



Best Practices in Curriculum Implementation Through the Experiential Learning Cycle

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Abstract:

The aim of teaching is to learn, and more importantly to relate what is learnt with real world experience. Therefore, this paper explores best practices for curriculum implementation using the experiential learning cycle for effective classroom interactions. It discusses: the curriculum; the curriculum implementation; experiential learning cycle to show the impact of Engagement, Exploration, Integration; evaluation to enhance classroom interactions; how can the experiential learning cycle support curriculum implementation; benefits of curriculum implementation

Keywords: *best practices, curriculum implementation, experiential learning.*

Introduction

The rigor of translating educational policies, plans and purposes into achievable goals in classroom practices will require best practices to bring about the existence of anticipated changes. Moreover, learning is central to every educational system while teaching is many sided, and it is an overwhelming job that involves many things at a time. In addition, helping the learner to acquire experience can be a great task or rather frustrating without a proper understanding and delivery of content of the curriculum. Furthermore, the teacher is the translator of the curriculum and driver of the vehicle through which knowledge and other learning activities are conveyed. However, teacher play a central role in curriculum implementation and should be armed with the Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) to effectively translate the content of the

curriculum. Therefore, this position demands for best practices and particularly the experiential learning cycle for attainment of curriculum implementation in schools.

The Curriculum

Curriculum in education is largely the outline of activities, and the arrangement of planned experiences under the auspices of the school, and within a specific time setting and place. Curriculum gives direction to education with series of activities that every learner must carry out to experience expected behavioural change. It also serves as a guide to the teacher's responsibility of helping the learner to acquire knowledge and experience to develop ability for a specific task. Moreover, in line with Rajurkar, Chavan, Kachewar and Giri (2019) curriculum is generally interactive, and it determines what teaching should be, and what goes into learning



by the guidance of the school. However, according to Slattery and Danaher (2015) it can be regarded as a delivery component of an institution's vision and mission that are translated into specific goals, contents, strategies, resources and measurable outcomes. Therefore, every educational system is based on a curriculum, and it can never function without taking into consideration the importance of the curriculum.

Curriculum Implementation

This can be referred to as the techniques of instructional delivery and assessment through the use of specified resources in line with the components of the curriculum (Rajurkar, Chavan, Kachewar and Giri, (2019). It is the translation of an agreed plan or official educational document into classroom practices, which according to Mkpa (2005) can be organized into three major components: objectives, contents or subject matter, and learning experiences. This buttresses the submission of Danaher (2013) that all curriculum starts out as a plan which can only be a reality when it is implemented by teachers with real students in real classrooms. Moreover, in curriculum implementation, there is always a tryout of a new experience to know what it looks like, and possible outcome in short and long run. In addition, it helps the school to make adequate preparation for learning resources, effective teaching and learning as well as enabling environment for desired outcomes. Bediako (2019) posits that It could also mean the provision of relevance assistance to teachers who will practice the curriculum with appropriate instructional strategies to deliver its contents at the classroom level. However, learning is central to every curriculum implementation process but the teacher is the major actor, and the curriculum implementer who should build an engaged relationship between the learner and contents. In addition to this, it is a kind of practice that is usually involve the arrangement of plans into actions by the teacher and particularly into syllabuses, scheme of work, lesson plans and lesson notes to be

delivered to students (Roehrig, Kruse and Kern, 2007). It is worthy of note, that delivery of contents of the curriculum cannot be underscored because it will determine the affairs and outcomes of curriculum in every educational sector. Therefore, it will be a cause in the right direction to adopt or adapt more vibrant strategies to ensure that components of the curriculum are well structured and delivered for best practices in every education system.

Experiential Learning Cycle

The Experiential Learning Cycle was founded by a Learning Theorist, David Kolb (2008). It is a four-step cycle, and a model where the learner experiences four different stages of learning by;

- Concrete Experience or Doing

This is a stage when the learner actively engages in an activity, and it could be in any form from learning a concept to carrying out a specific task to learning from mistakes, and becoming a more skillful learner.

- Reflective Observation of the New Experience or Observing

This stage is for the learner to reflect and think about the experience. It involves adequate exploration of experience in terms of how and why it happened.

- Abstract Conceptualization or Thinking

In this stage, the learner is fully integrated and therefore thinks about a new concept or idea, or rather modifies an existing one, and then apply this to what was already observed, in order to conceptualize the experience.

- Active Experimentation or Planning

The last stage provides opportunity to evaluate the learning processes, and here the learner is able to test the model, and can then improve the learning experience. The learner is considered to be confident of the concept being taught and can also apply the knowledge discovered to future concepts.

How Can the Experiential Learning Support Curriculum Implementation?

Learning is the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience according to Kolb (2008). Therefore, in order to experiment the experiential learning cycle in a curriculum implementation, the teacher will create opportunity for every learner to complete a concrete experience by doing an activity, reflect and observe the experience, form abstract concepts by thinking about the experience, and then use the experience to plan for future tasks. The theorist thought of learning as a continuous process with many components, and while each component work together to determine the desired change. Additionally, experiential learning is considered as a progressive method of instruction that affords learners an opportunity to generate a deeper understanding of concepts and to relate it to real world of work. Moreover, experiential learning cycle can be informative and transformative enough to create a memorable classroom practices and as such be a vibrant and dynamic complement to traditional classroom.

Benefits of Curriculum Implementation

The benefits of curriculum implementation are inexhaustible in the sense that:

- It exposes both teachers and learners to changes and ways to navigate with the changes within the society.
- It can build a pedagogically sound teacher with capacity and confidence for lesson delivery.
- It creates room to understand strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum while addressing the needs of the learner and the society as a whole.
- It serves as a foundation for developing learning resources in schools.
- It creates avenue to meeting the needs of the school.

- It improves communication and interaction patterns between teacher and learners.
- It properly integrated teachers and learners into curriculum processes.
- It makes for effective summative and formative assessments in schools.

Conclusion

This write up is concluded that:

- Education is a continuous process that will constantly undergo a variety of changes.
- There is no alternative to the role of education in any society.
- Curriculum dictates the affairs of every education which in turn determines the society.
- Curriculum is needed to shape education properly.
- The focus of curriculum Implementation is the learner.
- Curriculum Implementation can be a good forum for modelling the teacher identity.
- Teachers are the central figure in curriculum implementation.
- Teaching is an integral part of curriculum implementation and it requires innovative pedagogical practices.
- Learning is central to every educational system.
- Learning is a lifelong process.

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