

# ROLE OF TEACHER IN CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION

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# What is Curriculum?

- Curriculum is a systematic and intended packaging of competencies ie knowledge , skills and attitudes they are underpinned by values. Learners should acquire these values through organized learning experiences both in formal and informal settings.

# WHAT IS THE IMPORTANCE OF CURRICULUM IN A SCHOOL?

- Good curriculum plays an important role in forging life-long learning competencies , social attitudes and skills such as tolerance and respect , peaceful conflict management , promotion and respect of human rights , gender equality and social justice.

# WHAT IS THE IMPORTANCE OF CURRICULUM IN A SCHOOL? (Cont..)

- Besides , it also contributes to thinking skills ,creativity and the acquisition of relevant knowledge that is applicable to their daily life and careers.
- It also support the learners personal development by enhancing their self-respect, confidence, motivation and aspirations.

# WHO IMPLEMENTS THIS CURRICULUM?

- All this curriculum is implemented by teachers and depends on the quality of teaching and learning strategies, learning materials and assessment. Only those teachers who are trainees can play an effective role in defining and implementing the curriculum. This entails understanding and participating in the curriculum development process, taking on new roles as advisors, facilitators and curriculum developers.

# ATTITUDES OF POLICY MAKERS:

- Teachers cannot be taken for granted or viewed simply as skilled technicians who dutifully realize a given set of teaching in accordance with the directives of a distant authority. Teachers are supposed to be active participants in the creation of classroom realities and they act in light of their own beliefs, attitudes and perceptions of the relevant teaching situation.

# ATTITUDES OF POLICY MAKERS

(cont..)

- Policy makers should no longer assume that curriculum implementation is a process that translates directly into classroom reality. Teachers are those who ultimately decide the fate of any educational enterprise. Consequently, teacher's attitudes, feelings and perceptions should not be devalued before the launching of any innovation.

# ATTITUDES OF POLICY MAKERS

(cont..)

- Policy makers should identify, analyze and address any discrepancies between teachers opinions and ideas offered for curriculum innovation.
- Implementation is an interaction between those who have created the programme and those who are charged to deliver it. (Ornstein and Hunkins, 1988 )



# ATTITUDES OF POLICY MAKERS

(cont..)

- Even though large sums of money are spent on implementing new curriculum, several of these efforts have failed. According to Sarason (1990) the main reason for the failure is the lack of understanding of the culture of the school by both experts and educators externally and internally. Successful implementation requires understanding the traditions, the roles and responsibilities of individuals in the school system.

# ATTITUDES OF POLICY MAKERS

(cont..)

- Policy makers generally view teachers as technicians and do not include them in the curriculum development process.

# WHY ARE TEACHERS IMPORTANT IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CURRICULUM?

- Teachers/educators are the major pillars in the teaching and learning process. Without doubt, the most important person in the practice curriculum is the teacher. With their knowledge , experience and competencies teachers are central to any curriculum improvement effort, they are responsible for introducing the curriculum in the classroom and outside the classroom as well.

(CONT.....)

- Handal and Herrington (2003) also stress the central role of the teachers in implementing the curriculum and call on policy makers to take teachers attitudes and perceptions into account.

## (CONT...)

- A teacher does more than just implement curriculum. While curriculum specialists, administrators and outside education companies spend countless hours developing curriculum it is the teachers who know best what the curriculum should look like. After all, they work directly with the students who are meant to benefit from the curriculum. In order to create strong curriculum teachers must play an integral role in every step of the process.

## Teacher's role in planning the curriculum:

- Teachers know their students better than others involved in the curriculum process. While the state often dictates the skills covered by the curriculum, a teacher can provide insight into the types of materials, activities and specific skills that need to be included. Teachers from multiple grade levels may collaborate to identify skills students need at each level and ensure that the curriculum adequately prepares students to advance to the next grade-level.

## Teacher's role in the creation of the curriculum:

- A teacher can gauge whether an activity will fit into a specified time frame and engage students. All teachers should be allowed to provide input during the creation stage. As teachers provide input they will gain ownership in the product and feel more confident that the curriculum was created with their concerns , and the needs of their students in mind.

# IMPLEMENTATION FROM THE TEACHER:

- Teachers must implement the curriculum in their own classroom sticking to the plan that has taken so much time, careful planning and effort to create. When a teacher fails to properly implement a strong curriculum, she risks not covering standards or failing to implement effective practices in the classroom.



(CONT...)

- That does not mean a teacher can't make minor changes. In fact a strong curriculum is designed to allow a teacher to be flexible to add a few personalized components, from a selection of activities.

# REFLECTION BY THE TEACHER:

- Reflection on a curriculum allows teachers and others involved in the process to find any weaknesses in the curriculum, and attempt to make it better. Teachers may reflect on curriculum in multiple ways such as keeping a journal as they implement the curriculum giving student reviews and surveys, analyzing results and assessments, data about student's individual performance. Not only can reflection serve to improve a specific curriculum, it may guide the creation of a new curriculum.

## SETBACKS/SHORTCOMINGS OF INVOLVING TEACHERS IN THE PROCESS OF CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT:

- In the absence of adequate teacher training, teachers may rely on their prior beliefs and experiences in interpreting the new curriculum. This will contribute to the mismatch between what the curriculum aims to achieve and what actually happens inside the classroom.

## (CONT....)

- Teacher's prior beliefs and practices can pose challenges, not only because teachers are unwilling to change in the direction of the policy, but also because their understandings may interfere with their ability to interpret and implement the reforms in ways consistent with the designer's intent.

## HOW CAN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ENHANCE TEACHERS ROLE IN DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF CURRICULUM?

- It is the responsibility of teacher training and development programs to provide teachers with opportunities to redirect their beliefs and reflect upon their classroom practices, so that maximum targeted professional development can be implemented.

## (CONT..)

- An example of how the role of teachers was developed by the national teacher's organization in making a pivotal change is from new Zealand in the year 2011. Computer science was introduced into high schools after a long period when computing was mainly focused on training students to be users. The transition was rapid and teachers had little time to prepare for the new topics and yet there was widespread voluntary adoption of the new standards.

## (CONT.....)

- Without an appropriate focus on teachers, quality education is not feasible at all. The quality of teachers explains differences in learning outcomes. Proper recruitment and continuous professional development strategies must be in place to endow those entrusted with teaching with the required knowledge, skills, attitudes and values to retain them in the profession.

## (CONT..)

- The key to getting teachers committed to an innovation is to enhance their knowledge of the programme. This means teachers need to be trained through workshops organized for professional development. However, not all teachers will have the benefit of such exposure due to insufficient funds.
- A successfully implemented curriculum can be ensured only through teacher education programme with curriculum development as a major subject



## (CONT....)

- Following are some topics to be addressed in designing professional development opportunities for teachers who are implementing as new programme.
- **Program philosophy:**
- It is important for teachers to understand the philosophy behind the program and how it may impact students, parents, administrators and stake holders.

## 2. Content:

- Teachers may find the curriculum introduces unfamiliar content they have not taught in a while, eg using a problem solving approach rather than a topical approach.

### 3. Resources:

- Adequate resources should be available for implementing a new curriculum.
- **Time:**
- Teachers should be allowed enough time to prepare and deliver the new requirements of the new curriculum and take time to understand the subject.

## 5. School Ethos:

- The overall belief of the school in the new curriculum, eg the faculty and community recognises the importance of the subject in the school curriculum.
- **6. Professional Support:**
- Opportunities for professional development such as workshops, seminars, best teacher awards.

## 7. Professional Adequacy and interest:

- Teachers own interest, ability and competence to teach the curriculum i.e confidence in teaching, attitudes and freeness to teach the subject.