

UNIT 7: ASPECTS OF CURRICULUM



Contributor

Dr. G.A. RATHY

Associate Professor

Electrical & Electronics and Communication Engineering, NITTTR, Chennai.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE NO.
1.7 ASPECTS CURRICULUM	1
1.7.1 INTRODUCTION	1
1.7.2 DEFINITION OF CURRICULUM	1
1.7.3 DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A CURRICULUM AND SYLLABUS	2
1.7.4 COMPONENTS OF A CURRICULUM	3
1.7.5 ATTRIBUTES OF A CURRICULUM	5
1.7.6 TYPES OF CURRICULUM	7
REFERENCES	10

1.7 ASPECTS CURRICULUM

1.7.1 INTRODUCTION

Curriculum is the heart of any educational system. The curriculum consists of both the plans for learning and the actual delivery of those plans. Curriculum includes series of planned instruction that is coordinated and articulated in a manner designed to result in the achievement by students of specific knowledge and skills and application of this knowledge. The word curriculum comes from a Latin root meaning “racecourse” or the ground to be covered to reach a goal.

Traditionally curriculum was regarded as the relatively standardized ground covered by the student in their race towards the finish line i.e. a degree or diploma.

1.7.2 DEFINITION OF CURRICULUM

Curriculum from different points of view:

There are many definitions of curriculum. The definitions are influenced by modes of thoughts, pedagogies, political as well as cultural experiences.

This definition is anchored on John Dewey’s definition of experience and education. He believed that reflective thinking is a means that unifies curricular elements. Thought is not derived from action but tested by application. Caswell and Campbell viewed curriculum as “all experiences children have under the guidance of teachers”. This definition is shared by Smith, Stanley and Shores when they defined “curriculum as a sequence of potential experiences set up in the schools for the purpose of disciplining children and youth in group ways of thinking and acting”

Some influential definitions combining various elements to describe curriculum are as follows

- **John Kerr:** According to John Kerr a curriculum is a planned and guided by the school, whether it is carried on in groups, individually inside or outside the school.
- The curriculum is a total learning experience provided by the school. It includes the content of courses (the syllabus), the method employed (strategies) and other aspects like norms and values, which relate to the way school are organized.
- Thus a curriculum is neither a development nor a sequence of experiences. It is a plan for facilitating learning for students.
- This plan starts with where the child is. It enumerates all the aspects and dimensions of learning that are considered necessary. It gives a reason why such learning is considered necessary and what educational aims it would serve.

In a nutshell,

- A systematic group of courses or sequence of subjects required for graduation or certification in a major field of study
- It is a Planned learning experience

- The curriculum is a means followed by the teachers and students for achieving the set goals and the aims or objectives of education being provided in the school.
- Curriculum, in every sense, is supposed to be used for all experiences. These may be curricular or co-curricular, imparted by the school for the realization of the stipulated aims and objectives of the school education.
- The aims and objectives of the curriculum are set by professionals and experts who believe that they have sufficient technical knowledge to produce the desired product (Hart, 2002). It assumes that there is agreement by all interested groups (teachers, students, communities, employers) on common educational goals and, therefore, dialogue and consensus building among groups are not required.

Examples of Curricula:

- B.E/ B.Tech EEE/ECE/CSE Curricula
- B.Sc Maths/Physics etc
- Similarly for various Engineering science and arts programme of PG level.

1.7.3 DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A CURRICULUM AND SYLLABUS

The syllabus is described as the summary of the topics covered or units to be taught in the particular subject. Curriculum refers to the overall content, taught in an educational system or a course. Syllabus is descriptive in nature, but the curriculum is prescriptive. Syllabus is set for a particular subject.

Curriculum	Syllabus
Curriculum is for a programme	Syllabus is for a course
Curriculum is the superset	Syllabus is the subset of the curriculum
Curriculum is a whole document which includes the Objectives, the Instructional methods, Subject matter and also the scheme of evaluation	Syllabus gives the hyphenated content to be taught

Curriculum should not simply be seen as a kind of super syllabus because there is a qualitative difference between the two. On the one hand, curriculum may be viewed as the programme of activities, the course to learn by pupils in being educated. On the other, curriculum may be defined as all learning, which is planned and guided by the school, whether it is carried on in groups or individually, inside or outside the school. That is one school of thought regards the curriculum as a plan, while the other views it as activities.

Allen distinguishes at least six aspects of levels of curriculum:

- Concept formation
- Decision-making
- Syllabus planning
- Materials design

- Classroom activities
- Evaluation

1.7.4 COMPONENTS OF A CURRICULUM



The four components of the curriculum are :

1. Curriculum Aims, Goals and Objectives
2. Curriculum Content or Subject Matter
3. Curriculum Learning Experiences
4. Curriculum Evaluation

These four components of the curriculum are essential. These are interrelated to each other. Each of these has a connection to one another.

- Aims, goals, and objectives can be simplified as “what is to be done”,
- the subject matter/content: what subject matter is to be included,
- the learning experience” what instructional strategies, resources and activities will be employed,
- the evaluation approaches, while curriculum evaluation is “what methods and instruments will be used to assess the results of the curriculum.

The curriculum aims, goals and objectives spell out what is to be done. It tries to capture what goals are to be achieved, the vision, the philosophy, the mission statement and objectives. Further, it clearly defines the purpose and what the curriculum is to be acted upon and try what to drive at.

In the same manner, curriculum has a content. In here, it contains information to be learned in school. It is an element or a medium through which the objectives are accomplished. A primordial concern of formal education is primarily to transmit organized knowledge in distilled form to a new generation of young learners.

The traditional sources of what is taught and learned in school is precisely the foundation of knowledge, therefore, the sciences and humanities provide the basis of selecting the content of school learning.

In organizing the learning contents, balance, articulation, sequence, integration, and continuity form a sound content.

For the third component, the curriculum experience, instructional strategies and methods are the core of the curriculum. These instructional strategies and methods will put into action the goals and use of the content in order to produce an outcome.

These would convert the written curriculum to instruction. Moreover, mastery is the function of the teacher direction and student activity with the teacher supervision.

For the fourth component, the curriculum evaluation is an element of an effective curriculum. It identifies the quality, effectiveness of the program, process and product of the curriculum.

In summary, the components of a curriculum are distinct but interrelated to each other. These four components should be always present in a curriculum, as they are essential ingredients to have an effective curriculum.

For example, in a curriculum, evaluation is also important so one could assess whether the objectives and aims have been met or if not, he could employ another strategy which will really work out.

Curriculum experience could not be effective if the content is not clearly defined. The aims, goals and directions serve as the anchor of the learning journey, the content or subject matter serve as the meat of the educational journey, curriculum experience serves as the hands –on exposure to the real spectrum of learning and finally the curriculum evaluation serves as the barometer as to how far had the learners understood on the educational journey.

1.7.5 ATTRIBUTES OF A CURRICULUM

1. **Related to an occupation:** Students perceive themselves to have certain attributes and quite often think of these as relating to jobs. They need to become aware of how they can build on their attributes to gain work. For example, a person wishes to become a Electrician, he should undergo a course related to his Job.
2. **Objective oriented content:** Objectives are usually specific statements of educational intention which delineate either general or specific outcomes. The Objectives specified in the curriculum must guide the students to reach their goals
3. **Planned learning experience** are a way for teachers to structure, sequence, and plan outlearning goals for a specific instructional period, typically for the purpose of moving students toward the achievement of larger, longer-term educational goals such as meeting course learning expectations, performing well on a standardized tests. Planned learning experiences provide the means to satisfy objectives. Learning experiences indicate with different degrees of specificity how teachers and students are to interact with content
4. **Curriculum must be dynamic:** A good curriculum must be dynamic. It has to be kept dynamic in order to keep with the needs. interests, attitudes, abilities and life of students
5. **Criteria for evaluation of students performance**

The curriculum document must contain the scheme of Evaluation

1.7.6 TYPES OF CURRICULUM

(i) CORE CURRICULUM:

The term core assumes many meanings. Traditionally includes all required content areas in the school programme. More recently, the term “core” refers to type of course such as general education, united studies, common learning, social living and integral programmes. Regardless of the term that is employed in the school the two ideas common to the concept of core are that they provide experiences needed by all youth and the experiences cut across subject lines. The core curriculum deals problems of persistent and recurring deal with youth and of society irrespective of subject matter lines from martial may be down for the solution of the problems. Experiences have shown that “core” should occupy only portion of the school day.

Objectives of Core Curriculum

The following are the Objectives stated as:

- To provide a youth a common body of experience organized around personal and social problems,
 - To give boys and girls successful experience in solving the problem which are real to them here and now, thus preparing them to solve future problems,
 - To give youth experience which will lead them to become better citizens in a democracy
 - To increase the holding power of the secondary school by providing a program that has meaning for all, these are some of the needs of the core curriculum.
- Characteristics of Core Curriculum
- Core Curriculum utilities the problems of personal and social development common to all youth.
 - It develops these problems without reference to the traditional subject matter fields.
 - It encourages the use of the problem- solving technique to attack problems. These core issues are problems not topics of subject matter.
 - It requires a wide variety of techniques and materials for their development
 - There is a provision for individual and group guidance
 - It provides for a scheme of organizing around the core the majority of the teachers of the school in relation to dominant central purpose that of the school programme around individual interests and purpose of supplementing the core work

(II) TEACHER CENTERED AND LEARNER CENTERED CURRICULUM:

Though there is a foundational shift from a traditional classroom, a learner-centered approach does not eliminate the teacher. A learner-centered environment facilitates a more collaborative way for students to learn. The teacher models instructions and acts as a facilitator, providing feedback and answering questions when needed. It's the student that chooses how they want to learn, why they want to learn that way and with who. Students

Unit 7 Aspects of Curriculum

answer each other's questions and give each other feedback, using the instructor as a resource when needed.

This process is designed so that students can learn how they learn best. Taking into consideration what works for one may not work for another and at the end of the day it's not about what was taught but what was learned.

A Look at the Differences Between Teacher-Centered and Learner-Centered Learning

Teacher-Centered	Learner-Centered
Focus is on instructor	Focus is on both students and instructor
Focus is on language forms and structures (what the instructor knows about the language)	Focus is on language use in typical situations (how students will use the language)
Instructor talks; students listen	Instructor models; students interact with instructor and one another
Students work alone	Students work in pairs, in groups, or alone depending on the purpose of the activity
Instructor monitors and corrects every student utterance	Students talk without constant instructor monitoring; instructor provides feedback/correction when questions arise
Instructor answers students' questions about language	Students answer each other's questions, using instructor as an information resource
Instructor chooses topics	Students have some choice of topics
Instructor evaluates student learning	Students evaluate their own learning; instructor also evaluates
Classroom is quiet	Classroom is often noisy and busy

Source: *The National Capitol Language Resource Center (a project of the George Washington University)*

(iii) **ACTIVITY BASED CURRICULUM:**

When course material is taught in the form of an activity or hands-on project, the curriculum is considered activity based. The learning takes place as students are working in labs completing experiments or collaborating in group work through games or competitions, according to Study Lecture Notes.

Each activity or project in an activity-based curriculum serves as the means for students to learn concepts and skills. For example, students may be asked to re-enact a movie, story or play to physically and visually learn the plot of the piece. Through actions and physical activity,

students are often motivated and enthusiastic about learning concepts versus sitting in the classroom and merely observing a lecture about the course concepts.

Activity-based learning does not always include physical activity. Students can complete a project together by brainstorming ideas, designing a web page and collaboratively writing literature. Students can also complete math problems as a group, identify science definitions and make a block diagram of manufacturing plant together in an activity-based curriculum.

(iv) INTEGRATED CURRICULUM:

An integrated curriculum is described as one that connects different areas of study by cutting across subject-matter lines and emphasizing unifying concepts. Integration focuses on making connections for students, allowing them to engage in relevant, meaningful activities that can be connected to real life. In general science learning as opposed to separate subjects such as physics, chemistry and Biology.

Teachers of different subjects within an existing curriculum can determine collectively the extent to which other domains are addressed already in the teaching learning programs (For example, Thinking, ICT, Interpersonal skills, Learning etc within English or History etc.).

(v) INTENDED CURRICULUM:

INTENDED CURRICULUM-refers to a set of objectives identified set at the beginning of any curriculum plan. It establishes the goal, the specific purposes, and the immediate objectives to be accomplished

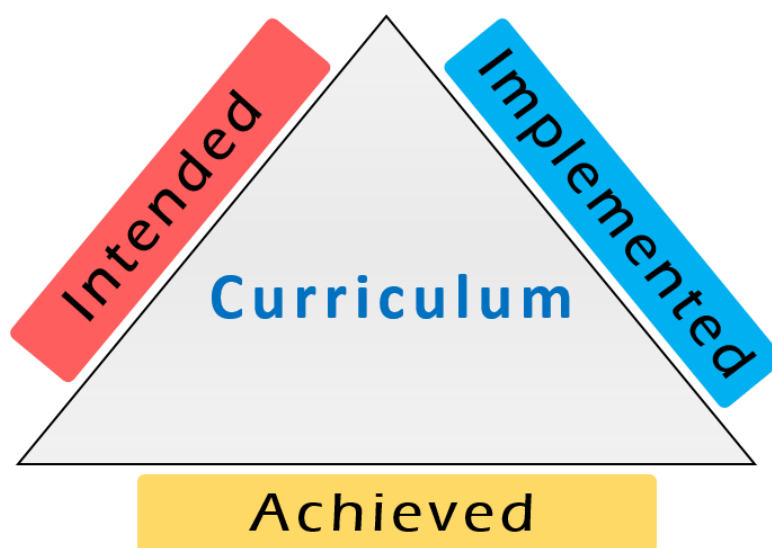


Figure 1 Relationship between three types of curriculum

(vi) IMPLEMENTED CURRICULUM: This refers to the various learning activities or a experience of the students in order to achieve the intended curricular outcomes. Implemented curriculum refers to the ACTUAL activities being practiced in schools.

(vii) ACHIEVED CURRICULUM: Achieved Curriculum- refers to the curriculum outcomes based on the first two types of curriculum, the intended and implemented.

(viii) HIDDEN/ LATENT CURRICULUM: A hidden curriculum can be defined as the lessons that are taught informally, and usually unintentionally, in a school system. These include behaviors, perspectives, and attitudes that students pick up while they are at school.

This is contrasted with the formal curriculum, such as the courses and activities students participate in. A hidden curriculum is a side effect of an education which are learned but not openly intended" such as the transmission of norms, values, and beliefs conveyed in the classroom and the social environment.

Any learning experience may teach unintended lessons. Areas of hidden curriculum in our schools that mold perspectives of students deal with issues such as gender, morals, social class, stereotypes, cultural expectations, politics, and language. Hidden curriculum is often found within the formal curriculum of a school; this may be partially in what is not taught.

Various aspects of learning contribute to the success of the hidden curriculum, including practices, procedures, rules, relationships, and structures. Many school-specific sources, some of which may be included in these aspects of learning, give rise to important elements of the hidden curriculum. These sources may include, but are not limited to, the social structures of the classroom, the teacher's exercise of authority, rules governing the relationship between teachers and students, standard learning activities, the teacher's use of language, textbooks, audio-visual aids, furnishings, architecture, disciplinary measures, timetables, tracking systems, and curricular priorities.

Although the hidden curriculum conveys a great deal of knowledge to its students, the inequality promoted through its disparities among classes and a social status often invokes a negative connotation. Since the hidden curriculum is considered to be a form of education-related capital, it promotes this ineffectiveness of schools as a result of its unequal distribution.

As a means of social control, the hidden curriculum promotes the acceptance of a social destiny without promoting rational and reflective consideration. Although the hidden curriculum has negative connotations, it is not inherently negative, and the tacit factors that are involved can potentially exert a positive developmental force on students. Some educational approaches, such as democratic education, actively seek to minimize, make explicit, and/ or reorient the hidden curriculum in such a way that it has a positive developmental impact on students.

Today, it is considered that the social development of students are important as well as cognitive development and proving social development they give importance to a second curriculum, including social and cultural features of school, rather than formal curriculum. Except from the curriculum which is written at school, this curriculum is referred to as a second curriculum and referred to names such as 'the hidden curriculum', 'secret curriculum', 'stored curriculum or 'non-written curriculum', but it does not provide a clear and distinctive elements of the official curriculum for students, such as feelings, values, attitudes and habits of the official curriculum of the correct knowledge is stated to be more effective (Yüksel, 2004).

Within the context of hidden curriculum, it is suggested that elements like social class of the students that they come from and their academic achievement levels, social and academic

life in schools, interactions between school and the environment, management and organizational preparations of the school, position of the teacher and the students in classroom and school environment should be properly taken into account during the process of character education.

(ix) NULL CURRICULUM

The 'Null', or 'excluded' curriculum is a concept that was formulated by Elliot Eisner (1979). Eisner suggests that all schools are teaching three curricula: the explicit, the implicit, and the null. The explicit curriculum simply refers to publicly announced programs of study-what the school advertises that it is prepared to provide. Such a program typically includes courses in mathematics, science, social studies, English, art, and physical education.

The implicit curriculum, on the other hand, includes values and expectations generally not included in the formal curriculum, but nevertheless learned by students as part of their school experience.

The null curriculum Eisner defines as what schools do not teach: "... the options students are not afforded, the perspectives they may never know about, much less be able to use, the concepts and skills that are not part of their intellectual repertoire" (1985, p. 107). Like many terms used in the curriculum field, 'the null curriculum' is a multi-faceted concept. Eisner himself identifies two major dimensions of the null curriculum: intellectual processes and subject matter. These two dimensions may be supplemented by a third, that of affect. Null content can also consist of subfields within a discipline.

Topics within sub-fields represent yet a more specific level at which we may identify components of null content. The concept of evolution omitted from a biology curriculum would be an example of this type of exclusion. Null content can be considered in terms of particular facts.

Pelletier also observes the existence of the null curriculum: "what is not taught, addressed, or even mentioned in education." Here Pelletier is thinking particularly of the implications of not teaching philosophy. However, what she has to say about the null curriculum applies to other subject areas, conspicuous for their absence.

Potentials of Null Curriculum

- Visual and Performance of Arts
- Relationship and sexuality
- Contraceptive method
- Conservational second language
- Home economics
- Carpentry and Industry Arts
- Basic life skills Contribution to Students
- Increased knowledge leads to increased understanding leads to increased acceptance leads to increased and more collaboration
- More than excluded culture/perspectives, null-curriculum can be expressed through excluded methods or modes of expressions

- Deeper understanding, more well-rounded students.

(x) SPIRAL CURRICULUM:

A spiral curriculum can be defined as a course of study in which students will see the same topics throughout their school career, with each encounter increasing in complexity and reinforcing previous learning

A spiral curriculum is one in which there is an iterative revisiting of topics, subjects or themes throughout the course. A spiral curriculum is not simply the repetition of a topic taught. It requires also the deepening of it, with each successive encounter building on the previous one.

Bruner (1960), when he coined the term 'spiral curriculum', suggested that such a curriculum would be structured around the great issues, principles and values that a society deems worthy of the continual concern of its members. A curriculum as it develops should revisit the basic ideas repeatedly, building upon them until the student has grasped the full formal apparatus that goes with them



REFERENCES

1. Brahadeeswaran D and Rathy G A Resource material on curriculum Evaluation
2. [KNOWLEDGE AND CURRICULUM. pdf - Bharathidasan University. http://www.bdu.ac.in/cde/docs/ebooks/BEd/II/KNOWLEDGE%20AND%20CURRICULUM.pdf. Visited on 14.07.2019](http://www.bdu.ac.in/cde/docs/ebooks/BEd/II/KNOWLEDGE%20AND%20CURRICULUM.pdf)
3. Railph W. Tyler (1949) Basic principles of Curriculum and Instruction, Chicago: University Press Chicago
4. Ben-Peretz, M. (1990). The Teacher-Curriculum Encounter. Buffalo: State University of New York Press.
5. Ornstein, A. and Hunkins. (1998) , F. Curriculum: Foundations, principle and issues. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon. Chapter 10: Curriculum implementation.
6. Kelly A.V (1999) Curriculum Theory and Practice Sage Publications
7. Sowell, E. (2000). Curriculum: An integrative introduction. Upper Saddle River, NJ:Prentice- Hall. Chapter 1: Overview of curriculum processes and products.