

PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICE:

RELEVANCE OF CURRICULUM CONTENT OF THE LIVES OF CHILDREN

Pedagogy is the act of teaching. Definitions of pedagogy include the function of work of teaching, the art or science of teaching, education instructional methods. However, pedagogy, taken as an academic discipline, is the study of how knowledge and skills are imparted in an educational context, and it considers the interaction that take place during learning.

PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICES

Quality teaching is defined as pedagogical practices that are for diverse children, their access to knowledge, activities and opportunities to advance their skills, in ways that build on previous learning, assist in learning how to learn and provide a strong foundation for further learning, in relation to the goals of the curriculum.

Pedagogical practice is consisted of the following things:

1. Methods, strategies and/or styles of Instruction.
2. The learning activities that support the unit of content, the instructional approach such as active learning, constructivist model, student-to-student engagement, teaching through multiple learning styles, variety of assessment, etc.
3. The strategies that teachers use to teach students. Strategies are selected according to the beliefs of the teachers, the needs of the learners and the demands of the task.
4. Interactions and learning activities that support the delivery of content, such as using the constructivist model, active learning, student-centered activities, supporting multiple student learning styles etc

In simple words, pedagogical practice is the act, science or craft of teaching. When a teacher plans a lesson, he will consider different ways to deliver the content. That decision will be made based on his own teaching preferences, his experiences and the context that he teaches in.

EFFECTIVE AND APPROPRIATE PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICE

Effective teachers carefully plan and implement appropriate pedagogy and pedagogical practice. Learning is dependent on the pedagogical approaches teachers use in the classroom. A variety of pedagogical approaches are common in schools but some strategies are more effective and appropriate than others.

The effectiveness of pedagogy and pedagogical practice, often depends on the particular subject matter to be taught, on understanding the diverse needs of different learners and adapting to the on-the-ground conditions in the classroom and surrounding context.

TYPES/FORMS OF PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICE

1. **Teacher-Centered:** In it, the teacher is at the centre of the learning process. It relies on methods such as whole-class lecture, rote-memorization and chorus answers. This approach is often criticized, especially when students complete only lower- order tasks and are afraid of the teacher.

2. **Learner-Centered:** Here learners play an active role in the learning process. Students use their prior knowledge and new experiences to create knowledge. It is also called constructivist, student-centered, active, participatory etc. The teacher facilitate this process but also creates and structures the condition for learning. Considering research and advocacy has promoted learner-centered pedagogical practice in recent years. Some research suggests this approach can be very effective but it is also difficult to measure consistently.
Pedagogical Practice: Relevance of Curriculum Content.

3. **Learning-Centered:** It is relatively new term that acknowledges both learner-centered and teacher-centered pedagogical practice can be effective, but teacher must consider the local context, including the number of students in the class, the physical environment, the availability of teaching and learning materials etc. It suggests that teachers should be flexible and carefully adapt their pedagogical approaches based on the school environment.

Effective pedagogical practice can lead to academic achievement, social and emotional development, acquisition of technical skills and a general ability to contribute to society. Among these varied learning outcomes, academic achievement is the easiest to measure, but the others are also important to consider when trying to reform and monitor ongoing changes to pedagogical practice.

Pedagogical approaches are often placed on a spectrum from teacher-centered to learner-centered pedagogy, though these two approaches may seem contradictory, they can often complement each other in the realization of educational goals. A teacher-centered approach may be useful to introduce a new theme, while a learner-centered approach may be necessary to allow students to explore these ideas and develop a deeper understanding.

CURRICULUM CONTENT

The term 'Curriculum' is viewed in two different ways-the micro and the macro. The micro curriculum refers to subjects, while the macro curriculum refers to curricular programmes. For example, the subject physics is a micro curriculum while other programmes and supportive activities are called macro curriculum.

Meaning of Curriculum Content

Curriculum content or content area refers to a defined domain of knowledge and skill in an academic programme. The most common content areas in public schools are languages, science, social studies and mathematics. Content areas are one method that schools use to organize knowledge, teaching and academic programming.

Curriculum content may be defined as information to be learned in school, another term for knowledge- a collection of facts, concepts, principles, generalizations and theories. Curriculum content comes in any form- audio, text and video and it informs, entertains, enlightens or teaches people who consume it.

Curriculum content must take account of the environment in which the course will be used, the needs of the learners and principles of teaching and learning.

In this way, curriculum content simply means the totality of what is to be taught in a school system. Its purpose is to organize the material and establish a sequential relationship of material. It also presents application of facts, concept, knowledge and skills taught in the class.

Curriculum Content of the Lives of Children

Following types of the curriculum content is supported to be reflection to the lives of children:

1. The curriculum content to be taught to the children must be connected to their life and daily routine. It must be life-centric and must not be merely theoretical.
2. It should have ample scope for learner's active participation.
3. **Scientific Outlook:** Curriculum content must have a scientific outlook. It must have its bases upon the nature, age, demand and interest of the learner, It should be graded in accordance with the varying demands, interest of the different age-groups.
4. **Development of Integral Personality:** Content should aim at meeting the physical needs of the students such as reflexion, meditation, developing their abilities of critical thinking and adjustment, nourishing their creative urge and developing their capability of aesthetic appreciation in different areas. All these will lead to the development of integrated personality and character.
5. **Experience- Centered:** The content should be activity-oriented. All the great educators of all the countries and recent education commission and committees have attached great importance to activity-based and experience-centered curriculum. It will enrich the society with productive individual imbued with social sense. It is essential for the happy life of the child.
6. **Service to Society:** The content of the curriculum should foster in the child - the sense of serving the society and thus enable the society to progress.
7. **Progressive and Pragmatic:** The content should be progressive and modern. It should not blindly conserve the social heritage and transmission of same to the next generation. It should develop the social conditions and help in the process of social change and progress even at the cost of traditional norms and customs, if necessary.
8. **To face the Challenges of Life:** The content should have the power to make children to face the problems of life boldly. From the primary stage, a child should learn to judge each and every value of life without accepting it blindly only because those are taught by the elders. They should develop the strength and power to face the truth of life.
9. **Based on Life-Skills:** The content should be based on life-skills and their development. Life skills are abilities for adaptive and positive behaviour that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life. Some of such skills are- decision making problem solving creative thinking, critical thinking, self-awareness, empathy coping with emotions, coping with stress, effective communication and interpersonal relationship skills etc.
10. **All Round Development:** The curriculum content should be able to attempt all round development of the child. It should be related to the development of skills in five main areas

of development Cognitive, Social and Emotional, Speech and language, Motor skills and Intellectual developments.

Criteria of Selecting Curricular Content for the Lives of Children

All curricula have content, regardless of their design or models. Children content or subject matter is more than simply information to be learned in school. It is a compendium of facts, concepts, generalizations, principles of accumulated discoveries, an invention of man's down the centuries, due to man's exploration of his world. This is a subject-centered view of the curriculum. On the other hand, those who view knowledge as learner-centered, relate knowledge to the individual's personal and social world and how he or she defines reality.

Here are given some criteria for selecting curricular content for the lives of children:

1. **Self-sufficiency:** According to Scheffler, the prime guiding principle for content selection is helping the learners to attain maximum self-sufficiency in learning but in the most economical manner.
2. **Significance:** When content will contribute to basic ideas, concepts, principles and generalizations to achieve the overall aim of the curriculum, then it is significant. It is also significant if it will develop learning abilities, skills, processes and attitudes.
3. **Validity:** It relates to the authenticity of the content selected. It refers to the relevance of the stated learning experience to the stated goals of the curriculum. It contains two things- is the content related to the objectives and is the content true or authentic..
4. **Variety:** Learning experiences must cater to the needs of different types of learners by providing different types of experiences.
5. **Suitability:** It must be suited to the learners' present state of learning and characteristics.
6. **Interest:** The content should suit the personality and intellectual capabilities of the students. It should be interesting. Pedagogical Practice: Relevance of Curriculum Content... to the learner. It should motivate the child to learn.
7. **Learn ability:** This criteria emphasizes on the optimal placement and appropriate organization and sequencing of the content.
8. **Feasibility:** This criteria compels the planners to analyze and examine the content in the light of the time and resources available to the students, cost involved, socio-practical climate, etc.
9. **Relevance to Life:** The content must be related to the learner's real life situations in and out of school.

10. Other Considerations: As a guide, content or subject-matter can be selected for use if these are:

- (i) Frequently and commonly used in daily lives of the children.
- (ii) Suited to the maturity levels and abilities of children.
- (iii) Valuable in meeting the needs and the competencies of a future career.
- (iv) Related with other subject areas, and
- (v) Important in the transfer of learning.

PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICE RELEVANCE OF CURRICULUM CONTENT OF THE LIVES OF CHILDREN

Pedagogy and pedagogical practice is related to the curriculum deeply. Curriculum gives the subject-matter or content and pedagogy provides the method of teaching to that content. In fact, pedagogy has three basic components:

1. Curriculum or the content of what is being taught to the children.
2. Methodology of teaching or the way to which teaching is done, and
3. Techniques for socializing children in the repertoire of cognitive and affective skills, required for successful functioning in society that education is designed to promote.

The first component content of teaching should be designed to encourage learning processes like memory, attention and observation and cognitive skills of reasoning, comparing, contrasting and classification, as well as the acquisition of specific information.

The second component of pedagogy, the teaching strategies or methods used in implementing the content or curriculum are the arranged interaction of pupils and materials planned and used by teachers. They include the teacher role, teaching styles and instructional techniques.

The third component of pedagogy practice is cognitive socialization. It refers to the role that teaches in early childhood setting play through their expectations, their teaching strategies, their curricular emphases in promoting the repertoire of cognitive and affective characteristics and skills that the young child needs to move down the path from natal culture to school culture, to the culture of the larger society.

In this way, curriculum content and pedagogical practice are deeply related to each other. They are compliment to each other in order to make curriculum content relevant to the lives of the children. Following pedagogical practices or strategies can be used and employed;

1. **Constructivism:** It is based on constructivist theory and believed that learning occurs as learners are actively involved in a process of meaning and knowledge construction,- as opposed to passively receiving information. Learners are the makers of meaning and knowledge.

In constructivist strategy, it is important that we know where our students are coming from but not to judge them, but to be able to provide the most suitable learning environment for them to discover what needed to be learned and un-learned.

Constructivist teaching fosters critical thinking and creates motivated and independent learners. **Bruner's constructivist instructional strategy** contains four steps- Invitation, Exploration, Explanation and taking action. Here learners are provided the opportunity to construct their own sense of what is being learned by building internal connection or among the idea and facts being taught.

2. Collaborative Strategy Approach: In this strategy, a situation is created in which two or more learners learn or attempt to learn something together. Unlike individual learning, people engaged in collaborative learning capitalize another's resources and skills. They ask one another for information, evaluate one ideas and monitor one- another's work, etc. on one

Collaborative learning is based on the model that knowledge can be created within a population where members actively interact by sharing experiences and take on asymmetry roles. Jigsaw collaborative strategy is an example of this, in which learners work in a small group. In it, students are allowed to interact. work independently also and develop listening, engagement and empathy skills apart from academic studies.

3 Interactive Strategy: This strategy is a learning theory describing a movement towards integrating lessons helping students to make connection across curricula.

Its aim is to connect what is learned in school to real life situations. Thus, it is more on developing problem solving and discussions of issues in the real world.

Integrative approach is making connections of learning across curricula. It focuses on connections rather than isolated facts. Thematic teaching is an example of this in which themes help students to see the meaningful connection across disciplines or learning areas. Similarly, integrating with reading comprehension and writing lessons has been shown to improve students' understanding in both science and English language.

4. Reflective Strategy: It is a process where teachers think over their teaching practice, analyzing how something was taught and how the practice might be improved or changed for better learning outcomes. In this way, reflective method of teaching is stepping back and analyze their experience to improve future learning.

Hence, in this strategy, teachers analyze their own practice and underlying basis to consider alternative means for achieving their ends. In multi-media approach of this strategy, effective use of instructional materials that utilize a wide range of electronic media, allows learners to reflect after the teaching- learning process. Drill and practice gives emphasis on repetition after the learners reflect on their skill or learning.

5. Experiential Learning Strategy: It is the core pedagogical approach. Experienced learning is an engaged learning process whereby students learn, "learning by doing" and by reflecting on the experience. Experiential learning activities can include, but are not limited to hands on laboratory experiences, practicum, field exercise and studio.

David A. Kolb model of experiential learning can be found in many discussions of the theory and practice of adult education, informal education and lifelong learning. This model suggests four stages of learning:

(i) Active experimentation

(ii) Concrete experience

(iii) Reflective observation and

(iv) Abstract Conceptualization

Experiential learning is major for teaching at many institutions of teaching as it focuses on learners reflecting on their experience of doing something, so as to gain conceptual insight as well as practical expertise. There are many different design models available for experiential learning, but they also have faculties in common.

6. Service Learning Strategy: Service learning is a pedagogy or teaching strategy that combines classroom instruction, engaged student learning, meaningful service in the community and personal reflection.

Many educational institutions support and help to generate academically grounded community-based learning opportunities, their faculty, students and local communities work directly to enhance partnerships and to foster a culture of mutual benefit.

7. Inquiry-Based Strategy: It is form of active learning that starts by posing questions, problems or scenarios-rather than simply presenting established facts or portraying a smooth path to knowledge.

This process is often assisted by a facilitator. Inquirers will identify research issues and questions to develop their knowledge or solutions. Inquiry-based learning includes problem-based and is generally used in small scale investigations and projects as well as research. The inquiry-based instruction is principally very closely related to the development and practice of thinking skills.

In this strategy, learners acquire knowledge by investigation. They formulate questions, investigate and build understanding of an issue. Then after creating new meaning they acquire new knowledge. Simulation, Role playing and games may be used as different strategies. Demonstration can be used as inquiry based strategy which lessens teachers active role and allow learners to respect diversity. It provides a concrete/ visual way of explaining the topic.

