OVERVIEW OF CURRICULUM CHANGE: A BRIEF DISCUSSION

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research paper is to study the overview of curriculum change and its various aspects. The curriculum is the co-operation of the programs that are adopted and consciously materialized in the school to develop the personality of the student and change the behaviour. Human life is changeable. With the advancement of science and technology, knowledge is spreading, and society is changing. So, the curriculum should change accordingly. The investigator has adopted the qualitative research approach and theoretically descriptive method for this study. The researcher tries to investigate various aspects of curriculum change: types and approaches of curriculum change, factors of curriculum change, needs of curriculum change, principles of the process of implementing a new curriculum, plan and, resource for effective curriculum change, the role of teachers in curriculum change and, challenges in implementing curriculum change.

KEYWORDS: *Curriculum, Curriculum Change, Curriculum Implementation*

INTRODUCTION

The curriculum is one of the four most important components of education. The teaching-learning process continues based on the curriculum. Curriculum refers to all the experiences that students gain through classrooms, workshops, playgrounds, and interactions with teachers. In this sense, the curriculum throughout the school life touches on all aspects of the student's life and makes a cohesive personality. The word "curriculum" comes from the Latin word "currere". The etymological meaning of the word "currere" is "racecourse". In the field of education, students try to reach the desired goal of education according to their needs and abilities with the help of curriculum, just as they must reach a destination or goal as soon as possible according to their ability by taking a path on the racetrack.

Human life is changeable. With the advancement of science and technology, knowledge is spreading, and society is changing. With that change, many changes are coming in the life and livelihood of the people. And the curriculum is also changing in keeping with it. That is, an important feature of the curriculum is that it is subject to change.

Curriculum change is a learning process for teachers and their schools. A good understanding of change and a clear conception of the curriculum are necessary conditions for improved implementation of the new curriculum into practice. Policymakers, education leaders, and teachers need to know more about the drivers of successful curriculum change in schools. Therefore, learning about educational change and its key features should become integral elements of any serious curriculum reform process. (Pasi Sahlberg).

The literature on curriculum changes in tertiary education focuses mainly on larger-scale transformations that fall outside of our scale. Much of the academic discussion is concerned with the changes in teaching culture and philosophy that accompany a wholesale move away from traditional (subject-based, knowledge-centered, teaching focused) approaches, when institutions turn to alternative (student-based, competence-centered, learning-focused) approaches that stress the educator's role as a facilitator of learning, rather than a transmitter of knowledge (Bocock 1994, Huba & Freed 2000, Jones 2002, Merton, Clark, Richardson & Froyd 2001).

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This research study aimed to explore the overview of the curriculum change and its various aspects. More specifically, this study sought to answer the following objectives:

a) To explore the meaning and definition of curriculum change & the types of curriculum changes.
b) To know the approaches of curriculum changes & importance of curriculum change.
c) To determine the principles of the process of implementing a new curriculum & the plans and resources for effective curriculum change.
d) To identify the roles of teacher for curriculum change & the challenges in implementing curriculum change.

RELATED STUDIES

Gruba, P. et al (2004) explored a research article entitled "What drives curriculum change?". In this article, they focused on different types of curriculum change, the processes of change, and mainly various factors influencing changes.

Wootton & Selwa (1970) published a research paper titled "Curriculum: a changing concept". Where they mainly focused on the emerging trends of curriculum change. They proposed some trends, that were an interdisciplinary emphasis in the curriculum is growing, the subject-matter is being restructured, individual curriculum programming is increasing, attention is being given to clarification of objectives by using behavioral objectives.

Yin Cheong Cheng (1994) explored curriculum change in his article "Effectiveness of curriculum change in school: an organizational perspective". The researcher developed an organizational model for understanding and managing effective curriculum change in school. And provided a comprehensive conceptual framework to plan and manage curriculum change and teacher competence development.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The present study was driven out to explore the curriculum change and its various aspects. After studying the various research paper, the researcher found the research gap and selected the problem as **"Overview of Curriculum Change: A Brief Discussion."**

METHODOLOGY

The study is qualitative in nature because the data collection and presentation are fully dependent on previously published documents like a research paper, book, etc., and various websites.

ANALYSIS THE OBJECTIVES
MEANING AND DEFINITION OF CURRICULUM CHANGE

Curriculum revision or curriculum change means making the curriculum different in some way, to give it a new position or direction. This often means alteration to its philosophy by way of its aims and objectives, reviewing the content included, revising its methods, and re-thinking its evaluator procedures.

Hancock, Dyk & Jones (2012) define curriculum change as the transformation of the curriculum schemes for example its design, goals and content.

According to Dziwa (2013), curriculum change is not a matter of supply of appropriate technical information rather it involves changing attitudes, values, skills and relationship.

Hoyle (1972) defines curriculum change as a generic term embracing a whole family of concepts (i.e., innovation, development, and renewal) which are used in relation to curriculum. He rightly argues that the curriculumis continually changing to suit the needs of changing society and changing knowledge and learners.

Ewell (1997) Suggests:
"That most Curriculum changes are implemented piecemeal and, in fact, "without a deep understanding about what collegiate learning really means and the specific circumstances and strategies those are likely to promote it."

TYPES OF CURRICULUM CHANGE

McNeil (2009) identified several types of curriculum change according to its complexity.

I. Substitution

Substitution occurs when a new element substitutes the other which is already present, such as, teachers are required to substitute a new textbook for an old one. Undoubtedly, this kind of change is the easiest to do by teachers and in fact, it is the most common type of change occurs in schools.

II. Alteration

Alteration exists when new content, items, materials, or procedures are added up into existing materials and programmes. The changes usually are minor, and thus, schools usually can adopt it instantly.

III. Perturbations

Perturbations are changes that may at first interrupt the existing programme but later it can be attuned accordingly by teachers to the on-going programme within a short time span, for instance, teachers need to change their class schedules. The changes may affect the time allocated for teaching other subject or it may affect other teachers' class schedules but it could be adjusted shortly.

IV. Restructuring

Restructuring occurs when the changes modify the whole school system, such as schools introduce a new curriculum to their teachers and pupils. The changes demand the teachers adopt new concepts of the teaching role, new curriculum content, and new textbooks.

V. Value-orientation

Value-orientation changes take place when teachers or school staff are sought to adopt the new fundamental philosophies or curriculum orientations. The changes could occur if only they are willing to accept the new values otherwise the changes will be short-lived. (Sulaiman, T. Ayub, & Sulaiman, 2015)
Gruba, P et. al. (2004) identified the following curriculum change

1. Introduction of a whole new degree program or specialized stream at the undergraduate level.
2. Introduction of a whole new (course-work) degree program at the postgraduate level.
3. Introduction of a new subject, or deletion of an existing subject.
4. Change to or within a first-year or other core subject, such as a change to the first language taught to undergraduate students.
5. Change to or within an elective subject, such as a change in the choice of AI language used in a third-year subject.

APPROACHES OF CURRICULUM CHANGE

The traditional approaches to curriculum change may be classified under three categories: (1) the administrative approach; (2) the grass-roots approach; and (3) the demonstration approach. Each of these is briefly discussed in the following:

1) The Administrative Approach:

In administrative approach, the administrator or head of the school makes the first move when he realises the need for curriculum change and sets up machinery to make the needed revisions. He arranges for faculty meetings in which the need for curriculum improvement is presented. Then a steering committee is appointed consisting of administrative officers and teachers. This committee formulates general plans, develops guiding principle and prepares a statement of general objectives covering the entire school system. These formulations become the curriculum development manual. In addition, the steering committee works out plans for training teachers in curriculum work, determines the number and kinds of consultants to be employed and the kinds of activities best calculated to familiarise teachers with the theory and practice of curriculum building and provides for the setting up of "production committees" consisting largely of teachers to prepare new courses of study in keeping with the objectives and guiding principles laid down by the steering committee. When the courses of study are completed, these are reviewed either by the steering committee or by a committee created especially for that purpose. Finally, the courses of study are tried out and installed.

2) The Grassroot Approach:

In its most comprehensive form, the grass-roots approach is community-wide. It embraces not only teachers but also students, parents and other members of the community. It is based on certain general propositions. One such proposition is that if teachers share (or take part) in shaping the goals to be attained, in selecting, defining and solving the problems to be encountered and in judging and evaluating the results, their involvement in curriculum change will be most nearly assured. The grass-roots procedure begins with individual schools in each neighborhood. Each school is encouraged to work at a unit in the development of a new program. Perhaps the most important feature of this procedure is that the teachers, administrator, students and parents of a particular locality can work face-to-face on their common problems. In this approach the function of the central administration is to provide stimulating leadership, free time, materials and whatever the various schools may need. Commonly used techniques in this approach are the workshops and work-conference. The grass-roots approach also makes wide use of consultants as well as of bulletins and study guides issued by the central administration on such topics as child development, community needs and resources, social and economic conditions and innovations in curriculum theory and practice.

3) The Demonstration Approach:

The purpose of this approach is to introduce changes in the regular program on a small scale, thereby holding the disturbance of the faculty and community to a minimum. Since this approach discovers the consequences of a pro- posed change on a small scale before making the changes in the whole school it reflects the sort of caution associated with an experimental attitude. There are two forms of this approach. The first is an experimental unit within a school. A separate faculty and administration are deliberately set up to operate the experimental project. The purpose of this separate unit is to develop new programs, methods and materials in the hope that the whole school will be influenced by them. The second form of this approach is the same as the first in purpose, but the lines separating the experimental project from the rest of the school are not as clearly drawn or not drawn at all. There is no experimental faculty designated as such, nor is the project under a separate administration. A few teachers who are dissatisfied with the regular program and who are, therefore, most enthusiastic for curriculum change are given the opportunity and the encouragement to make innovations. A first step in this approach is for the administrative staff to identify those teachers who wish to improve the existing

program. These teachers are then provided with enough free time, leader-ship and materials to develop a new program at the level of classroom practice. If successful these developments will, hopefully, influence other teachers to re-examine their own programs and to modify them.

WHY CURRICULUM CHANGES ARE IMPORTANT?

I. Advancement of Knowledge:
Knowledge is constantly changing. Knowledge is constantly being improved. A lot of theory is now being discovered that would not have been acknowledged in the past. Students should have an idea about this new information. So, with this improvement in knowledge comes a need to change the curriculum.

II. Progression of Technology:
Along with the knowledge, technology is also improving. In the field of education, the use of various techniques in the teaching-learning process has changed. As an example, we can say, the use of ICT. So, the curriculum should change with that.

III. The changing needs, interests, and abilities of learners:
There is a huge difference between the needs of the students of the present 21st century and the needs of the students of the past. Similarly, their interests, abilities have changed. As at present it is necessary to know computer knowledge. So, it has become essential to have computer knowledge in the curriculum. Which was not so important before.

IV. Reconstruct curriculum according to teaching methods:
At present, the teaching method is child centered. Education is given the highest importance to the child. At present, a variety of new teaching methods are used like- collaborative learning, spaced learning, flipped classroom, self-learning, cross-over learning, etc. The curriculum is changed according to teaching in these methods. That is also one of the reasons for the change in the curriculum.

V. Globalization:
Globalization is the process of interaction and integration among people, companies, and governments worldwide. (Wikipedia) In this way, there is an opportunity to see exactly how the curriculum is taught in different countries. Then we can compare them in our interest. And if they are more useful after making comparisons like this, we can use them. In this way, the curriculum can be changed.

VI. Curriculum Research:
Curriculum research is done to improve the curriculum. As a result of this research, many new outcomes are being discovered. The curriculum needs to be redesigned based on all these research outcomes.

PRINCIPLES OF THE PROCESS OF IMPLEMENTING A NEW CURRICULUM

Pasi Sahlberg describes seven principles that are used in process of implementing a new curriculum. Which are discussed bellow

I. Making sense of why a new curriculum is necessary:
The moral purpose of the change is the key factor in building a commitment to raising the quality and closing the gap in student achievement.

II. Understanding the change process:
Implementing a new curriculum requires changes on many fronts. Understanding the complexity and internal dynamics of the change process is conditional for the sustainable implementation of curriculum reforms.

III. Capacity-building:
Capacity is one of the key conditions for the successful implementation of curriculum reforms. Capacity-building involves policies, strategies, resources, and other actions that are aiming at increasing the collective power of people.

IV. Developing cultures of learning:
Successful curriculum change involves learning during implementation. A powerful factor of change is learning from one's peers, especially those who are further along in implementing a new curriculum.

V. Developing cultures of evaluation:
Cultures of evaluation must be embedded in the cultures of learning.

VI. Developing leadership for change:
Good leadership is one of the key conditions for successful curriculum change. Leadership, to be productive and sustainable must spread throughout the school.
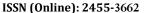
VII. Utilizing the ideas that already exist in schools:
Schools are full of good ideas about how to improve teaching and help pupils learn. Many curricula re-form ignore this reality (Aho, Pitkänen & Sahlberg, 2006).

PLAN AND RESOURCE FOR EFFECTIVE CURRICULUM CHANGE

Dr Cheryl A Jones and Mike Anderson (2001) proposed the following plan and resource for effective curriculum change:

I. Be realistic about the timescales and resources needed for effective change, taking into consideration people's readiness and capacity for change.

II. Look for pioneers and innovators who can motivate others.

III. Allow for degrees of participation at the planning stage.

IV.   Define what is non-negotiable and leave room for choices to be made.

V.   Encourage more efficient working. Set deadlines by which certain outcomes should be agreed.

VI.   Eliminate casualties of curriculum development by carrying out effective planning, re-training, and staff development.

VII.   Include a communication strand in the plan that promotes openness rather than secrets.

ROLE OF TEACHERS

I.   As a social reformer:

The teacher is a social reformer. He played an important role in the betterment of society. He took the responsibility of changing the curriculum in different ways according to the needs of society. The teacher will make sure that the subject is included in the curriculum considering the needs and requirements of a society.

II.   Understand their students:

The teachers are equal to the guardian of the students. He understands students' needs, abilities, attitudes, etc. In the teaching-learning process, students interact directly with the teacher. And it is through the curriculum that the teacher interacts with the student. So the teacher plays an important role in shaping the curriculum according to the needs of the students.

III.   As an implementor:

It needs to be implemented after the curriculum changes. If the changed curriculum is not implemented, it has no worth. The teacher is responsible for the implementation of the curriculum. He can implement the curriculum appropriately. In this way, he helps to change the curriculum.

IV.   As a curriculum evaluator:

The first step in curriculum change is curriculum evaluation. The curriculum is evaluated to see if there are any current curriculum errors. This is how it is understood whether the curriculum needs to be changed. The teacher is in charge of evaluating the curriculum. They consider different aspects of it.

CHALLENGES IN IMPLEMENTING CURRICULUM CHANGE

I.   Lack of adequate infrastructure:

One of the major obstacles in implementing the changed curriculum is the lack of proper infrastructure. Infrastructure is an important element in the implementation of any curriculum. For example, if there is no ICT infrastructure, it is not possible to conduct ICT enable curriculum.

II.   Training of Teacher:

In the field of education, teachers have the main responsibility of implementing the curriculum. They need to be trained to introduce something new in the curriculum. At present, there is not much in-service training system for teachers. So, teacher training in implementing the changed curriculum becomes a challenge.

III.   Attitudinal Issue:

Negative attitudes to curriculum change are a big problem. Because people usually like to cling to old things. So, you can't accept change a lot of the time. Sometimes parents have attitudinal issues towards a changed curriculum. Parents are often reluctant to teach their children such content.

IV.   Financial Issue:

And finally, the main problem with curriculum change is the financial issue. Money is needed at every level of implementation of the changed curriculum. A developing country like India can't implement curriculum changes due to insufficient funding.
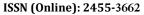
CONCLUSION

Curriculum change is a learning process for teachers and their schools. A good understanding of change and a clear conception of the curriculum are necessary conditions for the improved implementation of the new curriculum into practice. Furthermore, as the conception of learning is becoming more studied and considered as an important factor changing education, exploring and rethinking what learning deserves more attention in the future curriculum development efforts. The key message of this presentation can be crystallized to three conclusions. (Pasi Sahlberg)

The curriculum is always changing. Curriculum changes are helping modern education become more advanced and appropriate. This requires a more comprehensive understanding of curriculum change.

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