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Factors affecting curriculum implementation for students

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Abstract

Curriculum implementation entails putting into practice the officially prescribed courses of study, syllabuses and subjects. The process involves helping the learner acquire knowledge or experience. It is important to note that curriculum implementation cannot take place without the learner. The learner is therefore the central figure in the curriculum implementation process. There are various factors that influence Curriculum Implementation like *the learners, resource materials and facilities, the teacher, the school environment, culture and ideology, instructional supervision and assessment*. This Research paper has outlined some of the factors that influence the implementation of a curriculum and discussed how each factor influences the implementation process. Do remember that in educational practice, these factors interact with each other and generate influences that cannot be attributed to one factor or another. You should view them as a whole.

Keywords: Instructional, Assessment.

Introduction

As a classroom practitioner, it is important that you know what is involved in implementing the prescribed curriculum. The aim of this research paper is therefore to take you through the processes and stages of curriculum implementation.

Objectives

After completing this research paper, you should be able to:

1. Define curriculum implementation.
2. List factors that influence curriculum implementation.
3. Identify determinants of curriculum implementation.
4. Explain how to implement a curriculum.

Content

This research paper where we focus on the Factors Affecting Curriculum Implementation For Students will cover the following topics to measure the curriculum implementation:

- Definition of curriculum implementation
- Factors influencing curriculum implementation.

Definition of Curriculum Implementation

Curriculum implementation entails putting into practice the officially prescribed courses of study, syllabuses and subjects. The process involves helping the learner acquire knowledge or experience. It is important to note that curriculum implementation cannot take place without the learner. The learner is therefore the central figure in the curriculum implementation process. Implementation takes place as the learner acquires the planned or intended experiences, knowledge, skills, ideas and attitudes that are aimed at enabling the same learner to function effectively in a society.

Viewed from this perspective, curriculum implementation also refers to the stage when the curriculum itself, as an educational programme, is put into effect.

Putting the curriculum into operation requires an implementing agent. Stenhouse identifies the teacher as the agent in the curriculum implementation process. She argues that implementation is the manner in which the teacher selects and mixes the various aspects of

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knowledge contained in a curriculum document or syllabus. Implementation takes place when the teacher-constructed syllabus, the teacher's personality, the teaching materials and the teaching environment interact with the learner. Curriculum implementation therefore refers to how the planned or officially designed course of study is translated by the teacher into syllabuses, schemes of work and lessons to be delivered to students

Procedure

In this stage the researcher implement the curriculum and try to find out influence of implementation of curriculum on various levels.

Factors That Influence Curriculum Implementation

List what you consider to be the factors that influence curriculum implementation and see whether they are similar to the ones discussed below:

- Curriculum Implementation Influence on Teachers
- Curriculum Implementation Influence on Learners
- Curriculum Implementation Influence by Resource Materials and Facilities
- Curriculum Implementation Influence on Interest of Groups
- Curriculum Implementation Influence on the School Environment
- Curriculum Implementation Influence due to Culture and Ideology
- Curriculum Implementation Influence through Instructional Supervision
- Curriculum Implementation Influence by Assessment

The Teacher

As Whitaker (1979) asserts that the teachers view their role in curriculum implementation as an autonomous one. They select and decide what to teach from the prescribed syllabus or curriculum. Since implementation takes place through the interaction of the learner and the planned learning opportunities, the role and influence of the teacher in the process is indisputable.

You could be thinking, "I understand that teachers are pivotal in the curriculum implementation process, but what is their role in the curriculum planning process?" If the teacher is to be able to translate curriculum intentions into reality, it is imperative that the teacher understand the curriculum document or syllabus well in order to implement it effectively. If the curriculum is what teachers and students create together, as Wolfson (1997) states in *Curriculum Implementations*, the teacher must play a more significant role in designing the curriculum. Teachers must be involved in curriculum planning and development so that they can implement and modify the curriculum for the benefit of their learners.

The Learners

Learners are also a critical element in curriculum implementation. While teachers are the arbiters of the classroom practice, the learners hold the key to what is actually transmitted and adopted from the official curriculum. The official curriculum can be quite different from the curriculum that is actually implemented. The learner factor influences teachers in their selection of learning experiences, hence the need to consider the diverse characteristics of learners in curriculum implementation. For

example, home background and learner ability can determine what is actually achieved in the classroom.

Resource Materials and Facilities

From your experience, you are aware that no meaningful teaching and learning take place without adequate resource materials. This applies to curriculum implementation as well. For the officially designed curriculum to be fully implemented as per plan, the government or Ministry of Education should supply schools with adequate resource materials such as textbooks, teaching aids and stationery in order to enable teachers and learners to play their role satisfactorily in the curriculum implementation process. In *Curriculum Implementation*, it is suggested that the central government must also provide physical facilities such as classrooms, laboratories, workshops, libraries and sports fields in order to create an environment in which implementation can take place. The availability and quality of resource material and the availability of appropriate facilities have a great influence on curriculum implementation.

Interest Groups

Can you identify interest groups in your country that could influence the implementation of curricula? A number of these groups exist in almost all societies. These include parents, parents' and teachers' associations, religious organizations, local authorities, companies and private school proprietors. These

Groups can influence implementation in the following ways:

- Provide schools with financial resources to purchase required materials.
- Demand the inclusion of certain subjects in the curriculum.
- Influence learners to reject courses they consider detrimental to the interests of the group.

It is therefore important to involve these groups at the curriculum planning stage.

The School Environment

One other factor that influences curriculum implementation concerns the particular circumstances of each school. Schools located in rich socio-economic environments and those that have adequate human and material resources can implement the curriculum to an extent that would be difficult or impossible for schools in poor economic environments.

Culture and Ideology

Cultural and ideological differences within a society or country can also influence curriculum implementation. Some communities may resist a domineering culture or government ideology and hence affect the implementation of the centrally planned curriculum.

Instructional Supervision

Curriculum implementation cannot be achieved unless it has been made possible through the supervisory function of the school head. The head does this through:

- deploying staff,
- allocating time to subjects taught at the school,
- providing teaching and learning materials, and
- creating an atmosphere conducive to effective teaching and learning.

As stated in *Curriculum Implementation*, the head “monitors and guides curriculum implementation through ensuring that schemes of work, lesson plans and records of marks are prepared regularly”. The head teacher maintains a school tone and culture that create the climate of social responsibility. Effective curriculum implementation does not take place in a school where the head is incapable of executing supervisory functions.

Assessment

Assessment in the form of examinations influences curriculum implementation tremendously. Due to the great value given to public examination certificates by communities and schools, teachers have tended to concentrate on subjects that promote academic excellence and little else. This action by the teacher obviously can affect the achievement of the broad goals and objectives of the curriculum.

Summary

This Research paper has outlined some of the factors that influence the implementation of a curriculum and discussed how each factor influences the implementation process. Do remember that in educational practice, these factors interact with each other and generate influences that cannot be attributed to one factor or another. You should view them as a whole.

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