

Unit 1

Meaning of Curriculum

Explanation of Curriculum

The word "curriculum" began as a Latin word which means "a race" or "the course of a race" (which in turn derives from the verb **currere** meaning "to run/to proceed").

The curriculum is defined as the guideline of the chapters and academic content covered by an educational system while undergoing a particular course or program.

In a theoretical sense, curriculum refers to what is offered by the school or college. However, practically it has a wider scope which covers the knowledge, attitude, behaviour, manner, performance and skills that are imparted or inculcated in a student. **It contains the teaching methods, lessons, assignments, physical and mental exercises, activities, projects, study material, tutorials, presentations, assessments, test series, learning objectives, and so on.**

The curriculum is well planned, guided and designed by the government or the educational institution. It is aimed at both physical and mental development of a student. It is the overall learning experience that a student goes through during the particular course of study. Curriculum is what the school is attempting to teach, which might include social behaviors as well as content and thinking skills.. A curriculum is the combination of instructional practices, learning experiences, and students' performance assessment that are designed to bring out and evaluate the target learning outcomes of a particular course. Curriculum is a group of courses offered in a particular field of study.

Keep in Mind

Curriculum overload occurs when the range of the content is too broad and students do not have enough instructional time to learn. Though many topics are covered, the student achieves little depth or mastery of the subject material. Teachers must pay special attention to the choices of subject matter they present to students to avoid creating lessons that merely familiarize the student with a large quantity of content resulting in less instructional time per topic and decreasing the student's depth of understanding and mastery of the subject.

Curriculum omissions occurs when a decision is made not to include a given piece of information in the classroom instruction. Curriculum omissions are often based on erroneous beliefs held by teachers that certain topics will be taught at a subsequent time to the student or during another subject area.

Explanation of Syllabus

The syllabus is defined as the documents that consist of topics or portion covered in a

particular subject. It is determined by the examination board and created by the professors. The professors are responsible for the quality of the course. It is made available to the students by the teachers, either in hard copy or electronic form to bring their attention towards the subject and take their study seriously.

A syllabus is considered as a guide to the in charge as well as to the students. It helps the students to know about the subject in detail, why it is a part of their course of study, what are the expectations from students, consequences of failure, etc. It contains general rules, policies, instructions, topics covered, assignments, projects, test dates, and so on.

Unit 2

Distinction between Curriculum and Syllabus

Differences between Syllabus and Curriculum

1. 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.
2. Syllabus is prepared by teachers. Conversely, a curriculum is decided by the government or the school or college administration.
3. Syllabus varies from teacher to teacher while the curriculum is same for all teachers.
4. The curriculum has a wider scope than the syllabus. Syllabus is set for a particular subject. Unlike curriculum, which covers a particular course of study or a program. The curriculum has to do with the entirety of a program or an educational level whereas the syllabus only deals with one course or subject.
5. The duration of a syllabus is for a year only, but curriculum lasts till the completion of the course.
6. The syllabus is provided to the students by the teachers so that they can take an interest in the subject. On the other hand, normally the curriculum is not made available to the students unless specifically asked for.
7. Syllabus is descriptive in nature, but the curriculum is prescriptive. The syllabus describes what is to be learned in a course or subject, but the curriculum prescribes what should be learned in a program offered or at a particular educational level.

Conclusion

Curriculum and Syllabus are the terms of education, imparted to the students by teachers. It means the knowledge, skills or qualifications that are passed on from one generation to another.

A subject syllabus is a unit of the curriculum. The two terms differ in a sense that curriculum is a combination of some factors which helps in the planning of an educational program, whereas a syllabus covers the portion of what topics should be taught in a particular subject.

Unit 3

The Structure and Content of the Ghanaian Basic School Curriculum

General Features of the School Curriculum.

THE NEW PRIMARY CURRICULUM: KEY FEATURES

Under the new curriculum, the following important features must be noted;

1. At KG, the number of learning areas is to be reduced from seven (7) to four (4) which are integrated into themes. However, these will be treated with more depth.
2. At Lower and Upper Primary, the number of subjects remains the same. However, there will be fewer concepts and more in-depth treatment of concept in each subject. Further, there is greater emphasis on literacy and numeracy.
3. Introduction of standards-based curriculum. This means that at every stage in school, a student is expected to demonstrate an understanding and mastery of knowledge and skills that they are expected to learn as they progress through their education.
4. There will be national assessments at P2, P4 and P6 to ensure that children's performance is being tracked.
5. History of Ghana will be compulsory for each child from P1 to P6.
6. RME will be a standalone subject.
7. PE will be a standalone subject and will be taught practically
8. French will be introduced at Upper Primary

Overview of the Content of the Ghanaian Basic School Curriculum.

To provide a firm foundation for future academic endeavour, the new curriculum places a renewed focus on reading, writing, arithmetic and creativity. Proficiency in English language will enable pupils to imbibe and express ideas clearly and confidently while strengthening the teaching of mathematics, in recognition of its role as a foundational building block for other

subjects, will be a boon to our national mission of industrialization.

To prepare them for the ICT-first world that is evolving globally, learners will be exposed to and have digital technology and skills inculcated in them. Basic ICT skills will become an increasingly vital skill in navigating public and commercial services and transactions and the new curriculum recognises and prepares pupils for this. Pupils will also be equipped with financial literacy and entrepreneurial skills to create a critical mass of job creators and innovators, as opposed to job seekers.

To make them comfortable global citizens, students will be taught at least one foreign language such as French or Arabic, in addition to local languages and of course, English. Exposure to multiple languages is known to improve general academic performance, in addition to being an essential soft skill that will become vital in an interconnected, interdependent world.

To create engaged citizens committed to the national cause, the new curriculum reintroduces a focus on the history, heritage and culture of Ghana and its constituent groups. They will be given a heightened sense of their cultural identity, knowledge and understanding of traditional norms and their own roles in moving the national narrative forward. A focus on critical thinking and problem solving as opposed to rote learning, the instilling of moral and leadership values as well as the development of foundational and lifelong skills will help ensure that learners come out of school as well rounded, versatile adults able to adapt and thrive in a variety of academic, professional and social situations. And that will be helped by the restoration of physical education an integral part of this new balanced curriculum that nurtures both mental and physical agility.

All of this will be underpinned by increased deployment of ICT tools. In sum, the new curriculum seeks to make it easier to teach and more fun to learn. Pupils will be fully engaged in the process, be given as much chance as possible to apply and demonstrate what they have learnt in an environment that fosters curiosity and creativity.

Learning Areas

The revised curriculum seeks to build character and nurture our children to become citizens we can be proud of. It focuses on Reading, wRiting, aRithmetic and cReativity (4Rs) and has features such as making Ghana a mathematics friendly country, the reintroducing history of Ghana as standalone subject and the strengthening of the teaching of French starting from Primary 4.

The revised KG to primary 6 curriculum have the following learning areas:

- Kindergarten: Language and Literacy, Mathematics, Creative Arts and Our World, Our People
- Lower Primary: Language and Literacy (English and Ghanaian Languages), Mathematics, Creative Arts, Science, Our World, Our People, History, Religious and Moral Education, and Physical Education

- Upper Primary: Language and Literacy (English, Ghanaian Languages and French), Mathematics, Creative Arts, Science, Our World, Our People, History, Religious and Moral Education, Physical Education, and Computing.

Unit 4

Objectives of the Ghanaian Basic School Curriculum

The relationship between the general and specific objectives of the curriculum

For the case of our study, we shall look at the general and specific objectives of the Ghanaian Basic 4-6 language and literacy curriculum, and we shall also look at the relationship between them.

General Objectives

The general aim of the language and literacy curriculum is to enable learners develop an appreciation and understanding of the English language and to use it effectively, making meaning with it in ways that are purposeful, imaginative, creative and critical.

Specific Objectives

The overriding aim for the Language and Literacy curriculum (in both Ghanaian Language and English language) in basic schools is to promote high standards of language and literacy by equipping pupils with a good command of the spoken and written word to enable them to:

- acquire the basic skills that will help them decode any text;
- read age-level texts easily, fluently and with comprehension;
- cultivate the habit of reading widely for pleasure and information;
- acquire a wide stock of vocabulary and understanding grammatical structures as well as linguistic conventions for easy reading, good writing and speaking;
- write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their first language style in a range of contexts for varied purposes and audience;
- read with pleasure, literary materials and appreciate a great stock of literary repertoire;
- acquire the skill of self-expression and be able to communicate their ideas to different audiences to achieve the intended purpose;
- develop and cultivate the skill and ability to read the lines, in-between the lines and beyond the lines; and to find out hidden meanings and ideas.

From the general and specific objectives of the language and literacy curriculum,

1. The general objective answers the question why should students study language and literacy, whereas the specific objectives answer the question why should students study a particular topic in the language and literacy curriculum.
2. The general objective forms the basis of the specific objectives. Specific objectives are deduced from the general objective.
3. Specific objectives are a breakdown of the general objective and until they are achieved, the general objective can not be achieved.
4. The curriculum, generally, is for the achievement of the general objective, whereas the specific strands or topics and their contents are for the achievement of the specific objectives.

Unit 5

Why the study of the school curriculum.

Teachers are the forerunners and implementors of a curriculum. So for a curriculum to be effectively implemented or delivered, there is the need that the teacher studies the curriculum in order to understand all that the curriculum is about.

Studying the curriculum will help the teacher to;

1. Know what the curriculum contains and entails. He will get to know the content and objectives of the curriculum.
2. Know the general structure and topical outlines of the curriculum, and the meaning of terms used in the curriculum.
3. Prepare his own syllabus rightly so as to deliver the content appropriately and achieve the objectives or goals set by the curriculum.
4. Facilitate the learning of his students effectively, since the curriculum guides him, spells out what is expected of him and the students.

Unit 6

Types of Curriculum

Standard - Based and Objective - Based Curriculum

Standards-Based Curriculum

A standards-based curriculum refers explicitly to specific knowledge, learning experiences to gain that knowledge, and assessments to check for mastery of that knowledge, developed by looking at the standards of a district, state, or nation. It is a body of knowledge and a set of

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competencies that form the basis for quality education. It defines what students should know, understand and be able to do and includes the accompanying teaching content. The standards-based curriculum or the intended curriculum is the official or adopted curriculum contained in state or district policy. A body of content knowledge that students are expected to learn based on their participation within the school experience, standards-based curriculum includes broad descriptions of content areas and often specifies performance standards that students are expected to meet. State and district assessments are linked directly to the content and performance standards contained in the standards-based curriculum. The standards-based curriculum outlines graduation requirements, which are taken from state department of education guidelines that specify the subjects and skills that should be taught at each grade level. Standards-based curriculum helps teachers to link the **taught curriculum** to the required standards. It is the connection between the content standards and the taught and learned curriculum.

Taught Curriculum

The daily events that occur in the school community, including all lessons, activities, and social gatherings among peers. The techniques used by teachers during instruction, such as lectures and discussions, are part of the taught curriculum. The term even refers to the style of instruction used by the teacher (e.g., group arrangements, time allocated for instruction, teachers' personal beliefs and attitudes related to the intended curriculum). Curriculum materials strongly influence the instruction that occurs in classrooms, but the use of curriculum materials varies considerably. In other words, teachers determine the variety of activities and lessons that get taught and how their students will be asked to use the information they receive. Textbooks, worksheets, and electronic media are all examples of curriculum materials that are part of the taught curriculum. However, it should be noted that teachers often mistakenly refer to the school district-adopted textbooks as "the curriculum."

Learned Curriculum

The information that students learn as a result of being in the classroom and interacting with the taught curriculum is the learned curriculum. This can include information that may not be a part of the standards-based or taught curriculum, something that can be problematic when the learned curriculum includes erroneous or incomplete information. It is important to use assessments that accurately indicate how much of the standards-based curriculum that students have actually achieved.

Some benefit of Standard based curriculum

First, it promotes high expectations for all students. Second, standards-based curriculum benefits learning through the practice of building on a student's prior knowledge to teach new concepts. The new information becomes more meaningful and easier to understand because of the personal connection to the past. Lastly, in standards-based curriculum, the freedom to explore and examine more deeply presented information independently decreases the pressure, frustrations, and fear often associated with learning new information in a non-primary language.

Objective - Based Curriculum

Objective based curriculum also known as Outcome-based education (OBE), is an educational theory that bases each part of an educational system around goals (outcomes). By the end of the educational experience, each student should have achieved the goal. There is no single specified style of teaching or assessment in OBE; instead, classes, opportunities, and assessments should all help students achieve the specified outcomes. This educational theory pays little attention beyond the classroom teacher to whether or not students learn any of the material. The objective based curriculum is meant to be a student-centered learning model. Teachers are meant to guide and help the students understand the material in any way necessary.

Differences between Standard - Based curriculum and Objective - Based curriculum.

The differences between standard based and Objective based curriculum are that;

1. With standard based curriculum, the student is the centre of focus, but with objective based the teacher is the center of focus.
2. While standards are set for the student to meet after going through a learning experience in the standard based curriculum, objectives are set for the student to achieve in the objective based curriculum.
3. With standard based curriculum, students are expected to acquire and exhibit some competencies and skills to indicate that they have really learned, but with the objective based curriculum, students are assessed to determine whether the objectives set for them are achieved or not. So with objective based curriculum, students would only need to pass an exam, whether they can apply the knowledge acquired is not the focus.
4. With the objective based curriculum, teachers teach to help the students achieve certain goals and objectives, but teachers serve as facilitators as learners learn on their own to enable them acquire some skills and competencies, with the standard based curriculum.
5. Many subjects are taught and deeply in the objective based curriculum, whereas few subjects are learned and shallowly in the standard based curriculum. Because there are many subjects, and the broad nature of the subjects in the objective based curriculum, students are not able to get a deeper understanding of the topics as compared to the standard based curriculum where there are just a few subjects.

Unit 7

Processes involved in Curriculum implementation/Delivery.

Curriculum Implementation : This term refers to the act of working out the plans and

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suggestions that have been made by curriculum specialists and subject experts in a classroom or school setting. Teachers are the main curriculum implementers, while at the same time students, parents, school administrators can be directly or indirectly involved in the implementation process.

The curriculum implementation process include the following;

Educating the Teachers on the objectives and hence the content of the Curriculum

After the process of developing the Curriculum, the key factor in the implementation of the Curriculum, the teacher, should be brought to the knowledge of the objectives and content of the Curriculum to inform him adequately on what is intended or expected how it is to be achieved.

Provision of Curriculum materials

The materials needed to be used in the classroom to implement the Curriculum should be made available to the teacher by the government or stakeholders of education.

Setting Learning Targets

Each subject can be broken down into a number of modules. The teacher might need to translate these modules into concrete learning targets for actual teaching in the classroom.

Setting Teaching Priorities by the teacher.

A very important part of curriculum implementation is that the teacher should consider carefully the order in which learning targets should be learnt. It is logical to put learning targets requiring lower level skills before those requiring higher level skills, for example, teaching the children to draw lines before teaching them to write. Some higher level targets can be learnt more quickly after the pre-requisite skills have been mastered. For example, learning to write will become easier when eye-hand co-ordination skill has been acquired. It follows that unrelated targets can be learnt in any order.

Specifying Baseline Assessment Procedures

The assessment enables the teacher to know whether or not the children have acquired the pre-requisite skills required for learning the target.

Unit 8

The basic curriculum materials and how they are used to promote learning

Curriculum materials are educational resources that provide curriculum and instructional experiences. Curriculum serves not just students; curriculum materials also provide potential

learning opportunities for the adults who teach them. Conventional curriculum materials include textbooks, workbooks, manipulatives, charts and posters, Audio-Visual Aids as Curriculum Materials. Curriculum materials can be divided into; **Teaching aids (TAs)** and **Instructional materials (IMs)**.

Teaching aids(TAs) are objects (such as a book, picture, or map) or device (such as a DVD or computer) used by a teacher to enhance or enliven classroom instruction (Merriam-Webster). They could be audiovisual teaching aids such as videos and guest lectures or tactile like 3D models.

Instructional materials are defined as resources that organize and support instruction, such as textbooks, tasks, and supplementary resources. It refers to the human and non-human materials and facilities that can be used to ease, encourage, improve and promote teaching and learning activities. They are whatever materials used in the process of instruction (IGI global). Instructional resources usually fall into one of two categories: **student-centered** and **teacher-centered**. In the **student-centered model**, instructional resources can be used for tutorials, problem solving, discovery, and review. In the **teacher-centered model**, resources are used for presentations of supplementary or primary material in the classroom. Information technology can also be used for communication and for information retrieval. These materials also provide information for those conducting research.

The need for teaching aids and instructional materials

1. Conceptual knowledge requires examples, familiarity with the concept's features, contexts, and engagement/experience. These tools directly help.
2. Some academic subjects like biology or electronics can benefit students in useful ways if they know what the real-world counterparts to a theory are – circuits, tissue under a microscope, plants, etc. Such information sticks longer because the memory encoding for these concepts involves strong sensory and experiential components. The brain acquires the concept with multiple representations in a network- right from what the concept looks on paper to how it feels to the senses.
3. Using youtube videos and discussing Ted talks puts dense information in a familiar context. Youtube is a part of human culture, so are memes, putting information in the context of the internet culture can motivate or change the perception of the so-called 'boring' topics.
4. IMs and TAs also motivate students at the level of the classroom. This goes hand in hand with confidence (security that one can learn) as having materials is proof of accessing information. Having access can, at the very least, prime students to learn.
5. Relying on general information on the internet can overwhelm students due to an inherent lack of direction and potential misinformation. This problem can be solved by designing IMs to accommodate snowballing around a topic, authority references, summarizing content or priming content like video overviews and infographics.

6. The cost of implementing TAs and IMs is not trivial. However, improved teaching efficacy and learning efficacy can significantly lower the burden of learning course content. Teachers may save time, students may require lesser effort to achieve learning goals, and primary organizational resources would be better managed (manhours to pay for, classroom upkeep, scheduling). And even if it does cost the organization a little more, better learning would probably always be worth it.
7. Testing and assessment not only helps to confirm the learning of content but it also helps improve the learning. Research has shown that being tested (the testing effect) can promote memory and conceptual understanding. Attempting worksheet exercises, quizzes, essays, etc. reinforce learning as well as create a hub for further self-motivated learning.
8. At the superficial level and the definition level, who wouldn't want a lively class and learning experience?