

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

THE TEACHER, SCHOOL & SOCIETY

CURRICULUM DEFINITIONS

- 1) A curriculum can be defined as a plan for action or a written document that includes strategies for achieving desired goals or ends. (Tyler, 1949).
- 2) A curriculum usually contains a statement of aims and specific objectives. It indicates some selection and organization of content; it either implies or manifests certain patterns of learning and teaching... finally it includes a programme of evaluation of the outcomes. (Taba, 1962, p. 10).
- 3) ...a plan for providing sets of learning opportunities for persons to be educated. (Saylor, 1981).
- 4) Curriculum is an organized set of formal education and/or training intentions. (Pratt, 1980).
- 5) ...a plan for learning whereby objectives determine what learning is important. (Wiles & Bondi).
- 6) Curriculum is the planned experiences offered to the learners under the guidance of the school. (Wheeler, 1983).
- 7) The curriculum consists of the ongoing experiences of children under the guidance of the school. It represents a special environment for helping children achieve self-realization through active participation within the school. (Shepherd & Ragan).
- 8) ...a programme the school offers to its students ... a preplanned series of educational hurdles ... an entire range of experiences a child has within school. (Eisner, 1975).
- 9) The planned and guided learning experiences and intended outcomes, formulated through the systematic reconstruction of knowledge and experience, under the auspices of the school, for the learner's continuous and willful growth in personal-social competence. (Tanner & Tanner).

- 10) Curriculum is a plan for achieving intended learning outcomes, with what is to be learned and the results of instruction. (Unruh and Unruh, 1984)
- 11) The curriculum of a school is the totality of the experiences that a school plans for its pupils. It is not restricted to courses; extracurricular activities and auxiliary services such as guidance and health services are also part of the curriculum. On the other hand the curriculum does not include everything the students learn in school. (Clarke and Starr, 1981)
- 12) Curriculum is an explicitly and implicitly intentional set of interactions designed to facilitate learning and development and to impose meaning on experience. The explicit intentions usually are expressed in written curricula and in courses of study; the implicit intentions are found in the 'hidden curriculum' by which we mean the roles and norms that underlie interactions in the school. (Miller and Seller, 1985).
- 13) The curriculum can be defined as a course of learning activities set out for the learner to perform to make him achieve certain goals prescribed by the educational system. The curriculum generally includes all subjects and activities over which the school has responsibility. It also defines the limits within which certain types of learning are to take place. It denotes those experiences and activities which are devised by the school or other institutions of learning for the purpose of changing a learner's behaviour, acquiring or reinforcing certain skills and preparing him to fit properly into his society. (Robinson, 1983).

ADDITIONAL CURRICULUM DEFINITIONS

Formal or Official Curriculum - This includes the activities accommodated in the regular hours of school. The timetable of the school allocates specific periods of teaching time for different areas of the formal curriculum.

Informal Curriculum – Activities that occur outside of regular school hours, during breaks of lunch time, after school and sometimes on weekends, are also sources of learning and constitute the informal curriculum. These are sometimes referred to as **extra-curriculum** or **co-curriculum** activities and are therefore treated in a different way from the activities of the formal curriculum.

Hidden Curriculum According to Kelly (1989, p. 11). Educationists speak of the 'hidden curriculum' by which they mean those things which pupils learn at school because of the way in which the of the school is planned and

organized but which are not in themselves overly included in the planning or even in the consciousness of those responsible for school arrangements.

Actual or Received Curriculum – These terms are often used interchangeably. This view of curriculum acknowledges that a definition of curriculum out to embrace all the learning that results from the experience of schooling. This includes not only learning that is explicitly planned in the **formal curriculum**, but also unplanned learning that is a by-product of planning and practice and is learnt through the **hidden curriculum**. Examples of this are social roles, sex roles and certain attitudes and values. For this reason, some writers prefer to make a distinction between the **official curriculum** and the **actual curriculum** or between **planned** and the **received curriculum**. The official or planned curriculum refers to what is openly acknowledged and often written down while the actual or received curriculum is the full range of pupils' experiences in school.

Total Curriculum – The curriculum offered by a school to students should not be simply a collection of separate bits of information and unrelated experiences. Schools need to be concerned with a 'total curriculum'. There must be vertical and horizontal organization of the curriculum elements.

Vertical Organization ensures sequence and continuity within a given subject area, not only for a particular grade but also between grades. One example of vertical organization is placing 'the family' in the grade 1 social studies curriculum and 'the community' in Grade 2. Another form of vertical organization is where subject curricula are organized so that the same topics are treated in different grades but increasingly more difficult levels. This corresponds to Bruner's idea of the **spiral curriculum**.

Horizontal organization is concerned with side by side relationships or **integration**, that is, how one area of the curriculum relates to another; for example, how topics in mathematics relate to topics in science.

Bibliography

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