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Curriculum Evaluation

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Introduction

This chapter delves into the foundational concepts of curriculum evaluation, focusing on its essential role in assessing the effectiveness and impact of educational programs. It introduces various models of curriculum evaluation, providing a framework for understanding different approaches to evaluating curriculum quality and outcomes. The chapter outlines the systematic process of curriculum evaluation, from setting evaluation criteria to collecting and analyzing data. Emphasis is placed on the practical steps involved in conducting evaluations to ensure that curricula meet educational goals and standards. By exploring these components, the chapter equips readers with the knowledge and tools needed to implement effective curriculum evaluation practices.

Learning Outcomes

At the end of the chapter, you should be able to:

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1. Describe the foundations of curriculum evaluation
2. Identify and apply models of curriculum evaluation
3. Implement the process of curriculum evaluation

Discussions

Foundations of Curriculum Evaluation

Schools as institutions have been held responsible for the processes and systems of the educational programs under their premise. Varied studies indicated that an organized and systematic school processes were found to have positive effect on the improvement of the learners, school performance and efficient delivery of school programs. Efficient and effective implementation of the curriculum is evidence of a well-managed institution. It signifies a systematic process on the implementation of the program, effective leadership of the school administrators and satisfaction of the clientele, beneficiaries and stakeholders.

In consonance to this, the concept is anchored in System Approach by Falk, et al (2015) wherein they defined curriculum as a system of interrelated yet separate parts working together towards a common purpose. Each part is distinct but it interacts to form a complex system. In the school setting, System Approach Theory is evident in terms of the process flow system on the foundations of curriculum namely, program objectives, teachers, learners, physical facilities, administrative support and

instructional materials. An organized manner is manifested for the successful outcome of the endeavor.

This scholarly work is primarily inclined with a comprehensive discussion on curriculum evaluation. It is comprised of key concepts which are necessary towards effective and efficient implementation of programs in schools. It indicates sufficient input which serves as blueprint on the management and conduct of the curriculum. Hence, it utilizes indicators from the diverse resources to comply with the purpose of this paper.

McCormick & James (2018) cited that curriculum evaluation is a process by which we attempt to gauge the value and effectiveness of any piece of educational activity which could be a rational project, or a piece of work under taken by or with learners. Purposively, it entails participation and collaboration as central aspects to bring about learning and change.

Moreover, educational institutions give high regard on high quality and relevant educational goals, materials and methods of instruction that are in consonance with the advances in social cultural & scientific field. It is also important to ascertain how different educational institutions and situations interpret a given or prescribed curriculum. Hence, arises the need for curriculum evaluation. (Tas & Duman, 2021)

Curriculum evaluation monitors and reports on the quality of education. The purpose of evaluation is essentially the most important factor in the formation of curriculum and program evaluation models. There are five foundations of curriculum evaluation which were identified by Nouraey, et al (2020):

a) Needs assessment, which aims at examining the problem which the program addresses. It is also identifying the needs of the learners with respect to planning of instruction and grouping, profiling them based on strengths and areas of improvement;

b) Program theory, or the conceptual framework of the program. It is deciding what instructional material and methods are satisfactory and where changes are needed;

c) Process analysis, which aims at evaluating the program implementation. It entails judging how good the school system is, how good individual teachers are, etc.;

d) The impact of evaluation, which aims at highlighting the effect of the program. The goal of evaluation must be to answer questions of selection, adoption, support and worth of educational materials and

activities. It helps in identifying the necessary improvements to be made in content, teaching methods, learning experiences, educational facilities, staff-selection and development of educational objectives; and

e) Cost-benefit or cost-effectiveness analysis, which aims at assessing the program's effectiveness and efficiency with insights from the costs and benefits. It also serves the need of the policy makers, administrators and other members of the society for the information about the educational system.

In conclusion, curriculum is the sum of total of all experiences to be provided to the learners and transpired by the teachers. It can also be defined as the planned & guided learning experiences formulated through a systematic reconstruction of knowledge. The developed curriculum should be filtered through evaluation techniques. For this, different models are to be employees and ultimately finalized. A good curriculum is for the development of learners, system and national development.

Process of Curriculum Evaluation

Curriculum serves as "heart" of education. It is a set of tools to achieve a goal, ranging from planning, and implementation to evaluation. Innovation or curriculum renewal needs to be done because education practitioners must adjust to the development of a society that is always changing and continues to grow. (Supriani, et al, 2022)

Kranthi (2017) exclaimed that curriculum evaluation is fundamentally the process of studying the merit or worth of some aspect or the whole of a curriculum. Depending on the way in which the term curriculum is defined, the focus or objects of curriculum evaluation could include Curriculum design, Learning environment, Instruction Process, Resources and Materials used in instructional process.

In light of this, it is essential to find out about the adequacy of the curriculum with respect to provisions of the required teaching resources such as teaching aids, laboratories, library books and instruments and related matters. Curriculum evaluation appears to answer critical issues in education. The application must be efficient, easy to use, and serves ease for learners, teachers, and administrators of education.

The process of curriculum evaluation employs observation, questionnaire, checklist, interview, group discussions, evaluation, workshops and Delphi techniques which are considered the major ones as cited by Kranthi (2017).

The following relays further information on the process of curriculum evaluation:

a. Observation

It is related to curriculum transaction. Observation schedule helps the evaluator to focus his attention on the aspects of the process that are most relevant to his investigation. This method gains credibility when it contains both subjective and objective methods. Interviews and feedback and other documentary evidences may supplement observations.

b. Questionnaire

It is used to obtain reaction of curriculum users namely learners, teachers, administrators, parents and other educational workers concerning various aspects of prescribed curriculum are to be ascertained.

c. Checklist

It can be used as a part of questionnaire and interview. It provides numbers of responses out of which most appropriate responses are to be checked by the respondent.

d. Interview

It is a basic process of evaluation and for gathering information. It may be formal or informal in nature. The information required should be suitably defined and the presentation of questions should in no case betray and sort of bias the part of the interviewer.

e. Workshop and Group discussion

In this process, experts are invited at one place to deliberate upon syllabi, materials and related matters; and to arrive at a consensus regarding the quality of the same. The materials may be evaluated against a set of criteria that might have been prepared by the evaluator.

f. Delphi Technique

It is also known as "Remote Conferencing" which is employed instead of workshop technique. It can be used at various stages of curriculum development. This technique is cost effective and provides an equal opportunity to all members of the group to express their individual views.

In consonance to this, Buker and Niklason (2019) pointed out that the process of curriculum evaluation may seem arduous, but can be reduced to a series of steps that will insure a comprehensive and collaborative process that ultimately leads to program improvement. They provided some basic criteria to assist in the development of the process. The steps include:

    a. evaluating the mission of the program and determining an appropriate set of competencies that align the mission with the desired outcome;

b. mapping the curriculum to the adopted set of competencies;

c. developing objectives within a specific course that include the appropriate level of taxonomy;

d. establishing appropriate measures using formative and summative assessment;

e. collecting data from each of the measures to determine whether or not student learning is leading to competency attainment; and

f. developing a plan of action to improve program curriculum and increase competency attainment.

Hence, the process cycle of curriculum evaluation ends and then begins again with a careful evaluation on the effectiveness and impact of the program. Using the different aforementioned processes, schools need to periodically gather data on perceptions of program strengths, weaknesses, needs, preferences for textbooks and other materials, and topics or objectives that do not seem to be working effectively. This information should be gathered from data that represents overall student performance that is linked closely to daily instruction. Teams of teachers responsible for the specific discipline could accomplish this by sharing samples of assessments, performance tasks, student work, lessons and instructional practices related to the curricula.

Learning Activities

Directions: Read and analyze each item carefully. Identify the correct answer for the statements below.

1. It aims at assessing the program's effectiveness and efficiency with insights from the costs and benefits.
2. It aims at examining the problem which the program addresses.
3. It aims at evaluating the program implementation.
4. It is deciding what instructional material and methods are satisfactory and where changes are needed.
5. It aims at highlighting the effect of the program.
6. It is a basic process of evaluation and for gathering information. It may be formal or informal in nature.
7. It is used to obtain reaction of curriculum users namely learners, teachers, administrators, parents and other educational workers.
8. It helps the evaluator to focus his attention on the aspects of the process that are most relevant to his investigation. This method gains credibility when it contains both subjective and objective methods.
9. It is also known as "Remote Conferencing" which is employed instead of workshop technique.
10. It provides numbers of responses out of which most appropriate responses are to be checked by the respondent.

Answer Key:

1. Cost-benefit or cost-effectiveness analysis
2. Needs assessment
3. Process analysis
4. Program theory
5. Impact of evaluation
6. Interview
7. Questionnaire
8. Observation
9. Delphi Technique
10. Checklist

Enhancement Activities

Directions: Provide a summary of your research based on the following writing prompt:

- **What is the purpose of curriculum evaluation? What are its effects and impact on the present educational system? Include related studies to improve discussion.**
- **Conduct a curriculum evaluation on your preferred subject and grade level using one of the processes aforementioned in the discussion.**

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