UNIT - 4 : CURRICULUM

UNIT STRUCTURE

4.1 Learning Objectives

4.2 Introduction

4.3 Concept and Meaning of Curriculum

4.4 Types of Curriculum

4.5 Defects of Curriculum

4.6 Basic Principles of Curriculum Construction at Primary and Secondary level.

4.7 Let Us Sum Up

4.8 Further Reading

4.9 Answers to Check Your Progress

4.10 Model Questions

4.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

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

- define curriculum
- differentiate the types of curriculum
- identify the defects of curriculum
- describe the different principles of curriculum and its significance to be followed at primary and secondary school level.

4.2 INTRODUCTION

In the first three units, we have already discussed the meaning of education, its different types, aims, scope, the relationships between school and the community, school and home and its various roles. After having a fair understanding about education, now we are going to discuss one important component of education, that is curriculum and its meaning, types, defects as well as the various principles required to follow in constructing a good curriculum. In the broad sense, curriculum fulfils a major role through which activities of both the classroom and school are run for reaching the

desired goal of students as well as of the school. It is the curriculum through which all round development of the children can be achieved through its diversifications, to the needs and demands of the students.

4.3 CONCEPT AND MEANING OF CURRICULUM

We are all familiar with the term of curriculum. Curriculum is an essential tool for running the programme of educational instruction in the formal schooling. Each and every educational institution has some planned activities and programmes in the name of curriculum and co-curricular activites which are meaningful and significant for the students in their real life. Because through the various skillful and value-oriented curricular and co-curricular activities students can develop their physical, emotional and intellectual capacities that lead to their all round development. In order to have some clarity about its basic meaning, we have to know the origin of the term curriculum. The term "curriculum" is derived from Latin word 'Currere' which means 'run'. The very meaning of curriculum means a course to be run for reaching a certain goal or destination. Thus, in an educational institution, education is imagined as a race, with its aim as the goal and curriculum as the course leading to that goal.

In a more precise term, we can define curriculum in the words of an educationist, **Cunningham** as "a tool in the hands of artist (teacher) to mould his material (pupils) according to his ideals (aims and objectives) in his studio (school)" This definition explains that curriculum is a course of study, designed to be followed at the various levels of education.

- In the opinion of **Crow and Crow** (as quoted in the book Safaya, R.N. and Shaida, B.D. (1996): *Development of Educational Theory and Practice*") "Curriculum includes all the learner's experiences in or outside the school that are included in a programme which has been devised to help his development, physically, emotionally, socially, spiritually and morally." Here the main logic of curriculum is to develop the total learning experiences of the students in their life.



LET US KNOW

- The term Curriculum has come to mean all the planned activities and the experiences which are available to students under the direction of the school.
- The curriculum deals with the real life problems that have meaning for children and which are significant for them to solve. It is related to the physical, emotional and intellectual needs of children that leads to full development of each child.
- A good curriculum is a co-operative effort of children and teachers and helps to solve the problems that children face in the school and the outside the school.
- A good curriculum, in fact, is the sum total of good learning experiences that the pupils have in order to achieve the goals of education, which determine the direction of their experiences.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 1. How would you like to define curriculum? Explain it in 30 words.

.....

.....

.....

Q 2: Say True or False:

a) Curriculum is derived from Latin word 'Currere' .(True/ False)

.....

b) The meaning of currere is to run. (True/ False)

.....

4.4 TYPES OF CURRICULUM

After getting a fair understanding of curriculum as to what it basically means, now we are going to focus on different types of curriculum which are based on changing situations from time to time. For instance, the modern pattern of curriculum differs from the traditional one, because of development

of new psychological, philosophical and sociological principles which has brought the modification in the educational process as well as in the curriculum construction.

Let us look at the following types of curriculum-

- The Traditional or Subject-Centered Curriculum
- The Activity Curriculum
- The Experience Curriculum
- The Undifferentiated Curriculum
- Basic Education Curriculum
- Life-Centered or Balanced Curriculum.

Among the above types of curriculum, we are discussing here only three types of curriculum i.e. **Traditional, Activity-based** and **Balanced curriculum.**

Traditional or Subject-centered curriculum: The Traditional curriculum which is also known as subject-centered curriculum includes the subject of study within a fixed time schedule. In this curriculum, each subject has separate entity where the nature and the scope are clearly defined. Emphasis is on the intellectual attainment of the child, rather than on the values of studies for personal and social development.

In this curriculum the basic features are as follows :

- It is centred around subject.
- Its emphasis is on teaching matter.
- Subject matters are selected and organized before the teaching situation.
- It is teacher-centred and controlled by the teacher or someone representing authority, external to the learning situation.
- Emphasis is on teaching facts, imparting information of acquiring knowledge for its own sake or possible future use.
- Emphasis is upon improving methods of teaching in the subject matter.



LET US KNOW

For more clarity, we have to look critically into some of the points of subject-centered curriculum which are provided by different educationists as follows -

- It is strictly conceived in terms of subject, where the extent and scope of each subject is studied in a particular class during a particular period.
- It is rigid and static. Such a curriculum can neither meet the needs of the individual child nor can serve the society.
- It is constructed by the adults after their own image. The curriculum is constructed by the adults to prepare the child for the future, according to the adult standard and values. Generally, this curriculum is constructed by the high ups of the education department or the political administrators who have absolutely no idea of the actual needs and interests of the children.
- It stresses repetition and memorization. Here, the teacher's main concern is with what to teach and not with how to teach. In this system, teacher gives stress on memorization of the subject matter which is given in the text matter that is considered to be the only source of knowledge.
- This type of curriculum is not an expression of the culture and spiritual heritage of Indian Society, because it is closely related to bookish knowledge and not with the lives of people. It fails to touch the emotion, folklores, music, art and craft, in short, ***aesthetic*** values of life.



Growth: increase quantity and size. Here it indicates the personal develop-ment, emotional, intellectual, spiritual development etc.



Personality: some one character, behave towards other person.Sum total of behaviour.

Activity based curriculum : After going through the subject centered curriculum, now let us discuss the activity centered curriculum where the subject matter is taught in terms of activity. The activity curriculum is based on projection and learning by doing system, where knowledge is gained as an out growth and product of those activities. Activities develop the constructive and creative urges of the children through the different activities in school that help to lead to the all round ***growth*** of their ***personality.***

Therefore, teaching through a constructive and purposeful activity should be done in accordance with the nature and interest of the children. Thinkers like Rousseau, Montessori, John Dewey and Gandhi who consider education through the process of 'Learning by doing' and 'Activity' as the best methods of teaching.

Some of the salient features of Activity curriculum are:

- Activity curriculum reveals that activities through 3H (Head, Heart and Hand) can enrich the students.
- Generally, all physical activities of the activity based curriculum undertaken by pupils not only develop manual skill and technical efficiency but also give the mental satisfaction and the intellectual growth.
- Activity also contributes to the social development of the children.
- The problems and techniques of the activity curriculum are solved through the mutual understanding between teachers and the pupils.
- The mutual dealing within the group under the activity based curriculum leads to social awareness and provides training in proper adjustment and co-operation.

LET US KNOW



Although, Activity curriculum is more attractive and life-based curriculum for imparting the requisite knowledge, skills and attitudes, yet for the want of proper infrastructure, it is not easy to run. Besides this, this curriculum is not sufficient for the children to develop the social and cultural habits which play some essential and prominent role for developing the children's personality at best.



Aesthetic: the study of beauty, especially beauty in art.

Balanced Curriculum: After going through the other two types of curriculum, now we have realized that neither the Subject-centered curriculum nor Activity based curriculum is the perfect type of curriculum that can bring out and develop the full potentialities of the students. Keeping the variability of the students in mind, one type of curriculum is developed which is called Balanced type of curriculum. Balanced curriculum is the curriculum which is made considering the selected activities and subjects

for various grade of pupils. Such a curriculum includes all the aspects of human activity and human development and thus, will cater for the needs of the individual and the society. Besides these, it transmits the cultural heritage, explains the present as well as helps the future and in this way, it enables the pupil to adjust himself / herself properly to the modern complex and fast changing world. 'Correlation Principle' of Mahatma Gandhi's Basic Education is considered in this type of curriculum where the course content in study is related to different subjects of the curriculum and the life-activities of the environment. For instance, Subjects of Humanities (Art, Philosophy, History, Literature, Ethics, Religion) Subjects of social sciences (like Anthropology, Sociology, Demography, Political science) and natural sciences (like physics, Geography, Geology, Astronomy, Mathematics) are selected and considered as subjects of Balanced curriculum.

LET US KNOW



In fact, Balanced curriculum is based on the mental level of the students. Based on growing stages and ages of the students, the contents and courses of this curriculum provide the specialization opportunity to the students. It means that in the beginning the curriculum will be same for all but at the later stage, students will be permitted to specialize in subjects according to their own choice and interest. The specialization is permitted after the age of fourteen at the higher secondary stage, where students can develop their aptitudes and interests whatever he/she desires to study; whether it technical, commercial, academic, medical or general. Such a system would produce balanced personalities who would be able to live as good citizens as well as to adjust with any type of situation in a democratic country. For more clarity, if we see the subjects which are recommended by Secondary Education Commission (1952-53) as subjects of Balanced curriculum at Middle school level, we will see that this includes Languages (Regional, national and international),

Social studies, general sciences, Mathematics, Art and Music, Craft and Physical Education etc.. At the stage of Higher level, this curriculum is based on special abilities and interest of the pupils who can choose the subjects among a wide variety like the Humanities, Technical, Commercial, Agricultural, Fine arts etc.



ACTIVITY 4.1

Which one would you like to choose as the best way of curriculum for study in teaching learning process?

.....

.....

.....



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 3: What do you mean by Balanced curriculum? Explain it in 50 words

.....

.....

.....

.....

Q 4: Say True or false:

a) Traditional curriculum is based on bookish knowledge (True/False)

b) Activity based curriculum is fully controlled by teachers (True/False)

c) Activity curriculum follows the principle of learning by doing system.(True/False)

d) Balance curriculum is designed on the basis of variability of the students. (True/false)

e) In the Balanced curriculum, students have the choice to select their desired subjects after the age of fourteen. (True/false)

4.5 DEFECTS OF CURRICULUM

In this section, we will discuss briefly the various defects of curriculum for a better understanding as to what type of curriculum is prevalent in our present teaching-learning process and what are the drawbacks due to which the students are unable to have good learning experiences that can help them to reach a certain goal in their life. The basic defects of curriculum are found by Secondary Education Commission after a thorough analysis of curriculum. Let us discuss the following defects-



Innovative: A new idea, method or innovation



Pedagogical: The practice of teaching, relating to teaching method and study.



Circumstances : The conditions in which you live

- Rigid and Static: In formal schooling, the curriculum is pre-designed and pre-determined for teaching-learning process. The curriculum is based on subject instruction. The main emphasis is given on bookish knowledge; importance is given on what teachers want, not on what students desire.
- Narrowly conceived: The present curriculum is rather degree oriented and meets the requirements for passing the school stages.
- Emphasis of Bookish knowledge: The present curriculum prevalent in our education system mostly gives emphasis on the theoretical and academic side, rather than practical one.
- Single Track curriculum: The curriculum lacks adequate provisions for the diversity of tastes and talents.
- Absence of Technical and Vocational studies: In a democratic country like ours, we have the need of more skilled persons (that is technically fit) as well as more entrepreneurship facilities and trainings. Proper and up to date education should provide such type of vocational and skillful training that prepares the students for their future. But in formal schooling, more importance is given on bookish knowledge rather than on practical and vocational aspects. Besides these, there is also a lack of flexibility which is needed to keep pace with a fast changing world.
- Domination by Examination: The curriculum is dominated by examination. It concentrates more on enabling the students to pass examinations and not to acquire knowledge in a wider manner. Because it is time bound, the contents of the topics and the types of the study are determined by the questions to be asked in the examinations.

4.6 BASIC PRINCIPLES OF CURRICULUM CONSTRUCTION AT PRIMARY AND SECONDARY LEVEL

For constructing a curriculum, some principles should be followed in order to cater to the needs and interests of the students from the school to college and university levels. But it is required to see their interests and needs separately. Besides, the mental level of the students should also be taken in to account. Now let us discuss the basic principles, which should be followed while constructing a curriculum at the primary and secondary level.

The principles which should be followed at ***Primary level***:

- Curriculum should be child centred: Curriculum should be based on the present needs and **circumstances** of the children. At the time of curriculum construction, mental level of the students should be considered.
- Curriculum should provide a fullness of experience for children: Curriculum should be constructed not only to include some certain academic subjects like sciences, mathematics, work experiences, languages, art and music, health and physical education, the knowledge of which is very vital for the learners; but it should also have enough space for some other activities like drama, excursion, regional study, laboratory work, drawing, original composition, collection for museum etc. It may also include some other co-curricular activities like games, social service, scouting and guiding, N.C.C. etc. These activities should form a regular feature of the normal working of the institution in order to empower the students with experiences that would help them to reach their ideals in life.
- Curriculum should be Community centred: The main purpose of the curriculum is to serve the children's needs and to enable them to adjust themselves in society. Actually, the very meaning of the school is to serve the needs and demands of the society where it is established. In fact, it is the school which the students attend as members of the society. Curriculum, therefore, should be prepared keeping in view the needs and changing nature of the society.
- Curriculum should be integrated: Curriculum should follow the principle of integration through which to bring about integration between children's

needs and activities with the needs of a democratic society, where the main focus is on technological as well as ***innovative*** ideas and ***pedagogical*** knowledge.

- Curriculum should be Activity centred: While catering for the children's interest, curriculum should be centered round the multipurpose activities to ensure the development of Hand, Heart and Head of the children through the process of Learning by doing System.
- Creative Principle: Curriculum should include such subjects through which creative power of the children can be encouraged and chalked out. In preferring the subjects for teaching-learning process, the students' interest must be primary focus so that their creativity can be encouraged.
- The principle of Elasticity and variety: Curriculum should be flexible in nature, because a rigid and static curriculum can not meet the requirement of the children. Therefore, the curriculum should be elastic and broad based to corporate with the new subjects and activities as demanded by the changing times. In fact, curriculum should be based on student's consideration and their requirements.
- The principle of comprehensiveness: Curriculum should follow the principle of comprehensiveness including all the necessary facts or details about requirement of the students and their interest. The curriculum must be comprehensive enough to generate the needs of various individuals and communities with keeping the needs of various types of pupils.
- The Principle of Balanced: Curriculum should maintain a balance between the theoretical and practical subjects for developing the potentialities or capabilities of the students in order by enabling them to face and perform in any kind of competitive situation of the society. Balanced curriculum should include individual and social aims of education, professional and liberal education, compulsory and elective subjects of education in accordance with the mental level of the students.

Secondary level : We now need to understand, what kind of principles should be followed at the Secondary level for developing the various skills and

capacities of students. Let us discuss the following principles which are recommended by the ***Secondary Education Commission(1952-53)*** in the education report for constructing the curriculum at Secondary school level:

- Totality of Experience: This principle believes that curriculum should not only include the academic subjects but also the whole ranges of experiences that the student faces both inside and outside the school. It is the curriculum from which students get experiences like class room, library, laboratory, workshop, playgrounds besides numerous formal and informal contacts between teachers and the pupils. Therefore, all these should be considered at the time of constructing the curriculum.
- Variety and Elasticity: Curriculum should have the ***way of selectivity*** where the children can choose the subject for study in accordance with their needs and interests. Uninterested and uncongenial subjects lead to the sense of annoyance and frustration among the children and thus, hinder their normal development. Therefore, flexibility is one of the basic criteria of a good curriculum. The Courses of curriculum should be linked with the fast changing time and situation that produce the ***manpower*** in the society.
- Relation to Community life: The learners who come to the school for study are the members of the community. Again, the school where it is established is surrounded by the community and therefore there should be strong link between the two. The course of curriculum should co-relate to the community's requirements.
- Training for leisure: The curriculum should be designed to train the students in leisure time also. A variety of activities like social, aesthetic and sports etc. should be introduced in the school. Such activities make the school experience not only pleasant and meaningful, but also cultivates the varied interests and hobbies among the students enabling them to choose their way in future.
- Integrated and Co-related: Curriculum should be interrelated within each subject; the contents should be a broad-field unit that includes all the necessary information which can be co-related better with life rather than with narrow items of information.



Way of Selectivity: what you choose to do, method of selection



Manpower**:** all the worker available for a particular kind of work, the person who are trained and skillful**.**



LET US KNOW

The course of curriculum should be broad based and it should have the advantage of selectivity that learners can study according to their needs and interests. The course content should be based on the mental level of the students. The construction of the curriculum should be planned relating to the present time and situation. Flexibility should be the basic criterion in the construction of curriculum. While making the curriculum, attention should be paid to the student's abilities, needs and interests. The curriculum should be designed in such a way incorporating such courses and activities, so that students can prepare themselves to meet the future challenges of life.



ACTIVITY 4.2

Write some principles which you like to choose as the best principles for curriculum construction at primary school level.

.....

.....

.....

Write some principles which you like to choose as the best principles for curriculum construction at Secondary school level.

.....

.....

.....



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 5: Should curriculum be child-centered? Give your opinion in support of it.(Not more than 50 words)

.....

.....

.....



4.7 LET US SUM UP

- Curriculum means a course for reaching a certain goal or destination of the learners in an educational institution.
- In the recent years, curriculum is considered including all the planned activities and experiences which are available to students under the direction of the school.
- Although there are so many types of curriculum, but here, we have discussed only three types of curriculum: **Traditional, Activity-based** and **Balanced curriculum**.
- Traditional curriculum is subject-oriented and bookish, whereas in Activity curriculum, subject matter is directly concerned with the activity. In Activity curriculum, the knowledge is gained through the system of learning by doing system.
- Balanced curriculum is the combination of both theoretical and practical subject. It means Balanced curriculum makes the bridge between the Subject and Activity based curriculum.
- The present system of curriculum suffers from the various defects like narrowly conceived or rigid, emphasis on bookish knowledge, absence of proper technical and vocational course, domination by examination etc.
- For constructing the curriculum, some basic principles should be followed separately for the Primary and Secondary School levels.
- The constructing principles should be based on mental level of the students, according to their growing stages of schooling.



4.8 FURTHER READING

1) Safaya, R.N. and Shaida, B.D. (1996): *Development of EducationalTheory and Practice* , Dhanpat Rai & Sons, Jalandhar, Delhi

2) Kochhar, S.K. (1995) *: Method and Techniques of Teaching*, Sterling Publishers private Limited.



4.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No 1: Curriculum is a tool for running the courses of an educational institution which are meaningful and significant for the students in their real life. Through the various curricular and co-curricular activities, students can develop their physical, social, emotional, intellectual capacity which lead to the all round development of the students.

Ans to Q No 2:

a) True

b) True.

Ans to Q No 3: Balanced curriculum is the combination of both Subject or traditional and Activity based curriculum. Balanced curriculum is the curriculum which is made considering the select activities and subjects of various grades of pupils. Such curriculum includes all the aspects of human activity and human development as well as caters for the needs of the individual and the society.

Ans to Q No 4:

a) True.

b) False

c) True.

d) True

e) True.

Ans to Q No 5: As a child centric approach of education, the curriculum should be definitely related to address the needs and requirements of the children for their all-round development. The course of curriculum should be broad based and it should have the advantage of selectivity that learners can study according to

their needs and interests. As a child centric curriculum, the course should be based on mental level of the students and also the two aspects, mainly time and situation, should be considered when curriculum is being constructed.



4.10 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Short Questions (Answer each question in about 150 words)

Q 1: What do you mean by the term curriculum?

Q 2: Traditional curriculum is subject centred-explain.

B) Long Questions ((Answer each question in about 300-500 words)

Q 1: Discuss the various types of curriculum in the educational process.

Q 2: Discuss the idea of a Balanced curriculum.

Q 3: Discuss the importance of Activity curriculum.

Q 4: Explain the various defects of curriculum.

Q 5: What basic principles would you suggest for the curriculum of Primary school level?

Q 6: What basic principles would you suggest for the curriculum of Secondary school level?

****