

Curriculum: Concepts, Nature and Purposes

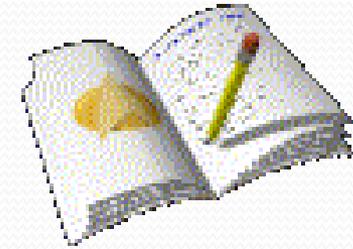
Lesson 1

Concepts, Nature and Purposes of Curriculum





Introduction



The concept of curriculum is as **dynamic as the changes that occur in society**. In its narrow sense, curriculum is **viewed merely as a listing of subject to be taught in school**. In a broader sense, it refers to the total learning experiences of individuals not only in schools but in society as well.

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- What is curriculum?
 - What is its purpose?
 - What is its nature?

These are the fundamental questions that will be addressed in this lesson.

Curriculum from Different Points of View

There are many definitions of curriculum. Because of this, the concept of curriculum is sometimes characterized as fragmentary, elusive and confusing. The definitions are influenced by modes of thoughts, pedagogies, political as well as cultural experiences



1. Traditional Points of View of Curriculum

In the early years of 20th century, the traditional concepts held of the “curriculum is that it is a body of subjects or subject matter prepared by the teachers for the students to learn”. It was synonymous to the “course of study” and “syllabus”

Robert M. Hutchins views curriculum as “permanent studies” where the rule of grammar, reading, rhetoric and logic and mathematics for basic education are emphasized.



Basic Education should emphasize the 3 Rs and college education should be grounded on liberal education. On the other hand, Arthur Bestor as an essentialist, believe that the mission of the school should be intellectual training, hence curriculum should focus on the fundamental intellectual disciplines of grammar, literature and writing. It should also include mathematics, science, history and foreign language.



This definition leads us to the view of Joseph Schwab that discipline is the sole source of curriculum. Thus in our education system, curriculum is divided into chunks of knowledge we call subject areas in basic education such as English, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies and others. In college, discipline may includes humanities, sciences, languages and many more



2. Progressive Points of View of Curriculum

On the other hand, to a progressivist, a listing of school, subjects, syllabi, course of study, and list of courses or specific discipline do not make a curriculum. These can only be called curriculum if the written materials are actualized by the learner. Broadly speaking, curriculum is defined as the total learning experiences of the individual.





This definition is anchored on John Dewey's definition of experience and education. He believed that reflective thinking is a means that unifies curricular elements. Thought is not derived from action but tested by application.

Caswell and Campbell viewed curriculum as "all experiences children have under the guidance of teachers". This definition is shared by Smith, Stanley and Shores when they defined "curriculum as a sequence of potential experiences set up in the schools for the purpose of disciplining children and youth in group ways of thinking and acting"

Marsh and Willis on the other hand view curriculum as all the “experiences in the classroom which are planned and enacted by the teacher, and also learned by the students.





Points of View on Curriculum Development

From the various definitions and concepts presented, it is clear that curriculum is a dynamic process. Development connotes changes which are systematic. A change for the better means any alteration, modification or improvement of existing condition. To produce positive changes, development should be purposeful, planned and progressive. This is how curriculum evolves.



Ralph Tyler Model: Four Basic Principles.

1. What educational purposes should the school seek to attain?
2. What educational experiences can be provided that are likely to attain these purposes?
3. How can these educational experiences be effectively organized?
4. How can we determine whether these purposes are being attained or not?





In summary, Tyler's Model show that in curriculum development, the following consideration should be made:

- ❖ Purposes of the school
- ❖ Educational experiences related to the purposes
- ❖ Organization of the experiences, and
- ❖ Evaluation of the experiences

On the other hand, Hilda Taba improved on Tyler's Rationale by making a linear model. She believed that teachers who teach or implement the curriculum should participate in developing it. Her advocacy was commonly called the *grassroots approach*. She presented seven major steps to her model where teachers could have a major input.



These steps are as follows:



- ❖ Diagnosis of learners needs and expectations of the larger society
- ❖ Formulation of learning objectives
- ❖ Selection of learning content
- ❖ Organization of Learning content
- ❖ Selection of learning experiences
- ❖ Organization of learning activities
- ❖ Determinations of what to evaluate and the and the means of doing it.

Types of Curriculum Operating in Schools

From the various concepts given,

Allan Glatthorn (2000) describes **seven types of curriculum** operating in the schools.

- 1) Recommended curriculum- proposed by scholars and professional organizations.
- 2) Written curriculum- appears in school, district, division or country documents.
- 3) Taught curriculum- what teachers implement or deliver in the classrooms and schools





4. Supported curriculum- resources textbook computers, audio visual materials which support and help in the implementation of the curriculum.
5. Assessed curriculum, that which is tested and evaluated.
6. Learned curriculum-what the students actually learn and what is measured and
7. Hidden curriculum- the unintended curriculum.



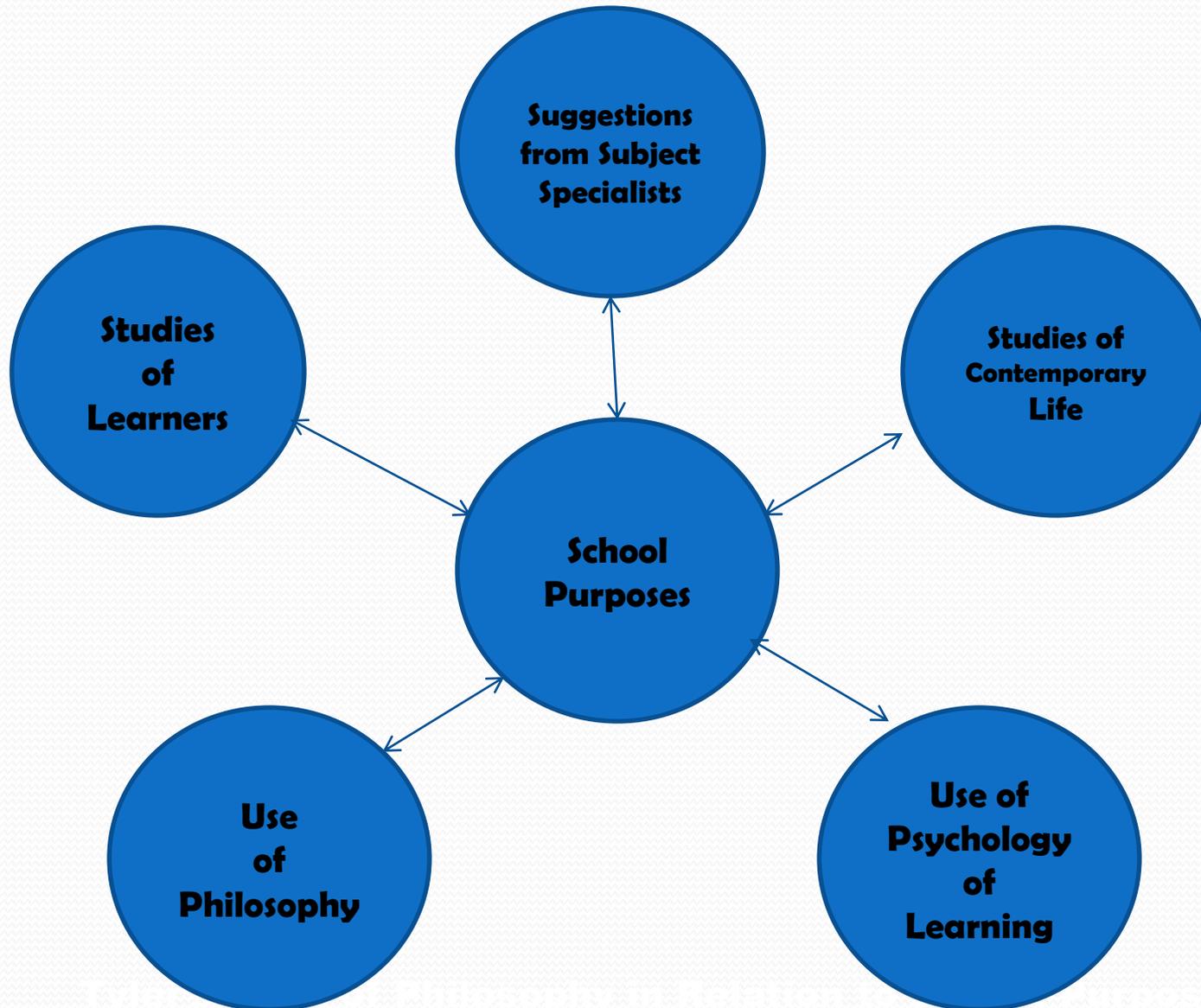
Major Foundations of Curriculum

Let us now look into the major foundations of a curriculum. Debates continue on what curriculum is and its basic foundations. The commonly accepted foundations include philosophical, historical, psychological and social.



PHILOSOPHICAL FOUNDATIONS of CURRICULUM

Philosophy provides educators, teachers and curriculum makers with framework for planning, implementing and evaluating curriculum in schools. It helps in answering what school are for, what subjects are important, how students should learn and what materials and methods should be used. In decision making, philosophy provides the starting point and will be used for the succeeding decision making.



Historical Foundations of Curriculum

Curriculum is not an old field. Majority of scholars would place its beginning In 1918 with the publication of Franklin Bobbit's book *The Curriculum*.

Philippine education came about from various foreign influences. Of all foreign educational systems, the American educational system has the greatest influence on our educational system.

Curriculum theorists and how they view curriculum from a historical perspective.

- 1. Franklin Bobbit (1876–1956) - he presented curriculum as a science that emphasizes on student's need. Curriculum prepares students for adult life. To Bobbit, objectives with corresponding activities should be grouped and sequenced. This can only be done if instructional objectives are clarified.**

2. Werret Charters (1875-1952) – to him, curriculum is a science. It gives emphasis on student's needs. The listing of objectives and matching these with corresponding activities ensures that the content or subject matter is related to objectives.

The subject matter and the activities are planned by the teacher.

3. William Kilpatrick (1871-1965) – Curricula are purposeful activities which are child centered. The purpose of curriculum is child development and growth. He introduced the project method where teacher and student plan the activities

4. Harold Rugg (1886-1960) –to him, curriculum should develop the whole child. It is child-centered and should produce outcomes. He also emphasized social studies and the teacher plans curriculum in advance.



5. Hollis Caswell (1901-1989) – he sees curriculum as organized around social functions of themes, organized knowledge and learner's interest. He believes that curriculum is a set of experiences. Subject matter is developed around social functions and learner's interests.

6. Ralph Tyler (1902-1994) – he believes that curriculum is a science and an extension of school's philosophy. It is based on student's needs and interest. To him, curriculum is always related to instruction. Subject matter is organized in terms of knowledge, skills and values. The process emphasizes problem solving. The curriculum aims to educate generalists and not specialists.

Psychological Foundations of Curriculum

Psychology provides a basis for the teaching and learning process.

1. Behaviorist Psychology

**a. connectionism – Edward Thorndike
(which influenced Tyler and Taba,
the well known curricularists)**

b. classical conditioning – Ivan Pavlov

c. operant conditioning – B. F. Skinner

**d. modeling and observation theory –
(Bandura)**



d. hierarchical learning – Robert Gagne

To the behaviorists, learning should be organized in order that students can experience success in the process of mastering the subject matter.



2. Cognitive Psychology

- a. cognitive development stages – Jean Piaget**
- b. social constructivism – Lev Vgotsky**
- c. multiple intelligences – Howard Gardner**
- d. learning styles – Felder and Silverman**
- e. emotional intelligences – Daniel Goleman**



To the cognitive theorists, learning

- constitutes a logical method for organizing and interpreting learning**
- it is rooted in the tradition of subject matter and is similar to the cognitive development theory**

3. Humanistic Psychology

Humanist psychologist are concerned with how learners can develop their human potential.

a. Gestalt theory

b. theory of human needs and for self actualizing persons - Maslow

c. Carl Roger's non directive lives

Social Foundations of Education

Schools exist within the social context. In considering the social foundations of curriculum, we must recognize that schools are the only one of the many institutions that educate society. The home, the family, community likewise educate the people in the society. But schools are formal institutions that address more complex and interrelated societies and the world.

ELEMENTS/COMPONENTS OF THE CURRICULUM

For most curricula, the major components or elements are:

- 1. aims, goals and objectives**
- 2. subject matter/content**
- 3. learning experiences**
- 4. evaluation approaches**



When translated into questions, each component can be addressed by the following:

- 1. What is to be done?**
- 2. What subject matter is to be included?**
- 3. What instructional strategies, resources and activities will be employed?**
- 4. What method and instruments will be used to assess the results of the curriculum?**

COMPONENTS OF THE CURRICULUM

- **Component 1- Curriculum Aims, Goals and Objectives**
- **All schools shall aim to:**
 - **1. inculcate patriotism and nationalism**
 - **2. foster love of humanity**
 - **3. promote respect for human rights**
 - **4. appreciate the role of national heroes in the historical development of the country**
 - **5. teach the rights and duties of citizenship**

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- 6. strengthen ethical and spiritual values**
 - 7. develop moral character and personal discipline**
 - 8. encourage critical and creative thinking**
 - 9. broaden scientific and technological knowledge and promote vocational efficiency**

Aims of Elementary Education (Education Act of 1982)

In the elementary level, schools through their curricula should aim to:

- provide knowledge and develop skills, attitudes, values essential to personal development and necessary for living in and contributing to a developing and changing society;**
- provide learning experiences which increase a child's awareness of and responsiveness to the changes in the society;**

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- **promote and, intensify knowledge, identification with and love for the nation and the people to which he belongs; and**
 - **promote work experiences which develop orientation to the world of work and prepare the learner to engage in honest and gainful work**

Aims of Secondary Education

In high school or secondary level, educational curricula aim to:

- **continue to promote the objectives of elementary education; and**
- **discover and enhance the different aptitudes and interests of students in order to equip them with skills for productive endeavor and or to prepare them for tertiary schooling**

Aims of Tertiary Education

The different courses should aim to:

- **provide general education programs which will promote national identity, cultural consciousness, moral integrity and spiritual vigor;**
- **train the nation's manpower in the skills required for national development; and**
- **advance knowledge through research and apply new knowledge for improving the quality of human life and respond effectively to changing society.**

The school's vision

- **is a clear concept of what the institution would like to become in the future**
- **provides the focal point or unifying element according to which the school staff, faculty, students perform individually or collectively**
- **is the guiding post around which all educational efforts including curricula should be directed**

The school's mission statement

- **spells out how it intends to carry out its Vision**
- **the mission targets to produce the kind of persons the students will become after having been educated over a certain period of time.**

The school's vision and mission are further translated into goals which are broad statements or intents to be accomplished. Data for the sources of school goals may include the learners, the society and the fund of knowledge.



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In a curriculum, these goals are made simple and specific for the attainment of each learner. These are called educational objectives. Benjamin Bloom and Robert Mager defined educational objectives in two ways:

- 1. explicit formulation of the ways in which students are expected to be changed by the educative process**
- 2. intent communicated by statement describing a proposed change in learners**

In other words, objectives

- **direct the change in behavior which is the ultimate aim of learning**
- **provide the bases for the selection of learning content and learning experiences**
- **also set the criteria against which learning outcomes will be evaluated**

Bloom and his associates classified three big domains of objectives. These are:

- 1. cognitive**
- 2. affective**
- 3. psychomotor**

○ **Cognitive Domain – المجال المعرفي (Bloom et. Al. 1956)**

domain of thought process

- 1. Knowledge – recall, remembering of prior learned materials, in terms of facts, concepts, theories and principles. It is the lowest cognitive level.**
- 2. Comprehension – ability to grasp the meaning of material. It indicates the lowest form of understanding**

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- 3. Application – the ability to use learned material in new and concrete situation**
 - 4. Analysis – ability to break down material into component parts so that its organizational structure may be understood**
 - 5. Synthesis – ability to put parts together to form a new whole**
 - 6. Evaluation – ability to pass judgment based on given criteria**

○ **Affective domain – المجال الوجداني (Krathwohl, 1964) –**

domain of valuing, attitude and appreciation

- 1. Receiving – students' willingness to pay attention to particular event, stimuli, classroom activities**
- 2. Responding – active participation on the part of the students**
- 3. Valuing – concerned with the worth or value a student attaches to a particular phenomena, object or behavior**

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- 4. Organization – concerned with bringing together different values and building a value system**
 - 5. Characterization by a value or value complex – developing a lifestyle from a value system**

○ **Psychomotor Domain – المجال النفسي (Simpson, 1972) – domain of the use of psychomotor attributes**

- 1. Perception – use of sense organs to guide motor activities**
- 2. Set – refers to the readiness to take a particular type of action**
- 3. Guided response – concerned with the early stages in learning complex skills. Imitation and trial and error are some of the ways of doing**

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- 4. Mechanism – responses have become habitual. Performance skills are with ease and confidence**
 - 5. Complex overt responses – skillful performance and with complex movement patterns**
 - 6. Adaptation – skill well developed that the ability to modify is very easy**
 - 7. Origination – refers to creating new movement patterns to fit the situation. Creativity is evident.**

Component 2 – Curriculum Content or Subject Matter محتوى المنهج

**Regardless of their design or models,
all curriculum have content. Content is:**

- simply more than information to be
learned in school**
- another term for knowledge**

**What criteria should be used in selecting
the content?**



Some criteria which can be used in the selection of subject matter content or knowledge for the curriculum.

1. Self-sufficiency

- **2. Significance**
- **3. Validity**
- **4. Interest**
- **5. Utility**
- **6. Learnability**
- **7. Feasibility**

1. **Self-sufficiency** – the prime guiding principle for content selection is helping the learner attain self-sufficiency in learning in the most economical manner (Scheffler, 1970). Economy means less teaching effort and educational resources, less learners' effort but more results and effective learning outcomes

2. **Significance** الأهمية

Content or subject matter is significant if

- **it will contribute to basic ideas, concepts, principles and generalizations to achieve the overall aim of the curriculum.**
- **it will develop the cognitive, affective and psychomotor skills of the learners**
- **if the cultural aspects will be considered**

3. Validity **الصلاحية** – the authenticity of the subject matter. Subject matter should be checked or verified at regular intervals to determine if the content that was originally valid continues to be.

4. Interest الإهتمام – this is the key criterion for a learner-centered curriculum. A learner will value the content if it is meaningful to him/her. Students' interests should be adjusted taking into consideration maturity, prior experiences, educational and social value of their interest among others.

5. Utility الفائدة – usefulness of the content or subject matter may be relative to the learner who is going to use it. Usefulness may be either be for the present or the future.



6. Learnability – **التعلم** – subject matter in the curriculum should be within the range of the experiences of the learners.

7. Feasibility الجدوى – content selection should be considered within the context of the existing reality in schools, in society and government.



**Other considerations that maybe used
in the selection of the learning content**

- a. frequently and commonly used in
daily life**
- b. Suited to the maturity levels and
abilities of students**
- c. valuable in meeting the needs and
competencies of a future career;**
- d. related with other subject areas**
- e. important in the transfer of learning**



In organizing or putting together the different learning contents; the following suggestions are given (Palma)

- 1. Balance**
- 2. Articulation**
- 3. Sequence**
- 4. Integration**
- 5. Continuity**

Component 3 – Curriculum Experiences

Different instructional strategies provide the experiences. The instructional strategies and methods will put into action the goals and the use of contents in order in order to produce an outcome.

Teaching strategies convert the written curriculum into action. Both the teacher and the learner take actions to facilitate learning .



The action are based on planned objectives, the subject matter to be taken and the support materials to be used. This will include a multitude of teaching methods and educational activities which will enhance learning. Whatever methods the teacher utilizes to implement the curriculum, there will be some guide for the selection and use. Among these are:

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- 1. Teaching methods are means to achieve ends. They are used to translate the objectives into action.**
 - 2. There is no single best teaching method**
 - 3. Teaching method should stimulate the learner's desire to develop the cognitive, psychomotor, social and spiritual domain of the individual**
 - 4. In the choice of the teaching methods, learning styles of the students should be considered.**

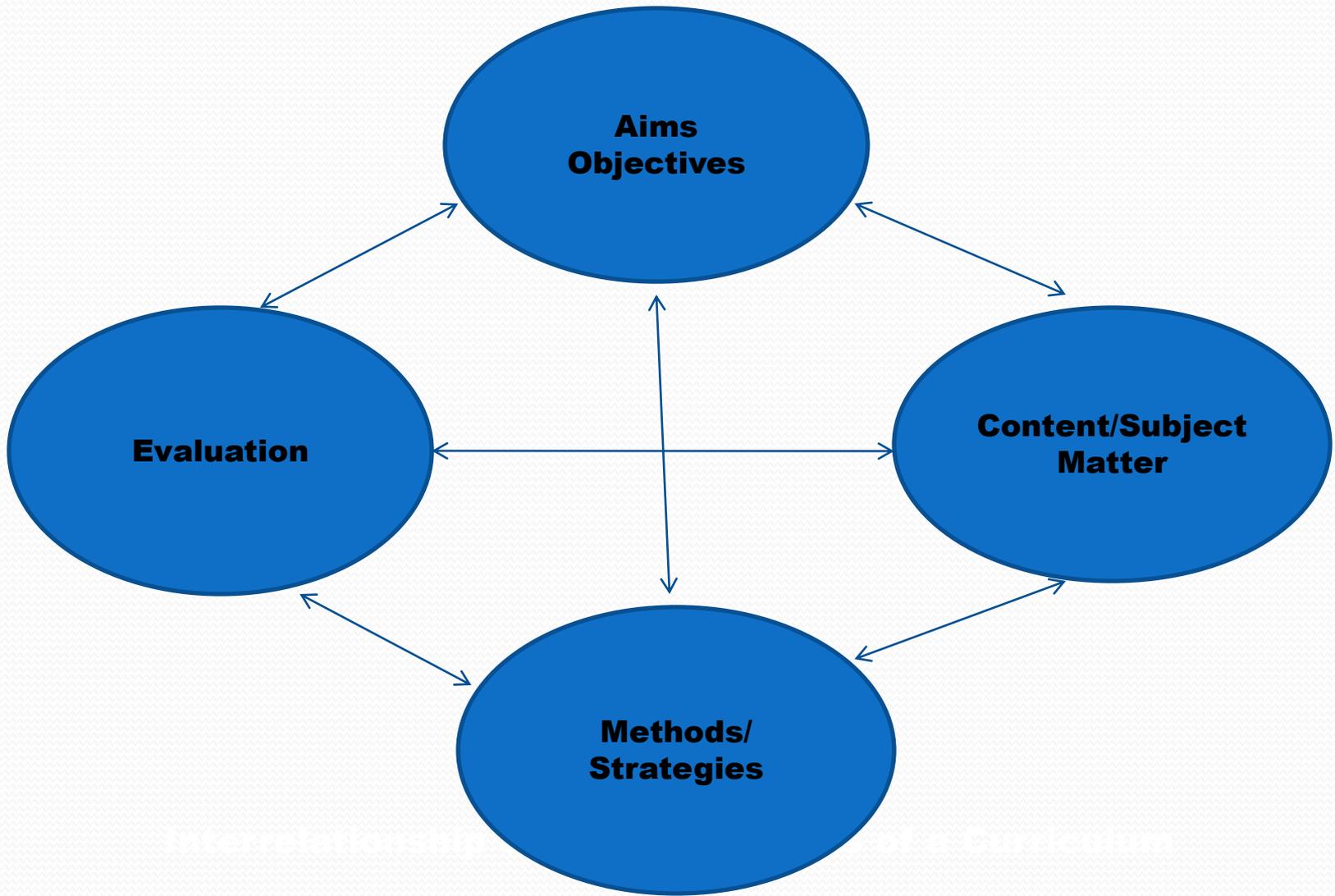
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- **4. In the choice of the teaching methods, learning styles of the students should be considered.**
 - **5. Every method should lead to the development of the learning outcomes in the three domains: cognitive, affective and psychomotor**
 - **6. Flexibility should be a consideration in the use of the teaching methods**

Component 4 – Curriculum Evaluation

All curricula to be effective must have the element of evaluation (Worthen and Sanders, 1987). This refers to the formal determination of the quality, effectiveness or value of the program, process, product of the curriculum. Evaluation is meeting the goals and matching them with the intended outcomes. There are different evaluation methods that can be utilized like diagnostic, placement, formative or summative evaluation or the norm or criterion-referenced evaluation.

Regardless of the methods and materials evaluation will utilize, a suggested plan of action for the process of curriculum evaluation is introduced with these steps

- 1. Focus on one particular component of the curriculum**
- 2. Collect or gather the information**
- 3. Organize the information**
- 4. Analyze information**
- 5. Report the information**
- 6. Recycle the information for continuous feedback, modifications and adjustments to be made**

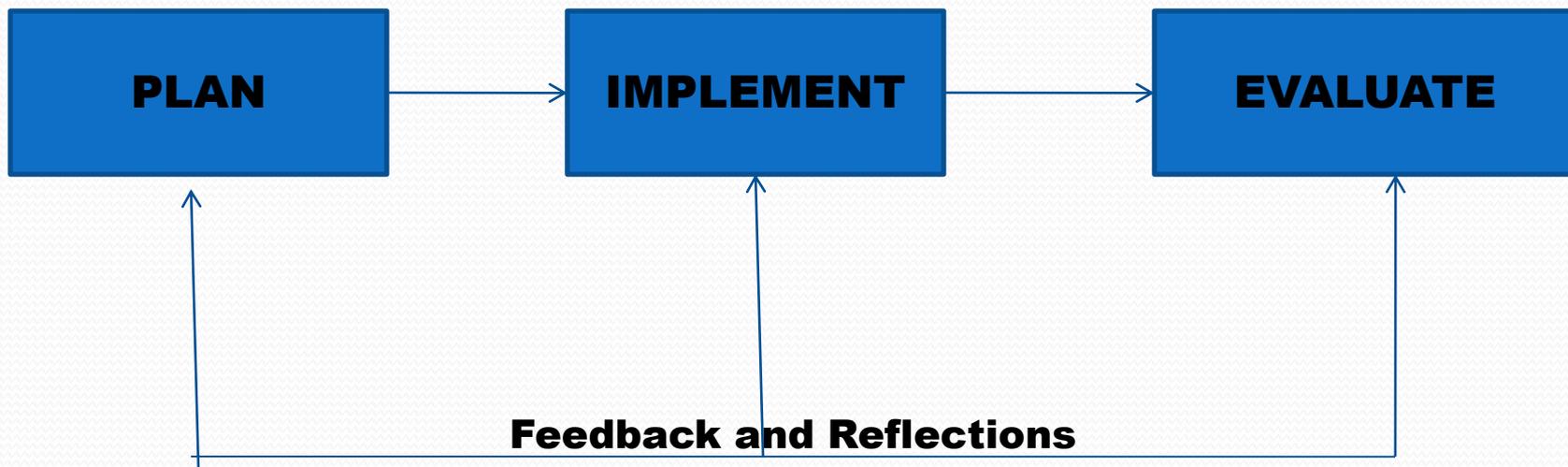


Instructional Design

Instructional Design



TEACHING LEARNING PROCESS AND CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT



Teaching Process



CURRICULUM DESIGN MODELS

1. Subject-centered design model

a. Subject design

b. Discipline design

c. Correlation design

d. Broad field design/interdisciplinary

2. Learner-centered design

a. Child-centered design

b. Experience-centered design

c. Humanistic design

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- 3. Problem-centered design**
 - a. Life-situation design**
 - b. Core design**



DIMENSIONS AND PRINCIPLES OF CURRICULUM DESIGN