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CURRICULUM ENGAGEMENT IN SCHOOLS

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BES 126 KNOWLEDGE AND CURRICULUM

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Block 2

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Block 3

Curriculum Engagement in Schools

Unit 9 School : The Site of Curriculum Engagement

Unit 10 Curriculum Implementation in Schools

Unit 11 Curriculum Leadership

BLOCK 3 CURRICULUM ENGAGEMENT IN SCHOOLS

Introduction to the Block

This block is the second block of the course and it focuses on developing an understanding about the engagement of school in the implementation of the curriculum.

This block consists of three units and each unit focuses on different aspects of curriculum engagement.

Unit 9 discusses about the role of ideology and philosophy of school in contextualizing learning. It elaborates how ideology and philosophy influences the curriculum engagement. It will help you to think of the ways in which a school culture and climate gives meaning to the curricular objectives, making specific to the social milieu and needs. This unit also details out the relationship between teaching and decision making for meaningful curriculum engagement.

Unit 10, discuss about how curricular goals gets implemented in schools. This unit will also help you in understanding the need for contextualizing learning. And, highlight the role of a teacher as implementor of curriculum.

Unit 11 is the last unit of the block and it deals with concept of curriculum leadership. The unit details out the meaning and concept of curriculum leadership. In the unit, the role of principal and teachers as a curriculum leaders have also been explained. You will also develop an understanding about the challenges of curriculum leadership so that you can develop a skill to combat them.

UNIT 9 SCHOOL: THE SITE OF CURRICULUM ENGAGEMENT

Structure

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9.1 INTRODUCTION

Being a teacher, you would agree that school is the actual site for implementation of any curriculum. From the previous blocks of this course, you might have understood the theoretical meanings of curriculum, its designs, role of national and state bodies in the framing the curriculum and the need and vision for curriculum assessment and evaluation. In this we will discuss about how curriculum gets implemented in schools.

The ideology and philosophy of a school helps in contextualising learning and translating the goals set at the national level. The culture of a school, its infrastructure, climate and teachers helps in reshaping and the curriculum to make it contextualising the curriculum as per the needs of their learners. In this unit, you will understand the role of school's philosophy in linking the goals of a curriculum with the context of their learners. It will also help you to think of the ways in which your school culture, climate and environment gave meaning to the curricular objectives, making them specific to the needs and socio-cultural milieu of your learners. Schools and its philosophy play a significant role in shaping the knowledge of a child. The goals set by curriculum documents get contextualised within school systems.

Since, you deal with learners every day, it is obvious that you as teacher, would understand their contexts and learning needs much better than the curriculum

and policy makers. From your experience of working with learners, you would have, by now, collected many instances of their learning difficulties, conceptions and misconceptions. Teachers can participate in the development of curriculum by sharing their experiences of transacting and researching the curriculum. These inputs are crucial for the revision and development of any curriculum. We can say that teachers are agencies through which a curriculum is implemented, developed and researched. In this unit, you will come across the relationship between teaching and decision-making regarding curriculum and the role of a teacher as a curriculum implementer, developer and critical thinker.

9.2 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you should be able to:

- explain the role of school as a site for curriculum engagement;
- illustrate the role of school context in providing meaning to a curriculum;
- describe the contribution of school resources (such as its library, laboratories, neighbourhood etc.) in curriculum engagement;
- explain the relationship between the teacher as an implementer and as decision-maker in the process of curriculum engagement;

9.3 MEANING OF CURRICULUM ENGAGEMENT

Curriculum, as we have understood till now is usually a prescribed course of a study that schools are expected to follow. It covers the content that is to be covered in course of study. A curriculum also recommends teaching methods that help to achieve the set objectives. Thus, you can say that curricula, to some extent, defines and directs what should be taught in schools, how should it be taught, and what to expect from the learners. On the other hand, you would agree even though curriculum makers may set their objectives through curricular documents, it is the school which is the actual site of any curriculum implementation and engagement.

Curriculum Engagement occurs when the learning process helps in realizing the goals of a prescribed curriculum. Engagement is not just the involvement of the sole individual in learning; rather, learning is the vehicle for the individual's engagement with a community and with society at large. Schools must provide opportunity to their learners to engage meaningfully in learning. In order to be engaged learners, they must see the value of learning, they must see their own potential as learners, and they must have access to resources for learning.

Thus, Schools play crucial role in curricular engagement. Many educationalists and reformers therefore believe that the context of school defines and shapes the real meaning of the curriculum. In this section, we will see the role of school and schooling in curriculum engagement.

9.3.1 Role of School Philosophy

Through the earlier units of this block, we have understood that the premise of any curricular document is centred on what knowledge is worth teaching to the learners. The fundamental concern of any curriculum is to give a framework of what should be taught and what is worthwhile to learn. As a result one can say that curriculum attempt to provide an understanding of the nature of education.

However, if you try analyse the functioning of any school with an analytically, you would realise that there exist multiple layers of understandings related to learner's expectations. Suppose, if you ask your learners about why they come to school and what would they like to learn? You would realise that different learners hold different expectations. Some aspire to get well educated, for some education is synonymous to taking informed decisions while some would associate it with empowerment. These predominant thoughts with which learners come to school set their expectations. On a finer analysis of learners expectations, you would also realise that they assign roles to each component of schooling. A classroom is typically considered as a site for serious work while a playground may be seen as a site of enjoyment. However, on the other hand, a child wishing to pursue career in sports would ascribe to a playground as a site of learning and growing. These multiple expectations forms dispositions related to the role of school in the life of learners.

The scope and nature of curriculum gets articulated through the practices and ideologies of the site of its implementation, which is the school. School differ from each other in terms of their needs of their learners, the available resources community in which it is located, school environment, management committees of the school and the competence of the teachers. The social and cultural aspects of schools set boundaries and definitions of a curriculum. Each school redefines the implementation of the curriculum through its actual practices. For instance, by studying the timetable of a school you will be able to understand the ideology of the school related to scholastics and non-scholastic areas. The school which places subjects like Mathematics, languages, sciences at the first half of the day strongly believes in the old school of building mental faculties through study of disciplines. Another school whose timetable is based on thematic work visualises a blended mode of curriculum, amalgamating the scholastic with the so-called non-scholastic areas. One can, thus, say that school becomes a mirror that reflects the vision and mission of the curriculum. The actions of a school point out the decisions that the school has taken related to its curriculum. It would hence, not be incorrect to say that each school defines and develops its own curricula to a certain level. Let us consider an example here.

A school called Techie Kids located at the centre of a metropolitan city is equipped with advanced technological devices and the teachers are expected to use these devices in their classrooms. The school adopted project-research pedagogy wherein the learners are expected to search online resources while doing their assignments. On the other hand, another school, The My Learning School located in the same area, with similar student strength believes in the philosophy of learning-by-doing. This school also adopts projectwork as a strategy of learning but encourages students to experience things on their own, through their own senses and draw their learning through their observations.

As you can compare, both the schools, though follow the same aim, have adopted different strategies for learning. Though both the schools come under the ambit of the same standard National Curriculum, their ideologies differentiate their strategies of following the curriculum. The first school relies on technology as a medium for learning whereas the latter school follows an experiential methodology.

Check Your Progress

- Notes :** a) Write your answers in the space given below.
b) Compare your answers with those given at the end of the unit.

1) How do you think the ideology of a school effect the implementation of curriculum in a school?

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9.4 SCHOOLS AS CURRICULAR SITES

Curricular sites of a school comprises of both physical and psychological spaces that are other made available in the school or a school creates. The physical sites are expressed in terms of the infrastructure of the school its building, the layout of the school premises and resources that are available. At the psychological level, the curricular sites can be looked at the teacher-student relations, students-student relationship, teacher-administrator relationship, teacher-teacher relationships. In the implementation of a curriculum, both physical as well as psychological sites play a significant role.

The influence of a curriculum gets reflected from the curricular sites through which it is implemented. The curricular sites develop students’ knowledge and skills as well as cultivate values and attitudes to enable them to acquire broad and balanced learning experiences. Well planned and proper utilization of curricular sites benefit the learners in achieving the goals set in the curriculum document. The school as site of curriculum engagement sends a feedback on the effectiveness of the curriculum, which in turn, helps in the development of future goals. Each school is unique in itself. Each school has its own history of experiences of teaching, learning, students’ characteristics, teachers’ dynamics leadership styles, community engagement, school culture and context. A school makes changes according to its own needs, resources and pace. With reference to its curricular sites, a school takes decisions on its learning goals. In implementing and developing a curriculum, a school should flexibly utilize its psychological and physical spaces to achieve a homogeneous amalgamation of resources. Through strategic planning a school can devise is school-based curriculum in which every member participates in achieving the targets.

Teachers and learners have to adjust to the infrastructure available to them in the school. The building of the school, its architecture, school playground, resources such as library and laboratories, neighborhood of the school are important components in this process. The availability, access and condition of

these curricular sites have important consequences on the learning and achievement of the students. These sites determine the attitude, behavior and values of the learners.

In this section we will try to see how the infrastructure of the school, its resources, culture and ideology frame influence curriculum engagement within the school. There is also a **hidden curriculum**, which is often not evident explicitly but gets reflected through the unspoken, non-specific acts that happen inside the school is referred to as hidden curriculum. It gets communicated implicitly through the physical, social and cultural sites of the school.

9.4.1 Available Infrastructure

The infrastructure of the school, its design, its layout, building, size of classrooms, seating arrangements, class size are some of the crucial determinants in ensuring good quality education in any school. You would agree that learners perform better in conducive and healthy environments.

Many research studies have established a positive relationship between learners's learning and the infrastructure of the school. They assert that a stimulating and comfortable learning environment enhances the concentration of learners. Appropriate design and facilities support the learning processes and proper space for independent as well as group work promotes motivation to work. A productive and supportive learning environment enhances the zeal to know. Spacious classrooms with proper ventilation and seating arrangements encourages learners to come to school.

You might have read about the reports about schools in India which were found lacking of proper infrastructure as one of the major reasons of dropout of learners, especially girls from the schools. They found lack of proper toilet facilities and the distance of the school from the homes contributing to less attendance of girls to the schools.

The infrastructure of the school should be sensitive to the needs of all learners coming to school. Physically differently abled students sometimes find hard to cope with school systems due to harsh environments of the schools. Learners who cannot reach to all parts of a school building due to their physical confinements will not be able to participate in school activities. Learners who have difficulties with their limbs need proper ramps to access all parts of the schools. Failure to provide infrastructural support to access to the school building and classrooms leads to dropout of many learners who are already at the thresholds of availing education.

9.4.2 Resources (Library, Laboratory, School Playground Etc.)

The physical resources present in the school, support the implementation of the planned curriculum. Though one may not see a direct relation between curriculum and the physical conditions of the school, but these influence in the fulfillment or non-fulfillment of the perceived goals. There are evidences that support the role of various factors such as library, laboratories, playground and the school's neighbourhood in students' achievement. Based on your experience do you also feel that absence or presence of these facilities effect in the learning of learners? Have you ever realized how these facilities contribute in a learners school life? The condition of science laboratories, classroom furniture, playground, library have direct relation with students' achievement.

(i) Classrooms

You would agree that inadequate and unhygienic classroom conditions would discourage anyone to enter the classrooms. As teachers you would also like to take classes in good comfortable environments. Learners have to spend many hours in a classroom, therefore it is important for the school that their classrooms are cleaned every day and there is proper ventilation in the classrooms. A space for each child to sit comfortably and work must be ensured. You would have noticed that overcrowded classrooms, especially in early grades is a major source of poor achievement. You can even display learners's work on the walls to make them feel attached to the classroom.

(ii) Playground

Besides the classrooms, learners also need space to enjoy, to experiment and to learn on their own. They need a good playground where they can play and enjoy the school premises. Playgrounds are places where learners get the freedom to enjoy, vent out their energies and to be with their friends. It is important that learners feel attached to the natural surroundings and use them as part of their learning. The teachers can use the playgrounds for playing games, teaching through games and also for learning science. For example, in the recent drive by Delhi Government to teach learners about plants, they have asked each school to write the biological nomenclature of every tree present in the playgrounds. Learners, unknowingly, have started to recognise the names and benefits of trees in their lives.

(iii) Laboratories

Learners are inquisitive by nature and want to learn everything by experimentation and experience. Laboratories are places where learners learn to experiment and do things on their own. Nowadays, educationalists have started to promote learning by doing and experimentation as a pedagogy for almost every subject. They urge schools to establish laboratories for science, language and mathematics. A well-equipped laboratory where instruments are easily made available to the learners invites them to learn on their own. If you want your learners to excel and to understand a concept better, allow them free access to laboratories and make sure that the required material is also available to them.

(iv) Library

Along with equipment to experiment, learners also need books and other reference material to learn. Learners use libraries for seeking life-long opportunities and to enhance their learning gaps. It is through school libraries that learners get opportunities to access information and develop their competencies. Libraries, thus play a crucial role in encouraging to learners developing as responsible citizens. Learners need place to study on their own, to read more and to self-learn. Libraries that provide access to good books, magazines and journals enhance learners's learning. Now- a- days a lot of material is available online too. Learners need guidance to skim through these to identify and locate good meaningful material. The librarian and teacher should be able to help learners browse through the internet and make judgement on the quality of the content. Librarians can make lists of good websites and display it in the library. Besides books, libraries can also have digital material such as educational CDs and videos. These audio-visual aids definitely help in learning.

9.4.3 School Culture and Climate

The importance of school culture and its climate have a direct link with the performance of learners. Learners are quite poised and would want their schools to have conducive and safe learning environment. School that maintain an ordered, disciplined atmosphere without being rigid and oppressive leave a positive mark on the learners's learning.

Besides providing good infrastructural facilities, a school has to also ensure a psychologically conducive environment that would let learners participate without fear. It is the ethical responsibility of every school to provide learners with safe surroundings that motivates them to come to school. This is promoted by establishing a healthy relationship between students-teacher, teacher-administrators and teacher-parents. School should ensure that their learners have a freedom to express their feelings with their teachers, teachers should be aware of abilities and difficulties of each child and provide feedback on their behaviour. In other words, we can say that the teacher, the learner and the parents should work as collectively for healthy development of learner.

Discussions on school climate often begins and end with learners's safety and classroom participation. A truly positive environment is not characterized by ensuring physical safety and comfortableness of the child. It should rather be determined by the values that are present in the school. The vision, values, beliefs and assumptions of a school are what define its climate and environment. A strong and positive culture serves several functions such as fostering the efforts and productiveness of each child's inner resources, valuing each child's potential and in maintaining collegial relationships among all.

Schools send their vision of organizational culture through their enactments. They send signals of their organizational culture through the roles and responsibilities that they define for their students and teachers. For example, schools that regard athletic success to be paramount would send signals of promoting sportsmanship, valuing the importance of games, structuring their teaching around sports and pushing learners towards physical fitness. Their organizational culture will reflect their bend towards sports. On the other hand, schools that are centered on academic excellence will revere academic competitions and intellectual efforts.

The culture of a school - positive or negative - in an offshoot of its vision, values and beliefs. The actions, rituals, ceremonies and gatherings of a school are closely aligned to its beliefs and values. To illustrate, a school that values the work done by learners would hold exhibitions to showcase their students' projects. On the other hand, there are schools, where administrators would talk of positive values and beliefs but fail to follow them in their actions. For instance, school want its teachers to be resourceful and up-to-date with their content and pedagogic knowledge but would not hesitate to send their teachers for any professional development workshops.

Schools which practice what they believe in make sure that their ideology gets reflected in their working too. In one of the schools, the principal and the teachers addressed their students in a strange manner. They identified their students as "Class of 2020"- the year in which the batch will pass out from the school. Whenever a visitor asked the students about their class, the students would, invariably, tell them about year in which they would enter the college. The students were also confident of the courses that they would like to pursue in their college.

While talking with the Principal it was found that school values its alma mater most and they were very proud of their students and their achievements. They even displayed the names and degrees of all the students who had passed out from the school. They believed in preparing their learners for future and this ideology was obvious from all the actions of the school.

Similarly, in a government school of Chattisgarh, the teachers taking extra effort while giving feedback on their learners’s work. Each class was found with its walls full of learners’s worksheets. Beneath each learner’s work, suggestions given by teachers as well as learners were written. The display was open for all and every learner was encouraged to give suggestions to their friends. The teachers told us that in their school assessment was not a hidden task. All learners participated in this process. The display of students’ work and the idea of evaluating and feedback was a symbolic way of representing trust within teachers and students.

Check Your Progress

2) List of the infrastructural facilities that you think make any school conducive for learning.

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3) Which aspects of school culture and climate influence the execution of curriculum goals?

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9.5 ROLE OF TEACHERS IN CURRICULUM ENGAGEMENT

Teachers are one of the crucial elements in the implementation of any curriculum. They are also central to any improvement and revision processes of a curriculum. Their knowledge, experience and understanding that they gain by working with learners helps curriculum and policy makers to know the ground realities of the school system. Teachers’ feedback and suggestions are essential for any curriculum formation and revision. They act as facilitator in the making of a curriculum.

In the following sections, we will look at the role of a teacher in the curriculum engagement. Teachers can participate by sharing their experiences of transacting

the curriculum and by sharing their analysis that they have gained by being active researchers in the classrooms.

9.5.1 Role of Teacher in Transacting Curriculum

As discussed earlier, teachers form a crucial link between the aims envisioned in education policies and their actual implementation in schools. Teachers are the active participants who create classroom realities in the light of their own beliefs, attitudes, knowledge and experiences. Their perceptions decide the actual implementation of a curriculum. Policy makers cannot assume the realities of transaction of a curriculum. This decision now lies with the teachers who ultimately shape the realities of an educational enterprise. It is therefore important to acknowledge teacher's attitude, perceptions and experiences while thinking of any curriculum revision or teaching innovation.

While framing curriculum, we should identify and listen to the suggestions that teachers have towards curriculum implementation and its further improvement, as they have a direct experience of working with the learners. Having spent many hours in understanding their developmental processes, intellectual needs, cultural and social contexts a teacher understands better what would work and what will not be feasible for her learners. Teachers understand their students' abilities and levels of engagements. Their opinions about implementation of any programme must be respected and analysed before taking any decision.

Teachers teaching in multiple grades can collaborate and suggest materials that would be most suitable for teaching a specific content. By collaborative thoughts they can suggest ways in which concepts need to be sequenced across grades to ensure smooth transition between the grades. They may also participate in suggesting what should be expected from learners of a particular grade and how to prepare them for subsequent levels. Since a teacher can gauge whether a certain activity is suitable for a particular grade, she can provide meaningful inputs during the creation of the curriculum. When teachers participate in the process of creation of curriculum they perceive themselves as part of the process. They feel attached and confident as the curriculum is prepared by consulting them, considering their concerns and needs. They feel themselves as agents of change.

9.5.2 Teachers as Researchers in the Development of Curriculum

Often we perceive teaching and research as separate activities. Research is considered to be done in universities whereas teaching is related to the level of schooling only. This dichotomy of roles in education has created gaps when it comes to knowing the ground realities of a school system. Since researchers are far away from actual school situations they are not able to speak for actualities of a schooling system. You would agree that researchers can never equate with the true and long experiences of teachers. Since teachers are with learners for the longest time they understand their learners much better.

Just as researchers do not see themselves as part of schools, teachers too shy away from their role of researchers. Often teachers take their roles of teaching as their only work and seldom think of themselves as researchers in the classrooms. You may be aware of several reasons behind such a view. Firstly, teacher training courses do not train teachers for being researchers. As part of their education process, teachers are never made to think like researchers.

They are made well conversant with their content and pedagogic practices but are seldom taught the traits of being a researcher. Secondly, teachers do not indulge themselves in reflecting and researching about their practices. They take their job of teaching too seriously but forget to reflect on the practices related to learning, teaching and curriculum implementation.

Teachers who involve themselves as researchers in the classrooms can identify gaps and can suggest alternative strategies. This is possible only when teachers act as reflective practitioners.

A reflecting teacher is able to find any weaknesses in the curriculum and attempts to make it better. Teachers can reflect on curriculum in multiple ways. One of the ways to do is by keeping a journal while implementing the curriculum. This journal is used to keep record of students' responses, their learnings and the progress made by them. This daily journal serves as a diary to take notes of any incidence that happens in the classroom. Teacher should keep evidences of learners's work, their learnings and their difficulties. The journal is also used to note any anecdotes about learners's reaction to a certain content, what difficulties did they face while learning a content, what alternatives strategies did the teacher adopt while transacting the content, what was learners's reaction to it and so on. These anecdotes helps while taking decisions related content revision. The teacher who is also a researcher should time to time survey students' achievements by reviewing and analysing the assessment records. Such ongoing reflections serve, not only to improve a specific curriculum but to also guide the creation of new curriculum. Such researches that are done by teachers, which are specific in nature, targeted at a theme are called action researches. Thus, the core idea is of promoting teachers role as **action researchers**.

Action research is a systematic inquiry done by a teacher to reflect on her own practices in order to enhance her teaching. Doing action researches not only help the teachers in their professional growth but also add an element of motivation. When a teacher starts to reflect on her own practices and on her place of work, she begins to take a more professional role. She starts forming wise decisions, that are grounded in actual realities and which benefit the school in particular. By exchanging their findings with their colleagues, teachers get varied multiple perspectives which help in making informed decisions.

You may adopt the following steps for conducting an action research:

- i) **Select a Problem:** This is the most crucial stage. It is a moment of reflection and identifying an aspect that is worth worrying about. One needs to be focused and determined to conduct a research in the area.
- ii) **Clarifying Theories:** No work is done in isolation. Read some theories that will help ground your work. The review of work done earlier gives directions for the current work.
- iii) **Collecting Data:** to accomplish the goals select suitable data that is also representative. As an action researcher a teacher needs to ensure the validity and reliability of the data collected. The data should be collected through multiple modes to drawing true and detailed analysis.
- iv) **Analysing Data:** Draw out the findings by triangulating the data collected through various sources. Analysis should be specific, targeted to answer the research questions.

- v) **Reporting Results for Taking Informed Action:** share your findings with your colleagues, with the administrator and with higher authorities. A good action research may provide meaningful insights for future decisions related to curriculum and others.

Let us take an example where a teacher's notes helped in the reconsidering the mathematical content of elementary grades. Akram, a mathematics teacher of class V was in a habit of taking notes of his learners's work in his daily journal. Through years of experience he concluded that learners of class V have difficulties in recognizing right angled triangles when their orientation is changed. He had been making a note of this observation and could generalise based on his observations of every year. He had also kept a record of the incorrect responses that learners give when shown an inverted right-angled triangle. Akram shared these anecdotes in one of the textbook writing meetings organised by his state's SCERT. The insights were well received and this initiated many debates and deliberations regarding learners's learning. The mathematics textbook of that state now represents all triangles in varied orientations to avoid fixation. This small effort of Akram of being a researcher in the classroom provided many meaningful insights related to learners's learning, difficulties and content representation.

The basic question that one can ask here is how researches done by teachers can help in development of schools? To answer this concern is not easy yet is imperative, considering the how researches done by teachers have proved to be helpful in curriculum development and feedback. When teachers themselves make commitments of doing meaningful action researches in their school systems, they embark on the processes that ensures continuous growth, development, feedback and thus reflection. It's a cyclic process. A teacher who on receiving the curriculum, implements it as a researcher, keeps a note of the successes and drawbacks. Since she delves in on-site anecdotes, she has proofs substantiating her claims. These mini researches, being done at the ground level, give first-hand authentic feedback.

9.5.3 Teacher as a Critical Pedagogue

Over these recent years we are seeing a radical shift in the way curriculum is perceived. Critical theorists are challenging the traditional ideologies that make the school system. The British school of thought regarded schools as centers for social control. Critical theorists challenge all such rigid colonial thoughts of imparting education. They question the ways in which schools mirror the already existing social discriminations of the society. In some sense, we may say that schools are like miniature society and they practice what already exists in the society. Critical pedagogues contest that schools should not be sites of replication of social and cultural discriminations of the society. Schools should rather be sites where such social issues are debated and challenged. Critical pedagogy as a concept has arisen from the thought and actions to challenge the dominant and oppressive ideologies that were constructed historically. The proponent of critical pedagogy challenge all forms of alienation, oppression and subordination that comes as a result of social structures. They believe that schools should challenge the oppressive ideologies and they see teachers as potential actors in this process of social justice. Teachers should situate themselves in challenging the oppressive pedagogies and thus take critical positions.

Before we try to understand the role of a teacher as a critical pedagogue, we need to understand how schools, in general, are spaces of social distinctions and how these spaces can be made spaces for encouraging critical thinking and dialogue.

Critical theorists condemn the traditional ideologies within which education is rooted. They believe that every child has a right to education as per her needs and pace. The existing structure of schooling is dominated by idea of management and control. Rigid structure and standardised curriculum puts every child under the same ambit of learning. Schools rely on the logic of preparing learners for the market economy and this thinking is exacerbated in every component of education – from curriculum to parents' expectations. Schools prepare learners for differentiated social class divisions through excessive competitions and differentiated teaching practices. It is no secret that learners from affluent schools, who have access to multiple resources are made to prepare for high level testing situations as compared to those who struggle in managing even the basic resources such as textbooks for studying. Higher education comes easily for resourceful people whereas many to struggle to get it.

Education, to some extent, presupposes intrinsic motivation on the level of learners. We believe that all learners are always motivated to learn and that the same curriculum will excite every child equally. The education system tests all learners on an equal scale. Those who have been trained in this system excel while many who cannot cope with it fail. In such normative situations, teachers become agencies for critical thought and change. A critical teacher is one who draws her lessons from the social context of her learners. Even though there is one curricula and syllabus, a critical teacher would make efforts to frame her pedagogy around the cultural resources of her learners. This means that she would draw examples from the daily life experiences of her learners and make connection with the lived histories. The language that learners are most comfortable with would be used for transacting the curriculum and the voices of the students will be respected. Instead of following the set examples from the textbooks, a critical teacher should have the skills to mould the text according to the social and cultural milieu of the child. The subject to be taught should be integrated with the dynamics of everyday life.

Teachers' actions in the classroom reflect their thoughts and ideologies. Their actions speak of their notions related to school, their colleagues, of society, of learners and their expectations regarding learning and achievement. Teachers should critically analyse their own ideologies, values, notions and actions. If a teacher herself holds bias against any religious group or any particular ethnic sect, her actions will reflect her biasness. It is therefore important the teacher holds a neutral opinion and is sensitive to backgrounds of her learners.

Being aware and to be a critical thinker would mean to critically question the existing ideologies that discriminate people and to question the cultural politics. A critical teacher will engage her students in discourses related to identity, values and existence of communities, their people and their values, thus making her students aware and more responsible towards the others emotions and rights.

A critical teacher will engage her students in talks related to social justice and oppression of people around them. She allows her students to critically reflect on the reasons of inequality that exists in the society and if education has any

role in it. She allows them to think about bringing justice through education. The learners must be able to see their relationships with the larger society and to be able to understand how power distinguishes between people.

Engaging teachers to think critically is also not an easy job. Such awareness must be instilled from the teacher education courses themselves. For this we need a new vision to education. An education that educates teachers to think critically, to question, to be empathetic towards the needs of others, to challenge the existence of power and how it controls others, to locate oneself in others histories and to exercise moral and public responsibility of being critical agents who have power to change things intellectually.

School can also be sites for promoting critical thinking. Schools should be visualised as a image of the society. To bring about critical awareness, schools should work in collaboration with the community. The teachers and members of the community should collaborate as co-workers to collectively determine the aims of education, what should be taught, how should schools organise the teaching-learning processes and how can the neighbourhood contribute in successful achievement of the set targets. Schools should be cultivated as sites for addressing social responsibilities. Build environments wherein learners get opportunities to understand their rights, duties and responsibilities. Schools should instil social awareness and public values. Along with building core academic values, the schools should also foster ethos of responsibilities and sensibilities. The aim should be bring our learners who are responsible citizens rather than exercising feeling of competence. The schools must empower their teachers to take decisions regarding their pedagogies. Give them spaces to take informed decisions regarding their students' educational welfare. A move towards building democratic spaces must be initiated wherein students are equal participants with their teachers.

Check Your Progress

4) What is the role of a teacher in implementing the curriculum?

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5) What do you mean by teacher as a critical pedagogue?

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9.6 LET US SUM UP

The philosophy and ideology of a school play a significant role in defining the vision of a curriculum for a child. The actions, rituals, ceremonies and gatherings of a school reflect its beliefs and values. The goals set by curriculum documents get contextualised within school systems. The context of school defines and shapes the real meaning of the curriculum. Learning environments of school which include its physical infrastructure like library and laboratories, neighbourhood of the school are important components in the process of curriculum engagement. Availability of resources, their condition and their access to learners and teachers have important consequences on learning and achievement. A school has to also ensure that it provides a psychologically conducive environment to their learners to flourish. Teachers can participate in curriculum development by sharing their experiences of transacting the curriculum. Teachers should act like researchers in the classroom to note learners's learnings and their difficulties. These ground realities give inputs for curriculum formation and revision. A critical teacher is one who engages her students in talks related to social justice and oppression of people around them. She allows her students to critically reflect on the reasons of inequality that exists in the society and if education has any role in it.

9.7 UNIT-END EXERCISES

1. In a school a curriculum gets manifested through its infrastructure, resources and human elements. Elaborate this statement and provide examples in support.
2. Recall your childhood experiences of schooling. Does the ideology of your childhood differ from the ideology of the school in which you are teaching now? Do you see differences in their curricular engagements?
3. A critical teacher is aware of the discriminations of a society and does not let her learners get affected. What is the role of a teacher in analyzing a curriculum from a critical perspective?
4. Elaborate on the ideology that promotes 'Teacher as a critical pedagogue'.

9.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

- 1) You should be able to comment on:
 - The vision and beliefs of a school and how they reflect in students' learning
 - Day-to-day activities of a school and its relationship between its curricular objectives
 - Experiences that form learners's thinking regarding education
- 2) It includes:
 - School building, its access to all learners
 - Laboratories
 - Library
 - School playground
 - Classroom sizes and seating arrangements

- 3) Vision of school, nature of school culture and values of a school.
- 4) You should be able to list the opportunities that teachers provide to help their students learn better. Talk about the efforts that teachers make while teaching a content and how they A teacher provide help to her learner in the achievementg of curriculum goals. She create linkages between students' experiences, prior learnings and socio-cultural context.
- 5) Go through the section 9.5.3.

9.9 SUGGESTED READINGS

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UNIT 10 CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION IN SCHOOLS

Structure

- 10.1 Introduction
- 10.2 Objectives
- 10.3 Meaning of Curriculum Implementation in schools
 - 10.3.1 Translating Curriculum into Learning Situations
 - 10.3.2 Models of Implementation
- 10.4 Teacher as Planner, Implementer and Evaluator
 - 10.4.1 Role of a Teacher Role in Generating Dynamic Curricular Experiences
 - 10.4.2 Contextualization of Learning
 - 10.4.3 Proving Varied Learning Experiences
- 10.5 Selection and Development of Learning Resources
 - 10.5.1 Textbooks and Teaching-Learning Materials
 - 10.5.2 Utilising Resources from Outside of the School
- 10.6 Adopting Suitable Assessment Modes
- 10.7 Let Us Sum Up
- 10.8 Unit-End Exercises
- 10.9 Answers to Check Your Progress
- 10.10 Suggested Readings

10.1 INTRODUCTION

As you might have understood that curriculum prescribes the goal of learning expected to be reached by learners. The task of meeting these goals is done by state, districts, schools and teachers. The generic goals set by the curriculum are translated into specific, achievable goals by the state and the school. The overall implementation of the curriculum is thus the responsibility of the schools.

Implementation of a curriculum is a complex process. It involves all those who play a key role in the education of a learner, viz. parents, teachers, school, community, state and country. Of these the most important role is of the community and the teachers who shape the learning of the child. To bring out a holistic learning environment for a child it is important that the teachers as well as the community work together towards a achieving the common goal – an overall development of the child.

In this unit, we will study how the goals set in the curriculum are implemented in the actual school situations. We will learn about the complex network between learning situations and construction of formal knowledge. The unit will help you

in understanding the importance of contextualizing learning. Finally, the unit will highlight the role of a teacher as implementer of the curriculum. Since, as a teacher, you form a crucial link between the school and the learner, it is the utmost your responsibility to select, develop and manage resources that are best for the learners. The unit also describes the role of an effective teacher, who tries to bridge the cultural milieu of a learner with the formal knowledge of the school.

10.2 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you should be able to:

- understand the nuances related implementation of curriculum in school;
- list examples of how curriculum seeps in varied learning situations within a school;
- describe the role of a teacher in generating dynamic curricular experiences and contextualising curriculum in learning situations;
- understand the need for selecting and developing learning resource; and
- understand the importance of adopting varied assessment modes of curriculum.

10.3 MEANING OF CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION IN SCHOOLS

In the earlier units, we have seen how a curriculum is developed, piloted and proposed to schools. While designing curriculum, the planners are also concerned about its successful implementation in the school. Because, the success of a curriculum depends upon how well it is implemented in the schools. In this section, we will study what it means by curriculum implementation and what factors contribute towards its successful implementation.

Curriculum implementation involves the set of experiences (within and outside the school), learning resources, actual classroom situations, and teacher-student interactions that gets formed during the execution of the curriculum. In more specific terms, we may say that curriculum implementation refers to the formal adoption of the curriculum in the schools. It refers to the stage when the curriculum actually gets accepted in the formal school situations.

During the implementation of a curriculum, learners engage themselves with the content to acquire the envisioned skills and abilities. While doing so, the learning situations, resources and other materials help them to achieve the set goals and objectives. The learners engage within the well-planned learning situations to maximize their learning. This acquired learning then gets reflected in their behavior and approaches.

The curriculum developers need to account the factors that help teachers in meeting the goals set in the curriculum. The planners need to have a wise vision related to students' learning, learning experiences, teachers' needs and other factors that are instrumental in implementing any curriculum. Any flaw in planning gets reflected in its implementation too. Schools are the actual sites that give feedback to the planners. At the time of actual implementation, the curriculum planners get to reflect on the successes and drawbacks of the curriculum. Schools are sites from where policy makers get feedback. One such instance from US

in early 60s was the New Math Movement which aimed at introducing children to the abstract nature of mathematics. This programme proved to be too ambitious and many teachers as well as parents could not cope with it, this led to massive dissatisfaction and was revised as it failed to meet the expectations. The programme was soon called off and a review committee was set up to analyse the situation.

10.3.1 Translating Curriculum into Learning Situations

We have discussed in Block 2 of this course that designing a good, meaningful curriculum at the national and state level is one part of the curriculum making process, its successful implementing in actual learning situations. An official curriculum sets the goals and aims for what is to be achieved by all the stakeholders. These aims are decided by keeping the larger vision of education in mind. While deciding the goals, the policy makers are concerned about the overall needs and vision of education across a nation or a state. They perceive the goals based on the expectations of the society and needs of the nation at large. At the school level the actual implementation of curriculum gets reflected through its ideology, its mission and vision and various other factors that affect its implementation. Let us look at some of these factors and their role in the implementation of curriculum.

Curriculum, at a larger scale prescribes what schools should do. At the implementation stages, however, there are many factors that play a significant role. Every curricular document sets the goals for what should be taught and how teaching should take place. It sets the scope and nature of education. However, when we look at it more analytically, we realise that schools reflect layers of understandings of what is considered worthwhile and important for their students to know and experience. As the curriculum is seen through the eyes of the school, the ideology, vision and mission of the school interfere in the implementation of the curriculum.

For illustration, a kindergarten school that follows Friedrich Froebel ideas of education will organise the learning situations based on Froebel's educational principles and philosophy. Froebel believed that for young children learning to be embedded in meaningful playing. He suggested activity based approach that integrates playing, singing, dancing and gardening as means for giving learning experiences to young children. In the remotes of Bihar, we came across a kindergarten school that had a 'children's garden' where children were seen playing in sand-tubs. We observed them forming alphabets in sand. From the various activities that were going on in the school, such as stacking the toys according to their heights, playing with abacus, absence of any writing material etc. gave us enough indications that that school followed the philosophy of play and learn, akin to that promoted by Froebel. Similarly, if you ever happen to visit Shanti Niketan in West Bengal, you would instantly come to know that the school is based on the philosophy of Tagore. The ambience, teaching methodology, connect with nature, classroom structures, teachers, learners, scheme of assessment will all give you a glimpse of the Tagore's ideas on education. Tagore believed that children learn their lessons by through both body and mind. Schools should be open gateways of promoting natural inquiry. We find reflections of this philosophy in every aspect of Shanti Niketan.

Every school has its own sets of rules. The differences in teaching, learning and transacting processes of a school mirror the ideas that the school believes in. Since at the school level the curriculum is a sequence of activities that are

undertaken collectively by teachers, learners, parents and communities, they determine the implementation of the curriculum. All these participants are active agencies in the implementation and reflection of the recommended policies.

The factors which determine the implementation of a curriculum are its environment, administrator, teachers and resources. Let us understand the impact of these factors in the implementation of the curriculum:

i) The School Environment

The environment of the school comprises of both human and non-human aspects of the school. This implies that a school that believes in establishing a democratic relationship between its teachers, students, administrators and parents will work as an entity towards achieving which would be very different from a school that possesses an environment of authoritarianism.

ii) Administrator

The administration of the school are the backbones of the school. It is through them that the school establishes its identity. Schools in which the administration or the administrator are open to ideas attract respect from all its sub-units. Teachers, parents and learners look towards their administrators for all advice. Thus, a visionary administrator will ensure amicable and comfortable learning situations. The administrator will consider different factors that influence the implementation of curriculum and will try to ensure that they work collectively.

iii) Teachers

The most important person in the entire cycle of curriculum implementation is the teacher. With her knowledge, experience and competencies, a teacher tries to meet expectations of the recommended curriculum. She forms a crucial link between the goals set at higher level to those established at the ground level by the community. Through this Unit we will see the work of some of the remarkable teachers who were determined to deliver best to their students.

iv) Resources

Schools equipped with resource material and facilities attract good learning situations. All schools must be supplied with adequate resource material such as textbooks, teaching-learning aids, stationery and basic infrastructural facilities such as well-lit classrooms, sitting spaces and toilets. Any lapse in such facilities can have adverse effects on the learners. Several girls from the remote rural areas do not go to school owing to non-availability of toilets in the school. This affects the dropout of girls. Similar examples of dropout or poor performances were heard from schools where resources are either limited or non-available.

10.3.2 Models of Implementation

Depending upon the mode that decides the dissemination of the curriculum, three models of curriculum dissemination have emerged: Social Interaction Model, Centre-Periphery Model and the Shifting Centre Model. As the names suggest, these models make a distinction based on who decides the implementation processes of the set goals. The difference lies in the process that takes the central position in bringing the change. The recommendations could be brought down

directly from the top authorities by involving local bodies or could emanate from school situations. Let's look at each model.

The states that adopts the **Social-Interaction Model** perceives educational systems as complex networks of social relationships. Decisions are made through social networks which could at times be very complex. These are more prone to the factors that influence the implementation rather than the distance between the social structures. This, in effect means, that schools get influenced by other schools. Schools that are innovative in their approach initiate the implementation of the curriculum and other schools that recognize their success join in. The social engineering begins from certain prominent schools.

When the proliferation of dissemination lies with some central authorities it is termed as **Centre-periphery model**. A central authority, such as the Kendriya Vidyalaya Sanghathan, envisages the plan and the ideas are then shared to the schools associated with them. The proliferation involves planning at a central level, taking an autonomous role, which then takes the responsibility of inducting all the local bodies that are associated with them.

The Shifting centres or the **Learning Systems Network model** posits learning in shifting centres of curriculum innovation. Instead of following any one particular curriculum, they seek for multiple sources of innovative ideas. They do have a path to follow but get influenced by innovative and new ideas.

It is important to note here that the distinctions made between the models exists more on theoretical level than in practice. In actual situations there seem to exist an overlap between these models. The distinction between the models is not easy to perceive. These models represent more of an artificial distinction than being there in actual practice. These are only perspective theories and in no term define a best-fit model. Curriculum theorists need to understand what exists in a particular situation at a particular time. Therefore there can't be one model for all situations. A model that proved successful may not be an appropriate for the other situation. Also, in no way are these models exhaustive. Dissemination multi-facet and can happen in multi-forms. One needs to understand that since various agencies are involved in the implementation of the curriculum, it is difficult to follow any one particular model.

Check Your Progress

- Notes :** a) Write your answers in the space given below.
b) Compare your answers with those given at the end of the unit.

- 1) What do you mean by curriculum implementation.
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- 2) According to you, which model's are dominant in implementation of curriculum?
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3) Explain the role of school environment an curriculum implementation.

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10.4 TEACHER AS PLANNER, IMPLEMENTER AND EVALUATOR

There is no doubt that when teachers become active participants in the planning, implementing and evaluating stages of a curriculum then only it can become successful. It is the teacher who knows her students best and has a good understanding of their learning levels. She is the one who understands the nuances of the school and community and it is she who knows how to maintain the balance between the state and parents. Thus, the work of a teacher cannot be undermined while talking about the dissemination of curricular goals at actual classroom level. One cannot talk of the goals of curriculum without talking of the role that a teacher plays in achieving them. As a curriculum implementer, it is she who brings the plans to reality.

An effective teacher will try her best to provide learning environment to promote optimum learning among her students. Besides all the challenges, she would make sure to arrange for good teaching –learning resources and materials that would help her learners.

In the following subsections we will look at the role of a teacher in bringing the curriculum goals to an executable level. We will look at some of the case studies of teachers who have made remarkable efforts in providing optimum learning environments to her/his students.

10.4.1 Role of a Teacher in Generating Dynamic Curricular Experiences

It would not be wrong in saying that another name for a teacher is curriculum implementer and evaluator. A teacher is the one who brings curriculum to an operational level. Being a teacher, you would agree that a good teacher is one who, in spite of all challenges, thrives to provide the best leaning resources to her students.

The most important role that a teacher plays in implementing the curriculum is through actively shaping the school environment, learners’ context, learning situations and teaching practices in accordance to the vision of the curriculum and level of her learners. This needs a dynamic planning and an active engagement. A teacher has to maintain a chord between the curriculum and the learners. Only a teacher is dynamic in her approach and who evolves regularly can do so effectively.

For instance, a teacher who understands the cultural traditions of her leaners and their community will incorporate culturally- appropriate educational experiences in her pedagogy to link children’ informal understandings to the formal knowledge

of the school. Given below are examples of two such teachers who made extra efforts in bringing changes in the school environment.

A school teacher, Kunni Mahula from a district of Rajasthan was well aware of the low attention of his students. He realized that his students showed little interest in learning and they often missed classes. Most of his students are first generation learners and have little support from their home. Low literacy standards were keeping many students out of the school. In such a situation it was difficult for Kunni to retain students' interest in studies. Kunni had also realized that reading text from the textbooks would not excite his students. He had to find a solution to this problem. Kunni thought of an innovative idea. He used the local art of puppetry to attract his students to studying social studies. He designed dialogues between two puppets to teach language and social sciences. His use of local dialects attracted many who had left schooling in between. Gradually the puppet shows became quite popular even with the adults. Kunni's dedication and resourcefulness promoted awareness not only in children but also among adults. His 'beyond the classroom' pedagogy helped the entire community get educated.

Let's look at one more example where a teacher mobilised her students to be resourceful.

An important feature of teacher's work is to recognize her students' potentials and make them self-initiators in their learning process. Motivation is a key factor in promoting life-long learning. The responsibilities of a teacher go much beyond the classrooms. An effective teacher would try to build a community of learning which should continue to learn even outside the walls of the classroom. Neena a school teacher from a rural school recognized children as educational resources and thus built a community of self-driven learners. Let's take a look at this remarkable effort.

Neena, a rural school of has huge responsibilities of teaching large number of students a single class. She was always concerned about the learning of each of her student to the best of their potentials. Being a teacher, it is her responsibility to look after each child's progress and provide age appropriate experiences. Most of the students in Neena's school do not have books and other study material. To manage such a situation, Neena mobilized her own students. She prepared small educational plays on various common topics in Social sciences and Sciences with her children. Older students were also made part of these plays. The elder students contributed by donating their old books and materials for reference. These older students collected books, recycled old books and read the text together to see the continuity in the topics. They identified common themes which could be understood by most of the children. Common topics such as awareness towards environmental, water problems, hygiene, oragnisation of panchayat etc were some of the topics on which the plays were made. These plays provided enough knowledge. On her own, it would have been difficult for Neena to teach all the topics to all her students. Almost all the students got the key ideas through

these educational plays. This activity also brought out-of-school children in contact with school children which later resulted in increased enrollment. The non-enrolled children got interested and started coming to school. Neena is a perfect example of an aspiring teacher who made children themselves as resources of learning.

Our third example highlights the efforts of a teacher who modified school timings to meet diverse needs of the students.

Being a teacher you would agree that school calendar is often bestowed upon by higher authorities and is fixed in nature. It gives little scope for doing any extra activity. Teachers are guided by these rules and regulations that define yearly, monthly, as well as daily schedules. Many of you would find these regulations restrictive and binding.

Mr. Tomar has many talented children in his school who need extra time to practice. He struggles very hard with his authorities to convince them for creating flexible space for student interaction. He proposed to have extend the school breaks to benefit such students. Tomar let his children practice in these extended breaks. He even convinced the higher authorities to allow children good in sports to come late and to provide compensatory attention to girls who missed classes owing to domestic work. Within months the school inspectors reported of significant improvement in the children's work and attitude towards the school.

Likewise, there are many such examples where teachers have used alternative sources to generate knowledge. A teacher sent her students on a village trip to collect varieties of leaves and thorns. She then connected the collected samples to those presented in the textbooks. In another similar example a teacher titled his unruly students national leaders. He asked them to come half an hour before the school to discuss the biographies of these leaders. The students had to then read and enact their role in front of the whole school. This not only provided an opportunity to encourage the students to study history but also took care of holding the attention of naughty children.

These examples indicate that by generating dynamic curricular linkages effective helps in motivating learners towards learning and in sustaining their learning.

10.4.2 Contextualization of Learning

The famous educationist John Dewey said, "Children are people. They grow into tomorrow only as they live today", and also "... when we say a child cannot understand, we frequently mean that he has not had sufficient experience of the right kind to be able to understand". From this perspective, a child is a holistic being who cannot be compartmentalised between school, home and community. The varied experiences of a child has to be interlinked, it can be done by integrating learning with the context of the child.

Contextual learning refers to relating subject matter with meaningful situations that are appropriate to the child's level. When learning happens within contexts, it promotes active participation and longer retention. Children feel motivated when they see learning as a continuum, emerging from their own contexts. When learning happens within purposeful situations children perceive knowledge embedded within their contexts. In this situation, Schools no longer seem to be boring and detached.

As teachers, you would have made many attempts to link learning within a child’s context. Recall when you made a fictitious story to teach about values, or the shopping situation to let children experience money transactions, or the plays through which they experienced history, or maps by which geography became live in the classroom. At time teachers even use metaphors and analogies to relate the child’s own experiences with the formal learning of the school. Any such pedagogic strategy is an effort to contextualize learning and attaches meaning to the otherwise abstract concepts.

Let’s look at the work of some of the teachers who tried to contextulise their teaching.

Shankar Dowal, is a mathematics teacher who often finds difficult to teach the topic of profit, loss and percentages to his students. Shankar was aware that students to this age are very comfortable in doing money transactions. Thus the best way to teach these topics was to organize a cooperative store in an organized manner. Shankar spoke to the parents and convinced them about the importance of the activity. The parents also agreed to send something from their home for the cooperative store. Shankar organized this store and invited people from the community as customers. The children had to organize all the necessary activities that happen in a cooperative store, such as promoting sales, giving discounts, buying in bulk and maintaining retails. This entire process gave students enough experience about cost price, selling price, marked price, profit, discounts and their percentages. Children could never forget what they learnt from this experience.

Another example where a teacher embedded learning within children’s social and cultural milieu was done by Manju Dagar, a social science teacher.

Manju’s school was located in a colony of carpet craftsmen. The locals were skilled in making carpets. Manju had realized that many of her children worked with their parents to generate extra income. This resulted in irregularity and frequent absenteeism. Manju had to find a solution. She convinced the parents that she would allot some of the school time to let her children practice the craft. She allowed the children make door mats and wall hangings in the school hours. Their work was promoted through online sources and soon the community started receiving orders. This generated some income and could thus sustain themselves. This simple step reduced the problem of absenteeism and also promoted learning.

Before coming to school, children possess many skills. As teachers we should harness their already possessed talent and link it to the formal knowledge.

10.4.3 Providing Varied Learning Experiences

Look inside any classroom and you will find learners of different backgrounds, possessing varied talents, having diverse abilities, learning through varied modes and responding to different teaching styles. Not all children learn in the same

way. Some learners are quick in making visual connections while some understand when they work repeatedly with their hands. There are others who get the idea by listening to the lecture. In any class we have learners with varied learning styles.

Schools today are encouraged to respond to the variations that exists in the classrooms. They are being oriented to equip themselves to respond to diversities of students. These diversities could be in the levels of readiness, interest, and learning profiles. The premise is to consider each child as an independent entity having unique needs and demands. There is a need to acknowledge and respect all diversities.

The challenge for teachers, therefore, is to provide varied learning opportunities to let all children understand to the best of their abilities. As teachers we should be open to evolve and change our teaching styles to cater to the needs of our students. This mean we should be open to vary our teaching methodologies and be prepared to present the same information in several modes. Such is possible only when a teacher is resourceful, open-minded and ready to adopt innovative approaches in her teaching. We need to think of incorporating multiple resources to provide differentiate learning environments.

Since the goal of teaching is to facilitate learning of all children, many teachers have started to expand their teaching styles to suit the level of their pupils. Teachers have begun to question and reflect on the past traditional styles. They now understand that some of the earlier practices are no longer useful for the current generation. Many enthusiastic teachers have started learning and using innovating techniques in their teaching. They are trying to incorporate differentiated resources to optimise the learning of each child of their class.

You would agree that there can never be any best or single strategy. It is important that we provide many opportunities to students to learn, discover and experiment on their own. Let them interact with the content in variety of ways, incorporating multimode environments.

Check Your Progress

- Notes :** a) Write your answers in the space given below.
 b) Compare your answers with those given at the end of the unit.

4) Think of instances where you tried to go beyond your usual classroom teaching and created learning environments suited to the needs of your children and content.

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5) What is the role of a teacher in implementing the curriculum?

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10.5 SELECTION AND DEVELOPMENT OF LEARNING RESOURCES

As teachers it is our utmost duty to ensure that learners are given best of resources to engage with and enrich their learning. Before we begin with teaching, we need to think ahead of the resources that would benefit all learners. A thoughtful planning, incorporating a wide range of materials will be fruitful in addressing varying levels of learnings.

Teachers play an essential role in identifying, selecting and developing resources that would suit the needs of their learners. This exercise may not sound simple as we are surrounded with a variety of textbooks, teaching-learning materials and internet websites that offer many ideas. It takes experience and maturity to identify meaningful resource material that can indeed help children in their learning. A teacher should have a critical eye while selecting any resource and should look at its utility very carefully. The material, including the textbook should be affordable as well as feed in meaningful learning. It is the responsibility of the teachers to select resources that would enrich and support curricular objectives. Teachers have to also keep in mind the diversities that exist in the classrooms. Let us have a look at the resources which you can use:

10.5.1 Textbooks and Teaching-Learning Materials

While selecting any textbook or teaching-learning material we have to consider the academic diversity among the students, their varied interest, learning styles and maturity levels. At the same time we need to be careful that the resources would benefit the learning levels of all abilities of students. The resources should stimulate the growth of disciplinary knowledge along with ensuring intellectual development of each child.

While selecting or developing textbooks or learning resources it is important that they are representative of gender, cultural beliefs, race and ethnicity, abilities and disabilities, demography and linguistics, and of socio-economic status. It should raise above any personal opinion or prejudice.

Given here, is a narrative of a teacher who developed a range of toys and educational aids to make his teaching interesting and entertaining.

Prajapati Mahajan belongs to the community of potters and teaches in a rural district. Prajapati is the only link between his learner and the state. He used his pottery skills to develop a range of teaching aids. With years of dedicated work he has been able to establish a science laboratory in his school which is famous for its handmade baked clay equipment. In this lab, one will find magnifying glass, tripod stand, test-tubes, weights, measuring devices such as a scale, protractor, three-dimensional shapes etc all made of clay. Children have complete freedom to visit the lab and experiment with these free, no cost equipment. Prajapati is a perfect example of a teacher who used his indigenous knowledge to develop learning resources for his children. He is an enterprising teacher who without having any financial support made from the State improved the learning situations in his school.

10.5.2 Utilising Resources from Outside of the School

As said earlier, children gain experiences from several sources. To excel in their teaching, teachers need to be aware of the interface between school and society. As part of good teaching, teachers should learn to establish meaningful connections between the resources outside school with the formal syllabus taught within the school. Teachers are expected to develop the skills of dealing with the community and the curriculum. Often in state-run schools one can see the influence of state's ideology in the school. The state or the community have a strong influence in the functioning of the school, which means deciding the ways in which the curriculum has to be transacted. On the other hand since a school is a part of the community, it reflects the ideologies of the community too. In such situations it is with the teacher to maintain a balance between the state and the authorities. Though the goals of curriculum are decided by the state, its implementation can be localized, drawing resources from the local contexts.

You would have seen how a school becomes an image of the community in which it is located. One can clearly associate the schools' ideology with the community in which it is located. If you analyse the day-today functioning, you can see how children carry with them the cultural traditions of their home, village, community and state. It thus becomes imperative for the teachers to be aware of the cultural practices which have become an indispensable part of the child's life. To become a part of the child's life, become a part of the community.

One needs to understand the nuances and the traditions of the community and use them for initiating students' learning. It is a good idea to pick examples from the cultural milieu of the child and create linkages in the curriculum. It will even be better if you could avail of the local resources and embed them in your teaching. You can even think of mobilising local resources and use them to achieve your educational goals.

If you look carefully around yourself you will find examples of many good teachers who have tried to shape their functioning considering the socio-economic contexts of their children. Learning in their classes is a two-way process. The teachers learn about students from their parents and community and then refine their teaching skills to make it contextual. In the process to get close to the children, they revise their strategies and draw connections from the out-of-school contexts of the children. They use cultural elements in their educational practices. You would be amazed to see the creativity of such teachers and how efficiently they embed specific local features in the teaching process.

We also know of teachers who in their attempt to know their students better participate in the local festivals and become part of them. Example elude where teachers have used folk drama to encourage enrolment of children to schools, held katha-sabhas for educating the adults, used local dialects as medium of instruction for primary school children, made connections between local art such as carpentry with measurement, used culturally significant days or events to hold talks on history. All such examples motivate us to think beyond our usual classroom teaching practices and imbibe innovative strategies to harness the resources available outside the school.

10.6 ADOPTING SUITABLE ASSESSMENT MODES

In consonance to learning, assessment or evaluation also forms a part of curriculum implementation. The modes that a teacher adopts while assessing her students gives feedback on the success of the intended goals. In earlier sections we have seen how curriculum implementation can be innovative, progressive, contextual as well as modified to suit the demands of the learning situation. Similarly, assessment should also be done in varied modes depending upon the need and abilities of the learners.

All of us are born with different abilities. We are convinced that teaching has to, therefore, be differentiated. Can we also think of differentiated ways of assessment too? Can assessment be individualistic? Can there be different modes of evaluating children? The answer to all such questions is – Certainly, it is possible! In fact, if learning is perceived as a self-constructed process, then its assessment should also be customised. We should be open to adopt new and innovative ways of assessing our students. Without being open to incorporate many ways of assessment, learning becomes meaningless.

Assessment should be interwoven with learning. Often learning objectives define goals of assessment. If your teaching objective is to build an appreciation of poetry, you cannot monitor it via usual paper-pencil test. You will have conceive of alternate ways of judge this trait. Similarly, there are times when you know learning is happening even without doing any formal assessment. For example, the emotional value gained during an experience or activity can be known even in the absence of any formal evaluative methods. Do we need a formal test to describe attachment towards sports? Can any formal test judge the depth of musical maturity? There are many such acts whose success that cannot be proved empirically but can be felt emotionally.

When thinking of assessment we must resist ourselves from getting trapped within the rigid, confined, often short-sighted ways of assessment. We need to devise holistic or illuminative types of evaluation. The essence should be on matching assessment with learning situations. The foundation of any act of assessment should be on understanding the processes that children adopted while forming the knowledge rather than on checking the end product. The intermediate check, while the concept is getting formed gives valuable feedback. Assessing while learning is happening also lets us know of the learning difficulties of the children. Assessment done at the end of a course will lead to rigid conclusions with little reflection on the gaps in the knowledge. Schools must encourage varied assessment activities that move beyond the traditional paper-pencil methods.

If you wish to analyse the impact of the curriculum on children then fixed, rudimentary strategies of assessment will no longer work. Did the curriculum help? Were the teaching goals met? Was the curriculum effective? To get suitably convincing answers to such questions you need to emphasise on conceptualising assessment. We need to make a shift from the quantitative methods to more elaborated processes such as observations, classroom discussions, group-work, individual projects as means of evaluating the child. We need to develop an eye that captures all the complexities of the classroom.

Check Your Progress

- Notes :** a) Write your answers in the space given below.
 b) Compare your answers with those given at the end of the unit.

6) Explain the role of teachers in selecting a learning resource.

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7) State the importance of adopting suitable assessment mode.

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10.7 LET US SUM UP

In this unit, it was discussed that the success of any curriculum depends upon its how well it was implemented in the schools. Curriculum implementation is related to all the acts that help in dissemination of the learning objectives set up by the curriculum makers. It involves the set of experiences (within and outside the school), learning resources, actual classroom situations, and teacher-student interactions that gets formed during the execution of the curriculum.

Depending upon the mode that decides the dissemination of the curriculum, three models of curriculum dissemination were discussed : Social Interaction Model, Centre-Periphery Model and the Shifting Centre Model.

It was discussed that a teacher plays in implementing the curriculum is through actively shaping the school environment, learners’ context, learning situations and teaching practices in accordance to the vision of the curriculum and level of her learners.

Contextual learning refers to relating subject matter with meaningful situations that are appropriate to the child’s level. When learning happens within contexts, it promotes active participation and longer retention. Children feel motivated when they see learning as a continuum, emerging from their own contexts. When learning happens within purposeful situations children perceive knowledge embedded within their contexts.

While selecting or developing textbooks or learning resources it is important that they are representative of gender, cultural beliefs, race and ethnicity, abilities and disabilities, demography and linguistics, and of socio-economic status. The need to adopt new and innovative ways of assessment was explained in the unit.

10.8 UNIT-END EXERCISES

1. Which model of implementation of curriculum are most dominant. How do these models differ from each other?
2. How do the beliefs of a teacher reflect in the implementation of a curriculum in a school?

3. Describe the various roles that a teacher can play in the implementation of the curriculum
4. A child is the mirror of the culture that she comes from. What role does a teacher play in connecting a child's lived experiences with her formal school knowledge? How can a teacher create linkages between school, community and the curriculum?

10.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

- 1) It involves set of experiences, learning resources, classrooms situation and student teacher relationship that gets for meal during curriculum execution.
- 2) You may elaborate on these three models of curriculum implementation:
Social-Interaction Model
Centre-periphery model
Learning Systems Network model
- 3) School environment influences the achievement of curriculum aims.
- 4) talks about how teachers:
Implementing the curriculum by shaping the school environment, learners' context, learning situations and teaching practices
Contextualise learning to promote active participation
Role of teachers in identifying, selecting and developing learning resources.
- 5) Teacher is involved in generating dynamic curriculum experiences and contextualizing learning as per the needs of the learners.
- 6) A teacher has to select a teaching resource which is meaningful, affordable and useful. She can also develop the same in case of its unavailability.
- 7) Suitable assessment mode is important to provide feedback on the achievement of intended goals.

10.10 SUGGESTED READINGS

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UNIT 11 CURRICULUM LEADERSHIP

Structure

- 11.1 Introduction
- 11.2 Objectives
- 11.3 Defining Curriculum Leadership
 - 11.3.1 Need for Curriculum Leaders
- 11.4 Tasks of a Curriculum Leader
- 11.5 Role of a Principal as a Curriculum Leader
- 11.6 Role of a Teacher as a Curriculum Leader
- 11.7 Challenges of curriculum Leadership
- 11.8 Let Us Sum up
- 11.9 Unit End Exercises
- 11.10 Answers to Check your Progress
- 11.11 References and Suggested Readings

11.1 INTRODUCTION

In this course, till now you might have developed an understanding about curriculum, approaches to curriculum development. You might have also analysed the relationship between teaching and decision-making regarding curriculum and the role of a teacher as a curriculum implementer, developer and critical thinker. In the last two units of this block you have studied how the goals set in the curriculum are implemented in the actual school situations. You also learnt about the complex network between learning situations and construction of formal knowledge. Finally, the previous units also discussed about the role of a teacher as implementer of the curriculum.

In this unit, we will discuss about another aspect of a teacher i.e. as a curriculum leader. In this unit, we will discuss about the meaning and importance of curriculum leadership. This will help you to differentiate your role as curriculum implementer. You will also understand about the role of a principal as a curriculum leader and role of a teacher a curriculum leader. This Unit, will help you to identify the challenges faced by the curriculum leaders, so that you can develop strategies to combat the same.

11.2 OBJECTIVES

After completing this unit, you will be able to:

- understand the meaning and importance of curriculum leadership;
- explain the tasks of curriculum leaders;
- describe the role of a principal as a curriculum leader;
- describe the role of a teacher as curriculum leader;
- analyse the challenges of curriculum leadership.

11.3 DEFINING CURRICULUM LEADERSHIP

Earlier in this course, you have come across various definitions of curriculum. The most common understanding relates to *curriculum* as subject matter or a series of written documents like books and syllabi. It is also seen as a set of school experiences, which means it does not only includes “subjects,” and but includes all activities, such as lunch, play, sports, and other non-academic activities.

Other definitions have defined curriculum as a plan tied to goals and related objectives. These definitions suggest a process of choosing from the many possible activities those are preferred and, thus, value-laden.

Curriculum is also to be drawn from outcomes or results. Here, curriculum is seen as targeting specific knowledge, behavior, and attitudes for learners. This is a highly active definition that accepts change in schools as a normal variable in planning.

In the unit 9 of this block, you learnt about the importance of schools as curriculum engagement sites. The principal’s vision gets reflected while the curriculum is being implemented. You are aware about the tasks associated with the curriculum development process and it is the responsibility of a leader for sorting out and prioritizing the demands. This is a continuous process, hence as an effective curriculum leader, principal as a school has to establish new direction, align people and resources, motivate staff, and produce meaningful change for school improvement.

Following questions may come to your mind when you hear the term curriculum leader. Will a curriculum leader stand at the back of your classroom to observe teaching and learning? Will the curriculum leader conduct three-minute walk-through observations? Is the curriculum leader the principal of a school? How many curriculum leaders can one school hold? Let us try and answer these questions through following discussion.

Curriculum leadership is not be determined by an individual’s title or years of experience. According to Wiles (2009) Curriculum leadership is the essential function of school leadership, so it can be carried out by both a principal and by teachers. Thus, a school principal or a teacher is responsible for making sure that the school has a quality curriculum and that it is implemented effectively.

Curricular leadership is discussed by Fidler (1997) as instructional leadership. He believed that the principals of a school has an impact on the professional work of the school, including the teaching and learning which goes on in the classrooms. He presented two points of view from which instructional leadership can be considered: a functional approach and a process approach. The functional approach involves leaders in defining the school mission, managing curriculum and instruction, supervising teaching, monitoring learner progress and promoting an instructional climate. The process approach looks at ways this might be accomplished.

Thus, a curriculum leader has to make sure that the curriculum goals are achieved, which is to maximize learner’s learning by providing quality in the content of

learning. Thus, Curriculum leadership focuses on what is learned (the curriculum) and how it is taught (the instruction).

Another goal of curriculum leadership is to develop schools as a learning organization. A school becomes a learning organization when individuals (teacher, learners) expand their capacity to create results they truly desire and where people are continually learning to see the whole together. This form of leadership is viewed in the following finite activities:

- establishing objectives,
- structuring scope and sequence,
- choosing relevant textbooks and resources, and
- selecting appropriate forms of evaluation, and curricular development needs to be explored.

Glatthorn (1997) listed the essential functions of curriculum leadership carried out at the school and classroom levels:

At the School Level	At Classroom Level
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop the school's vision of a quality curriculum • supplement the National's or state's educational goals • develop the school's own vision & Mission • develop a learning-centered schedule • determine the nature and extent of curriculum integration • align the curriculum • monitor and assist in curriculum implementation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop yearly planning of calendars for operationalizing the curriculum • develop units of study • enrich the curriculum and remediate learning • evaluate the curriculum

The roles and functions show that regardless of whether these are at the school level or classroom level, curriculum leadership involves tasks that guarantee quality education.

Any effective curricular leader will have following characteristics :

- (i) Learner – continually seeking information, evidence and research to support current practices or develop new approaches within the school.
- (ii) Strategic thinker and have a long term vision – the ability to step out of the busyness of school and the role of curriculum leader to assess where the school is at and what long term initiatives will have an impact on improving learner learning.
- (iii) Relational – Has an ability to develop effective relationships with teachers, learners, leadership and other stakeholders to be able to work effectively

and communicate with all groups within the school. This is essential for any strategy to be implemented well in school.

- (iv) Action based – the ability to make decisions and act on them. Having knowledge is important but unless one act on this knowledge than it is pointless. Developing plans and actions that are implemented is crucial to being successful.

11.3.1 Need for Curriculum Leaders

Till now, you might have understood the meaning of curriculum leadership. Let us now discuss about its need in schools.

- (i) Curriculum Leaders provides clarity

As curriculum leader, you must understand the need for teaching the core curriculum. You do not need to be experts, but should know whether learners are taught the knowledge, the understandings and the skills that they are expected to learn in the core curriculum. Also, you must have the knowledge about the need to have importance of technical courses and electives which can help learners to choose a career later in their lives.

- (ii) Curriculum Leaders provides the opportunity to establish goals.

Curriculum leaders have a sense of purpose and a clearly defined mission or direction. In this process, they involve people as much as possible in the change process and promote continuous monitoring and review the proposed programmes and practices. They continuously reflect on their own teaching and assessment practices and encourage others to do the same.

- (iii) Curriculum leaders also uses effective inter individual skills and establish climate that build consensus, empower others and promote open and clear communication patterns. They motivate colleagues to attain goals and encourage discussion, collaboration, shared decision-making and problem solving. They also help in curriculum implementation, by helping teachers to better understand the philosophies and intent of curriculum, by providing assistance in implementing curriculum, and model appropriate behaviours and practices in curriculum delivery.

- (iv) Curriculum Leaders provides the opportunity for continuous improvement

Check Your Progress

- Notes : a) Write your answers in the space given below.
b) Compare your answers with those given at the end of the unit.

- 1. What do you mean by curriculum leadership?

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- 2. List the characteristics of curriculum leaders.

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11.4 TASKS OF A CURRICULUM LEADER

While the role of teacher and that of curriculum leader are complementary, the roles and associated competencies are not the same. Let us understand the differences

Teachers must have comprehensive understanding of their content areas and methods for communicating knowledge to learners. A curriculum leader is a individual who has not only a comprehensive understanding of the pragmatics of curricular design and instructional practice, but also a global understanding of education as a societal enterprise.

On the practical side, perhaps the side that is most frequently recognized by elementary and secondary school educators, curriculum is characterized as what is to be taught, in what order, in what way, and by whom (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2004). Teachers are generally professionally prepared to engage in discussions of curriculum in this frame. Textbook content, their own instructional experiences, and state-level content standards further support teachers' ability to engage in curricular decisions within this conceptual frame. Such ordering of content, planning activities and assessments, or matching content to state standards is better conceptualized as lesson decision-making versus curriculum decision-making.

On the pragmatic end of the spectrum of requirements, curricular leaders must demonstrate a sophisticated understanding of the relationship between assessment data and instructional design, particularly in light of the current dominance of progress monitoring and "Response to Intervention" paradigms. To meet the diverse needs represented in each classroom, curriculum leadership requires an ability to recognize the need for the best design and implementation techniques of a broad range of instructional variations.

Curriculum leadership requires more than a general understanding of psychology, as curriculum leaders must consider developmental, cognitive, emotional, and communicative factors as they relate to the reception and expression of content learning. Curriculum leaders must be well versed and articulate in classic and contemporary educational research, theory, and practical expectations across all subcategories including learning and instructional methodologies. They must have strong theoretical bases on which to build and they must be able to functionally separate the theoretical from the practical as needed (Hlebowitsch, 1999; Pinar, 1992). Curricular leaders must demonstrate a sophisticated understanding of education as a political and social enterprise. Curricular leaders must understand educational purposes of school, what educational experiences are likely to serve those purposes, and how to effectively organize and evaluate those experiences (Tyler, 1949). They must be ever cognizant of the ideology, bias, political agendas, and hegemonies that influence what is taught, how it is taught, and by whom it is taught in every classroom in America (Apple, 1996, 2000, 2004; Freire, 1970/2004; Ornstein & Hunkins, 2004). With the locus of control over the curriculum having shifted to that of the State (Fullan, 2001), today's curriculum leaders must have a substantial and current knowledge of state and national educational policy development, implementation. They must also be diligent in ongoing monitoring of debates and changing policies at all levels of influence.

The tasks and functions may further be specified into four major tasks:

- (i) ensuring curriculum quality and applicability
- (ii) integrating and aligning the curriculum
- (iii) implementing the curriculum efficiently
- (iv) regularly evaluating, enriching, and updating the curriculum

We will discuss about how these tasks are being undertaken by the teachers and Principals in the following sections.

Check Your Progress

- Notes :** a) Write your answers in the space given below.
b) Compare your answers with those given at the end of the unit.

3. List the major tasks of a curriculum leaders.

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4. Explain the role of a principal as a curriculum leader in managing resources.

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11.5 ROLE OF A PRINCIPAL AS A CURRICULUM LEADER

Often school principals are not clear about their role as curriculum leaders, they assume that their role is to look into the functioning of the schools. Therefore, the question, why principals must act as curriculum leaders is important. Let us understand those reasons first. Wilson B.I & Firestone (1987) asserted that principals can influence the quality of instruction by working through bureaucratic, inter individual and cultural linkages. According to him:

- (i) **Bureaucratic linkages** are the formal arrangements of the school which includes the rules, plans, supervision and administration which allow the school to operate.
- (ii) **Inter individual linkages** are those which involve one-to-one interactions that directly influence teachers’ classroom practice.
- (iii) **Cultural linkages refer** to the principal’s ability to affect how teachers think about their job and their commitment to it.

The role of the principal as a curriculum leader can be seen here as :

(i) Building and Sustaining a School Vision

A clearly determined vision, regards the priorities of a policy, is relevant and based on realistic long-term goals. It must also include an awareness of the cultural dimensions of the community.

Rutherford (1985) specified that the most effective principals have clear, informed visions of what they want their schools to become; visions that focus on learners and their needs. While preparing the school vision and mission, the school curriculum goals and its scope become clear.

When goals and priorities are clear then only a good teacher can set clear, concise, realistic, relevant, short/long-term goals. Setting such goals and priorities adds direction to a teacher's behavior and improves productivity. Thus, helping the schools to steer forward in the larger context of school improvement.

(ii) Tapping the Expertise of Teacher Leaders

Effective leadership sets the direction and influences members of the organization to work together toward meeting organizational goals. Similarly, when Principals act as curriculum leaders, they talk to teachers, provide staff development, and support lifelong learning about teaching and learning (Blase & Blase, 1999). They also create opportunities for teachers to work together and share teaching practices with one another.

Principals who tap into the expertise of teachers throughout the process of transforming their schools and increasing the focus on learning are more successful. They often encourage and use cooperation, team-building and problem-solving in their approach.

As curriculum leaders, they also recognize the importance of integrating activities of curriculum, staff development, and supervision. Teachers are responsible for teaching the curriculum, but administrators have equally important responsibility of supervising curriculum implementation.

Supervision responsibilities include:

- Monitoring the implementation of the school district curriculum in relation to learner needs
- Analyzing the teacher instructional effectiveness in relation to learner learning in the curriculum
- Monitoring learner outcomes that occur as a result of the teacher's instruction
- Analyzing the formal assessment of learner outcomes
- Using assessment information concerning learner outcomes to improve the curriculum and the teaching of that curriculum.
- Based on the subsequent findings from the supervisory process, the administrator and teacher must identify staff development activities and programs that are aimed at improving teacher skills in implementing and evaluating that curriculum.

Effective curriculum leaders recognize that importance of professional development of their teachers as a tool that allows administrators to become better curriculum leaders. When continuous professional development of teachers is done, principals help teachers to take up the role of curriculum leaders. Let us understand this through a case presented below:

Mrs Seema, Principal of Summer fields secondary school, realizes that that the science teachers were not involving Learners in active discovery experiences and the mathematics teachers, while knowledgeable about their subject, were following a didactic approach with relatively few visual aids or concrete examples for Learners. She prepared a report and listed the methodologies that would improve each subject- area. She proposed to provide workshops on new methodologies during the vacation time f the teachers. She also proposed to provide incentive in terms of giving leaves in lieu of the holidays which a teacher used it for her workshop. Teachers happily agreed and joined the workshops, resulting in improvised teaching and good leaning.

(iii) Collaboration in work

Effective curriculum leaders believe in teamwork and cooperative decision making for creating a climate of trust and respect. At the same time, it is ensured that effectiveness is not sacrificed for the goal of efficiency. While working together, they build trust, collective responsibility, and focus on improved learner learning.

During their daily interactions with teachers, principals help create a collective view of professional self-efficacy emphasising how teacher learning and improved classroom practices affect learner learning. Another approach could be that a Principal can help teachers individually and collectively identify the areas of their professional development. This will not only provide teacher autonomy but also will help in professional decision-making, which eventually strengthen teacher learning and classroom practices.

Before a teacher uses new pedagogical skills, they need to know that the principal will be there to provide professional, psychological, and emotional support. This is especially critical when teachers run into problems and/or meet with failure during trial periods. Teams of trained teachers should be allowed to try new strategies, refine their skills and share their knowledge with other teachers.

(iv) Managing Resources

For creation of a good learning environment in schools, a number of resources need to be managed, which include:

- recruiting and hiring teachers who are learners;
- coordinating professional development activities;
- making decisions on resources and school priorities;
- scheduling time, spaces and opportunities for teachers to work and learn together;
- identifying resources and providing information to the staff;
- aligning available incentives with professional development priorities;
- arranging for substitute teachers;
- visiting classrooms;
- developing and implementing teacher evaluation practices that support growth and improvement.

Check Your Progress

- Notes :** a) Write your answers in the space given below.
 b) Compare your answers with those given at the end of the unit.

5. List the major tasks of a curriculum leaders.

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6. Explain the role of a principal as a curriculum leader in managing resources.

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11.6 ROLE OF A TEACHERS AS CURRICULUM LEADERS

Wiggins (1994) believed that teachers should become instructional leaders to “...expand their own knowledge base and ... come to a better understanding of their own conceptualization of teaching” (p. 19). As a curriculum leader, you have to build instructional capacity that aims at increasing student learning and achievement. As a curriculum leader, a teacher must have knowledge of and skills in several curriculum designs and varied teaching strategies. When you enter the class, you have to do extensive prior planning ; which involves organizing content sequentially; stating behavioral objectives; effectively presenting content to learners; determining how learners are progressing in relation to the objectives; and planning classroom activities that provide appropriate practice. These techniques enable teachers to instruct learners better, especially in basic skills.

Your role as a curriculum leader can also include sharing the information on how to develop thoughtful curricula and instruction that incorporates high standards.

Let us now understand, the varied role of a teacher a as a curriculum leader.

(i) Resource Provider

Resourcefulness is the ability to adapt to situations as they develop, making the best use of both the human and material resources at hand. Teachers should not be bound by tradition or other such limiting factors and be willing to search for alternatives, such as using collaborative teaching methods vs. directive teaching methods. Teachers must be creative in finding and using the best avenue for getting the best from students.

Teachers help their colleagues by sharing instructional resources. These might include Web sites, instructional materials, readings, or other resources to use with learners. They might also share such professional resources as articles, books, lesson or unit plans, and assessment tools.

Manisha offers to help mamta, a new staff member to set up her classroom. Manisha gave extra copies and other web resources on the topic life cycles for her learners to use, explained her the various ways through which leaners can be assessed on this topic. She also shared the assignment questions with her.

(ii) Instructional Specialist

An instructional specialist helps you can help other teachers to implement effective teaching strategies. This help might include ideas for planning lessons in teams with other teachers. You can also explore and share instructional methodologies which are appropriate for the school.

When radha a science teachers shared her frustration about learners' poorly written lab reports with her colleagues. Other teacher, Jamal suggested inviting several English teachers to recommend strategies for writing instruction. Radha decided to talk with two English teachers serving as instructional specialists, the science teachers examine a number of lab reports together and identify strengths and weaknesses. The English teachers share strategies they use in their classes to improve learners' writing.

From the perspective of the classroom, you are required to make an analysis of the classroom climate and an assessment of the readiness of your learners for learning and their differentiated needs. You have to adopt such a style of instruction which helps in catering the demands of the learner.

(iii) Curriculum Specialist

Curriculum leaders have an clear understanding about content standards and they also know importance of linking various components of the curriculum . They lead teachers to agree on standards, follow the adopted curriculum, and develop shared assessments.

They also help teachers to implement new ideas, often by demonstrating a lesson, coteaching, or observing and giving feedback. They help them to reflect on their practices, hence give them an opportunity to on practice and grew together.

(iv) Mentor

Serving as a mentor for novice teachers is a common role for teacher leaders. Mentors serve as role models; acclimate new teachers to a new school; and advise new teachers about instruction, curriculum, procedure, practices, and politics. Being a mentor takes a great deal of time and expertise and makes a significant contribution to the development of a new professional.

Manoj is a successful teacher in his classroom, but she has not assumed a leadership role in the school. The principal asks him to mentor him new teammate, a brand-new teacher and a recent immigrant from the other state. Manoj prepares by participating in the training programme on mentoring. His roles as a mentor will not only include helping her teammate negotiate the district, school, and classroom, but will also include acclimating her colleague to the community. Manoj feels proud as he watches his colleague develop into an accomplished teacher.

From the discussion above, it is clear that leadership are in multiple, sometimes overlapping. These roles are sometimes formal with designated responsibilities on other occasions many informal roles are also played by teacher especially when you are interacting with their your peers. Regardless of the roles you assume, as a curriculum leaders you have to shape the culture of your school and improve and learning.

11.7 CHALLENGES OF CURRICULUM LEADERSHIP IN SCHOOLS

There many challanges which can be faced by both teachers principals when they take up the responsibility as a curriculum leaders. One has to identify those challanges first, in order overcome them. Let us now discuss about the challanges which can emerge in the following discussion.

- (i) **Multiple & conflicting goals:** Schools has multiple roles to play and often plan a range of strategic goals which they want to pursue and these can be conflicting goals. For example, curriculum goals can compete with other school goals and there is a possibility to lose the focus required to achieve them.
- (ii) **Developing a focus for school improvement** – Since, curriculum leadership has a main focus to increase the efficiency of school. Therefore as a curriculum leader, you have to identify and implement that strategy which helps in school improvement. It is a challenge to identify and ascertain the same.
- (iii) **Lack of Time and resources to implement strategies** – For implementing any plan, there is a requirement of supportive resources, which are often lacking in the schools. To organize such resources is also a challenge. Also, schools and teachers are busy and overloaded with their routine work that for implementing any new strategies becomes a challenge. For example, if any strategy require collaborative work in teachers, then scheduling a time can be problematic and a barrier to successful implementation.
- (iv) **Demands of the role** – (depending on teaching allocation and role description)- curriculum leaders role can be a very busy role with a high administrative component. Curriculum and instructional leadership is easy to be lost as a focus as the high demands of the administrative component are more pressing. The leadership aspect has the potential to make a far bigger difference but is the easiest to overlook.
- (v) **Ongoing professional learning** – the role requires an ongoing commitment to learning and the development of knowledge, skills and understanding of the latest research and its impact for learning. The busy nature of the role can make this difficult to prioritise.

Check Your Progress

Notes : a) Write your answers in the space given below.

- b) Compare your answers with those given at the end of the unit.

5) Explain the role of a teacher as a mentor.

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6) State any two challenges which can be faced as a curriculum leader.

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11.8 LET US SUM UP

Curriculum leadership is critical to the development of quality in the context of the school as it will have influence on the practices of leaders and their success in curriculum reform, implementation and evaluation. It is discussed in the unit that as a curriculum Leaders are not only responsible for solely on maintaining the existing curriculum through their continuous review but also have to provide vision, organization, and motivation to teachers and other staff members for school improvement.

Roles of teachers and principals as curriculum leaders are very important and have been defined in the unit. Principals as a curriculum leaders have to develop clearly defined vision and mission for the schools. For implementing these missions, they have to manage the resources. As teachers, the role is specified as that of a curriculum specialist, mentor to the new teachers, as resource provider to other teachers. The challenges of curriculum leadership has also been discussed in the unit.

11.9 UNIT END EXERCISES

1. Interview your colleagues about the problem faced by them in teaching a particular topic and develop a strategy to solve their problem.
2. Discuss with the Principal of your school about the various professional development programme which can be planned for the staff members. Develop a plan including priority areas of professional development and its implementation.

11.10 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. Go through section 11.3 and answer based on your understanding.
2. Following are the characteristics: learner, strategic thinker, Relational, action oriented.
3. Ensuring quality and applicability, integrating and alligning curriculum, implementing curriculum and evaluation of curriculum.
4. Some of the tasks involves, recruiting and hiring teachers, coordinating professional development activities, visiting classrooms etc.
5. As a member an experienced teacher can help invoice teacher to allimatize with the school system, help to find resources for teaching and to promote her to become a better teacher.
6. Multiple and conflicting goals and developing a focus for school improvement.

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