# The Place of Evaluation in the Curriculum Process

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*Abstract*

*Education is a process of acquiring necessary knowledge, attitude, wisdom and skills that are essential for the development of individual and that of the nation. The purpose of education is to acquire knowledge that will make an individual live successfully. An important programme for achieving effective education is the curriculum. Curriculum is a planned, organised learning opportunities meant to be imparted to the learners under the guidance of the school in order to bring about the desirable change in the learner's behaviour. It is the body of knowledge developed to guide the teachers and the learners to achieve the goals of education. However, to achieve the learning opportunities, the curriculum is broken down into objective, content, learning experience and evaluation. All these are carefully selected. The objective is the statement of intended learning outcome out of which content would be selected to be able to organise the learning experience and then evaluation. This is done to meet the aspiration of the society, but an evaluation has to be built into the whole process. Apart from this, the curriculum itself needs to be evaluated. Therefore, the study examined the place of evaluation in the curriculum process. It was revealed that evaluation form an integral part of the curriculum process and it is meant to place value on the worth of the curriculum to know whether the curriculum is achieving the purpose. Also, making consent evaluation of the curriculum will enable the curriculum planners in achieving educational goals.*

**Keywords:** curriculum, curriculum process, learning outcome, evaluation, curriculum evaluation.

## Introduction

Education is a process of transmitting the norms and values of the society from one generation to the other to achieve a total development which will bring about a change in the human behaviour. UKessays (2018) explains that education is the transmission of certain attitude, knowledge and skills to the members of a society through formal systematic training. It is an instrument to achieve a permanent change in one's behaviour. Education is also a process of acquiring necessary knowledge, attitude, wisdom and skill that are essential for the development of

individual and that of the nation. Williams and McGwern (2011) described education as a social institution through which a society's children are taught basic academic knowledge, learning skills and cultural norms. In the view of Njegere (2014), Education meant to assist the society to achieve its needs and aspiration which is national cohesion and integration. It is a virile instrument to success and empowerment. Equally, Ayodele and Oyinloye (2019) noted that education is a systematic process through which an individual is introduced to all sphere of life that exists in society such as economic, social, moral, political, intellectual and a set of behaviour, attitude and value. Every society takes education very seriously. The major purpose of education is to acquire knowledge that will make an individual live successfully and this knowledge is supposed to be from one generation to the next. Education broadened our minds and widened our experiences and build us to be a good citizen. The formal system of education employs the use of curriculum as blue print to achieve the desire behaviour.

**What is Curriculum?**

Curriculum is a planned, organised learning opportunities meant to be imparted to the learners under the guidance of the school in order to bring desirable changes in the learner's behaviour. Tanner and Tanner (1975) defined curriculum as the planned and guided learning experiences and intended learning outcomes formulated through the systematic reconstruction of knowledge and experiences under the auspices of the school for the learners continuous and wilful growth in personal-social competence. It is the entire course designed for a particular level of students of which they must attain in order to meet the requirements of certain level of education. Curriculum is all the learning program that students expected to fulfil under the guidance and supervision of the school for the wholistic development of the students.

A curriculum can be called a plan for learning which contains assumptions about the purpose of education in our society (Anit, 2019). Curriculum is an important blueprint with which the school educates the younger ones to a desirable status. A major concern of curriculum is how education can be achieved and the way of achieving it. Often times, curriculum is likened to the list of offered subjects in the school which includes sciences, humanities, social sciences and the likes. All these notwithstanding, can also include all the individual students learning experiences. Tyler (1949) defined curriculum as all the learning of students which is planned by and directed by the school to attain its educational goals. The curriculum is very important in an educational system. It helps one to plan the education process and procedure for a given period of time (Osarenren, 2019). It is a planned learning activity which students are to undergo in order to achieve the educational goals. Curriculum provides the teachers, students, administrators and community, stakeholders with a measurable planned structure for achieving a quality education (Alex, 2008).

In planning curriculum, Tylers (1949) designed certain questions that are very germane and needed to be answered in a bid to guide learning and to achieve educational goals. These questions are;

- What educational purpose should the school seek to attain?
- What educational learning experiences can be provided that are likely to attain these purposes?
- How can these educational experiences be effectively organised?
- How can we determine whether these purposes are being attained?

In Tylers' view, it is highly essential to set up a goal which is the objective. Objective is the statement of intent. This is the expectation of the society from learning or schooling. The second question bothers on selecting the learning experience that will suite the purpose of education while the third question asked about the process and method of organising the selected learning experience. The fourth question is based on how the worth of the stated objective can be determined. These explain that in organising the curriculum, considerations should be on what the school is meant for, which is the purpose of learning, what are the prescribed subjects to be learnt by the learners, the means and method of learning the subjects, the learning materials that will be involved, the teachers' method of imparting the subjects and also mean and method of evaluating the learning activities.

Universally, the scope of the curriculum focuses on the objectives, selection of the learning experience, organisation of the learning experience and the assessment of the learning outcome.

**Objective**

Objective entails what is to be done. Curriculum objective describes the goals which the educational process is directed. It is the learning that is to result from instruction (Education Encyclopaedia, 2020). It is the changes that one expects after learning might have taken place. Objective serves as road map to meet the needs of the society. It gives direction towards achieving virile learning. It is what an individual intends to achieve within the speculated time which should be observable and measurable. The curriculum objective undertakes the responsibility of given direction to educational plan. Objective assists in selecting the learning experience for proper interaction between the learner, the teacher and the learning environment.

Linda (2020) explains that objectives are statement that described the end points or desired outcome of the curriculum. The objective can be sourced from the learners' perspective, studies from the society as regards the individual needs, the values and needs of the society. Apart from this, other sources include the philosophical, sociological, economic, political and religious factors. All these are studied together to reflect the aspiration of a nation. Objective should focus on achievement of cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains. The second stage of the curriculum process is the selection of learning experience or content.

**Selection of content**

Content is the amount of knowledge, skills, attitude and values that learners are expected to learn. Contents are the compendium of knowledge that learners are to learn in classroom. Curriculum contents simply means the totality of what is to be taught in the school system that is, the facts, principles and concepts to be taught (Hyattractions, 2016). Ayodele and Oyinloye (2019) explained that the content of the curriculum contains activities which if adequately executed, would develop student's intelligence and personality to a reasonable level. It is a fact that, what learners learn is very important. The content forms the basis of what the learners will be exposed to in the process of learning. In the curriculum process, it is the objective that guide the selection of the content and learning experience.

The content must definitely lead to the achievement of the educational goals. The dual compliments each other. The content is an effective element in the process of curriculum development (Madadlou and Charaini, 2014).

The content always come in form of subjects or discipline; subjects can then be broken down to structures for easy learning. Selecting content is important for the learners to develop their own skills which they need to achieve the purpose of education.

There are certain factors that should be considered in selecting the content, they are, factor of validity, this means, the content must be authentic and valid. The factor of significance which means it has to be relevant, the factor of interest that is the content must be interesting to the learners, learners must derive interest in what they are learning. Linked (2013) explained that what we teach should respond to the needs and interest of the learners. Also, content must be learnable by the learners. For the curriculum to achieve its aim, contents have to be selected. It is recommended that the selection has to consider certain criteria such as validity, that is, it has to be authentic, the criterion of significance that is the selected content must be based on facts and be appropriate. The criterion of interest is very important, for effective learning to take place, the learning and the content must be interesting so as to hold the attention of the learners. The content also must be learnable in relation to the age and the level of the learners.

**Selection and Organisation of Learning Experience**

Learning experience refers to any interaction, course, programme or other experience in which learning takes place. The learning experience are ways students encounter contents. It is the outcome of learning as a result of interaction between the teacher and the learners in line with the educational objectives, the learner has to be provided with the learning experiences that can be used to achieve the stated objective. This will be based on the contents provided by the curriculum. (Satyaberata, 2019) refers to learning experience as course, interaction, programme and other experiences that facilitate learning. Learning experience is a deliberate planned experience in selected situation where students actively participated, interact and which results in the change of behaviour in students (Jayesh, 2019).

Ayodele and Oyinloye (2019) noted that the learning experience is the interaction between the teacher, the learner and the learning environment if the content is selected but not well organised, the curriculum may not be able to achieve its purpose, which is the objectives.

The learning experience should be selected in such a way that will provide intellectual and enough opportunity that will enable the learners to develop intellectually and be able to acquire skills and sustainability. The learning experience are mostly acquired through direct experience, vicarious experience and symbolic experience. It is expected of a teacher to organise the learning experience effectively in order to guide the learners to learn and be able to achieve the aims and goals of education.

The interaction should be manifested in cognitive, affective and psychomotor domain. If instruction is well organised, learning will be well coordinated and this will provide perfect understanding of the content (Mohabub, retrieved 2020), when learning is organised, learners will easily link the previous knowledge to the new learning. Through the learning experience, the teacher breaks the learning to learnable units for easy understanding. Learning experience can be organised either horizontally or vertically. In making horizontal learning, material contents and learning experience are arranged to align with relevant subjects while in the case of vertical learning, contents are

arranged in order of relevance. Organising learning experience entails grouping the learning according to subject heads such as, the normal school subjects, mathematics, English, history and others.

Learning experience can as well be broken into appropriate level or class of teaching. Learning experience also needs to be arranged sequentially in such that one aspect link with the other so that learners can learn effectively.

## Evaluation

Evaluation means placing judgement or value on something or making an assessment. Ayodele (2015) described evaluation as a means of knowing the effectiveness of instruction as represented by the extent to which the actual outcome corresponds with the intended outcome. Tyler (1949) stated that evaluation is a process that seek to determine the extent at which the educational objectives of educational programme or a curriculum are actually being attained. Tyler in his view stressed that, the achievement of outcome is very essential and paramount in relation with the stated goals and objectives in which outcome should be related to the stated goals to determine if there is any discrepancy which could lead to judgement.

To evaluate mean to characterise the worth or value of something, a method of determining the extent to which established goals or objectives have been achieved (Priyamvada Saarsar, 2015). Philip Crompton (1999) described evaluation as the collection of analysis and interpretation of information about any aspect of a programme of education or training as part of a recognised process of judging its effectiveness, its efficiency and other outcomes it may have. Evaluation is a way of measuring the total outcome of learning (Ellington, Perceval and Race, 1998). This includes determining the extent of the usage of curriculum. Evaluation is very important because it cut across all the activities of learning including the teacher, the learners and the programme itself.

## Essence of Evaluation

The essence of evaluation is for the improvement of the programme. Specifically, Seyed (2016) enumerated certain uses of evaluation such as;

- Provide feedback to all stakeholders.
- Improvement of educational process.
- Certification of the learners' competency.
- Provide data to meet accreditation requirement.
- Assessment of the cost of delivery.

## Evaluating the process of curriculum

Evaluation is not only used to assess the students learning outcome. It is used to evaluate each of the process of the curriculum.

## Evaluating the objective

Basically, the process of the curriculum needs to be evaluated right from the objective. Objective is the statement of intent. The essence of stating the objective is to be able to achieve the goal of education. Objective

needs to be specific, be relevant, measurable and achievable. Evaluation of the objective is needed in order to estimate the intended statement to know whether it is adequate and relevant to what is has been planned for.

Evaluation is used to clarify and modify the objective. Evaluation of objective is needed in order to reveal whether the objective take care of the domain of education which are affective, cognitive and psychomotor as well as relating the statement towards the achievement of the general goals of education. This will help to avoid pitfall. A good curriculum goal has its peculiarities and is multidimensional hence curriculum specialists and interested others should determine and express curriculum goal very cautiously (Olajide, 2018).

**Evaluating the content**

Evaluation is also important in measuring the content or the subject matter. Content is very important in the process of the curriculum. Content is the body of knowledge that learners should learn for the modification of the learners' behaviour. This include all the educational experiences to be provided for learning to take place. Evaluating the content will be able to determine the depth of this knowledge, the relevance of the knowledge to the society and to the learners. It will reveal the learnability, feasibility and how significant the content is. Drawing content need constant reference to the objective of which evaluation is put in place to consider this. Content need evaluation to determine the coverage of the facts and skills to be learnt. If proper attention is not given to the content, it will mar the stated objective and goal not been achievable.

**Evaluating the learning experience and learning process**

Learning experience refers to any interaction, course, programme or other experience in which learning takes place (Great School Partnership, 2013). It is defined as any specifiable means of controlling and manipulating the sequence of events to produce required behavioural modification in learners (Onasanya, 2018). This is the interpretation of the curriculum. It is the process of assisting the learners to acquire the body of knowledge, facts and values earlier developed in the content of the curriculum. Students learn through the various exposure and encounter in the school, in order to make education relevant and work towards achieving the goals of education.

In view of this, curriculum has to be brought into limelight. The main purpose of stating the learning experience is to impart knowledge and learners should be given maximum learning opportunities. This demands good interaction. Interaction is the integral part of the learning experience, and to achieve a meaningful learning, the teacher must constantly focus on the stated objective and relate it towards achieving the educational goals.

This learning experience is supposed to be planned ahead the classroom interaction. Satyabrata (2019) stated that learning experience is focused on creating an experience that will lead to a desired learning outcome, hence, the most reliable way to design an effective learning experience is to work backward from the desired outcome. Also, Tripathi and Kumar (2018) stated that effective teaching involves articulating explicit expectations regarding learning objective and policies.

Learning experience must include; teachers' effectiveness, instructional delivery, utilisation of resources which will promote concrete and meaningful learning. Teachers should work towards sustaining the interest of the learners. Abimbola (2009) opined that the presence of a live teacher is important in teaching who should know better

than his students. Learning experience should be stated clearly to indicate the effort of the teacher towards achieving the three domains of learning which are affective, cognitive and psychomotor domains through the classroom interaction.

All these should be arranged for proper instructional delivery and interaction which should be between the teacher, the learners and the learning materials. The selected learning experience must take care of the individual learning differences. If these are not done properly, the process of learning can be distorted. Evaluating the learning experience will serve as a sort of improvement in facilitating the implementation of the curriculum. It will also reveal the amount of learning that are emphasised, it will improve the teachers' effectiveness and efficiency and enable them to co-ordinate the activities of learning.

**Evaluating the learning outcome**

Learning outcome is the actual behaviour exhibit by the learners as a result of being exposed to the learning experience. Thomas (2016) described learning outcome as a measurable result of a learning experience which allows us to ascertain to which extent or level/standard a competence has been formed or achieved. Suvin (2019) equally stated that, learning outcome is measurable, skills, abilities, knowledge or valuables that students demonstrate as a result of completing a given course or class. It is an evident that learning has taken place or not. It is the attainment of stated objectives. Learning outcome involves ability of the students to understand the content of the curriculum as passed across through the estimated learning experience through the classroom instruction. These are revealed by the behaviour that the learners are able to demonstrate at the end of the lesson. It includes successful achievement, acquisition of socially, morally desirable intellectual skills, ability to organise information, to solve problems, comprehend the content, engage in critical thinking and analyse instruction, being able to find answer to certain questions arising from the content taught. An in-depth understanding of a particular subject (Geoff Lawson, 1980).

These activities are very important for the learners in order to build his/her personality and be able to compete with peers in the society, and more importantly to meet the goals of education. These can only be revealed through evaluation to determine whether the required objectives have succeeded. The evaluation can be done during the extent at which the learners follow the instruction which is formative. It can as well be done at the end of the lesson to ascertain whether the pre-specified objectives have been achieved. This is summative, if learners are not able to exhibit all these favourably, it becomes a problem.

The circle needs to be revisited based on these evaluations, the teachers might modify the learning objectives, course content, structure and format of course and adjust the teaching accordingly.

**Evaluating all the process of curriculum**

Objective

Evaluation

Instruction content

Evaluation

Learning experience

Evaluation

Learning outcome.
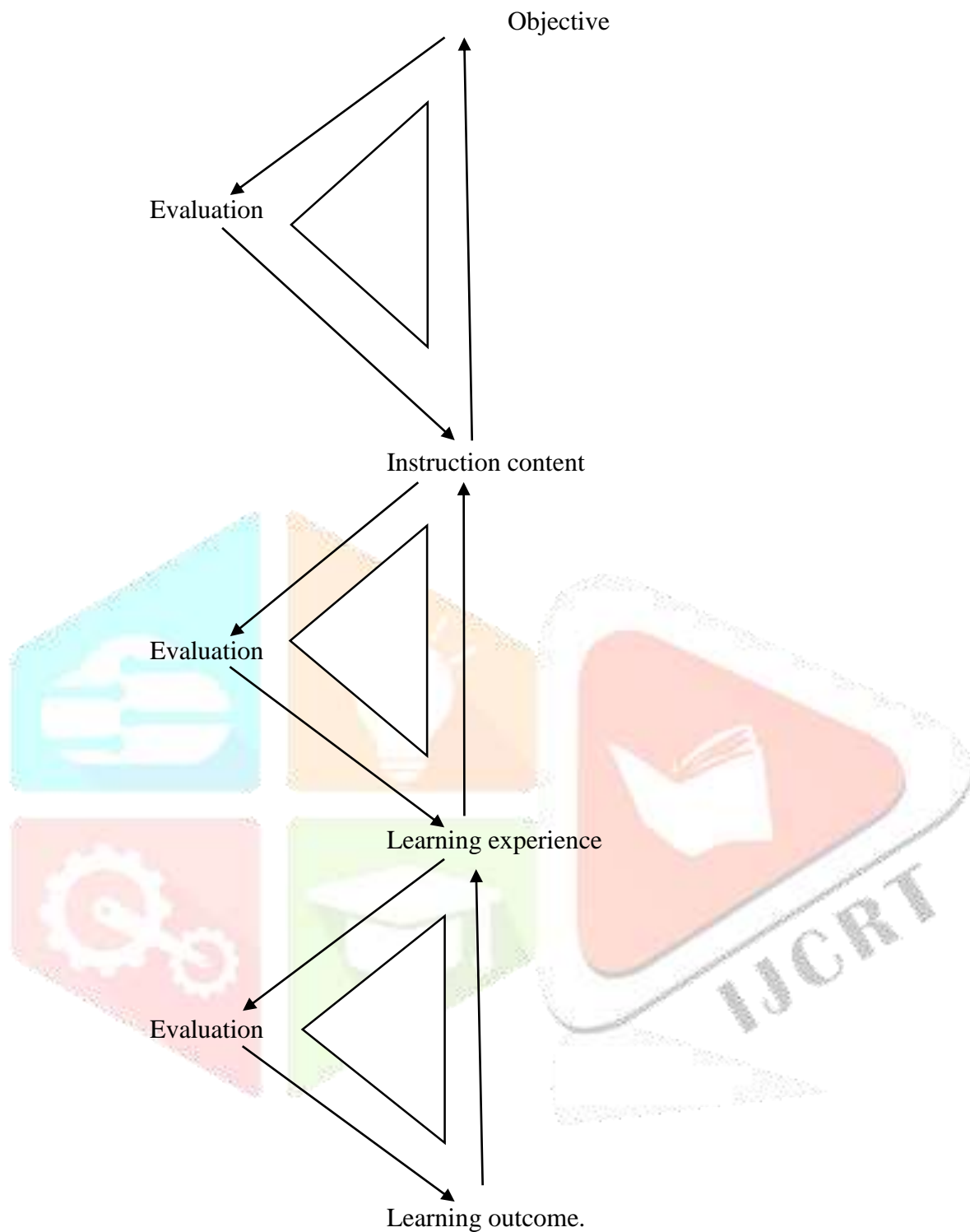
**The linking continues this way.**

**Essence of evaluating the curriculum as a programme**

A further step is the evaluation of the curriculum as a whole. Curriculum evaluation is a component of curriculum development that responds to public accountability, establishing the worth and merit of a curriculum (Alicia, 2016). In this situation, emphasis is on the programme. The evaluation of the curriculum is meant to satisfy the parents on the process of education. Education is a core value of our democratic society and it is in everyone's self-interest to ensure that all children receive a quality education (NEA Policy Brief, 2008). The information will enable parents to have confidence in the curriculum. Evaluating the curriculum will enable and assist the teachers

about the safety of their job. Ibe retrieved 2020, stated that, evaluation is to ensure that the curriculum is effective in promoting and improved quality of students learning.

If the programme is not working well, teachers' job might be at stake. They are fulfilled if the knowledge they impart on the students is tilt towards the achievement of educational goal. Evaluating the curriculum provides feedback to the curriculum planners on the extent of the adequacy of the curriculum and if need be, make adjustment. Wiki user (2014) stressed that the main purpose of curriculum evaluation is to ensure that it is not static but constantly changing according to the needs and demands of the society and that the new curriculum should fulfil the needs of the changing society.

**Conclusion**

Curriculum is a programme which the school educate the young ones. It is meant to provide total and all-embracing education for the learners. This is done through a carefully formulated objective, content, learning experience in order to achieve the expected learning outcome. Therefore, evaluating the curriculum is very germane in order to determine the worth and value of the curriculum. Also, to know the extent of the usage of the curriculum and to determine the extent of the achievement of the objectives, so as to achieve the goals of education.

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