UNIT 1 DEFINING CURRICULUM

Structure

1.1   INTRODUCTION

This unit is the first unit of Block 1 of Course ES-331: **Curriculum and Instruction.** In this unit, you will study about the concept and various interpretations of curriculum. When people talk about curriculum, they use various phrases like bases of curriculum, approaches to curriculum, aims, goals, objectives and various types of curriculum. All these have been discussed in this unit. Besides, you will also study about other related issues regarding curriculum. This unit provides an introduction to this entire Block. Therefore a fuller understanding of this unit should help you understand the later three units of this Block better.

Curriculum can be called the pivot around which various classroom activities and the entire school programmes are developed. Think of various activities that you carry out with your students and ask yourself why you carry them out with them (students). Also think of the variety in these activities and how these are linked with each other. You may also think of the various activities that other teachers in your school carry out with their students while teaching languages, sciences, mathematics and social sciences. These educational activities are intimately connected with curriculum studies. Thus this unit will help you understand why teachers do whatever they do in classrooms and how education can be made more purposeful and better related to life. Besides, your understanding of the concept of curriculum will help you achieve the intended goals/objectives of education better.

1.2   OBJECTIVES

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

● define and explain the concept of curriculum;

● cite various interpretations of curriculum;

● explain the curriculum process and its various stages;

● describe various approaches to curriculum and differentiate between process, structure and humanistic approaches;

● illustrate and explain the role of curriculum in effective teaching and learning.

1.3 CURRICULUM : THE CONCEPT

The curriculum is the heart of schooling, the education process. All resources available at school e.g. the school building, equipment, various varieties of instructional materials including books in the library exist for just one purpose – for supporting effective implementation of the curriculum. The entire set of classroom activities, the co-curricular programme as well as the entire evaluation schedule flow from the school curriculum.

Every civilized society tries to socialize its younger generation through its programme of educational prescriptions. These prescriptions are acted upon by schools. However there is a lot of disagreement about what should be included in these prescriptions and how these should be transformed into educational practices and activities. Long ago, Aristotle remarked "As things are....mankind is by no means agreed about the things to be taught....Again about the means, there is no agreement". This disagreement about what should be included in the curriculum, how it should be organised, sequenced and taught has always been with us. Even today, these disagreements remain and they have influenced our conception of curriculum and how we should develop it.

The word 'curriculum' has been used in many ways. It usually stands for :

- a school's written courses of study and other curriculum materials;

- the subject content taught to the students;

- the courses offered in a school; and

- the totality of planned learning experiences offered to students in a school.

It is quite easy to establish that all the above interpretations are included in curriculum and yet curriculum is more than what is implied by each of these. It is often remarked that definitions often hinder our understanding of such key concepts in education. There have been such wide changes in our thinking about the role of school in socialisation of the individual, the nature of the student and his development, and the nature of knowledge that definitions of curriculum have become almost irrelevant. Take for example some of the famous definitions of curriculum:

- A curriculum is a structured series of intended learning outcomes (Johnson, 1967). This explanation emphasises that **learning outcomes** and not **learning experiences** constitute the curriculum. These outcomes are linked with objectives.

- A curriculum is an attempt to communicate the essential principles and features of an educational concept in such a form that it is open to critical scrutiny and capable of effective translation into practice (Lawarence Stenhouse, 1975). Here, curriculum has been viewed as an attempt, an activity aimed at communication.

- A curriculum is the formulation and implementation of an educational proposal, to be taught and learnt within schools or other institutions and for which that institution accepts responsibility at three levels : its rationale, its actual implementation and its effects (Jenkin and Shipman,1975).

- A curriculum is an organised set of formal educational and/or training intentions (David Pratt, 1980).

- A curriculum is all of the experiences that individual learners have in a programme of education whose purpose is to achieve broad goals and related specific objectives, which is planned in terms of a framework of theory and research or past and present professional practice (Glen Hass, 1987). The curriculum is thus a list of planned learning experiences offered to the students under the direction of the school, in other words, curriculum is a blueprint of experiences that have been planned for the students.

We have presented different view points on the concept of curriculum. Surely these definitions need quite a bit of explanation or commentary in order to be understood by every teacher. And the chances are that even after a lengthy explanation, the confusion might remain. These definitions seem to take us in different directions. While the first definition is quite compact and concise, all later definitions are lengthy and try to describe almost everything that should matter in a curriculum. And yet, even these lengthy definitions do not appear to succeed in their purpose.

Therefore, it is far more important for us to study and to understand the important aspects/features of the concept of curriculum than to get trapped in difficult-to-understand definitions. There are six important aspects of a curriculum that we should bear in mind and

these are as follows:

- A curriculum is always preplanned; it is not a set of activities developed on the spot or spontaneously.

- Any curriculum has four bases viz; social forces, knowledge of human development as provided by the accepted theory/theories, the nature of learning, and the nature of knowledge and cognition. Thus a curriculum is meant for education in a particular society and for children of a particular age group. A curriculum that has been developed for girl students of grade VIII may be quite irrelevant for boys of grade VIII preparing for a particular vocational stream.

- The goals/purposes of a curriculum are reflected in the set of educational objectives that accompany it. These objectives are the end and the given curriculum is a means to achieve them.

- A curriculum facilitates planning of instruction by teachers. You are expected to understand the social forces that operate in society, various stages of human development and their peculiar characteristics. You should also understand the factors that influence the process of learning and the nature of knowledge and cognition. Because of their intimate knowledge of children, and also how various educational objectives can be attained by children, teachers can plan a set of learning experiences that flow from a given curriculum. The quality and relevance of learning experiences determines the effectiveness of curriculum implementation.

- The teacher plans the same set of learning experiences for all students of his class. However they differ in terms of the learning experiences, and their level and quality of participation. Their individual differences and variation in their social backgrounds are responsible for these results. Because of these, every learner has an actual curriculum which is different from the actual curricula of other learners in the same class.

- Because of the gap between the intended curriculum and the transacted curriculum as reflected by the individual learner's actual curriculum, the teacher's role assumes critical importance. A teacher should not only provide flexible arrangements but also meaningful alternatives in learning. These demand professional decisions from teachers in terms of the objectives, bases and criteria of the given curriculum.

Check Your Progress 1

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

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

i) What do you understand by the term 'curriculum'?

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ii) Which definition of the curriculum do you prefer most? why?

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1.4   BASES OF CURRICULUM

We have already learnt that the four bases of any curriculum are **social forces, human development, the nature of learning and the nature of knowledge and cognition.** All societies want to survive and progress. For this, they try to induct the young into their culture and values. Schools are very powerful agencies for this induction.
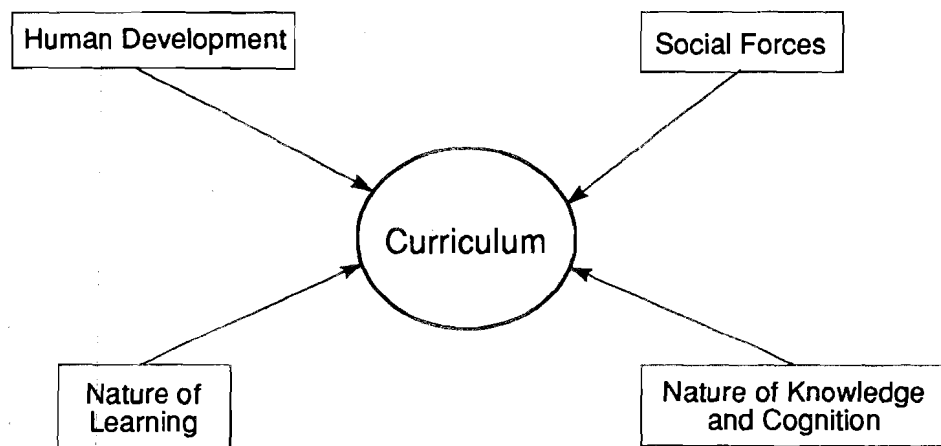
Fig. 1.1 : Bases of Curriculum

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

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

Human development: Various aspects of human growth and development are accomplished partly by the structured curriculum in use in the school and partly by the society. The area of human development has been researched and studied in detail for more than eighty years. These studies have made us think afresh about children, their developmental stages, how they think, their needs and interests. Children are not small adults. They differ from adults in many important ways. Differences across various developmental stages before adulthood are not merely quantitative, they are essentially qualitative. These differences have been admirably described by various child psychologists, chief among these being Jean Piaget. Knowledge about human development can help the teacher develop a curriculum. The curriculum thus developed provides for various aspects of a development stage not only in terms of age-cohorts but also differences among children from the same age cohort. You will study human development in detail in course ES-332.

Nature of learning: Knowledge about how human beings learn has been accumulating since the turn of the twentieth century. Human learning has fascinated many a researcher. Various aspects of the learning process have been well researched though we have not been able to reveal the entire process. This has given rise to a number of learning theories chief among these being the behaviouristic theories and the cognitive theories. These learning theories recommend different approaches to the task of curriculum planning. Curriculum specialists cannot ignore the role of these theories because most of these are scientific in their orientation.

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

Thus these are the four bases of any good curriculum. The emphasis on these bases will differ from one curriculum to another. These differences are partly due to the historical developments and partly due to the personal philosophy of the teacher who develops the curriculum.

1.5   THE CURRICULUM PROCESS AND ITS STAGES

The entire curriculum process has been treated at length in Unit 3 of this Block. You will study it in detail there, especially under Section 3.4. In this section you will just get a brief overview of the curriculum process which can be divided into five stages. These stages have been described below:
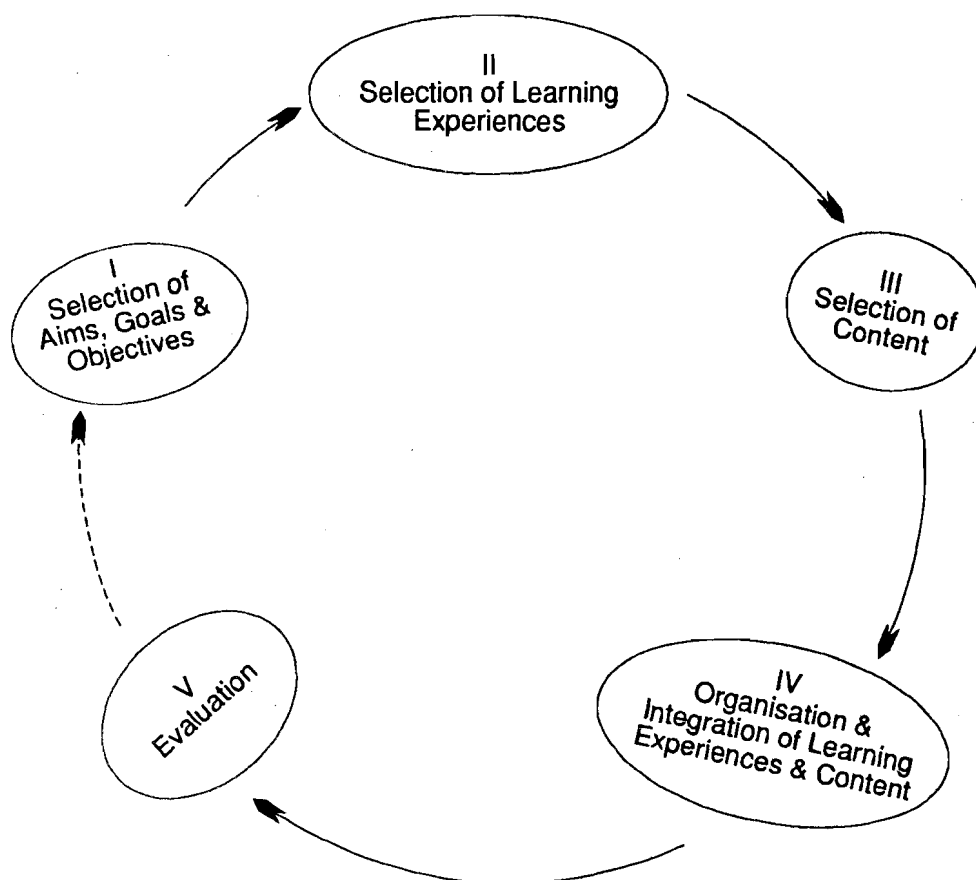
Fig. 1.2 : The Curriculum Process

1.5.1   Selection of Aims, Goals and Objectives

A curriculum is essentially a planned educational programme. It has definite objectives and it facilitates their attainment. When we talk of educational objectives, we should remember that these objectives are derived from goals. These goals are again conceived at three levels viz; ultimate (or long term) goals, mediate (or short term) goals and proximate (or immediate) goals.
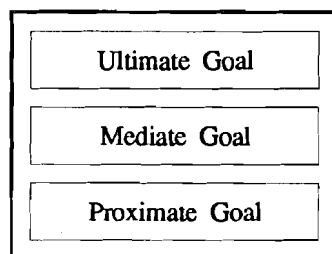
Fig. 1.3 : Levels of Objectives

In India we have the 10+2 year pattern of schooling. These twelve years of schooling fall into four clear stages, viz; the primary, the middle, the secondary and the senior secondary. The **ultimate aims** could deal with the outcomes of 12 years of schooling or they could be about

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any of the above mentioned five stages. In other words, these ultimate aims describe the end-products of education spread over a period of time. They are usually expressed in terms of statements of desirable knowledge, attitudes, feelings and actions, integrated in terms of personality pattern in appropriate situations of life.

Mediate aims may refer to a stage of education or a particular content area, e.g., languages, sciences, etc. The mediate aims are derived from ultimate aims and they promote them. Mediate aims are usually expressed in terms of intended behaviours in a class of situations at given stages of education. These stages of education usually mean various grades e.g. Grade VII, Grade IX, etc.

The proximate aims are also called specific objectives. These deal with classroom level behaviour. These may be expressed as what the teacher wants to attain through teaching a lesson or a unit or what the students will be able to do after learning a lesson or a unit. In the first case, they are called **instructional objectives**; in the second, they are called **behavioural objectives** or **learning outcomes**.

1.5.2 Selection of Learning Experiences

Learning experiences facilitate change in behaviour and, as a result of this, attainment of aims and objectives. Various learning experiences deal with the human being's functioning in particular situations, their interests or problem solving. These learning experiences provide physical, mental or emotional experiences or their mix. The role of learning experiences is reflected in the following proposition. If X is the intended objective, then A, B and C are the necessary learning experiences to be provided for it. Teaching various subjects, various activities in a laboratory, on the playfield or through projects, discussion, group work, etc., are examples of educational learning experiences. Care has to be exercised in order to ensure that the selected learning experiences indeed help in the attainment of a specific educational aim/objective.

The selected learning experiences should be relevant to learners in terms of their maturity level. Since there does not exist any sure way of determining whether the selected learning experiences indeed match the learners' maturity level, there is always an element of tentativeness about them. The teacher, if she is involved in selecting learning experiences, will invariably be guided by her own experiences of dealing with and observing children. She may also depend upon her recollections of how she behaved when she was of the age of the learners for whom the curriculum is being developed.

Yet another criterion to observe is the extent to which the ordinary teacher can translate these learning experiences into classroom activities. The greater the possibility, the more fruitful the learning experience.

1.5.3 Selection of Content

The content is usually considered to be the most important component of developing curriculum. However this exclusive importance given to content is educationally misplaced and indefensible. To put content at the centre of the curriculum is to put the cart before the horse. The overall approach to the curriculum shall determine our approach to the task of
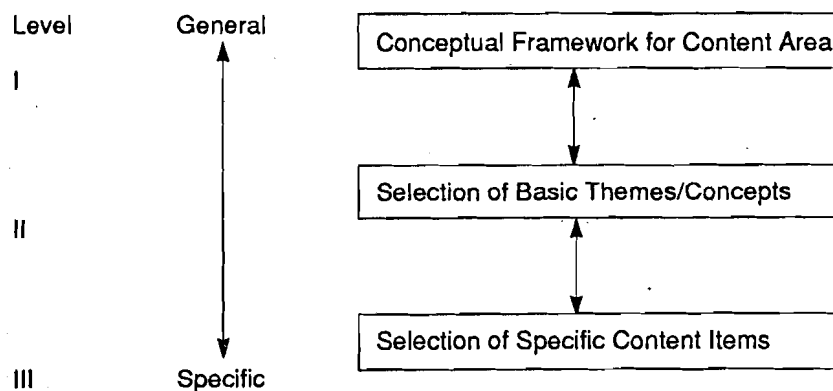
Level   General

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II

III   Specific

Conceptual Framework for Content Area

Selection of Basic Themes/Concepts

Selection of Specific Content Items

Fig. 1.4 : Three Levels of Selection of Content

selection of content. For example, in a process-based approach, only such content will be selected which supports the chosen process(es). Even in a subject-based curriculum, one has to be clear about knowledge, principle, generalisations, theories, techniques and procedures that can be developed through the chosen content. The content is thus a powerful means to attain the aims of teaching a particular content.

The process of selection of content can be viewed at three levels. The **first level** deals with selection and clarification of the conceptual framework related to the content area. The so called modern mathematics of the 1960s and the conventional mathematics provide a good example of this.

The **second level** is concerned with selection of basic themes or key concepts which alongwith other basic themes or concepts constitute the framework of knowledge in a given subject. Basic operations, the number system, the set theory are some of its examples. These themes/key concepts have a hierarchical relationship with each other. Some of these have broad connotation (e.g. the number system) while others have limited connotation (e.g. prime numbers). The **third level** is the most specific. At this level the content items are matched with the basic theme/concept they belong to and also with the objectives of the curriculum.

1.5.4 Organisation and Integration of Learning Experiences and Content

The essential task at this stage is to develop sequences of educational activities based on selected experiences and content. This fusion of selected experiences and content has a definite purpose which is derived from educational objectives. Hence it is called a sequence of learning experiences. The organising principles for this integration and sequence should ideally be derived from the learning situations available in schools and classrooms, inputs needed for effective classroom interaction, the developmental levels of learners, and principles of learning by children for whom the curriculum is meant.

Bruner talks of three modes of learning viz; enactive, iconic and symbolic.

- **Enactive** mode of learning is activity based, the learner acts and learns as a result of action process. 'Learning by doing' is a very familiar example of the enactive mode.

- **Iconic** mode of learning is based on the use of images and diagrams. It is often said that an image or a picture is more effective than a thousand words. Images help the teacher illustrate and young learners find these graphic illustrations a powerful means of learning.

- **Symbolic** mode of learning is based on the use of a symbol system. Language is a very powerful set of symbols. One can express almost everything through language. Symbolic mode of learning is largely verbal in nature. In addition to language, the mathematical symbols also mark as language. All learning beyond a particular age, say 10 years, becomes more and more language-mediated and therefore symbolic. Each of these modes of learning has certain distinguishing characteristics which are determined by developmental stages of children of a particular age-group.
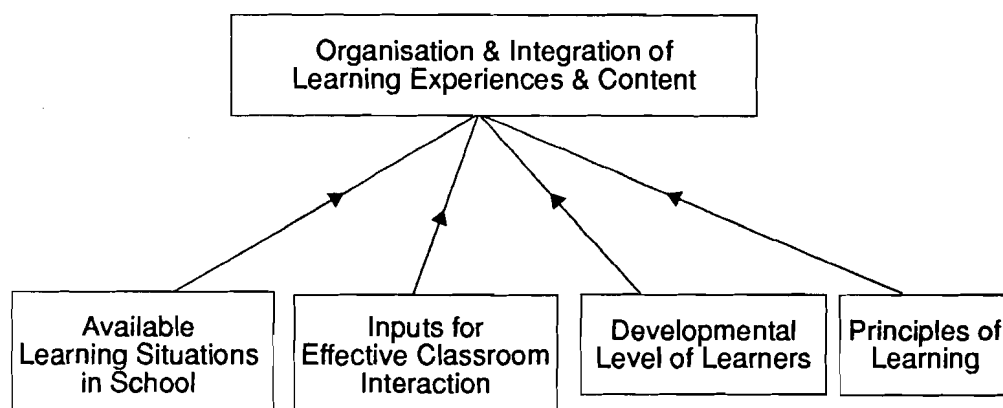

Fig. 1.5 : Principles of Organising and Integration Content and Learning Experiences

It must be remembered that there are alternative ways of sequencing and integrating content and learning experiences. You will learn about these in detail later on under Section 3.3 of Unit 3. Besides, a particular approach to sequencing and integration of content shall have

certain implications for classroom methodology and administration of school. A change in sequencing and integration of content and learning experiences is bound to affect classroom methodologies or school administration or both. It must be understood that the most effective sequencing and integration of learning experiences and content depends upon certain and dependable knowledge about how knowledge is acquired and how it accumulates over time and how this accumulated knowledge can be best organised for easy recall and use later on. Unfortunately, we do not have dependable answers to these questions. Yet the task of sequencing and integration of content and learning experiences must somehow be accomplished as best as it can be.

Quite often, this sequencing and integration is determined by the size and scope of units and the overlap and interrelation among units. If modular units are to be developed, the scope would be more specific and overlap with the preceding or the following unit would be minimal if not absent. Sometimes the entire curriculum has a built-in overlap and interrelation even though at surface level it may be divided in chunks of units, lessons, activities and projects.

1.5.5 Evaluation

This stage is the last one in the curriculum process. Evaluation is a process of judgement based upon relevant evidence. This evidence may be quantitative (e.g. marks awarded in various tests) and/or qualitative (e.g. observation-based information). Evaluation may be based on aims, goals or objectives of the curriculum. Objectives-based evaluation is more specific and usually more useful for teachers. Surely evaluation should be treated as a micro-level concept as well as macro-level concept. At micro-level, evaluation deals with intended objectives, actually attained objectives and an analysis of the gap between these two and how it can be reduced. Such analysis is usually based on measureable objectives. But there are, what Eisner (1979) describes, expressive objectives which can not be measured but which are otherwise quite as important.

Check Your Progress 2

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

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

i)   List four important bases of an effective curriculum.

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ii)   What are three levels of selection of content ?

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iii)   Briefly recapitulate the stages of curriculum development.

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1.6 MAJOR APPROACHES TO CURRICULUM

When developing a curriculum, one has to be clear about the following six aspects. In fact, these aspects determine one's emphasis as one approaches the task of developing a curriculum. These aspects have been described in brief here.

Curriculum

Society   Learner   Subject Matter   Learning Theory   School Organisation   Criteria of Construction
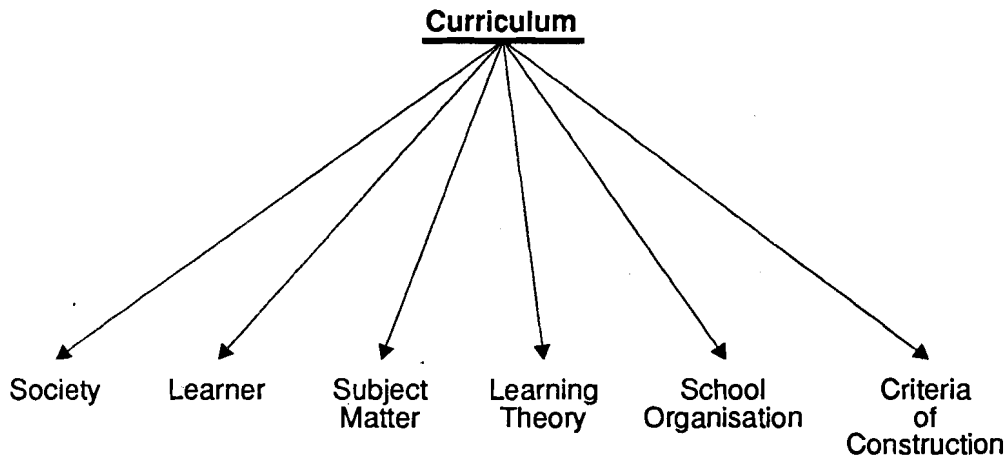
Fig. 1.6 : Aspects of Curriculum

The society: The social framework : its aims and purposes; social objectives of education; and how these can be achieved.

The learner: The learner's characteristics; the cultural roles that await him/her; aspects of culture that are changeable in view of the individual learner's needs and aspirations; individual objectives of education.

The subject matter: The role of various content areas in realizing the objectives of education; structure of knowledge in various content areas and how it can be acquired; learning activities suitable for acquiring structure of knowledge; providing for advancement in learning in various content areas.

The learning theory: The principles of teaching-learning supported by a learning theory, factors affecting school-based learning; validating a curriculum and the accompanying instructional materials, how to evaluate individual learner's progress.

The school organisation: The type of school organisation needed for achieving the objectives of a curriculum through its effective transaction; inputs necessary for effective curriculum implementation; school climate, provisions for various learning experiences; teachers' competencies.

The criteria of construction: Various approaches to curriculum construction : their relative strengths and weaknesses; analysis of the structure of each subject and matching it with developmental characteristics of learners : their experiences and levels of their linguistic performance.

While all these aspects are important in their own right, the sixth aspect viz; the criteria of construction constitutes the heart of the curriculum. Historically there have been three approaches to the structure of knowledge in a subject area and how it should be deployed in developing the curriculum. These are discussed in the following sub-sections.

1.6.1 The Process Approach

The process approach focusses on the processes which are essential to help the learners discover the structure of a subject for themselves. This approach assumes that knowledge in any subject area can be logically conceived and organised. The learner can therefore be expected to discover this knowledge structure if she uses the discovery/inquiry mode of investigation. Each process has therefore an instrumental value. The processes are the means to knowledge and also the end-objectives of a curriculum.

The process approach in science is an excellent example here. The underlying assumption in this approach concerns the very concept of science. The process approach defines science as the

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set of activities that scientists do. It de-emphasizes the 'content' aspect of science and highlights the processes in generating and validating scientific knowledge. These processes are broadly concerned with the ways of collecting and using information.

The following processes admirably illustrate the process approach.

- observing
- classifying
- using numbers
- measuring

- using space-time relationships
- predicting
- inferring
- defining operationally
- interpreting
- experimenting
- formulating hypotheses
- controlling variables

One can easily notice that these processes are common to all branches of science and do not change with time.

1.6.2 The Structure Approach

The structure approach assumes that every discipline has a basic structure, this structure is reflected by the organisation of its content and the interrelationships among its various components. If students master this structure, they can easily understand the contents and their interrelationship. The curriculum should therefore reflect the structure of the discipline. This will enable the students to develop new insights and express these in their own language.

The structure approach implies what are called the **minimum essentials**. These are derived from the structure of the discipline itself and these include concepts, skills, rules as well as principles. Secondly, the structure being all important, the curricula in a particular subject can be formulated in advance for various grades. Mastery knowledge of subject is all important. Knowledge about learners is of limited significance. Thirdly, changes occur in the structure-based curriculum only when the subject matter changes and the content is re-organised. Fourthly, in such curricula, the content and the learning outcomes determine the methods of teaching; the psychological principles of learning do not matter much. Lastly, the organisation of the content is determined by the logic of the structure of the discipline and not by other considerations. The teacher's main function is to emphasize this structure and its logic. Both teaching as well as learning tend to become formal and abstract in this approach.

The structure approach helps us answer the questions "What aspects of a subject matter are more emphasised; in which sequence should these be taught, and how should the content be presented." Since, language, mathematics, science and social studies are essential subjects in general education at all grades and further specializations emerge from these, the structure approach can be used to great advantage for teaching these subjects. Most school curricula during the 1960-80 were based on the structure approach. In India this approach continues to be used even today. Whether the essential purpose of the structure approach is being realized today is however a different question.

1.6.3 The Humanistic Approach

The humanistic approach is essentially geared to application of learnt structure, content, concepts and principles in any subject area. It assumes that the chief purpose of learning and teaching is to enable students to apply their knowledge in new situations. Transfer from the known context to an unknown one is, therefore, the prized function of education. Since transfer implies skills and processes, therefore the humanistic approach seeks to utilise learner motivation as the chief prop for acquiring knowledge and applying it. Acquisition of knowledge thus precedes its application.

Bruner in his famous treatise **The Process of Education** (1960) strongly recommends this approach. Bruner believes that tapping the learner's interest is the key to greater and better motivation for learning. Later on, learning becomes its own reward. This approach is called 'humanistic' because it emphasises the human aspects of learning (viz; the learner's interest, needs, motivation, sustained effort, etc.) without belittling the importance of the structure of the discipline, the principles and the interrelationship among various content areas. It enables the learners to know their interest areas, to develop these and to make wise choices for electives

and higher studies. The structure of the discipline and the student's well-articulated interests and needs determine the content he would pursue. It is not within the scope of this course to discuss the humanistic approach in detail.

1.7 ROLE OF CURRICULUM IN EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING

The process of teaching and learning can be made more effective if the teacher is made a partner in curriculum development. This involvement shall help the teacher understand the essence of curriculum and the objectives whose attainment is all important. Surely a teacher who knows a curriculum beyond its surface level, a teacher who knows the criteria according to which the content was selected and sequenced would be able to transact it more effectively than a teacher who is less informed about these aspects of the curriculum. Since it is impossible to involve all or even many teachers in the task of curriculum construction, it is essential that they should be made familiar with these aspects of the curriculum.

Any curriculum, even when addressed directly to students, has to be mediated by the teachers. The students' level of development and their interests are better known to the teachers than to curriculum framers. The team that develops a curriculum for a particular subject and a particular grade pitches it at the level of the average learner. But the student who faces the teacher need not necessarily be an average learner. Besides, all learners differ from each other and all good teaching has to be individualised. This individualisation of teaching and learning is the responsibility of the teacher because (s)he is the primary agent to ensure its proper transaction.

It is common knowledge that every child has certain age-specific interests. But the interests of a precotious child need not be the same as those of a dyslexic child. The teacher support that such students need has to be different in both cases. Therefore, the teacher's competencies have to be utilised in a manner that does justice to each individual learner.

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

Check Your Progress 3

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

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

i) List three approaches to the development of a curriculum.

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ii) What are the aspects of a curriculum ?

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iii) What is the main purpose of the humanistic approach to curriculum development ?

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

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1.8   LET US SUM UP

In this unit you have studied about the concept of curriculum. By examining various widely accepted definitions, you have tried to understand that the scope of curriculum is so pervasive in the educational process that interpretations of curriculum are bound to differ from each other. Later on, you learnt about the four bases of curriculum viz; social forces, human development, the nature of learning and the nature of knowledge and cognition.

In Section 1.4 you studied about the curriculum process and its five stages. These stages are concerned with (a) selection of objectives, (b) selection of learning experiences, (c) selection of content, (d) organisation and integration of learning experiences and content, and (e) evaluation.

After this, you studied about three major approaches to curriculum viz; process approach, structure approach and humanistic approach. In the end you studied about the role of curriculum in effective teaching and learning. Thus through your study of this unit you have learnt about the basic concepts, considerations in and approaches to curriculum. You can now easily understand why curriculum is said to be the pivot of schooling.

1.9   UNIT-END EXERCISES

1. Describe 'curriculum' and its major characteristics. (in about 300 words).
2. Which values should school curricula promote according to the National Policy of Education (1986)?
3. Why is it necessary to revise curricula because of changes in the socio-political context?
4. Describe the nature of the curriculum process in brief.
5. Establish the importance of objectives of curriculum.
6. Briefly describe the three levels of selection of content with the help of examples.
7. Write a note on 'process curriculum'.
8. What are the major features of humanistic curriculum?
9. How can knowledge about the process of curriculum construction enable the teacher to improve the teaching-learning process?

1.10 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. Your answer might have included the following points :

    i) • Schools written courses

       • Formal educational intentions/proposal

       • Subject content taught

       • Totality of planned learning experience offered to the students, etc.

    ii) • Discuss each definition carefully.

       • Give your views explaining and supporting each view.

       • Sum up.

2. i) Recall the aspects you have learnt and innumerate. You might have included the following bases in your answer, social forces, human development, nature of learning, knowledge and cognition.

    ii) The levels are:

       a) conceptual framework for content area

       b) selection of basic themes/concepts

       c) selection of specific content items

    iii) • Selection of aims, goals and objectives

       • Selection of learning experiences

       • Selection of content

       • Organisation and integration of learning experience and content

       • Evaluation

3. i) The approaches to the development of a curriculum are :

       • Process approach

       • Structure approach

       • Humanistic approach

    ii) The aspects of a curriculum are: society, learner, subject matter, learning theory, subject content organisation and criteria of curriculum construction.

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

    iv) The study of the curriculum process helps the teacher

       • have an understanding of the underlying concept of the curriculum

       • achieve the intended objectives of the curriculum

       • plan teaching-learning activities in more effective ways

       • make his teaching more authentic and relevent

1.11 SUGGESTED READINGS

Bruner, J.S. (1960/1977) : *The Process of Education*. Harvard University Press.

Eisner, E.W. (1979) : *The Educational Imagination*. New York : Macmillan.

Sharpes, D.K. (1988) : *Curriculum Traditions and Practices*. London : Routeledge.

Stenhouse, L. (1975) : *An Introduction to Curriculum Research and Development*. London : Heinemann.

Wheeler, D. K. (1967) : *Curriculum Process*. University of London Press.