

Principles of Curriculum Construction

It is essential to keep the following principles in mind while constructing the curriculum for economics :

1. Principle of Flexibility : The curriculum should be diverse and flexible so that it can be adjusted as per students' interests, differences, attitudes, aptitudes and needs. No effort should be made to impose uninteresting and unsuitable subjects on them, which can result in only despair and hinders their natural development. On the contrary, there are wide areas of knowledge, skill and evaluation into whose ambit, student should be brought. Therefore, the curriculum should include these elements on priority basis. They should be included in such measure that they may not protrude over students' abilities.

2. Principle of Comprehensiveness : According to the modern thinking of education, by curriculum is not meant only theoretical subjects which are taught traditionally. The curriculum includes all those experiences also which a child receives by different activities. These activities are performed at school, classroom, library, laboratory, workshop, playground and numerous teacher-pupil informal contacts. Thus, the whole school life is the curriculum.

3. **Principle of Motivation** : The curriculum should motivate student. If a curriculum does not motivate students to learn themselves, then it can never meet its purposes. A curriculum cannot motivate students unless it is based on their interests, desires, aspirations, abilities and capabilities. Besides, it should be psychological in nature. Such a curriculum can be constructed by a child psychologist. If a curriculum overlooks these principles, then students will not take interest in lessons, but will keep sitting in the classroom in teacher's terror. They would never take part in classroom activities, and would be reduced to mere passive listeners. He will feel bored up with the class work and thus a gap will be created between student and school, which will be difficult to bridge.

4. **Principle of Utility** : One of the important principles of curriculum construction is that the subjects included in the curriculum should be useful for the future life of students. In this connection, **Nunn** has opined that a common man generally wants that his child learns some useless things for the show of knowledge, but in the whole he desires that he should be taught what is useful for the future life.

5. **Principle of Inclusion of Life Activities** : Effort should be made while constructing the curriculum to include all those activities which can develop the health, thought, knowledge, skill, evaluation, expression, character and social and economic relationships. Because we have accepted the principle of democracy, the curriculum should be so constructed that the child learns to live a democratic life from the very beginning. So, it is necessary that such activities should be included in the curriculum which develop democratic attitude and concepts. So, the curriculum should be helpful in democratic adjustment.

6. **Principle of Activity** : Educationists think that four H's should be included in the curriculum; they are : **Health, Head, Hand and Heart**. According to pragmatism, the curriculum should integrate hand and head, because the child is active by his nature; so it is necessary that he should be kept active by the medium of various activities in the curriculum.

7. **Principle of Interrelation with Play-Work Activities** : It is important to include the principle of interrelation of work and play in curriculum construction. All activities have some purpose behind them. Generally, play is associated with entertainment or joy, while it may not be so with work activities. Thus, activity is a process of gaining learning. The learning activities should be made so interesting that children can learn them naturally. **Crow and Crow** have written that those who direct the learning process, should aim at planning such cognitive activities which can include the element of play in them.

8. **Principle of Individual Differences** : The curriculum makers should pay specific attention to the following two types of needs :

- (a) Self needs, which stimulate an individual to work.
- (b) Those needs which the adults think are necessary for children.

Besides the above, the need of security of the individual should be kept in view.

9. **Principle of Learning Capability** : The learning capability of different student is different keeping their chronological age and mental age. Children in 3-4 years age group have a limited attention scope while older children have a wider attention

scope. The capability for generalisation varies with level of a student. Therefore, the difference of capabilities should be kept in view while constructing the curriculum. Ellis has mentioned the following differences in learning capabilities of children and adults :

Child

1. Understanding of concrete objects.
2. Understanding of definite points.
3. Understanding of general points.
4. Scope of attention is limited.
5. Slow rate of perception.
6. Slow rate of thinking.
7. Rote memory.
8. Tendency to imitate.
9. Direct responses.
10. Sensory observation.

Adult

1. Understanding of abstract things.
2. Understanding of general rules.
3. Understanding of complex rules.
4. Scope of attention is wider.
5. Rapid rate of perception.
6. Rapid rate of thinking.
7. Logical memory.
8. Original tendency.
9. Mental processes.
10. Logical observation.

10. Principle of Relationship with Community Life : The curriculum should be related with the community life. The curriculum should analyse important characteristics of this life and the students should be brought into contact with some important activities of it. It entails that productive tasks should be given important place in the curriculum, because this is the basis of systematic human life. Besides, local needs and circumstances should be kept in view in the curriculum.

11. Principle of Forgetting : While constructing the curriculum, the following points should be kept in view :

- (a) **Ebbinghaus** has mentioned lack of exercise or disuse as the main reason for forgetting. Therefore, the curriculum should include elements of repeating the content from time-to-time.
- (b) Forgetting is also due to rote memory. The research has proved that the things in rote memory can be forgotten quicker than those in logical memory. Therefore, those things should be scarce included in the curriculum which are based only on rote memory, and more space should be created for those based on logical memory, because they can be retained over a long period of time.

12. Principle of Interference : According to **Muller**, learning several different things together or learning two different things which have something in common also results in forgetting. This principle was laid down by **Muller, Woodworth** etc. Therefore, the content should be so restricted that several different things are little taught together. Two different but having several common elements should be placed together in a curriculum.

13. Principle of Balanced Development : Balanced development of personality is the chief aim of education. Economics can contribute effectively only when its curriculum is based on the principle of balanced development. This balance should be maintained from three viewpoints. **One**, different subjects included under economics in a balanced manner. **Secondly**, balance should be maintained for the information received from Economics and the attitudes, skills and aptitudes developed from them, that is, only historical, geographical and other information should not be filled to the brim; but different skills, attitudes and activities should be included in it which are related to personality development. **Thirdly**, different activities included in the curriculum should be balanced; that is, the curriculum should not be bookish only; rather it should include different types of activities too and a balance should be maintained in them.

14. Principle of Need : The curriculum should be constructed as per the needs of children. Their needs will vary as per their civilisation, culture and stages of development. Also, their needs vary as per the encompassing social, political, economic and religious environment and their own capabilities. Therefore, a child's needs should be made the basis of curriculum construction. **Elicker** and his associates have studied students' needs, and have listed out the following ten important needs :

- ◆ Cultivation of sales skills, understanding and attitude for success of economics.
- ◆ To cultivate health and physical suitability and to construct suitable habits to retain this capability.
- ◆ To acquaint students with rights and duties of citizens, and to understand their aptitudes.
- ◆ To understand necessary situations for success in family life.
- ◆ To know suitable situations and methods to become an intelligent consumer.
- ◆ To know those methods by which modern life can be made successful.
- ◆ To cultivate moral understanding.
- ◆ To cultivate logical thinking.
- ◆ To cultivate aesthetic sense.
- ◆ To make use of leisure for individual and social well-being.

On the basis of above discussion, we can say that the curriculum should be constructed on the basis of needs of a child as linked with his future life.

15. Principle of Broadness : The curriculum should be broad, and should not be limited to only books, classrooms and libraries. The knowledge of economics should not be restricted to only textbooks and class teaching, as has been mentioned before. Economics should be taught from the entire academic environment.

✓ We can also analyse broadness from another viewpoint. The curriculum should not be based on narrow considerations. The curriculum should be so constructed that the sensitivities or faith of anyone is not hurt, nor should it mock at anyone. This would help to broaden the viewpoint of students.

Demerits of Present Curriculum of Economics