

Curriculum evaluation essay sample

[Literature](#), [Russian Literature](#)



Evaluation is the process of collecting data on a programme to determine its value or worth with the aim of deciding whether to adopt, reject, or revise the programme. Programmes are evaluated to answer questions and concerns of various parties. The public want to know whether the curriculum implemented has achieved its aims and objectives; teachers want to know whether what they are doing in the classroom is effective; and the developer or planner wants to know how to improve the curriculum product.

Definitions : • Ornstein and Hunkins (1998) define curriculum evaluation as “ a process or cluster of processes that people perform in order to gather data that will enable them to decide whether to accept, change, or eliminate something- the curriculum in general or an educational textbook in particular” (p. 320).

- Worthen and Sanders (1987) define curriculum evaluation as “ the formal determination of the quality, effectiveness, or value of a programme, product, project, process, objective, or curriculum” (p. 22-23).

- Gay (1985) argues that the aim of curriculum evaluation is to identify its weaknesses and strengths as well as problems encountered in implementation; to improve the curriculum development process; to determine the effectiveness of the curriculum and the returns on finance allocated.

- Oliva (1988) defined curriculum evaluation as the process of delineating, obtaining, and providing useful information for judging decision alternatives. The primary decision alternatives to consider based upon the evaluation

results are: to maintain the curriculum as is; to modify the curriculum; or to eliminate the curriculum.

Curriculum Evaluation Models

Several experts have proposed different models describing how and what should be involved in evaluating a curriculum. Models are useful because they help you define the parameters of an evaluation, what concepts to study and the procedures to be used to extract important data. Numerous evaluation models have been proposed but three models are discussed here.

Context, Input, Process, Product Model (CIPP Model)

Daniel L. Stufflebeam (1971), who chaired the Phi Delta Kappa National Study Committee on Evaluation, introduced a widely cited model of evaluation known as the CIPP (context, input, process and product) model. The approach when applied to education aims to determine if a particular educational effort has resulted in a positive change in school, college, university or training organisation. A major aspect of the Stufflebeam's model is centred on decision making or an act of making up one's mind about the programme introduced.

For evaluations to be done correctly and aid in the decision making process, curriculum evaluators have to:

- first delineate what is to be evaluated and determine what information that has to be collected (eg. how effective has the new science programme has been in enhancing the scientific thinking skills of children in the primary grades)
- second is to obtain or collect the information using selected techniques and methods (eg. interview teachers,

collect test scores of students); •third is to provide or make available the information (in the form of tables, graphs) to interested parties. To decide whether to maintain, modify or eliminate the new curriculum or programme, information is obtained by conducting the following 4 types of evaluation: context, input, process and product

Stufflebeam's model of evaluation relies on both formative and summative evaluation to determine the overall effectiveness a curriculum programme. Evaluation is required at all levels of the programme implemented.

a) Context Evaluation (What needs to be done and in what context)? This is the most basic kind of evaluation with the purpose of providing a rationale for the objectives. The evaluator defines the environment in which the curriculum is implemented which could be a classroom, school or training department. The evaluator determines needs that were not met and reasons why the needs are not being met.

Also identified are the shortcomings and problems in the organisation under review (eg. a sizable proportion of students in secondary schools are unable to read at the desired level, the ratio of students to computers is large, a sizable proportion of science teachers are not proficient to teach in English). Goals and objectives are specified on the basis of context evaluation. In other words, the evaluator determines the background in which the innovations are being implemented. The techniques of data collection would include observation of conditions in the school, background statistics of teachers and interviews with players involved in implementation of the curriculum.

b) Input Evaluation (How should it be done?) is that evaluation the purpose of which is to provide information for determining how to utilise resources to achieve objectives of the curriculum. The resources of the school and various designs for carrying out the curriculum are considered. At this stage the evaluator decides on procedures to be used. Unfortunately, methods for input evaluation are lacking in education. The prevalent practices include committee deliberations, appeal to the professional literature, the employment of consultants and pilot experimental projects.

c) Process Evaluation (Is it being done?) is the provision of periodic feedback while the curriculum is being implemented.

d) Product Evaluation (Did it succeed?) or outcomes of the initiative. Data is collected to determine whether the curriculum managed to accomplish it set out achieve (eg. to what extent students have developed a more positive attitudes towards science). Product evaluation involves measuring the achievement of objectives, interpreting the data and providing with information that will enable them to decide whether to continue, terminate or modify the new curriculum. For example, product evaluation might reveal that students have become more interested in science and are more positive towards the subject after introduction of the new science curriculum. Based on this findings the decision may be made to implement the programme throughout the country.