

Trends Affecting Curriculum 1964-1974

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Ten trends in the major curricular areas are identified as significant in a study of professional literature of the past decade. Readers will want to check these trends against their own subjective judgments or against findings in their own investigations.

A SIGNIFICANT array of educational innovations has appeared during the past decade. Many of these may be considered trends in that their impact has been described extensively in professional journals through descriptive, expository, and research literature. Increased interest on the part of the public, greater financial support, and increased professional activity have combined to produce these extensive innovations or educational trends which have strongly influenced the school curriculum from preschool through higher education. So great is the continually multiplying quantity of recorded data in the professional field that it is increasingly difficult for the educator to keep abreast of innovations.

Two means of informing the busy educator are synoptic compilations of selected literature and that of content analysis of professional publications. This article supports these means through a current study of trends that influence curriculum as reflected in education journals and an analysis of content of professional journals for the past decade. The current study reported is rep-

resentative of the process that has taken place periodically over the past decade making the content analysis possible. In order that the reader may be informed as to the findings of the 1974 study and be in better position to examine the findings of the content analysis, the current list of trends is stated in Table 1.

The following is a description of the way in which the 1974 list of trends was developed. The set of trends initially began as a composite set of 16 trend statements which was developed from a study of summary sets of trends prepared by recent sections of the authors' graduate course in Curriculum Trends at the University of Georgia involving approximately 200 teachers and administrators with public school experience or graduate students in preparation for teaching. The summary set of trends for each class was prepared as a composite of the study of professional literature published within the last three years in journals which are the official organs of professional education organizations or professional institutions.

The set of 16 trends was used as a guide in the classification of the articles found in

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three issues of 22 journals and all issues of six journals for 1971, 1972, and 1973. As a result of this classification of journal data, the composite set of 16 trend statements was modified to a set of 13 trend statements. Using the data available from the current study of journals, a list of terms relevant to each stated trend was assigned as a means of better identifying each trend.

The new list of 13 trends, with related terms, was reviewed by 20 professors in the College of Education of the University of Georgia. Modification of the trends list was made according to recommendations of the review professors. References from the literature reviewed were again classified according to the modified trend list. Through this process it was determined that the 10 trends listed above were most representative of the professional literature and views of the reviewing professors.

Using this set of trends as an outline, a publication, *Trends Influence Curriculum*, second edition, was prepared by the authors and published by MSS Information Corporation, 1974. The publication provides an overview of each trend which interrelates the trend and introduces specific literature in synoptic form as support of the respective trends. This publication is an example of how the periodic content analysis of professional literature has been organized to serve as the basis for the course "Curriculum

Trends" which has had an enrollment of 1361 students from 1964 to 1974 at the University of Georgia.

Changing Emphases in Curriculum

A comprehensive examination of the periodic content analysis of professional literature at two-year intervals 1964-1974 shown in Table 2 reveals some pertinent emphases, shifts, and additions that continue to influence curriculum. The sum total of 64 trend topics, set forth as representative of the literature during this period of study, indicates the extent of change in education that has been expressed by professional educators. The number of trends listed at intervals ranged from 31 to 10 with a fluctuation in emphases from list to list. Some trend statements were carried over, some deleted, and some trends were added to each list.

A look specifically at the data enables one to see some of the prevailing innovations—that is, the topics that were at least verbalized in the professional literature. In 1964 individualization of instruction was seen as a trend. In 1966, 1968, and 1970 this area did not appear in the literature sufficiently to indicate a trend. However, sufficient attention was given to individualization of instruction to indicate a trend in 1972 and 1974. Federal aid to education was given strong attention in 1964, 1966, and 1968 with less attention after 1968. Attention to creativity, reading, foundation aid, and nongradedness followed the same pattern. The whole decade 1964-1974 gave strong attention to disadvantaged students with strong emphasis on the culturally disadvantaged students through 1972 broadening to include all types of exceptional children in the early seventies.

Strong emphasis was placed on changing the educational preparation of teachers from 1964 through 1972. The literature of 1974 recognized not only teacher preparation but included staff development and teacher assistants. Trends noted in 1964 and 1966, but not identified as such afterward, included guidance services (particularly in the elementary school), adult education, programmed

1. Curriculum is being modified through teacher education, staff development, and teacher assistants.
2. Humanistic approaches are emerging in the curriculum.
3. Community, faculty, and students are being involved in educational decision making and program implementation.
4. New emphases in educational content are developing.
5. New and modified features in school facilities and equipment are influencing and being influenced by the curriculum.
6. Curriculum structure is being modified through individualization of instruction.
7. The curriculum is being modified to better meet the needs of exceptional children.
8. Early childhood education is emphasizing intellectual, physical, social, and emotional development.
9. Educational accountability emphases are affecting the curriculum.
10. Educational alternatives and options are modifying the curriculum.

Table 1. Current Trends in Curriculum 1974

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instruction, mathematics understanding, standardizing the curriculum, work experience through vocational education, and emphasis on educational excellence. A number of trend statements were included in only one periodic listing.

What Are the Findings?

Major findings from the study are as follows. Only 4 of the 64 trends listed in the decade were continued as trends in the same terminology in the 1974 list. The types of topics listed as trends in the early part of the decade were more narrow in scope than those in the latter part of the decade. This indicated that the literature of the latter part of the period studied reflects stronger attention of educators to selected innovations than was seen earlier. The four areas of attention during the decade which continued on the 1974 listing are individualization of instruction, attention to exceptional children with major emphasis on the disadvantaged, new and modified educational facilities and equipment, and humanization of education. Attention given to another area, early childhood

education, beginning in 1966, shifted emphasis from early intellectual stimulation to that of attention to all aspects of the development of the young child in the latter part of the decade.

The study also revealed two rapid developments—the middle school concept and the media center concept. The middle school concept, which was first listed as a trend in 1968, developed to the extent that it was included as a fully accepted alternative and option in the 1974 trends list. Increased emphasis on audiovisual and library services listed as a trend in 1964 advanced to a merger of standards for the two areas and further into a totally new concept embracing both areas in a media-learning center. This concept, considered beyond the trend stage, continues to appear under the trend of modified facilities and equipment in 1974. Curriculum content change was reflected in varying ways in each set of trends during the study with the emphasis on the specific subjects during the early years shifting to emphasis on the broader aspects of the total curriculum content in the latter years of the study.

In summary, we believe that the list of 10 trends set forth in this paper is a fair representation of the major content areas of contemporary professional literature generally available to educators. Sufficient documents in professional literature—expository, descriptive, and research—supporting these 10 trends appear to influence contemporary curriculum. Trends in education have shifted significantly from 1964 to 1974. One readily recognizes the gradual shift from narrow range topic trends to broader coverage in trend statements. Nevertheless, this appears to be a reasonable judgment as to the content of professional literature of the ten-year study. Probably the strongest contributor to this shift from the narrow topics to the broader is the devoting of full issues of many journals to a single broad topic area or theme which may be called a trend topic. It is further the judgment of the writers that in the early 60's educators were seen branching off into many directions, the spread of which was reflected in professional literature. We

also suggest that so many ideas have been tried by educators that there may be little new to bring forth. Thus, some of the recent so-called innovations have been merely "old wine in new bottles." Finally, one must con-

clude that the past 10 years in education have been years of much activity and shifting emphases, all of which are influencing the curriculum from early childhood through continuing adult education. □

TRENDS	1964	1966	1968	1970	1972	1974
1. Individualization of instruction	x				x	x
2. Reorganization graded school	x	x				
3. Federal aid	x	x	x			
4. Guidance services	x	x				
5. Adult education	x	x				
6. Creativity	x	x	x			
7. Teaching media-programmed instruction	x	x				
8. Culturally disadvantaged	x	x	x	x		
9. Teacher preparation/education	x	x	x	x	x	
10. Mathematics understanding	x	x				
11. Theory into practice	x					
12. Music, art, speech	x					
13. Reading	x	x	x			
14. Work experience: vocational education	x	x				
15. Foundation aid	x	x	x			
16. Conflicting ideologies	x					
17. Standardization of curriculum	x	x				
18. Utilization of research	x					
19. International understanding	x					
20. Educational excellence	x	x				
21. Flexible grouping		x	x			
22. Independent study		x	x			
23. Exceptional children		x	x			x
24. Early intellectual stimulation		x	x	x	x	
25. Team teaching and teacher aides		x	x			
26. Standardized tests		x				
27. School readiness and placement		x				
28. Potential drop-outs, provision for		x				
29. Reporting student progress		x				
30. Communication/linguistics		x				
31. Science and mathematics emphases		x				
32. Library becoming materials center		x	x			
33. Physical facilities: new organizations		x	x			
34. Remedial help and enrichment		x				
35. School extension: year, day, kindergarten		x	x			
36. Professional organizations' influence		x				
37. Student personnel services			x			
38. Discovery and understanding			x			
39. New content and concepts			x			
40. Middle school concept			x	x	x	
41. Nongradedness			x			
42. Library/learning center			x			
43. Consolidation/coordination			x			
44. Auxiliary school personnel			x			
45. Student, faculty involvement-decision making			x			
46. Organization and coordination				x	x	
47. New and modified facilities and equipment				x	x	x
48. Media center: combined media and library				x		
49. Increased and modified personnel services				x	x	
50. Individual learning: nongraded, independent study, LAPs				x		
51. Eclectic teaching: inquiry and discovery				x		
52. Humanism involving interdisciplinary relations				x		
53. Controversial issues: sex and drugs				x		x
54. Evaluating student achievement				x		
55. Modified educational climate					x	
56. Education content and experiences more relevant					x	
57. Disadvantaged students					x	
58. Evaluation and accountability					x	
59. Teacher education, staff development, teaching assistants						x
60. Involvement: decision making and program implementation						x
61. New emphases on educational content						x
62. Development: all aspects of early childhood						x
63. Educational accountability						x
64. Educational alternatives and options						x

Table 2. Trend Topics 1964 to 1974

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