ADVANCED DIPLOMA IN EDUCATION

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION (ECE)

ECE 103:   CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

UNIT ONE: AN ANALYSIS OF THE CONCEPT OF CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

INTRODUCTION

Early childhood curriculum is a recent phenomenon. In fact its rediscovery can be traced back to the 1990 World Conference on Education For All in Jomtien, Thailand. In this unit, we will survey and compare the different definitions of the term curriculum and arrive at one definition that suits early childhood education. We will also identify and describe different types of curricula, noting the salient characteristics of early childhood education in particular. An emphasis on developmental curriculum is made with a description of its components and its dynamics in early childhood education.

OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit the learner should be able to:

1.   define or explain the term curriculum;

2.   compare Phenix's definition of curriculum with that of Lewis and Miel;

3.   identify and describe the different types of curricula;

4.   identify the salient characteristics of early child-hood curriculum;

5.   list the components of a developmental curriculum; and

6.   distinguish among the official, actual and the hidden curricula.

THE CONCEPT OF CURRICULUM

In its simplistic form the term curriculum as used by the non-professional, consists of a course of study or the written outline of the topics of contents in a particular subject matter such as Science, or Mathematics or English Language. Early definitions of the curriculum have emphasized all the experiences under the auspices of the school i.e. as the organized pattern of the school's educational program and describe the subject matter of instruction, the method of instruction and the order of instruction-the what, how and when.

However, one wonders about the adequacy of these school-based definitions of curriculum to early childhood education especially in view of the transitional nature of early childhood education and the need not to depart too significantly from home-based experiences when planning curriculum for children at this level of education. Curriculum is also a plan of the intended learning outcomes organized in some fashion with implicit suggestions and directions for the learning opportunities to comprise the instructional program. This definition makes a distinction between curriculum and instruction.

Actually the curriculum is the concrete (material) product and manifestation of decision-making and planning processes of intended learning outcomes and which, at the early childhood level incorporates significant home-based parental inputs organized to achieve key developmental and social objectives stipulated in the national policy on pre-primary education. The curriculum experiences are to be developed for early childhood education in these core areas, such as health, nutrition and stimulation.

Early childhood curriculum should be defined to harmonize home and school activities bringing both parents and teachers as partners and major operators of the home/school curriculum.

It should be emphasized that at the early childhood education level the curriculum should be thought of more in terms of activities and experiences rather than packaged knowledge to be acquired and facts to be stored. Its basic aim is to organize the totality of the child's environment in a way that encourages the natural unfolding of the child's genetic blueprint. The different forms of activities and experiences embodied in the child's curriculum come under the broad spectrum of social development including the core concepts of self-image, sex role differentiation, socialization and pre-social skills. Social development as a unique combination of skills that lead children to feel a sense of mastery and control over their daily lives. This development of human competence involves skills that help children deal effectively with the people, objectives and events in their environment.

A DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH TO CURRICULUM: DO WE NEED A CURRICULUM FOR EACH-CHILDHOOD EDUCATION?

It is increasingly being recognized and appreciated that an organic developmental approach to early childhood education best describes the nature of the curriculum that is emerging from recent research in developmental psychology. Research in this area suggests that an organic developmental approach to early childhood education has inbuilt long-term qualitative value to address the four major categories of children's learning viz – knowledge, skills, disposition and feelings. A developmental approach to early childhood education incorporates and

strikes a balance between two dimensions of the child's development – the <u>normative</u> and the <u>dynamic.</u> At the early childhood level, these unfolding characteristics and capabilities of children that are typical or normal for particular chronological age group (e.g. volume of vocabulary, number of brain cells in a three year old or general pattern of physical and social development). Age norms, for example, provide useful starting points for curriculum planning. Knowledge of growth patterns, aggregate age-related needs, interest, abilities and capabilities when properly studied can serve as bases for preliminary planning of early childhood programme of activities, the selection and organization of methods and materials, the determination and assessment of learning outcomes for the teacher age norms assist in giving special attention to children whose development is at variance with the norms such that the teacher can decide whether or not special curriculum and teaching strategies are required.

The dynamics of early childhood curriculum addresses the child's unique developmental progression, which emphasizes changes over time within (intra) individual and the long-term effects of early experience rather than the normality of typicality of behaviour and abilities of a particular age group. This developmental dynamics has three components:

(i)   sequence which identifies prerequisite learning tasks and experiences and capabilities order them linearly;

(ii)   unfolding positive and negative potentials (delayed effects) associated with early experiences that are yet to manifest in determining the actual capabilities and components of the child. These unfolding or 'delayed effects' are those that do not show up until later in the course of development

(iii)   summative or cumulative effects are experiences that have no detectable consequences if they rarely or occasionally occur but whose consequences are powerful if they occur frequently.

TYPES OF CURRICULUM

There are basically three types of curriculum. These are the official, actual and the hidden curricula. The official curriculum – this represents government's own laid down proposed and planning learning experiences and guidelines usually rooted in a nation's educational policy. In Nigeria the official curriculum is a product of a top-down planning approach and it stipulates statutory/legal requirements. In most cases the official curriculum usually is teacher-proof. It desempowers teachers in its implementation and it makes too many assumptions about the local peculiarities where the curriculum is to be implemented. It also makes unjustifiable assumptions about the necessary materials and human resources required for implementation, such materials as books, furniture, classroom equipments and quality teachers for the ideal situation.

The actual or reality curriculum is in most cases a teacher-prone curriculum that has been re-planned to accommodate the inherent weaknesses in the official/formal curriculum. The actual curriculum usually is a necessary and meaningful modification of the official curriculum with substantial input for the teachers and the local communities. The actual curriculum reflects the realities of available human and material resources necessary for

effective implementation, hence it reflects the actual practice, incorporating improvised resources and alternative learning experience with substantial community support. This type of curriculum is more realistic and ideal for early childhood education. The hidden or unofficial curriculum is the unplanned for, unintended and rather obscure learning experiences which serve to reinforce or complement the planned and intended experiences of the official curriculum Experiences, which come under the hidden curriculum are usually 'picked' up by pupils in informal settings such as play grounds, social and cultural clubs.

The hidden curriculum exists at the early childhood level and we should be aware of it. Such an existence may be an evidence of non-participation of the learners in curriculum activities. In such a situation the 'hidden curriculum embodies learners' cumulative positive and negative strategies to successfully manourver the hurdles imposed by the formed or planned curriculum. The hidden curriculum thus becomes learner-invented or structured systems of different 'hidden' activities some of which may undermine the letters and spirit of the formal curriculum which they are meant to complement. For example, the behaviour, or habits which children learn at home more often than not are permanent in their minds, making the acquisition of new habits, difficult if not unacceptable, for example the exercise of respect and simple courtesy, the obedience to constituted authority and respect for other peoples views and opinions.

To this extent, a hidden curriculum, like a double-edged sword, determines to a significant degree what becomes the basis for all learners' sense of worth, self-esteem and dignity. It is the hidden curriculum to some extent, more than the formal curriculum that influences the adaptation of children. The existence and magnitude of the hidden curriculum affect the process of education.

SUMMARY

- In this unit, we have defined curriculum as the material or end-product of decision-making and planning processes of intended learning outcomes, and which at the early childhood level incorporates significant home-based parental inputs organized to achieve key developmental and social objectives among children. Three types of curricula were also identified and described with emphasis on the hidden curriculum. The developmental approach to early childhood education was suggested, analyzed and justified.

ACTIVITY I

1.	What is curriculum?
2.	Why are there different views and definitions of curriculum?
3.	List the three types of curricula and discuss their differences.
4.	Justify the existence of the hidden curriculum in early childhood.
5.	Describe a home-school curriculum. Who are its major players or actors?

6. Why would you recommend the developmental approach of curriculum for early childhood educational institutions?

7. Visit three different early childhood educational institutions and compare them and categorize their curricula.

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UNIT TWO: CURRICULUM POLICY AND INSTRUCTION IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

INTRODUCTION

Early childhood education is the most basic and formal level of education in Nigeria. In reality there is no formal policy for curriculum and instruction at this level of education. A policy of early childhood education however exists and it is assumed that a policy on curriculum and instruction is implicit in it. Accordingly in this unit, we shall make it explicit by defining and discussing a policy, the objectives of a policy to curriculum and instructional processes. A justification of the value of such processes will be undertaken.

OBJECTIVES

At the end of the unit therefore you will be able to:

1.   define a policy using the National Policy on Education as an example;

2.   list the objectives of the national policy on pre-primary (early childhood) education;

3.   relate policy on early childhood education to curriculum policy and instruction;

4.   establish how elements of educational policy can provide guidance for curriculum and instruction; and

5.   justify the value of policy making in curriculum and instruction at the early childhood level.

WHAT IS POLICY?

A policy is a rational statement of intentions, which usually includes or reflects the philosophy, ideology, goals and objectives of an individual, a group, an organization or a nation. A policy provides a general plan or framework for action as anadministrative and management tool, and guidance for planning and implementation of programme objectives. Policy-making is a phase of the planning function of management while policy is the principal instrument for reflecting the objectives of an organization; and that it is an important management tool for ensuring goal-oriented behaviour.

In general, a policy identifies, describes, articulates and justifies the philosophy, ideology goals and objectives of organizations; providing in the process, a conceptual and pragmatic framework for decision making for programme implementation. The National Policy on Education provides a guideline, which spells out in clear and unequivocal terms the philosophy and objectives for its investment in education. We have to be very careful with this declaration in the National Policy because usually policies have built-in-flexibility thus questioning the 'clear and unequivocal' phrase in the quotation above.

Policies are atimes formulated to address real or perceived inadequacies or to introduce reforms and innovations designed to meet specific challenges in an organization, a system or a society. The National Policy on Education for example attempts to address the general dissatisfaction with the existing educational system, which had become irrelevant to national needs, aspirations and goals. Section 1 of the National Policy on Education for example states that: "A nation's policy on education is government's way of realizing that part of the national goals".

Purposes of Early Childhood

The National Policy on Education identifies the following as the purposes of pre-primary education of children aged 3 to 5 plus prior to their entering primary school:

(a)   effect a smooth transition from the home to the school;

(b)   prepare the child for the primary level of education;

(c)   provide adequate care and supervision for the children while their parents are at work (on the farms) in the markets, offices, e.t.c.);

(d)   inculcate social norms;

(e)   inculcate in the child the spirit of enquiry and creativity through the exploration of nature, the environment, art, music and playing with toys e.t.c;

(f)   develop a sense of co-operation and team-spirit;

(g)   learn good habits, especially good health habits; and

(h)   teach the rudiments of numbers, letters, colours, shapes, forms, etc through play.

Curriculum and instructional policy derives from educational policy and it serves to provide comprehensive guidelines – goals, objectives and values for translating or implementing educational aims practically in classroom situations. Accordingly, a policy of curriculum and instruction is a rational and comprehensive framework of the aims, objective and intended outcomes (knowledge, skills and values) of an educational programme and which specifies the organizational and pedagogical guidelines including human and material resources for implementing programme objectives, which can be achieved using education as a tool. No policy on education however, can be formulated without first identifying the overall philosophy and goals of the nation.

A policy should therefore outline strategic organizational direction, management intended decision processes, personal involvement and operational guidance.

The 'raw' materials' or 'inputs' for curriculum and instructional planning and development are contained in the purposes of early childhood outlined in the National Policy on Education. Hence such elements of the policy which emphasize 'smooth transition', 'preparation' 'care' and 'supervision, 'spirit of enquiry', sense of cooperation and team-spirit, 'literacy' and 'numeracy' provide the 'pillars' on which the curriculum and instructional policies for planning and implementing learning and teaching early childhood education are anchored.

ACTIVITY II

1.   What is a policy?

2.   Relate your definition to education in general and early childhood education in particular.

3.   How do elements in educational policy making influence curriculum and instructional policy?

ASSIGNMENT

Visit at least ten early childhood educational institutions in your local government areas and

1.   identify the policy framework of their operations;

2.   describe how their policy frameworks influence what the (curriculum) and the (instruction) their teachers teach;

3.   interact with some members of the administrative and teaching staff of the schools and assess the degree of their involvement in the formation and implementation of their schools' curriculum and instructional policies;

4.   Are there committees delegated with policy functions?

SUMMARY

- A policy is a comprehensive and articulated intentional statement, which includes the philosophy aims and objectives of an organization. Policy serves as an administrative and management tool to provide the direction of an organization and a guideline for implementing programme objectives.

- A national policy for curriculum and instruction does not exist for early childhood education in Nigeria.. But such a policy is implicit in the national policy on early childhood education from which the former can be derived. Eight purposes of early childhood education listed in the national policy on education were highlighted to explain some advantages of establishing a policy for an organization were considered.

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Bogue, E.G. and Saunders, R.E. (1980): **The Educational Manager: Artist and Practitioner.** In Kaplan-Sanoff M, and Yablan – Magid (ed**) Exploring Readings in Early Childhood: Theory and Practice** Macmillan Publishing Co. Inc.

UNIT THREE: PRINCIPLES AND MODELS OFCURRICULUM PLANNING

INTRODUCTION

In Units 1 and 2 we discussed curriculum – its definitions, types and policies. We shall continue our study of curriculum of early childhood education by considering some basic principles and theories of planning. Planning is fundamental to curriculum development and implementation. Curriculum planning has long been a missing link in early childhood education. We shall consider Tyler's basic principles of curriculum planning in general.

OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, the learners should be able to:

1.   define or explain the term curriculum planning;

2.   define or explain the term model;

3.   justify curriculum planning for children in early childhood education;

4.   list and discuss theories of curriculum planning;

5.   discuss criteria relevant for planning curriculum at the early childhood education level;

6.   list factors influencing the planning of early childhood curriculum;

8.   relate principles and theories of curriculum planning to curriculum policy and instruction; and

9.   list the advantages of models in curriculum planning.

THE CONCEPT OF CURRICULUM PLANNING

Curriculum planning is a rational and systematic process of decision-making about how the elements of the curriculum can best be arranged to produce meaningful learning experience. Curriculum planning can also be viewed as an art of arranging appropriate condition,; environments and resources in order to achieve intended learning outcomes or objectives. These outcomes are the logical results of the analysis of the educational aims and purposes and visions as contained in the national policy of education and other documents by professional interest groups and organizations. Curriculum planning can also be the translation of value judgement into practice involving continual questioning of the aims and content of learning. It comprehends many stages, many different parties and a focus of how power has to meet demands from many sources.

The proliferation of knowledge in the field of developmental psychology and sociology has complicated the planning and organization of the various experiences required for children to learn. This proliferation has compelled planners to be more meticulous and rational in terms of what goes into children's curriculum. As a result of competing demands from a wide

range of interest groups challenging the professionalism of teachers at the early childhood education level, teachers are being requested to be accountable in terms of the type of objectives (outcomes) and procedure used in early childhood education.

In the early formative years <u>what,</u> <u>how,</u> <u>when</u> and <u>where</u> the child learns are vital to the child's success and his/her future education and indeed the rest of his/her life. The degree of attention a planner gives and the time used in school, the type of objectives or (learning outcomes) chosen, the quality and range of learning materials and methods, the assessments adopted are crucial matters requiring expertise and creativity in planning. Planning curriculum at the early childhood development offers an extraordinary opportunity to avoid or moderate learning problems and to bring lasting benefit to the individual and society. Planning curriculum is a particularly professionally challenging one. In planning curriculum for the early childhood it is useful to remember that (i) development and learning occur as children interact with people and objects in the environment. Planning curriculum involves in part, creating supportive environment, which promotes the achievement of curriculum objectives and (ii) children learn and develop better if they are actively involved in the learning process – the ultimate objective of curriculum planning. Planning should provide ample opportunities to construct their own knowledge and learning models through exploration, interaction with materials and imitation of role models. Such opportunities should also consolidate and integrate home and early childhood experiences.
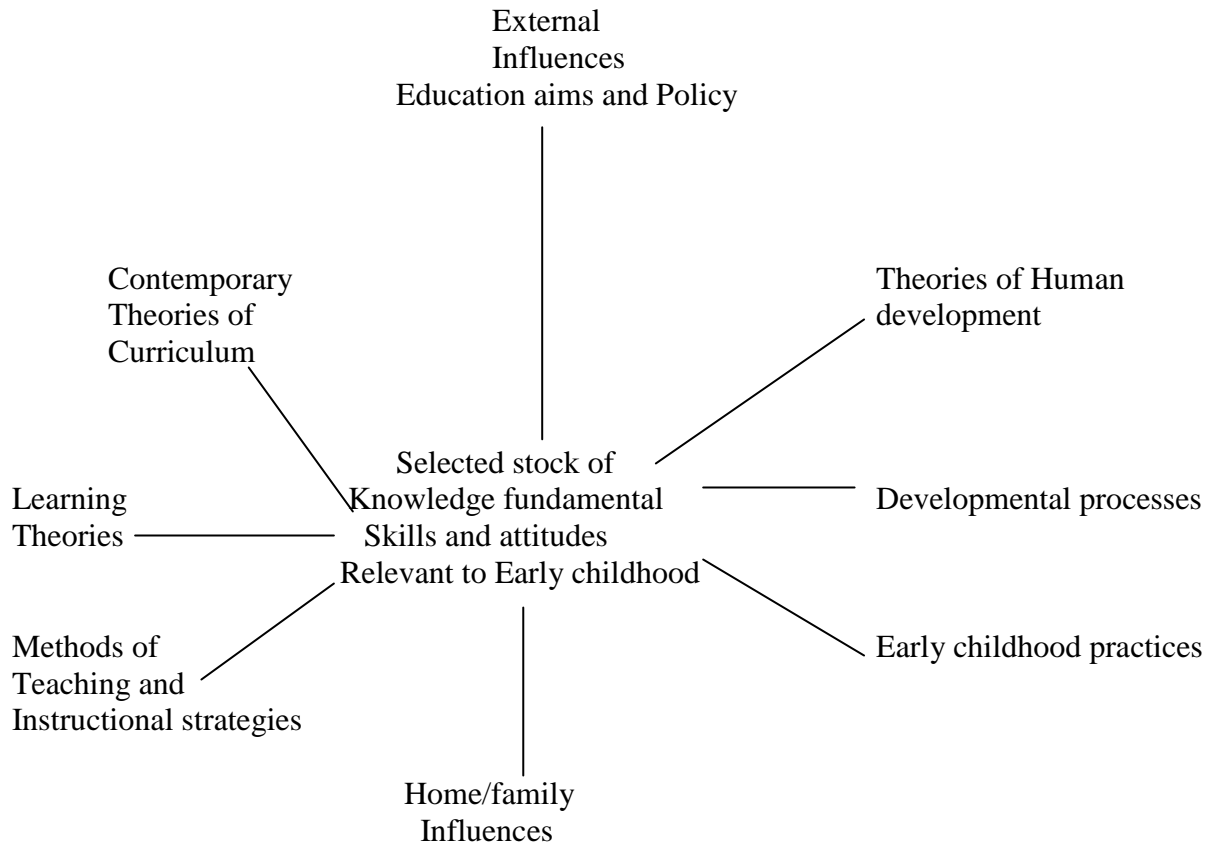
We have constantly been reminded that we must distinguish in our curriculum planning what we are hoping to achieve, the ground we are planning to cover in order to achieve it, the kinds of activity and methods that we consider likely to be most effective in helping us towards our goals and the devices we will use to evaluate what we have done.

Framework for Planning

A general framework for planning curriculum will address four questions: These four questions are:

- What educational purposes should the school seek to attain?

- How can learning experiences be selected which are useful in attaining these objectives?

- How can the experiences be organized for effective instruction?

- How can the effectiveness of learning experiences be evaluated?

  Several Factors influence the curriculum planning in early childhood education. These factors are illustrated in Fig. 3.1

External
Influences
Education aims and Policy

Contemporary
Theories of
Curriculum

Theories of Human
development

Selected stock of
Knowledge fundamental
Skills and attitudes
Relevant to Early childhood

Learning
Theories

Developmental processes

Early childhood practices

Methods of
Teaching and
Instructional strategies

Home/family
Influences

FIG. 3.1

Factors influencing Early Childhood Curriculum Planning and Development

Relating these curriculum questions to early childhood education we ask:

(a)   What are the major objectives of early childhood education for which the curriculum is being planned?

(b)   What experiences in terms of knowledge, skills, values and attitude are appropriate to achieve the objectives of early childhood education?

(c)   How best can we organize these experiences in terms of the different and wide ranging principles and theories of curriculum planning and the backgrounds of the children?

(d)   How can we ascertain whether or not children attain the objectives set out in the curriculum?

Answers to these questions provide the basic principles for planning. An analysis of answers to the questions shows that four interacting elements are basic to the curriculum planning. These are:

(i)   Objectives

(ii)   the content or subject-matter

(iii)   the pattern or organizing these subject-matter or content including the methods of delivery and

(iv)   evaluation.

Using these four principles, we can construct/develop different models for planning curriculum.

Models of Curriculum Planning and Development

A model is a purposeful abstract representation or creation of reality to enable us to conceptualize or visualize and therefore understand better a particular phenomenon in its real setting. In curriculum planning and development models provide a structure or abstract representation of how elements in the curriculum are logically sequentially arranged to ensure an interacting, integrated and dynamic development.

The use of models in curriculum planning and development has several advantages. Among them are:

- providing a basis for a consistent and professional approach to early childhood education;

- minimizing conflicts and confusion as well as to streamline and provide guidelines;

- providing a rational basis for early childhood educators and related professional to grasp the logic on which childhood practices are rooted;

- provide a sound basis for policy-and decision-making;

- serving as a simplified restructuring of reality undertaken to assist demonstration and exploration; and

- being a symbolic depiction in logical terms of an idealized relatively simple situation showing the strength of the original system.

It is a conceptual representation and an abstracted and reconstructed form of reality.

SUMMARY

- In this unit, we have been able to explain that Curriculum planning is a rational and systematic process of decision making for organizing different components of the curriculum into worthwhile and meaningful experiences for learning. In addition, planning curriculum for Early Childhood Education level requires making some value judgement about childhood i.e. our belief about children and childhood. Hence curriculum planning at this level should be sensitive to the following:

- An understanding of childhood as a natural period of innocence and innate beauty

- A view that children need to be controlled, corrected and shaped into responsible citizens in order to remove a potential threat to the social order

- An argument that childhood constitutes a period of particular vulnerability, which warrants adult protection and statutory advocacy or intervention.

- A perception that childhood is a time of growth and development towards adult competencies.

- Lastly, it was explained that, a model depicts reality and represents concrete creation of events or phenomena with the ultimate objective of promoting better understanding of those phenomena. The inherent advantages of the curriculum planning models as it relates to early childhood education were also listed.

ACTIVITI I

1. List and discuss the basic general principles of curriculum planning.

    (ii) What flexibilities must be considered in applying these principles to curriculum Planning at the early childhood education level?.

    (iii) What are models?

2. List the advantages and disadvantages of models in planning curriculum for early childhood education.

3. Sketch a plan for curriculum in a proposed neighbourhood early childhood education in your local government area indicating the steps and individuals to be involved in the planning.

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UNIT FOUR: CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES I

INTRODUCTION

Up to this time we have identified the national policy on early childhood education and discussed its purposes. We have also discussed objectives. Curriculum and instructional objectives are derived from the purposes. In this unit, we shall attempt to consider into details the nature of instructional objective and how these can be structured to promote learning in early childhood education.

OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, students should be able to:

1.   list and explain the six developmental learning outcomes;

2.   describe the four categories of Instructional Objectives; and

3.   explain the difference between Curriculum and Instructional Objectives.

DEVELOPMENTAL LEARNING OUTCOMES

Instructional objectives and the specific learning outcomes identified for each topic or concept. In most cases instructional objectives are measurable and time bound. Instructional objectives are of different categories.

At least six developmental learning outcomes and four categories of instructional objectives are the foci of an ideal early childhood curriculum suggested by some authors. The six developmental areas are:

▪   Intellectual

▪   Aesthetic

▪   Physical health and body care

▪   Language and communication

▪   Quantitative relationships

▪   Creation of an effective transition from home to school

Health Care And Safety ⟷ Multiple Environmental Contexts (MEC)

- Physical Developmental
  Development Dimensions
- Personal/Emotional
- Social
- Moral/Spiritual Aesthetic
- Cognitive Development

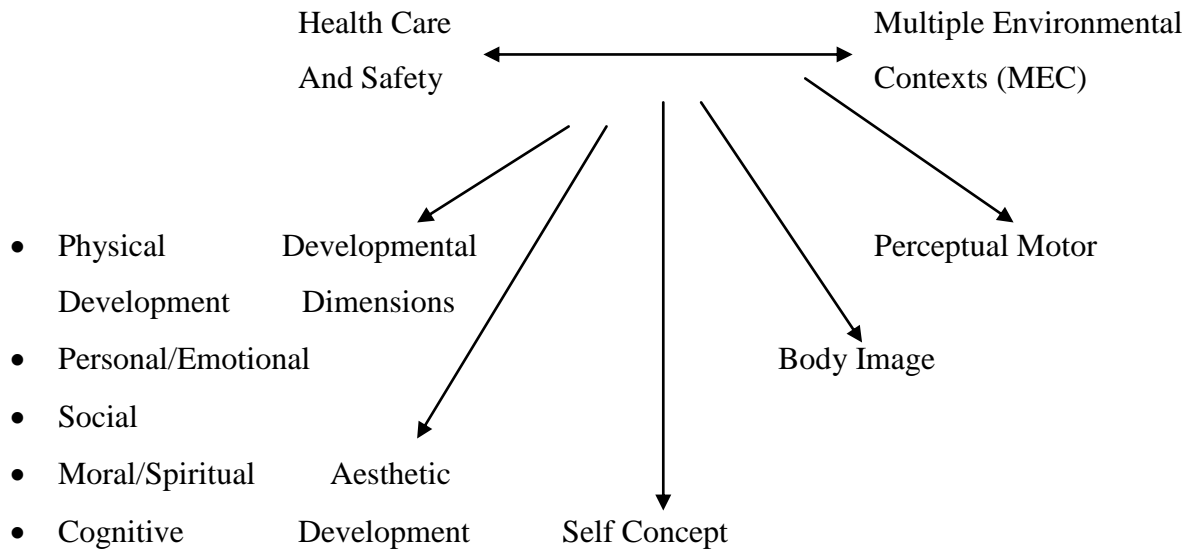Perceptual Motor

Body Image

Self Concept

FIG. 4.1

Framework for Structuring Activities in Early Childhood Education

The social and emotional aspects promote and sustain human relationships, encourage a sense of responsibility, self-confidence, independence, self-control and consideration for others. The intellectual development equips the child with the general abilities to learn a wide range of concepts from different disciplines. The aesthetic areas provides the child the opportunity to have first hand experience with a variety of materials in art and music, encourages creativity expression; awakening the child's awareness and appreciation to beauty   The physical development focuses mainly on perceptual motor development – the coordination of cognitive efforts combined with physical movement of the body.

Four categories of instructional objectives identified and discussed by Smidt (1998) are:

- Knowledge and understanding
- Skills and competence
- Dispositions and
- Feelings

Knowledge

At the early childhood education level knowledge consists of ideas, concepts, constructions, schema, facts, information, stories, customs, myths, songs, folklores. In Piagetian terms knowledge consists of three categories.

- Physical
- Social/cultural
- Logico-mathematical

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Skills

These are small, discrete chunks and relatively enduring observable chains of behaviour that can be inferred and measured. Among these are grouping and classifying objects according to particular attributes

Dispositions

These are relatively enduring habits of mind or habitual ways of responding to experience across a wide range of situations (including persistence at a risk, curiosity, generosity, meanness, the disposition to read, to solve problem). A disposition, unlike an item of knowledge or skill, is a tendency or a consistent pattern of behaviour and its possession is established only if its manifestation is observed repeatedly. Hence a child's disposition towards scientific literacy can be ascertained if the child is observed to engage him/herself in scientific activities spontaneously, frequently and without external coercion.

Feelings, Attitude and Values

In early childhood education pedagogical and developmental imperatives require us to view feelings, attitudes and values as subjective emotional and affective states. Children express feeling of belonging and self-esteem; confidence, competence and security feeling attitudes and values develop hierarchically in line with Maslow's theory.

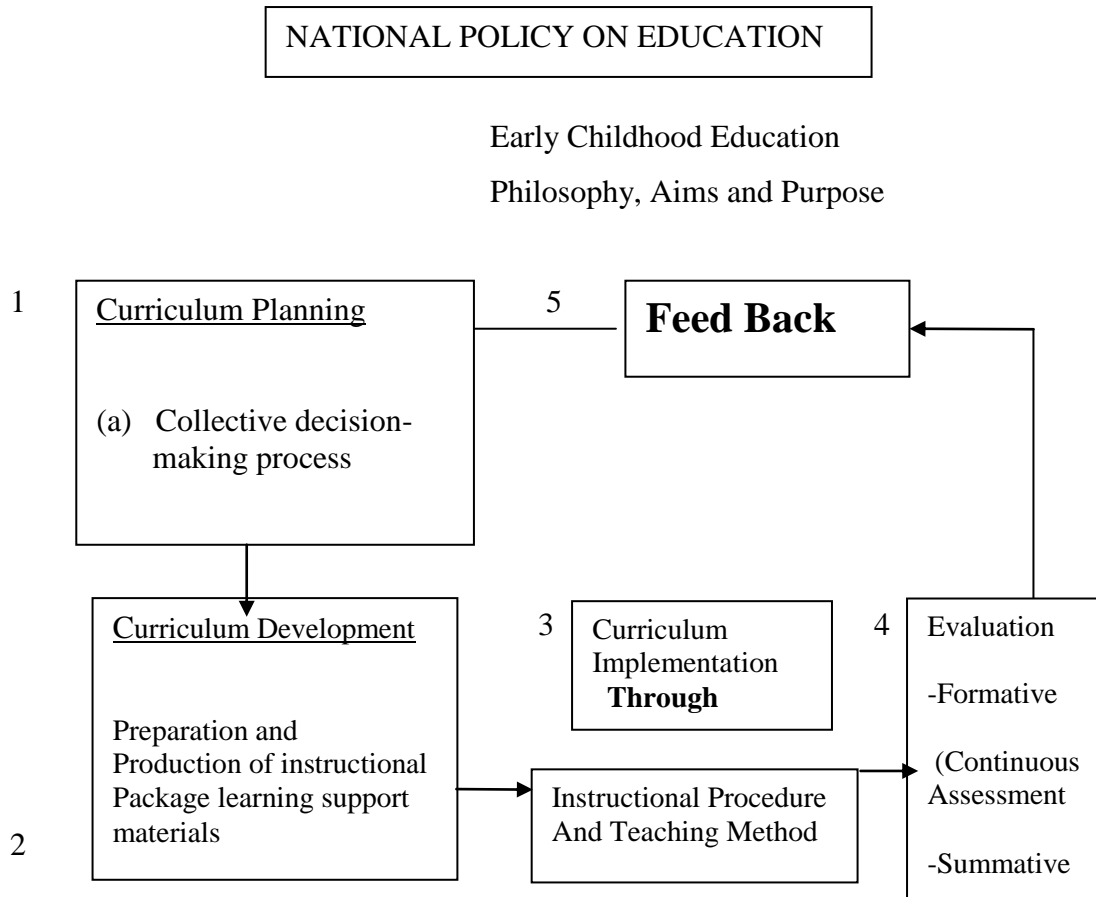**Curriculum and Instructional Objectives**

Objectives of the instructional programme for early childhood education should not be as structured as the example we encounter in the primary and post primary institutions. Hence the rigid division of objectives into Blooms taxonomy may not be very helpful to the children in early childhood institutions. While instructional objectives at the early childhood should be flexible, relatively unstructured and situational, they are ultimately derived from socio-cultural environments, from child development and learning theories and from theories and principles of knowledge and cognition. Other objectives, which complement those listed in the National Policy on Education, are:

- Helping learners to develop feelings of trust
- Developing autonomy on initiative
- Introducing structure and organization without stopping self expression and creativity
- Providing social activities in large and small groups as well as for individual
- Providing adequate and appropriate physical and health education
- Teaching the fundamental skills of communication and computation
- Establishing a desire to learn and an appreciation for education by teaching under conditions that enhance interest and curiosity
- Developing interest in many areas by exposure to many fields of knowledge and experience

- Developing feelings of self-worth and security by providing varied experiences on which each child can base and build his or her success.

- Providing many opportunities for achievement for each child.

- Developing appreciation for the worth and differences of others

- Developing the process of conceptualization, problem solving, self-direction, and creating.

- Developing a concern for the environment, the community, the society and the welfare of others.

Curriculum and instruction are separate activities, which form a continuum and mutually reinforcing in a teaching/learning early childhood education programme. Implicit in the definition of curriculum is a programme of instruction. In other words curriculum prescribes instruction because the planned experiences and intended learning outcomes (curriculum) are implemented through and by instruction. While controversies still surround the difference or relationship between instruction and teaching, such controversies do not manifest between curriculum and instruction. Instruction refers to the activity, which takes place during and within the classroom setting. The term includes both material and human variables; instruction is differentiated from teaching in that instruction encompasses more of the situational elements. Teaching refers primarily to the human interaction between teacher and pupil. This distinction is of significance in a distance learning system where face-to-face contact and interaction may not be important in the learning process.

NATIONAL POLICY ON EDUCATION

Early Childhood Education

Philosophy, Aims and Purpose

1 **Curriculum Planning**

(a) Collective decision-
    making process

5 **Feed Back**

2 **Curriculum Development**

Preparation and
Production of instructional
Package learning support
materials

3 Curriculum
Implementation
Through

Instructional Procedure
And Teaching Method

4 Evaluation

-Formative

(Continuous
Assessment

-Summative

Fig. 4.2
Curriculum and Instructional Continuum

SUMMARY

- In this unit effort has been made to describe the various developmental learning outcomes, and the categories of instructional objectives such as knowledge and unstinting skills and competence, disposition and feelings in early childhood education.

- The difference between curriculum and instructional objectives were highlighted, and finally the distinction between teaching and instruction was explained.

ACTIVITIES I

1. What do you understand by curriculum and instruction?

2. List the six developmental learning outcomes, as they relate to early childhood education.

3. Explain the difference between curriculum and instructional objectives.

4. Distinguish between teaching and instruction. Which of these is relevant to early childhood education?

UNIT FIVE: CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

INTRODUCTION

In this unit we consider curriculum development in terms of practical activities based on decision-making process and planning at different levels of early childhood education. The processes, principles and different models of curricula development are considered with particular emphasis to the Developmental/Exploratory Model of Growth (DEMOG). We present this model as an innovative dimension to curriculum development in early childhood education in terms of its relevance to the child's developing exploratory-oriented behaviour.

OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit the learners will be able to:

1.   define curriculum development;

2.   relate curriculum development to curriculum planning;

3.   list the foci or concerns of curriculum development at the early childhood education level;

4.   describe the Developmental/Exploratory Model of Curriculum Development and Growth (DEMOG); and

5.   assess the relevance of DEMOG to early childhood.

MEANING OF CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

Curriculum planning as discussed in Unit 4 provides a framework for curriculum development. The relationship between the planning and development of curriculum is similar to planning or designing and the actual building of a house. Hence curriculum development is a gradual sequential process of actualizing or transforming curriculum plan into instructional materials.

Early childhood education in its real sense is yet to have a formal curriculum in Nigeria. As usual the National Policy on Education sets out the objectives of Pre-primary Education, which provides the Framework for curriculum planning and development. These objectives were considered in Unit 2 of this module.

Curriculum development processes in early childhood education are similar to curriculum planning processes discussed earlier. Curriculum for early childhood is fundamentally <u>developmental</u> and <u>interactive</u>. It focuses on:

(a)   the child's active interaction in exploring his/her physical and socio-multicultural environment;

(b)   natural hierarchical unfolding of the child's multiple and complex body structures and processes especially the intellectual structures;

(c)   articulating these naturally stage-dependent unfolding with the child's learning environment in such a way that the child's natural environment is transformed into a giant learning laboratory. This developmental interactive nature of the early childhood curriculum has been elaborated by Shapiro and Biber 1972 (p. 59 – 60).

<u>Developmental</u> refers to the emphasis of identifiable patterns of growth and modes of perceiving and responding which are characterized by increasing differentiation and progressive integration as a function of chronological age.

<u>Interaction</u> refers, first to the emphasis of the child's interaction with the environment – adults, other children and the material world – and second, to the interaction between cognitive and affective spheres of development. The development-interaction formulation stresses the nature of the environment as much as it does the patterns of the responding child.

Hence curriculum development for early childhood education is a framework that creates opportunity to maximize learning through the interaction of the child's unfolding genetic blueprint with his/her socio-cultural natural and built environments. Such a curriculum is formative, humanistic, experiential, organic, empowering and relatively structured and its major focus is to foster and channel the child's psychological development in its broadest possible sense.

Evans (1975) identified the goals of such a curriculum as:

(i)   **Ego strength**: the child's ability to deal effectively with his/her environment

(ii)   **Autonomy**: including a sense of time for individuality, creativity and an experimental attitude

(iii)   Integration of self-understanding and hemp-thought, feeling, apathy with others and action.

Rationale/The for Curriculum Development

In developing a curriculum for early childhood education we should remember that: the infant is not entirely helpless but shows from birth on steadily increasing capacities for active searching for satisfaction and for active discovery and exploration and that it enjoys these active capacities; and that the child in many ways shows a promise which altogether too often is betrayed by adult man and his society and by the growing child itself when it yields to those forces and aspects of the culture, as transmitted by parents, teachers, and peers, which are crippling to its inherent potentialities. The child not only develops systems as organizers but is himself a system. Any system has an intake function, and this function of the child seeks, selects, and groups those stimuli that he is perceiving; there is also a selective relationship in connection with what the child will expose himself to and accept as input. The child may take action to change the environment (physical or social) or he may generate new encounters from which new data may be developed.
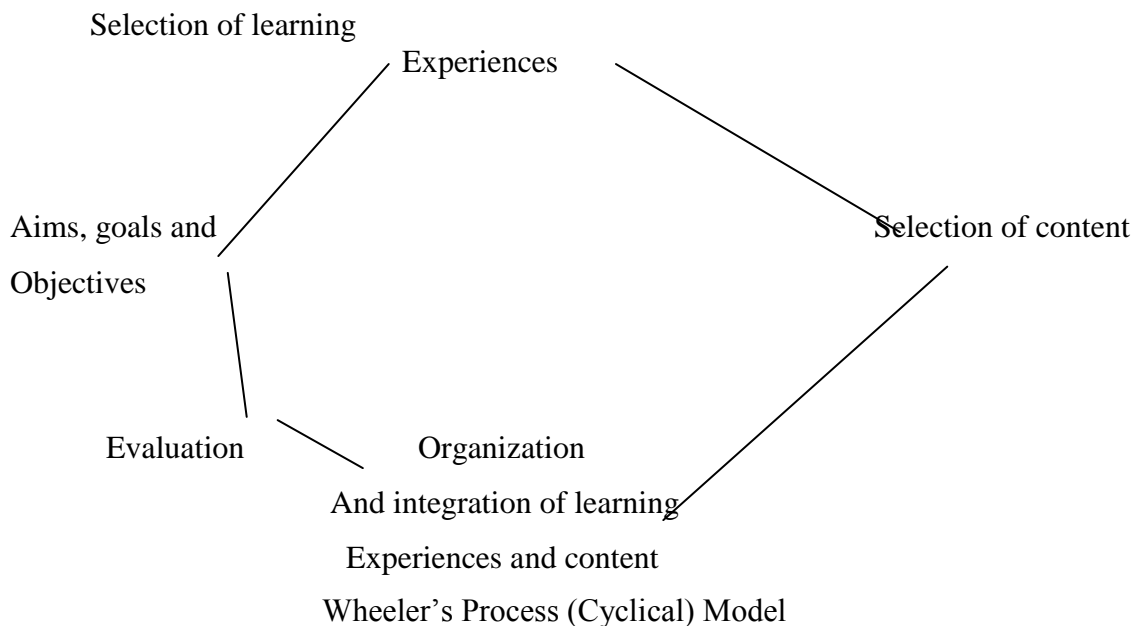
Major Steps in Curriculum Development

- selecting and specifying objectives;

- determining and organizing intended learning experiences into meaningful, integrated and sequential learning chunks;

- identifying the appropriate methods based on the unique needs, styles and habits of the learners,

- evaluation of the cumulative effect in terms of the objectives earlier identified

- use the results of such evaluation to provide feed back with the potential of improving the whole process

It is important to remember that in identifying, specifying and organizing learning experiences, the curriculum developer is also equally concerned with the range, quantity and quality of both human and material resources required to actualize the curriculum plan. Hence there is usually a stage of situation (Needs) Analysis in curriculum development. That stage will take stock of existing resources and determine the resources needed for curriculum development.

Models of Curriculum Development

This process of curriculum development follows the basic (generic) principles for curriculum development popularized by Tyler (1949). We have discussed these in previous units in this Module. It is generally referred to as the objective (or linear) model of curriculum development. At times it is also called the linear model. The model provides the basic framework from which other models have emerged e.g. Wheelers (cyclic) Process Model, Taba's model, and Lawton's Situational Analysis Model.

Selection of learning
Experiences

Aims, goals and
Objectives   Selection of content

Evaluation   Organization
And integration of learning
Experiences and content
Wheeler's Process (Cyclical) Model

Taba (1962) modified the original four-staged model of Tyler with a seven – sequential stage retaining its linear structure. The seven steps advocated by Taba are: diagnosis of needs, formulation of objectives, selection of content, organization of content, selection of learning experiences, organization of learning experiences, determination of <u>what</u>, <u>how</u> and <u>with what</u> to evaluate learning outcomes.

Throughout the previous modules we have emphasized the unique nature of early childhood education and the developmental and organic structure of its ideal curriculum. The curriculum models considered so far which provide some perspectives to curriculum development cannot be said to provide a unique perspective to curriculum in early childhood education. Curriculum for early childhood should focus mainly on principles and theories on human and growth development. Author has found such principles and theories as elaborated by Sergioranni and Starrat (1971). Such principles and theories are being used to develop curriculum which is unique to early childhood education and which are based on the realization that:

(i) Curriculum and instructional programmes should be designed in conformity to the growth patterns

(ii) The human growth needs should as much as possible not be subordinated to or be compromised for objectives dictated by the instrumental needs of the society and the demands of the disciplines.

(iii) Theoretically, these three concerns – human growth, achievement of disciplined knowledge, and fulfillment of social responsibilities should not be in conflict. In practice, however, they frequently are in conflict, and the concern for human growth usually is the one to be sacrificed. This practice should be reversed.

A Developmental Model/The Three Dimensional Development Models

Below we present three-dimensional developmental and exploratory reality – oriented behaviour model of early childhood curriculum, which focuses primarily on providing the child the opportunity to freely explore his/her expanding environment. The model assists the child to gradually free her/himself from the biological needs, which initially dominate his/her behaviour, e.g. needs for food, warmth, sleep and basic sensory stimulation.

A Developmental/Exploratory Model of Growth (DEMOG)

The general orientation of the model is to facilitate the growth from dependence through independence to interdependence and the orientation from passivity to increased self-activity. This is fundamental to the emancipation of the child emotionally, intellectually, socially and physically. The model is aimed at freeing the developing/maturing child from fear and ignorance both of which constitute serious threats to the child's exploratory-oriented behaviour. The holistic development of the child is inhibited by fear and ignorance. Studies have identified the categories/nature of fear and ignorance which the maturing child is prone to and which the curriculum must address. These are fear

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- of her/himself
- of the unknown
- of authority
- of insecurity
- of commitment and risk

  and ignorance about:

- her/himself
- the functioning of present society
- history
- natural phenomena
- demands of interpersonal relationships
- method of inquiry and communication

Once the curriculum recognizes and addresses the problems associated with both <u>fear</u> and <u>ignorance</u> early enough the maturing child is free to:

- explore his/her expanding world and unfolding environment
- respond to them appropriately with confidence
- participate in their structuring
- communicate by means of language, ritual and other art forms
- organize and commit him/herself to a hierarchy of values
- accept the limitations of him/her freedom by both social and natural causes
- serve his/her family, friends, community and the world
- love him/herself, significant others (beloved, family, parents, friends) others, country and the world.

Hence the core objectives of the curriculum model we present above are to provide the opportunity for the child to address the twin problems of fear and ignorance, which inhibit normal growth and development, and to emphasize the inherent value of freedom and exploratory behaviour. We believe that when these problems are addressed early in the child's life, a solid foundation might have been laid for subsequent and life-long education.

SUMMARY

- In this unit we defined curriculum in terms of a process of producing learning materials and we related the process to the process of curriculum planning. The basic principles and theories of curriculum development and models were identified. The unique three-dimensional nature of the Developmental/Exploratory Model of

Curriculum was considered which is designed to address the problem of fear and ignorance to which the maturing child is prone.

ACTIVITY I

1.	What is curriculum development?
2.	List and discuss each of the stages in curriculum development
3.	What are the unique features and significance of the Developmental Exploratory Growth Model of Curriculum Development?
4.	Compare the Developmental Model with the Linear Model

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UNIT SIX: CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION

INTRODUCTION

In this unit, we are going to define curriculum implementation, explain the distinction between curriculum implementation and adoption of a curriculum. Lastly, the position of the classroom teacher as it affects curriculum implementation will be justified.

OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit the learner will be able to:

1.   define curriculum implementations;
2   list factors that can inhibit the successful implementation of curriculum plans;
3   distinguish between curriculum implementation and adoption;
4.   identify and justify the key position of the classroom teacher and the school in curriculum implementation; and
5.   list the salient factors in the successful implementation of early childhood education curriculum.

THE MEANING OF CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation is a component process of curriculum studies that is concerned with putting into practice or actual using in practical situation, an innovative idea or concept or set of activities or programme designed to change/modify an existing one. Tumposky (1987) defines curriculum implementation as: one phase in a much broader cyclical process that involves curriculum goal setting, construction, and development, adoption, implementation, evaluation and eventual readjustment of the original on the basis of feedback from the evaluation.

A distinction should be made between curriculum implementation and the adoption of a particular curriculum and development plans. The <u>actual</u> use in the classroom of a new concept or programme is implementation while the <u>planned</u> or <u>intended</u> and decision to use such an innovative programme is adoption.   One reason for this confusion is the unwillingness by curriculum experts to undertake an in-depth study of the total contexts of implementation strategies with emphasis on the teachers and the school and classroom environment.   Hence the perspectives which we hold about curriculum, innovation, the teacher, the school and the classroom environment influence our attitude and approach to implementation.

While so much has been written about the philosophy, aims, planning and development of curriculum, comparatively little has been written on curriculum implementation. This is so in spite of the fact that most failures in actualizing curriculum intentions is attributed to poor implementation.   In other words implementation is the core of curriculum change and experience has shown that teachers, who are the gate keepers of education are central to successful implementation.

THE TEACHER AND CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION

There is therefore the need to take the perspective of the teachers as 'change agents' and relate it to the process of curriculum implementation.

At the early childhood education level, this is a daunting job because curriculum planning and development at this level of education is only at its infancy and as such hardly can we find an experience to fall back to in curriculum implementation.

At the early childhood education level, curriculum implementation should focus on the nature of the power relations between the teacher and the curriculum developer, the degree of built-in interaction between the learners and the curriculum materials, the availability of instructional resources, the quality of the teacher, the school and classroom learning environment, the model of curriculum development i.e. centralized top-bottom or decentralized bottom-up (grass root) and the approach to teacher (in-service) education. Secondly, less than three percent of teachers in early childhood institutions in Nigeria have the relevant qualification and cognate background experiences to teach at that level. As such teachers at that level can hardly be relied upon as agents of curriculum implementation. Now that early childhood education is attracting official government and long-deserved attention the anatomy of curriculum implementation can be more realistically studied with a focus on teacher and teacher education.

We are not yet aware of any systematic and sustained effort nation-wide to embark on curriculum development and implementation at the early childhood education level.

Tumposky (1981) remarked that: 'models of curriculum change or implementation routinely fail to address the issue of teacher perspective and concentrate instead on enumerating or classifying steps in the change process…

Other reasons for the failure of curriculum plans identified by Tumposky (1987) are value conflict, and the personal and power relationships among participants, neglect of the change process, the conventional belief that implementation is chiefly concerned with steps and procedures, the emphasis on prescriptive theories advocating rational and technical decision making and the neglect of empirical findings.

Because curriculum planning, development and implementation are at their infancy in early childhood education level in Nigeria, there is the opportunity to analyze factors involved in curriculum implementation.

Curriculum planning and development becomes the legitimate professional 'property' of the teacher at the implementation level. The teacher assumes the professional owner of the curriculum plans and it is on him/her falls the responsibility of transforming (implementing) the prescribed plan to the actual (implemented) learning experiences. The teacher thus becomes the first suspect in the failure to implement curriculum plans.

Curriculum implementation thus occupies pivotal position in the conventional Research Development and Diffusion (R,D and D) model currently being used by the Nigeria Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC) for curriculum development.
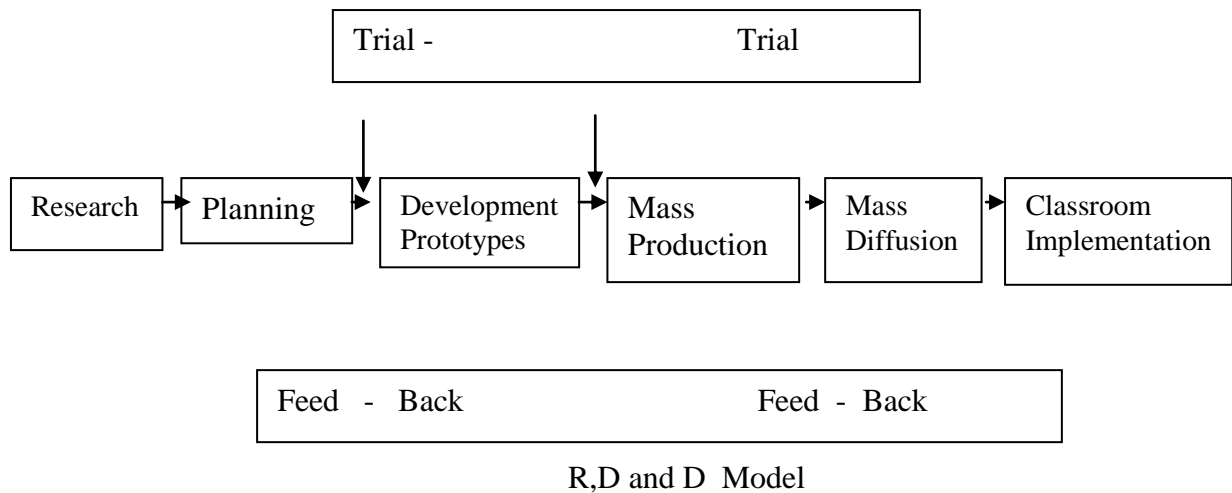
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R,D and D Model

FIG. 5.1

SUMMARY

- This lesson has given us an explanation of the meaning of curriculum implementation and and the factors inhibiting successful implementation of curriculum plans were discussed. In addition, the distinction between curriculum implementation and adoption was explained, and the key position of the classroom teacher vis-a-vis curriculum implementation was confirmed.

ACTIVITY I

1. What do you understand by curriculum implementation?

2. List the factors that are against successful implementation of curriculum plans

3. Explain the distinction between curriculum implementation and adoption.

4. Justify the position of the classroom teacher in curriculum implementation.

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