process, not a product.” Here Bruner proposes several elements or features for a theory of instruction without attempting to attack the problem of a theory of curriculum.

Holmes and McLean (1989) in their publication titled ‘The Curriculum - A Comparative Perspective’ state that in comparative and historical perspective curriculum theory has been based on finding answers to the question: ‘what knowledge is of most worth?’ Many answers have been given to this question. Of these answers those which informed the major civilizations of the ancient world are relevant to present-day curriculum issues. In the major cultures of the world a book, or books contain what is regarded as worthwhile knowledge.

In ancient China the classics of Confucious were used by tutors to prepare selected students for examinations held to select candidates for the service of the emperor. These classics, which acquired the status of religious texts stressed the importance of human relationships. In India, Brahmins protected Hindu traditions and introduced young scholars to the sacred Hindu texts. However, the privileged Hindus studied medicine, physiology, astrology and the principal systems of philosophy in addition to the sacred texts. The content of education in ancient India was thus designed to provide future leaders with an all-round education. In Islamic countries power was shared by religious teachers. The Koran was the initial source of all knowledge. In Europe the priest-teacher not only decided what should be taught, and to whom, but was the adviser of kings and princes. The religious content of education in Western Europe for Christians was taken from the Bible and for Jews from the Talmud. From an early date European schools

incorporated, in their curricula, secular knowledge and the non-religious justification for it from the literature of classical Greece. This was a major difference between curricula in European schools and those established by Hindus, Muslims and Buddhists.

The origins of the three most influential European Curriculum theories, namely, essentialism, encyclopedism and pragmatism and the epistemological, psychological and political / sociological theories associated with them can be found in this classical Greek literature. The fourth major theory - polytechnicalism – is designed in Soviet debates less to answer the question what knowledge is worthwhile than to suggest how all knowledge should be presented in schools.

1.2.4 Essentialism Curriculum Theory

The origins of essentialism as a curriculum theory are found in the paradigm exemplified in Plato's Republic (1935). In this work the public service that teachers were expected to perform was basically political. The aim of education in this model is to sustain a stable, just society. Plato's sole interest was in the education of future political leaders. His psychology of learning is related to his theory of individual differences. He divides the soul into three parts: reason, energy, and animal instincts. Those who possess these are the guardians, auxiliaries and workers respectively.

According to Plato education should cultivate reason; training should develop the animal instincts appropriate to workers. The essentialist curriculum consisted of a few carefully selected subjects like arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, music and gymnastics. Such subjects, presented in logical sequences provide learners with the intellectual skills, and moral fibre expected of a societal leader. The Seven Liberal Arts curriculum based on this theory dominated the content of education in the Middle Ages. The four subjects music, astronomy, geometry, and arithmetic provided a sound general education and the three subjects grammar, rhetoric, and philosophy or logic provided methods for studying essential knowledge.

1.2.5 Encyclopedism Curriculum Theory

The curriculum theory termed encyclopedism which had a profound influence on European curricula except those in England was mainly due to the Czech educator Comenius. Comenius pioneered the theory by first criticizing systems of education which

did not follow nature. His own scheme of universal learning was based on the observation of the nature and an examination of its laws. Since learning takes place first through the senses Comenius's curriculum was designed to develop senses first. According to this view instead of first learning from books pupils should learn from the 'book of nature'. In an encyclopedic curriculum knowledge of things and words should go together.

Comenius proposed that in vernacular schools children should learn to read and write grammatically in their mother tongue in order to learn about things. They should learn how to add, weigh, measure and how to sing and say sacred passages by heart. Moral values, economics, politics and the history of the world, the position and make-up of the earth, the motion of planets and stars, physics, geography and a general knowledge of the arts and handicrafts should be included in a comprehensive curriculum. This encyclopedic theory is reflected in all continental European national systems of education.

1.2.6 Polytechnical Curriculum Theory

The curriculum theory termed 'polytechnicalism' was developed by soviet educators on the basis of Lenin's assertion that the whole socio-economic and historical experience of mankind should be included in school curricula. The fundamental premise here is that the content of education should be deliberately interpreted in terms of the productive life of society. To relate theory to practice and education to the productive life of society requires a fundamentally different approach to the concepts of worthwhile knowledge proposed by Plato. However, this soviet curriculum theory and the physiologically based theories of learning associated with it offer a more realistic approach to the provision of education as a human right in an industrialization era based on advances of scientific knowledge.

1.2.7 Pragmatic Curriculum Theory

USA which changed more rapidly than most countries in response to the application of science and technology to industrial processes developed a viable alternative to polytechnicalism towards the end of the nineteenth century. John Dewey gave credence to this radically new curriculum theory known as "pragmatism." Dewey accepted that problems associated with healthy living, earning a living, family life, civil participation,

the enjoyment of leisure and the makings of moral decisions were the most worthwhile problems on which a sound curriculum should be based. Dewey (1902) located the problems in the urban environment for selecting the content of school education. For Dewey productive work was the main educative activity. He proposed that primary schools should become small communities with curricula providing problem-solving learning activities to children. The principle behind his proposal was that children learn best through participating in activities which are relevant to life in their community.

The USA, France, the Soviet Union and Britain have been centers of distinctive curriculum philosophies. Each of these countries also has had a major political influence on other parts of the world and, through this impact, educational practices based on the four major curriculum philosophies have been widely diffused.

Summary

Beginning with a comment on the worthwhileness of studying curriculum we presented a variety of curriculum concepts and definitions in this Essential Reading and analysed some of these briefly. Attempts made by some curriculum writers to classify these concepts or definitions into different categories were also discussed. An effort was made to present the key definitions in full with a discussion on their limitations and drawbacks.

Selected curriculum theories and interpretations of curriculum writers regarding these theories were discussed in the latter part of the Essential Reading.

Objectives

You are now able to

- i. Explain why it is important to study curriculum;
- ii. Discuss key concepts and definitions of curriculum and analyze their key aspects and limitations; and
- iii. Understand the major theories of curriculum and their specific features.

References

- Apple M. (1979) Ideology and Curriculum, Boston: Routledge and Kegan.
- Beauchamp, George A. (1972) "Basic Components of a Curriculum Theory", Curriculum Theory Network.
- Bobbitt, Franklin (1918) The curriculum, Boston: Houghton, Mifflin Company in Tanner and Tanner (1975) and Saylor et al. (1981).
- Bobbitt, Franklin (1924) How To Make A Curriculum, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company in Stone (1972).
- Bruner, J.S. (1960) The Process of Education, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.
- Bruner, Jerome S. (1966) Toward a Theory of Instruction, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.
- Caswell, Hollin L. and Campbell, Doak S. (1935) Curriculum Development, New York: American Book Company, in Tanner and Tanner (1975).
- Costa, Arthur L. and Liebmann, Rosemarie M. (eds.) (1997) Envisioning Process as Content –Toward a Renaissance Curriculum, California: Corwin Press Inc.
- Dewey, John (1902) The Child and the Curriculum, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, in Holmes and McLean (1989).
- Dewey, John (1916) Democracy and Education, New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc.
- Henson, Kenneth T. (2001) Curriculum Planning – Integrating Multiculturalism, Constructivism, and Education Reform, New York: McGraw – Hill.
- Holmes, Brian and McLean, Martin (1989) The Curriculum – A Comparative Perspective, London: Unwin Hyman.
- Kliebard, Herbert M. (1977) "Curriculum Theory: Give Me a 'For Instance'", Curriculum Inquiry, (1977): 262 in Saylor et al. (1981).
- Lewis, Arieh (ed.) (1991) The International Encyclopedia of Curriculum - Advances in Education: Pergamon Press.
- Lewis, Arthur J. and Miel, Alice (1972) Supervision for Improved Instruction: New Challenges, New Responses, Belmont, Calif.: Wadsworth Publishing Company, Inc.
- Macdonald, James B. (1965) "Educational Models for Instruction" in James B. Macdonald and Robert R. Leeper (eds.) Theories of Instruction, Washington D. C.: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Marsh, C. and Morris, P. (ed.) (1991), Curriculum Development in East Asia, London: The Falmer Press.

- Marsh, C.J. and Stafford, K. (1988) Curriculum: Practices and Issues, Sydney: Mc Graw-Hill in Marsh and Morris (1991).
- Omstein Allan C. and Hunkins Francis (1993) Curriculum Foundations, Principles, and Theory, London: Allyn and Bacon.
- Plato, trans. J.L. Davies and D.J.Vaughen (1935) The Republic of Plato, London: Lawrence & Wishart, in Holmes and McLean (1989).
- Quicke, John (1999) A Curriculum for Life – Schools for a democratic Learning Society, Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Richmond, W. Kenneth (1971) The School Curriculum, London: Methuen & Co. Ltd.
- Rugg, H. O. (1947) Foundations of American Education, 1st edn., New York: World Book Company, Yonkers-on-Hudson.
- Saylor, J. Galen, Alexander, William M., and Lewis, Arthur, J. (1981) Curriculum Planning for Better Teaching and Learning, New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.
- Squires, Geoffrey (1987) The Curriculum Beyond School, London: Hodder and Stoughton.
- Stone E. in collaboration with D. Anderson (1972) Educational Objectives and the Teaching of Educational Psychology, London: Methuen & Co. Ltd.
- Taba, H. (1962) Curriculum Development: Theory and Practice, New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc.
- Tanner, Daniel and Tanner, Laurel N. (1975) Curriculum Development - Theory into Practice, New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc.
- Taylor, P.H. and Richards, C.M. (1985) An Instruction to Curriculum Studies (2nd edn.) Windsor: NFER – Nelson.
- Tyler, R. (1949) Basic Principles of Curriculum and Instruction, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Tyler, Ralph W. (1956), “The Curriculum – Then and Now” in Proceedings of the 1956 Invitational Conference on Testing Problems, Princeton N.J.: Educational Testing Service.
- Tyler, Ralph (1977) “Desirable Content for a Curriculum Development Syllabus Today” in Alex Molnar and John A. Zahorik (eds) Curriculum Theory, Washington D.C.: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Young, Michael F.D. (1998) The Curriculum of the future – From the ‘New Sociology of Education’ to a critical theory of learning, Falmer Press.