

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT AND THE
EDUCATION PROGRAM OF THE AFRICAN NATIONAL
CONGRESS OF SOUTH AFRICA

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CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT AND THE QANC EDUCATION PROGRAM.

Education can be effectively used as an instrument of social transformation. The curriculum program could then be constructed and developed according to the desired social change. Thus the curriculum content, being the raw educative material for effecting a desired transformation should be selected according to the guidelines set out in an Education Policy document formulated by the society designed the change. In developing a curriculum program, firstly the Education Policy needs to be reduced into educational aims and objectives. The precise establishment of these aims and objectives enables curriculum developers to determine the necessary school subjects and select the appropriate syllabus topics to be taught for the purpose of achieving the established policy objectives. The curriculum developer will also suggest for trial text books and instructional methods that might be more effective for the teachers to use for the purpose of achieving the established educational policy objectives. The effects of the text books and the instructional methods are monitored and adjusted to them as thought necessary. The established objectives also become the key reference points when it comes to evaluating the success and failure of a curriculum program. Without these established objectives it is not possible to meaningfully evaluate a curriculum except by subjective rhetoric which is often meaningless. The paper first attempts to define the curriculum. The process of curriculum development is then outlined as follows. It is done in common practice. It is hoped that these elaborations might aid perceptions of the extent of the curriculum problem being addressed; This could in turn enable appropriate and effective actions to be taken in developing a curriculum for

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the ANC education program.

Curriculum could be defined in different ways. according to the curriculum problem in focus. For the South African struggle aimed at a- .total replacement of an abnoxious apartheid system of education by a new non-racial, equal and democratic education, this paper tenders the following comprehensive definition of a school curriculum; A school curriculum consists in all the planned- experience which the school offers to its learners for the purpose; of achieving certain predetermined aims and objectives. The planned experience (curriculum program) has an explicit (declared) and an implicit (hidden or undeclared) .. .

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The openly declared curriculum component can always be read of in the school's documents or heard of during discussions with the school authority,. It includes statements on: the , ducation policy; laime and objectives flowing from the policy; the school subjects selected and offered for the purpose of achieving the policy. determined aims and objectives the list of selected topics- (syllabuses) to be taught in each school subject for the purpose of achieving; the policy derived objectives at the subject 5 levels; , school rules; planned out-of-class activities-sometimes termed 'extra curricular activities in some definitions of curriculum -for the- purpose of attaining still more of corresponding policy determined objectives; the carefully and systematically selected teaching. approaches and instructional methods thought appropriate and effective towards achieving corresponding education policy derived objectives; and other statements that regulate the life of _

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The hidden (implicit) component of the curriculum on the other hand consists in all the educative experience within the school which is not explicitly declared, but which educates the learners through interaction with this kind of school experience. The appearance of the school in design, buildings and other structures, maintenance of the school and so on constitute elements of the school's a hidden educative material. In South Africa, black schools appear different from white schools in quality, of design, structures, maintenance and so on. These differences in appearance implicitly (silently) teach black children what the society which determined the education policy for

class of people compared to white children. V Shortages in

the subject choices - tell the story as it is; which professions they are to be excluded. 3 Such teachings and many more like them are the undeclared parts of the schools' curricula. The way the school is organised socially, administratively and so on, the way the school structures relate, - in practice - and not theory, - to one another and to other institutions in the social environment teach learners many things. These may include certain value systems, interests, and attitudes being silently promoted by the school towards certain ideas and objects which might be seen by the students as including the students themselves.

Corresponding meanings could be learnt by students from the nature of the atmosphere of authority; school norms and system of values preferred by the school. Jackson (1968) categorised meanings conveyed by the hidden curriculum in a school as - those connected with (i) praise, (ii) power and (iii) living in a crowd. The student learns: how to live with

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Others weak and strong, young and old, with power and with;
no power; what the school teaches-- by evaluating how and
who earns praise in the school; how power is distributed
and shared between the weak and the strong; what objectives
the exercise of power appears (to the students) to be intended
to achieve. ; u4

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There might now be a distinction between the concepts
of curriculum construction and curriculum development. Initially

one plane and construct a curriculum. Subsequently the initial
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curriculum is improved upon (developed). The National Education
Council meetings of the ANC in 1978 and 1978 planned and adopted

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constructed curricula respectively. This is the curriculum
that needs to be developed now. To develop also means to evolve
it to a higher quality through well calculated changes that make
the curriculum more in line with direct methods towards achieving

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the education policy determined objectives. Have we been
consistently keeping these policy goals in mind when we made
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some of the changes in the initial curriculum which we have
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made? Is our curriculum for S.M.A.F.C. now more closer to brid-
ging the gap between mental and manual work? Are we gaining
the questions might be. Perhaps a good warning is that
teachers must never contemplate suggesting a curriculum

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It is not possible nor necessary to describe in full the process of curriculum change in a paper of this kind. It should suffice to say briefly that teachers provide the final report and data on a problem they suspect with the curriculum

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program. being in the classroom teachers are better placed to detect such problems for a further study and analysis by the curriculum developer. The analysis should result in a diagnosis of the problem. Through a process of alternative hypothesising and testing and hypothesising again as need might be, the cause of the problem is established and directions in which curriculum change appears necessary are determined. A tentative change is then introduced at a well calculated time. This change is then monitored and altered if necessary till a more permanent change that will improve the curriculum is found. The timing of any change is a very important factor. Thus changes in curriculum should take their time to be decided upon and appropriate time of trying them might also come much later thus making the whole process slow. But shortcomings done at the heat of the moment for reasons that might not be linked to the curriculum itself, are not only a waste of time but are harmful to the students education. Consequently there is no education system where teachers just change curriculum out of sheer meeting eloquence. Mini research is always necessary before any change is introduced and even then only on a trial basis under strict monitoring of the students performance as a result of the change. I
The definition of curriculum and a brief outline of the curriculum development process was given above. We might now like to apply some of these ideas in evaluating the approach:

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we have been following in trying to develop our curriculum.
The paper prefers not to comment on this part as such comment
might be counterproductive. We have made many mistakes, we

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progress. Instead of the comment the paper suggests the following
in a search for progress: .

When looking at 99; education problems at Somafco we must
as a guide towards solving them, see them as symptoms of our
real problems of education which are in South Africa. Consequent
solutions to Somafco problems must always be in the context
of the corresponding problem in South Africa. For an example,

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subjects which are catered for 'adequately' should not be

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introduced at Somafco: at the expense of subjects not catered
for in South Africa. That is any change of school subjects
at Somafco can only be meaningful if such a change is a desirable
change also in the context of subjects taught in South Africa.

We must not depart from this principle even in the face of
'what might superficially appear to be a 'problem' at Somafco
requiring subject change;

1.2. Curriculum development must follow the Education policy.
Elaboration on this policy is long overdue as that it is spelled
out in terms of general; specific educational objectives.
This was suggested in the authors research proposal on Somafco
curriculum which was submitted years back with no go ahead
facilitated up to date. We need to attend to this matter of
clearly spell out Education Policy. 'An example to
illustrate curriculum development following policy could be:
If policy wants to bridge the gap between mental and manual
work, then manual-skill training cannot be removed from the
Somafco curriculum just as Daka training cannot be without

?-the social sciences in-proportion to the required emphasis.
t', 3. In curriculum development in general, teachers are to the
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academic (mental) training of an appropriate level. Similarly,
4t policy required emphasis on natural sciences over social,
sciences, then the overall teaching time allocation to natural
sciences must exceed the overall teaching time allocation to
The thrust of this paper is that curriculum changes such as
those of subjects and subject content of-teaching time allocations
should be discussed with and only authorised by the curriculum
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developer if we are ever to make any real headway in developing

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our curriculum. 4;;

curriculum specialists as drivers are to motor engineers. Teachers
have a role to play but that role is NOT changing the curriculum
without consultation with the curriculum developer.

44. The curriculum developer needs to participate when curriculum
matters are being discussed either at the education secretariate and
or national level; This should be even more so when the curri-
culum developer's own projects are being discussed. This has not
been happening.)H

5. The curriculum developers will need, time and again, to
visit ANC schools in which curricula are being developed. The
education department should facilitate such visits. This has
not happened in the past even when such visits were requested.

6. In developing an education system, those organising the
schools' physical and social environment must always keep in
mind that there will always be 'silent' teachings of the hidden
curriculum coming from this environment. Let us always never
forget that under Eban Education it was more the hidden
curriculum which produced the greatest number of the revolution-
aries we have, just the opposite of what the declared bent of
Education curriculum set out to achieve. we need to keep on

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guard that this never happen with our own curriculum.

7. The ARC must train as many curriculum specialists as it is possible. We need a lot of specialist power to succeed in completely transforming an established oppressive apartheid education into an equal; non-racial and democratic education; The success or otherwise in carrying out this transformation might well depend) on how large extent, on how far we are prepared to systematically use insights from the accumulated curriculum experience of other education systems in trying to solve problems of our own curriculum program.

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