

CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES IN SECONDARY EDUCATION

Dr. Radhika Kapur

ABSTRACT

The main objective of this research paper is to acquire an efficient understanding in terms of curriculum and instructional strategies in secondary education. When the educators are putting into operation these strategies, one of the important aspects that needs to be taken into account is, academic subjects. It needs to be ensured that these strategies prove to be advantageous to the students and they are able to understand the subjects and lesson plans in a well-organized manner. Within the course of time, it is vital to put into operation, modern, scientific and innovative methods in these strategies. In the present existence, the usage of technologies have acquired prominence. The educators as well as the students are making use of various types of technologies to carry out the teaching-learning processes in an appropriate manner. It has been found that implementation of the curriculum and instructional strategies in an appropriate manner has led to promotion of student learning and achievement of academic goals and objectives. The main areas that have been taken into account in this research paper include, development of curriculum and instructional strategies in secondary schools, analysis of the curriculum and instructional strategies in secondary schools, and types of curriculum and instructional strategies.

Keywords: Curriculum, Educators, Instruction, Secondary Education, Strategies, Students

Secondary education is the second stage in the system of public education usually initiating with class V or VI and ending with class X of a high school or XI or XII of a higher secondary school during which education is differentiated in varying degrees in accordance to the needs, requirements and interests of the students. In other words, in the secondary system of education, when the teachers are putting into operation the curriculum and instructional strategies, they need to take into account various factors, particularly in terms of students. These include, their needs and requirements, learning abilities, grade levels and academic goals. Secondary education is regarded as significant, because for about half of the students, who are entering it, it represents the terminal point of formal schooling. The education that the students acquire at this stage is vital for them in the adequate sustenance of their living conditions and for enhancing their career prospects (Chapter II. Secondary School Curriculum, n.d.).

The major significance of curriculum and instructional strategies that have been put into operation at this stage is highlighted in the fact that it bridges the gap between the general formation of the mind and personality, which school education is and the higher learning specializations, which are in colleges and universities. This stage is regarded as the benchmark of the school system and the forecaster of the learning futures of the university level education (Chapter II. Secondary School Curriculum, n.d.). Through the implementation of curriculum and instructional strategies in an adequate manner, one is able to enrich the system of education. This fact applies to not only secondary education, but all levels of education from nursery level to the

university level. Therefore, it can be stated that it is vital for the members of the schools to bring about transformations in curriculum and instructional strategies. These may prove to be favourable to the students as well as to the overall system of education.

DEVELOPMENT OF CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

The development of curriculum and instructional strategies is regarded as an indispensable aspect in not only secondary schools, but at all levels of education. It is comprehensively understood that when the educators will put into operation these strategies in a well-organized manner, they will be able to carry out their job duties satisfactorily and achieve the desired goals. The development and effective implementation of curriculum and instructional strategies helps in promoting student learning, leading to their effective growth and development, and enhancing the overall system of education. Therefore, it is vital for the educators to generate awareness in terms of procedures and methods that are necessary in developing curriculum and instructional strategies. The main aspects that need to be taken into account by the educators are, conducting research, augmenting their understanding in terms of various aspects, developing interactive abilities and communication skills and making use of technical and innovative methods.

In conducting research, they need to make use of technologies and internet in terms of curriculum and instructional strategies that are put into operation not only in schools in their communities, but also in other schools in other regions, cities and even countries. Teaching is an art and the teachers need to be skilled at this art. When they are teaching students, they need to make sure they implement the curriculum and instructional strategies in an effective manner and communicate well. Through internet, books, articles and other materials, the teachers are able to generate information in terms of the methods and approaches that need to be implemented to teach the students. Furthermore, there are numerous types of curriculum and instructional strategies. But the teachers need to implement the ones, which would prove to be suitable and worthwhile for the students. Therefore, it can be stated that conducting research in terms of various aspects would render a significant contribution in leading to development of curriculum and instructional strategies.

The teachers need to augment their understanding in terms of various aspects, when they are developing curriculum and instructional strategies. These aspects include, needs and requirements of the students, grade levels, subjects and concepts and overall system of education. The needs and requirements of the students are referred to their learning abilities and how would they like to understand the lesson plans. The implementation of these strategies also depend upon the grade levels of the students. This is apparent that subjects and concepts require different types of curriculum and instructional strategies. For example, solving calculations would require adequate practice. Whereas, lesson plans in English and Hindi, would require more of verbal explanations. The curriculum and instructional strategies not only aim to promote student learning, but they also aim to enhance the overall system of education. Therefore, it is vital to ensure that curriculum and instructional strategies prove to be worthwhile towards the overall system of education.

The educators need to develop interactive abilities and communication skills with other educators and administrators employed in other educational institutions as well. Communicating with them will help them to generate awareness in terms of modern, scientific and pioneering strategies. Furthermore, when they are to make decisions in terms of various strategies, they need to organize discussion meetings and seek ideas and suggestions from other members of the schools as well. The technical and innovative methods that are put into operation by the educators are, internet, computers, mobile technologies, models, charts, graphs, diagrams and so forth. These methods will enable them to acquire an efficient understanding of lesson plans and academic concepts, so they are able to make use of them in promoting student learning. Therefore, it can be stated that when the educators will generate awareness in terms of these aspects, they will be able to promote student learning in a well-organized manner.

ANALYSIS OF THE CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

An analytical study of the secondary school curriculum and instructional strategies in the present existence reveals a number of limitations in terms of planning, construction and realization of the purposes. These limitations are associated with the planning of the curriculum and instructional strategies, goals and objectives of education and the socio-cultural and political environments of the student population within the country. The major limitations that are identified in the curriculum and instructional strategies are stated as follows: (Chapter II. Secondary School Curriculum, n.d.).

Absence of Philosophical Thoughts – The philosophical thoughts aim to augment understanding among individuals in terms of their lives (Philosophical Questions, 2018). A philosophy, classification of beliefs, norms, standards and principles are essential in order to enrich the curriculum and instructional strategies in the system of secondary education. Such factors enable the educators to define the goals of education. But in the secondary school curriculum, the absence of philosophical thoughts is regarded as one of the important limitations. Apart from acquisition of academic concepts, it is vital for the students to generate information in terms of philosophical thoughts as well. For this purpose, it is vital for the teachers to put into practice the curriculum and instructional strategies in an appropriate manner.

Formulation of Academic Goals – Academic goals are referred to the statements of outcomes of education. In secondary schools, it is vital for all the members to be well-aware in terms of academic goals. Research has indicated that in some cases, the members of the schools, i.e. principals, head mistresses, teachers, staff members, and students are carrying out their job duties, but they are usually not aware in terms of what are the educational goals. Furthermore, unawareness in terms of academic goals also compel the members to remain unaware in terms of methods and strategies that are necessary to achieve those goals. Therefore, it can be stated that up-gradation of curriculum and instructional strategies can be brought about, when the academic goals will be formulated in a satisfactory manner.

Inability to Apply Academic Concepts to Practical Situations – The curriculum and instructional strategies demonstrates the inability on the part of the students to apply the academic concepts learned to practical situations. It is vital for the students to ensure that they should apply what they have learned in their practical lives as well. Learning should not only be limited to taking exams and getting a degree, but one needs to utilize the academic concepts in one's practical lives as well. The curriculum and instructional strategies are not based on the needs of various cultural environments of the student population. Therefore, inability on the part of the students to apply the concepts to practical situations is one of the major limitations.

Uniformity in Curriculum and Instructional Strategies – The uniformity in curriculum and instructional strategies in all secondary schools throughout the country is sociologically as well as psychologically unsound. The previous experience of the students in terms of the learning communities render a significant contribution in augmenting their learning and understanding. In other words, the curriculum and instructional strategies in secondary schools need to focus upon impartment of knowledge to the students in terms of various cultures. Awareness in terms of different cultures render a significant contribution in terms of meaningful learning. Hence, when there will be uniformity in curriculum and instructional strategies, then students will not be able to generate information in terms of different cultures, therefore, it is regarded as one of the important limitations.

Inability to Understand the Meaning of True Citizenship – One of the important objectives of secondary education is to enable the students to recognize the meaning of true citizenship and emerge into productive citizens of the country. When improvements are to be brought about in the curriculum and instructional strategies, it needs to be ensured that they take into account the concepts, which enable them to understand the meaning of true citizenship and turn out to be productive citizens of the country. Therefore, education needs to be utilized by the students to promote well-being of their families, communities and nation as a whole. Therefore, when the students are unable to understand the meaning of true citizenship, it is regarded as one of the major limitations.

Problems in Imparting Academic Knowledge – The enrichment will be brought about in the curriculum and instructional strategies, when teachers are aware of the methods and procedures that are to be implemented in an effective manner. There are number of problems taking place in impartment of academic knowledge. For example, when the teachers are teaching mathematics to the students, then apart from making use of textbooks, they need to make use of other learning materials to give them practice exercises. As one can master numerical problems through practice. Furthermore, the students need to learn how to make use of internet as well to augment their understanding. Therefore, it can be stated that utilization of technologies, books and other learning materials would render a significant contribution in overcoming the problems that may arise in imparting academic knowledge.

Inability in Meeting Basic Needs of Community Members – The schools need to pay adequate attention in meeting the basic needs of the community members. There is a two-way relationship between schools and communities. In other words, one should benefit from the other.

The curriculum and the instructional strategies need to be designed to meet the needs and requirements of the community members. In order to attain this objective, it is vital for the schools to function as community centres. In this manner, the material as well as the human resources will be able to mutually benefit. Such a scope is regarded as apparently light for the curriculum and instructional strategies, which have focused their attention upon the intellectual pursuits of the individuals. Therefore, it can be stated that inability of curriculum and instructional strategies in meeting the basic needs of the community members is a vital limitation.

Absence of Self-Sufficiency – Acquisition of education should promote self-sufficiency among the individuals. This is one of the goals of the students that when they are attending schools and are putting in their time and effort towards learning, then it should prove to be beneficial to them in attaining self-sufficiency. Research has indicated that in secondary education, the implementation of curriculum and instructional strategies have not proven to be worthwhile in promoting self-sufficiency among students. It is necessary to put into operation, the measures and approaches in terms of curriculum and instructional strategies that are focused towards promoting self-sufficiency among students.

Utilization of Resources – Utilization of resources can lead to up-gradation of the overall system of education. The development of curriculum and instructional strategies require the effective utilization of resources. The types of resources that need to be put into operation are, human resources, technical resources, financial resources and material resources. The human resources need to possess the essential knowledge, competencies and abilities. The technical resources include, technologies that are necessary to promote student learning and up-grade the system of education. The financial resources include the finances, these are regarded to be of utmost significance, as when any changes are to be implemented or any developments need to be made, it is vital to plan financial resources in an appropriate manner. Material resources include the tools, machines, equipment and other materials, which are needed to promote school functioning. Therefore, when utilization of resources is not carried out in an adequate manner, it is one of the major limitations in not only development of curriculum and instructional strategies but also in augmenting the overall system of secondary education.

Concept of Human Resource Development – In the implementation of curriculum and instructional strategies, it is vital to focus upon the concept of human resource development. In promoting human resource development, it is vital to take into account various factors. These include, development of knowledge and competencies, professionalism, personality traits, and one needs to be aware of duties and responsibilities. In the curriculum and instructional strategies, the factors that would enrich the concept of human resource development is lacking. Therefore, it is vital for the educators to ensure that when they are imparting knowledge and understanding to the students in terms of academic concepts, they should also focus upon development of personality traits and professionalism.

TYPES OF CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

The various types of curriculum and instructional strategies that are put into operation in the secondary system of education are stated as follows:

Accountable Conversation – In secondary schools, the students not only acquire an efficient understanding of the lesson plans and academic concepts through making use of various learning materials and listening to lectures given by their teachers, but they also need to get engaged in accountable conversations. These conversations facilitate their interaction with their fellow students. In this type of conversation, the students are exchanging ideas and suggestions. In this manner, they are making provision of support and assistance to each other in facilitating learning. Through getting engaged in accountable conversations, the students are not only acquiring an adequate understanding of the lesson plans and academic concepts, but they are also able to familiarise with their fellow students and enhance their communication skills. Therefore, it can be stated that accountable conversation is regarded as one of the important curriculum and instructional strategies.

Analysis of Student Work – After the teachers have provided knowledge to the students in terms of lesson plans, they need to give them class assignments, homework assignments and conduct tests. These strategies will enable them to identify how much the students have learned and whether the curriculum and instructional strategies have proven to be meaningful or not. In conducting an analysis of student work, it is vital for the teachers to augment their understanding in terms of various strategies and methods. The analysis of student work involves various features. These are, features of the lesson plans that are conducted by the teacher, individual feedback that is provided to the students by the teachers, discussion among small group of students, who are providing feedback to one another, discussion among teachers in terms of student work and assessment of the writing skills and abilities (Instructional Strategies List, 2015).

Conferencing – Conferencing is referred to the interaction that takes place among teachers and students. When the students experience setbacks and challenges in understanding academic concepts, then the teachers usually get engaged in conferencing with them. However, conferencing not only is put into practice in case of students, who are experiencing challenges, but it is also implemented in cases of students, who perform well academically. These students are able to retain their good performance as well as augment their understanding in terms of pioneering methods. The one-to-one conferencing with the students would help the teachers in identifying the limitations and what measures need to be put into operation to bring about improvements. When the teachers and students are getting engaged in conferences, they need to be well-prepared. In addition, the communication process needs to take place in an effective manner in terms of speaking, listening and getting feedback. Normally, records are maintained in terms of conferencing, which enables the teachers to provide solutions to problems faced by the students in terms of academic learning (Instructional Strategies List, 2015).

Co-operative Learning – In the case of co-operative learning, students form small groups in which they make provision of support and assistance to each other. In secondary education, students are usually required to work on projects. These projects can be individual as well as groups. When they are working on group projects, they need to implement co-operative learning. In this case, the tasks and responsibilities usually get divided among the students in accordance to their skills and abilities. In order to promote co-operative learning in an appropriate manner, there are various factors, which need to be taken into account by the students. These include, team

building, positive interdependence, group interaction, structured activity and individual accountability. Therefore, to promote co-operative learning as well as to do the projects in a well-organized manner, it is vital for the students to communicate in an effective manner and maintain good terms and relationships with each other.

Debates – Debate is regarded as the structured form of argumentations that requires the participants to get engaged in research, and develop listening, communication and critical thinking skills. In secondary schools, debates are organized in classrooms as well as there are competitions. When a topic is complicated and students are unable to acquire an efficient understanding of it, then classroom debates are organized, which enable them to understand it satisfactorily. When a topic is prominent, then there are organization of debate competitions as well in terms of it. The organization of debates is regarded as an important curriculum and instructional strategy. When the students participate in debates, they are also able to develop more confidence among themselves. Therefore, it can be stated that participation in debates have proven to be beneficial to the students to a major extent.

Direct Instruction – Direct instruction is a curriculum and instructional strategy, which focuses upon the instructional strategies that are put into operation by the teachers with the main objective of facilitating student learning. In the case of direct instruction, the teachers make use of various types of teaching materials, i.e. books, articles, notes, technologies, diagrams, charts, models and so forth. The teaching materials that are used in the case of direct instruction are dependent upon various factors. These include, academic subjects and concepts, grade levels of students, learning abilities and academic goals. In leading to effective implementation of direct instruction, it is vital on the part of the teachers to be well-prepared. On the other hand, the students need to pay attention when the teachers are teaching. Furthermore, direct instruction also involves putting into practice the question-answer sessions, checking for understanding, providing descriptions and giving feedback.

Inquiry-Based Learning – Inquiry-based learning is the learning that is based on the constructivist theories of learning. In this case, the knowledge is constructed from experience and process. This strategy takes into account the range of approaches, methods and strategies. These include, field-work, case studies, investigations, and individual and group projects. When the teachers implement this strategy, the students develop questions. Research has indicated that it is vital for the students to communicate with the teachers and clarify their doubts. When the students will clarify their doubts, then the teachers will form the viewpoint that they are taking interest and learning. It is the job duty of the teachers to put into operation the inquiry-based learning and encourage the students to participate. On the other hand, when the students participate in an effective manner, they are able to benefit from inquiry-based learning.

Speeches, Presentations and Seminars – In secondary education, there are organization of speeches, presentations and seminars. Their main objective is to augment the knowledge and understanding among students in terms of various topics and concepts. In these speeches, presentations and seminars, all the members of the school are required to participate. These include, principals, head-mistresses, teachers, staff members and students. Apart from these

individuals, guest-speakers are invited from various organizations as well from other schools. The major advantage of speeches, presentations and seminars is, the members of the school are able to develop interaction and generate awareness in terms of various factors. In some cases, there are organization of cultural performances as well. In this manner, the students are able to depict their talents and creative skills as well. Therefore, it can be stated that organization of speeches, presentations and seminars are regarded to be rendering a significant contribution in leading to up-gradation of curriculum and instructional strategies.

Homework and Practice – Homework and practice are regarded as one of the indispensable curriculum and instructional strategies that need to be implemented on a regular basis. The teachers need to give homework assignments to the students at the end of each lesson plan. When they are given homework assignments, the students are able to identify how much they have learned. Whereas, teachers too are able to detect, whether the teaching-learning methods have proven to be favourable or not. The lesson plan gets completed, after the students have acquired its efficient understanding and this can be ascertained with giving of homework assignments. Practice is regarded as another important strategy that needs to be implemented by the students in order to master the content and lesson plans. After the teachers have provided knowledge to the students in terms of lesson plans, particularly involving numerical calculations, then they encourage the students to get engaged in adequate practice. Therefore, it can be stated that homework and practice are regarded as important strategies in achievement of educational goals.

Implementation of Writing Techniques – It is vital for the teachers to train the students in terms of writing techniques. In secondary education, when the students put into operation the writing techniques in an appropriate manner, they are able to achieve the desired grades. When the students are writing answers in terms of subjects, such as, English, Hindi, science, and social science, in some cases, the answers are short, whereas, in other cases, the answers are long. But they need to ensure they write facts. When writing answers, they need to ensure that they provide adequate answers to the questions and not provide information that is not required. The teachers do give instructions in terms of implementation of writing techniques in an appropriate manner. Therefore, it can be stated that implementation of writing techniques in a satisfactory manner is regarded as one of the important strategies required in facilitating student learning and achievement of academic goals.

Subject or Discipline Centred – The curriculum and instructional strategies need to be subject as well as discipline centred (Types of Curriculum Models, 2020). The different types of subjects that are taught to the students in secondary schools are, mathematics, English, Hindi, science, social science and extra-curricular and creative activities. In all these subjects, the curriculum and instructional strategies that are put into operation are different. For instance, when the teachers are training students in terms of mathematics, they need to impart information in terms of calculations and give practice exercises to the students. Whereas, when they are imparting students, information in terms of English lesson plans, they either read themselves or make the students read and provide explanations. But the main objective of every type of curriculum and instructional strategies is to make sure that students are able to acquire an adequate understanding of the lesson plans.

Demonstration – Demonstration is regarded as one of the most efficacious and worthwhile curriculum and instructional strategies. This is applicable mostly in the case of science subjects. When the teachers are providing information to the students in the case of science subjects, they need to demonstrate the experiments in the laboratories. In secondary schools, there are laboratories in schools in terms of science subjects of chemistry, physics and biology. When the teachers are demonstrating experiments, the students usually observe and take down notes. Then for the next class, they need to come prepared and demonstrate the experiments under the supervision of the teachers. When the students are able to successfully demonstrate the experiments, the teachers form the viewpoint that their teaching-learning methods and instructional strategies have proven to be worthwhile. Therefore, it can be stated that demonstration is regarded as one of the indispensable curriculum and instructional strategies, particularly in science subjects.

Problem-Based Learning – Problem-based learning begins with the teacher assigning an open-ended problem with more than one variable solution. Students are then required to investigate the problem in small groups with supervision from teachers. There are variations in terms of problem-based learning in length from one class to another, depending upon the complexity of the problem (What are Instructional Strategies? 2020). This learning proves to be helpful and worthwhile to the students in the development of problem-solving abilities. In all subjects, there are case studies, which require the students to conduct an analysis of the problems and in implementing solutions. Problem-based learning has been put into operation at all levels of education. In some cases, this learning is not manageable, but the teachers are required to provide adequate training to the students in terms of honing their problem-solving skills. The up-gradation of these skills also enables the students to provide solutions to problems that have been experienced in practical life.

Giving Presentations – Giving presentations in terms of lesson plans is similar to giving lectures. Normally, the teachers give presentations through technologies or through making use of books, articles and other reading materials. When they are making use of materials, other than technologies, the students are required to take down notes. Whereas, when they are giving presentations through technologies, such as, PowerPoint presentations, then they either give hand-outs or email the students. In this case, the students are unable to take down complete notes as some slides contain large amount of materials as well as charts and diagrams. When the students are evaluated by the teachers, then too they are required to give presentations. Therefore, it can be stated that organization of presentations is regarded as one of the indispensable curriculum and instructional strategies in facilitating student learning as well as in achieving academic goals.

Organization of Activities – The organization of various activities is also regarded as one of the indispensable curriculum and instructional strategies that are put into operation by the teachers in terms of various subjects to augment student learning. In some subjects the activities are enjoyable and arouse motivation among students towards learning, whereas, in other cases, the students may find them tedious, particularly when they are complicated and time consuming. It is vital for the teachers to impart training to the students in terms of implementation of activities by giving an example. After they have understood them efficiently, they may carry them out in class or for homework. The activities may be carried out either in groups or on individual basis. The

different types of activities that have been put into operation in terms of different subjects are, group discussions, quick write-ups, think-pair-share, quick draw, gallery walk, making of charts, posters, diagrams and so forth. In the impartment of lesson plans in terms of English and Hindi, the teachers may put into practice role play activities.

CONCLUSION

The curriculum and instructional strategies is regarded as one of the indispensable factors in not only secondary education, but at all levels of education. It is vital for the educators to invest the resources and focus upon the development of curriculum and instructional strategies. With advancements taking place and with the advent of modernization and globalization, there have been utilization of modern, scientific and innovative methods in teaching and learning. In conducting an analysis of the curriculum and instructional strategies in secondary schools, the major limitations that are identified are, absence of philosophical thoughts, formulation of academic goals, inability to apply academic concepts to practical situations, uniformity in curriculum and instructional strategies, inability to understand the meaning of true citizenship, problems in imparting academic knowledge, inability in meeting basic needs of community members, absence of self-sufficiency, utilization of resources and concept of human resource development. Furthermore, in the development of curriculum and instructional strategies, the members of the schools experience various limitations. They need to formulate various measures, approaches and methods that aim to overcome these limitations.

The educators of the schools need to conduct research, augment their understanding in terms of various aspects, develop interactive abilities and communication skills and make use of technical and innovative methods to lead to development of curriculum and instructional strategies. The different types of curriculum and instructional strategies are, accountable conversation, analysis of student work, conferencing, co-operative learning, debates, direct instruction, inquiry-based learning, speeches, presentations and seminars, homework and practice, implementation of writing techniques, subject or discipline centred, demonstration, problem-based learning, giving presentations, and organization of activities. In secondary schools in urban as well as in rural communities, these curriculum and instructional strategies are put into operation. In urban schools, normally more than one is implemented, but in rural schools, accountable conversation and analysis of student work is implemented. There is a need to bring about improvements in these strategies in rural schools. Finally, it can be stated that development of curriculum and instructional strategies is regarded to be of utmost significance and needs to pay attention on a regular basis to enrich the system of secondary education.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Chapter II. (n.d.). Secondary School Curriculum as the Basis of Restructuring. Retrieved May 18, 2020 from shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in

Instructional Strategies List. (2015). An Evidence-based Strategy. Washoe County School District. Retrieved May 18, 2020 from washoeschools.net

Vol. 3, Issue II, Apr-Jun, 2019

<http://bharatpublication.com/journal-detail.php?jID=35/IJLML>

Philosophical Questions. (2018). Retrieved May 18, 2020 from conversationstartersworld.com

Types of Curriculum Models. (2020). Retrieved May 19, 2020 from study.com

What are Instructional Strategies? – Types and Examples. (2020). Retrieved May 19, 2020 from study.com