



ISSN Print: 2394-7500
ISSN Online: 2394-5869
Impact Factor: 5.2
IJAR 2015; 1(9): 693-696
www.allresearchjournal.com
Received: 16-06-2015
Accepted: 17-07-2015

Dr. Manishankar Roy
Associate Professor,
Barrackpore Rastraguru
Surendranath College,
Barrackpour, kolkata-120,
India

Examination system & curriculum framework at secondary level schools in west Bengal: A Study

Manishankar Roy

Abstract

Examination system has been defined as the output of the educational objectives blended with the realistic situation in an educational atmosphere. Achievement of learners is best viewed by their examination system. A curriculum theory is a coherent and systematic body of ideas used to give meaning to curriculum phenomena and problems to guide people in directing appropriate, justifiable actions (Walker, 1909) being reflected through examination system. Objectives of curriculum are successfully judged through examination procedure. Curriculum being descriptive in form encompasses a basic set of carefully articulated ideas intended to illuminate phenomena and problems or guide to practice by implementing through examination system. From the perspective of examination some other features appear as usually descriptive, a set of procedures or a sequence of steps about how to do something for practicing manpower in a better way presented in the paper.

Keyword: Examination System, Curriculum Framework, Secondary Level Schools

1. Introduction

Examination systems accommodate different purposes and uses. There are models for thinking about examination matters in a particular way. Others are guides for doing particular types of work, such as reaching a consensus on the goals or purposes of curriculum should serve. Both examination system & curriculum go hand in hand and the achievement of the learners based on proper integration of both the process highlighted in the paper. Historically, Franklin Bobbit's *The Curriculum* (1918, 1924) which proclaimed strongly that focus of curriculum was the school and schooling and the professionals must do curriculum work accordingly and scientifically. Does the curriculum address the life at the community? Is to be a basic curriculum question while analyzing any curriculum model, theory or framework. Tyler's Rationale model begins with four basic curriculum questions which are most useful in any curriculum study exercise. His questions are:

- What educational purposes should the schools seek to attain?
- What educational experiences can be provided that are likely to attain these purposes?
- How can these education experiences be effectively organized?
- How can we determine whether these purposes are being attained?

The first question directs you to the goals that schooling and the curriculum should serve and the second question deals with the scope of the curriculum. What should be included to meet those goals. The third question asks how the content would be organized, a sequence matter. The last question, how will we know if we achieve the intended, refers to the need for evaluation. Answers to these four questions with regard to a develop curriculum framework may help one to judge that curriculum or curriculum phenomena.

We know that subsequently Tyler's rationale model was further refined by Hilda Taba who refined Tyler's curriculum model for practical use by teachers. In her *Curriculum Development: Theory and Practice* (1962), she articulated curriculum development process for general use by teachers and others at the classroom level. According to her curriculum one may seeks answers if the curriculum workers have undergone the following actions with regard to the curriculum under study. These actions are: Diagnose needs, Formulate objectives, Organize objectives, Select experiences, Organize experiences, and Evaluate.

Hence, a curriculum worker during curriculum studies must analyze to what extent these four elements are appropriately and systematically sequenced, organized and integrated and for

Correspondence
Dr. Manishankar Roy
Associate Professor,
Barrackpore Rastraguru
Surendranath College,
Barrackpour, kolkata-120,
India

which as four broader curriculum questions pertaining to each of the four elements.

Curriculum studies is a field that addresses distinct and important issues related to education. Specific questions related to curriculum studies include the following: What should be taught in schools? Curriculum inquirers also investigate the relationship between school programs and the contours of the society and culture in which schools are located.

School Education has been a central theme in the deliberations of the National Knowledge Commission (NKC) since its inception. The urgent need for ensuring universal access of all Indian children to good quality school education hardly needs to be reiterated.

1.1 Objective of the study

- 1) To study the examination system & curriculum framework in the qualitative way.
- 2) To analyze the different aspects of curriculum framework for enriching examination system.

1.2 Methodology

Documentary analysis of examination system & Curriculum framework through qualitative mode of research.

1.3 Reforms in the curriculum and examination system:

Curriculum reform remains a critically important issue in almost all schools. School education must be made more relevant to the lives of children. There is need to move away from rote-learning to understanding concepts, developing good comprehension and communication skills and learning how to access knowledge independently. This also requires substantial changes in the examination.

1.4 Aims and Objectives of Secondary Education

In the Commission's opinion, the most outstanding and educationally relevant facts in the Indian situation were:

- (1) The adoption of the goals of democracy and socialism necessitating the development among the people of a broad, national and secular outlook;
- (2) The extreme poverty of the country and urgency for promoting its economic growth; and
- (3) The absence of educational facilities needed for developing all aspects of the human personality and the neglect of cultural pursuits and activities.

On the basis of this analysis, the Commission recommended that secondary education should be reoriented to the following aims and objects:

- (a) *Development of qualities essential for creative citizenship:* This includes the development in the students of secondary schools of those habits, attitudes and qualities of character which are essential for creative citizenship in a democratic society. Among these qualities, which are to be fostered through curricular and co-curricular activities in secondary schools, are:
 - (i) The capacity for clear thinking (allied which is the capacity for clearness in speech and writing);
 - (ii) The scientific attitude of mind;
 - (iii) A receptivity to new ideas;
 - (iv) A respect for the dignity and worth of every individual;
 - (v) The ability to live harmoniously with one's fellowmen through the cultivation of discipline, cooperation, social sensitiveness tolerance; and
 - (vi) A sense of true patriotism.

- (b) *The promotion of vocational efficiency:* This involves not only the creation of a new attitude to work and an appreciation of the dignity of manual labour but also the development of the students' technical skill and efficiency through greater emphasis on craft and productive work and the diversification of courses at the secondary stage.
- (c) *Development of personality:* This implies cultivation of the students' literary, artistic and cultural interests for a fuller development of their personalities. This means the provision of subjects like art, craft, music, dancing and hobbies in the secondary school curricula.
- (d) *The training for leadership:* The training of persons who, on completion of the Secondary stage, would be able to assume the responsibilities of leadership at the intermediate level.

2. Methods of Teaching

Inculcation of values, attitudes and work habits: The methods of teaching in schools should aim not merely at the imparting of knowledge in an efficient manner, but also at inculcating desirable values and proper attitudes and habits of work in the students.

They should, in particular, endeavour to create in the students a genuine attachment to work and a desire to do it as efficiently, honestly and thoroughly as possible.

Activity and project methods: The emphasis in teaching should shift from verbalism and memorization to learning through purposeful, concrete and realistic situations and, for this purpose, the principles of Activity Method and Project Method should be assimilated in school practice.

Teaching methods should provide opportunities for students to learn actively and to apply practically the knowledge that they have acquired in the classroom. Expression Work of different kinds must, therefore, form part of the programme in every school subject.

Emphasis on clear thinking and expression: In the teaching of all subjects special stress should be placed on clear thinking and clear expression both in speech and writing.

Training pupils in techniques of study: Teaching methods should aim less at imparting the maximum quantum of Knowledge possible, and more on training students in the techniques of study and methods of acquiring knowledge through personal effort and initiative.

Instruction to suit different student abilities: Attempt should be made to adopt methods of instruction to the needs of individual students as much as possible so that dull, average and bright students may all have a chance to progress at their own pace.

Group projects and activities: Students should be given an adequate opportunity to work in groups and to carry out group projects and activities so as to develop in them the qualities necessary for group life and cooperative work.

3. Examinations and Evaluation

Reviewing the defects of examinations at the Secondary stage, the Education Commission said:

"The examinations today dictate the curriculum instead of following it, prevent any experimentation, hamper the proper treatment of subjects and sound methods of teaching, foster a dull uniformity rather than originality, encourage the average pupil to concentrate too rigidly upon too narrow a field and thus help him to develop wrong values in education. Pupils assess education in terms of success in examinations.

Teachers, recognizing the importance of the external examination to the individual pupils, are constrained to relate their teaching to an examination which can test only a narrow field of the pupil's interests and capacities and so inevitably neglect the qualities which are more important though less tangible."

- (a) *External examination — introduction of objective type tests:* The number of external examinations should be reduced and the element of subjectivity in the essay type tests should be minimized by introducing objective tests and also by changing the type of questions.
- (b) *School records for assessment of all-round progress:* In order to find out the pupil's all-round progress and to determine his future, a proper system of school records should be maintained for every pupil indicating the work done by him from time to time and his attainments in the different spheres.
- (c) In the final assessment of the pupils due credit should be given to the internal tests and the school records of the pupils.
- (d) *Symbolic marking to replace numerical marking:* The system of symbolic rather than numerical marking should be adopted for evaluating and trading the work of the pupils in external examinations and in maintaining the school records.
- (e) *One public examination—final comprehensive certificate:* There should be only one public examination at the completion of the Secondary School course.
- (f) The Certificate awarded should contain, besides the results of the public examination in different subjects, the results of the school tests in subjects not included in the public examination as well as the gift of the school records.
- (g) The system of compartmental examinations should be introduced at the final public examination.
- (h) *Board of secondary education to be set up:* There should be a Board of Secondary Education consisting of not more than 25 members with the Director of Education as its chairman to deal with all matters of education at the Secondary stage and to lay down general policies.

A Sub-committee of the Board should deal with the conduct of examinations.

4. Buildings and equipment

School buildings—space per pupil: Normally, in designing buildings for schools, care should be taken to see that an area of not less than 10 sq. ft. is provided per student in the classroom.

Optimum strength of class and school: The optimum number of boys to be admitted to any class should be 30 and the maximum should not in any case exceed 40; the optimum number in the whole school should be 500 while the maximum should not exceed 750.

Research required on school buildings, furniture and equipment: In the type design of schools as well as the furniture, etc., research should be carried on to improve functional efficiency and to adjust them to Indian conditions. An Expert Committee should be appointed to lay down carefully the amount and the kind of equipment required for various types of diversified courses and workshops.

Land for educational purposes: The State Governments and the Centre should, wherever possible, assign lands to schools for playgrounds, buildings or agricultural farms and other necessary purposes without any charge.

Exemption from customs duty for equipment and books: In order to popularize progressive teaching methods and facilitate their introduction, "Experimental" and "Demonstration" schools should be established and given special encouragement where they exist, so that they may try out new methods freely without being fettered by too many departmental restrictions.

5. Teachers

Guide material for teachers: Suitable literature for the guidance and inspiration of teachers should be produced by the Education Departments of all States and either the office of the Director of Education or one of the training colleges should be adequately equipped for the purpose.

Special committee to review the scales of pay: A special committee should be set up to review the scales of pay of teachers of all grades and recommend such scales of pay that will meet in a fair and just manner the varying cost of living. National Policy on Education 1979 suggests that "the present system of education must be reorganized in the light of Contemporary Indian realities and requirements."

5.1 Ref

Challenge of Education 1986.

5.2 Curriculum Studies and Examination System

Curriculum analysis or studies is necessary by virtue of its centrality to two important tasks performed by teachers and administrators: curriculum selection and curriculum adaptation. When selecting or adapting a curriculum for use in a particular classroom, school or school systems, it is important to determine whether or not it is appropriate for the situation. This determination is not limited to an analysis of such matters as the reading difficulty, the quality and accuracy of content, and the amount of additional training required for implementation. This scanning also requires the ability to determine the extent to which the assumptions underlying the curriculum are valid for the particular class remaining in the existing school set ups. These assumptions consist of tacit beliefs about the central purpose of education, about the intended audience (students, teachers, parents etc.) and the way the people learn, about the teachers and the best ways to teach, about the subject matter and how it should be organized, and about the community and what it values; or about to what extent it will be feasible in the school setting for all types of learners of differing ability and cultural tools of learning. Posner thinks that an understanding of these sort of these sorts of beliefs is at the heart of reflective eclecticism. Uncovering these sorts of beliefs requires probing beneath the surface of the document of the curriculum framework, reading between lines and making inferences on the basis of scattered evidence and reflection. Thus curriculum studies or analysis is more like a detective work or intellectual discourse than clerical work. Once you learn how to do a thorough and complete work, you will have internalized a basic sense of the enterprise and even some of the steps.

Curriculum studies may be looked as one kind of content analysis of the curriculum documents and therefore, you will have to put into actions and steps required in content analysis as a kind of methodology of research.

Finally, with these sorts of activities, thinking, orientations, techniques, etc. when you will be able to internalized, you will be an active team member of a curriculum group.

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Then the planners have explicitly states the Guiding Principles of the National Curriculum Framework-2005 in the following statements.

We need to plan and pay attention to systemic matters that will enable us to implement many of the good ideas that have already been articulated in the past. Paramount among these is:

- Connecting knowledge to life outside the school,
- Ensuring that learning is shifted away from rote methods,
- Enriching the curriculum to provide for overall development of children rather than remain textbook centric,
- Making examinations more flexible and integrated with classroom life and,
- Nurturing an identity soaked in caring concerns within the democratic polity of the country.

The above statements reflect a new educational panorama, the curriculum planners are going to draw in cognizance of shifts in contemporary sociology of knowledge to be addressed and attained by the learners. This may be evinced if we look the broad content headings of this national document. Of these five chapters, Chapter-2 bears a special significance as it expresses a paradigm shift: *from reception learning to construction of learning.*

5.3 Findings and conclusion:

- 1) Making examinations more democratic and integrated with classroom environment for better output of the system.
- 2) Enriching the curriculum to provide for overall development of children to overcome the maximum influence of textbook centric attitude.
- 3) The loaded curriculum recommended a major change in the design of syllabi and textbooks & examination system which places stress on children to become aggressively competitive.
- 3) Reducing stress and enhancing success in examinations necessity: (a) a shift away from content-based testing to problem solving skills and understanding, (b) a shift towards shorter examinations, (c) an examination with flexible time limit, and (d) setting up a single nodal agency for coordinating the design and conduct of entire examinations.

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