ABSTRACTS OF SELECTED DOCTORAL DISSERTATIONS IN CURRICULUM: 1990

DOROTHY HUENECKE, Georgia State University

Volume and page numbers are from Dissertation Abstracts International

Curriculum Development


This study examined curriculum development and revision in the accounting department of a university. The author used ethnographic methods to discover that the single most important factor in successful curriculum development was active faculty involvement. A systematic approach to planning and design was also important. The researcher recommended involving both tenured and untenured faculty in the process and providing for a faculty reward system.

Bevis, Em Olivia.  A New Direction for Curriculum Development for Professional Nursing: A Paradigm Shift from Training to Education." Ed D. University of Georgia, 1990 5^-9 pp (51/08-A 2616)

This theoretical study proposed a paradigm shift for curriculum development in nursing education that moves from a Tylerian/behaviorist mode to a multivious/multidimensional mode. The proposed model includes four elements: (1) a five-point learner maturity continuum, (2) a six-type learning typology, (3) a set of criteria for shaping teacher learner interactions, and (4) a set of criteria for selecting or designing learning episodes. The researcher hoped this shift would lead to practitioners who are not only clinically skilled but connected to the community in a critically conscious manner.


This study examined curriculum decision making in Malawi and probed the effect of centralized planning on teacher flexibility. The researcher collected data through document analysis, questionnaires, and interviews. The findings confirmed that curriculum decision making and planning are indeed centralized; teachers have little flexibility to adapt the curriculum to local conditions. The study recommended, among other things, site-based management and the further refining of performance-based assessment now in operation.


This study proposed a model for second and foreign language curriculum development that differs from the traditional linear, top-down model. According to the author, a major problem with the traditional approach is the assumption that what is planned prior to instruction actually occurs in the classroom. The new model builds on a phenomenological and qualitative paradigm that incorporates the experiential and interactive nature of the language classroom. The negotiated curriculum is a bottom-up, classroom decision making process for curriculum and instruction.

This study designed a curriculum for architectural education using the Tyler model of curriculum development. The author initially applied the model to the Bauhaus curricula to determine their sources. Analysis indicated that Bauhaus curricula were more strongly influenced by powerful directors than by the traditional influences of student, society, and academic discipline. The author applied the same model to American architectural curricula from 1930 to 1983. He developed a new curriculum based on this analysis that provides for two levels: a basic level for those who want an architectural background as part of a general education, and an advanced professional level for those who want to become practicing architects.


This study proposed the Visitor-Centered Model of Curriculum and Program Development for use by museum educators. The model envisions the museum visitor as a component of the model equal to the institution's collections. The museum educator serves as a facilitator rather than as a director of the visitor's experience. The author provides a framework that includes strategies, organizing elements, implementation steps, and formative and summative evaluation procedures.

Curriculum Change


This study sought to discover whether practices deemed necessary for curriculum change in the literature are found in actual practice. The researcher surveyed elementary teachers and interviewed them about their use of manipulatives and calculators (new to the math curriculum) and their use of a new formalized process approach for teaching writing. The data revealed no clear distinctions in curriculum implementation related to training or participative decision making, contrary to what the literature indicates. The researcher found, however, that the effective use of consultants and resources may have a positive effect on implementation. Young teachers with less experience also seemed to be more inclined to implement change.

Khunji, Farida Mohammad Saleh. "Teachers' Participation in Curriculum Development: A Study of Educational Change in a Small Country" Ph D University of Reading (United Kingdom), 1990. 316 pp (52/03-A:792)

This study examined the nature and processes of curriculum change when teachers are not involved in the early decision making. The Bahrainian Ministry of Education planned the change and presented it to the teachers. The policy makers were enthusiastic about the change and were involved with the teachers during implementation. The teachers showed strong support for the new program and offered little resistance. The researcher concluded that the smallness of the country and the proximity of all participants contributed greatly to teachers' willingness to support a change imposed on them.


This research investigated curriculum change in home economics at Goodlad's levels of curriculum decision making: societal, institutional, instructional, and personal. A historical review of two periods of time (1900s and 1950s) examined earlier societal pressures for curriculum change in home economics. The researcher used case study methodology to investigate current curriculum decision making at a high school and found marginal change at the school level, due largely to deeply held beliefs and organizational aspects of schooling. She concluded that the organizational aspects of schooling result in many layers of curriculum decision making that are likely to result only in minor changes in response to social pressures for change.


This study examined the process used by 22 university faculty involved in a curriculum transformation seminar designed to change the main curriculum to include information about...
women and minorities. The researcher addressed three questions. (1) What does it mean to transform courses to include information about ethnic women? (2) What factors are involved in curriculum transformation? (3) What facilitates or impedes the transformation process? The researcher found that information about ethnicity and gender were more likely to be "added on" if the participant was uncomfortable or uninspired by the seminar. "Shifting" likely occurred if an interdisciplinary or ethnic research focus was present. "Transforming" occurred when the participant had outsider status or an interdisciplinary focus.

**Curriculum Implementation**

**Chandler, Susanne Roberta.** "Curriculum as Socially Constructed: A Study of Classroom Curriculum in Three Seventh-Grade Reading Classes" Ph.D. The Ohio State University, 1990. 213 p. (51/10-A.3313)

This study focused on the relationship between the planned and enacted curriculum and the effect of the specific setting and participants on this relationship. The author collected data from three 7th grade reading classes using observational, comparative, and interpretive methodologies. The results indicated that the enacted curriculum varied from class to class because of the unique context and participants in each setting. Findings also indicated that test scores and other accountability measures did not reflect the enacted curriculum found in the actual classrooms.


This study examined parent, teacher, and administrator responses to the implementation of a new program, PGRP II. Reading and Talking Across the Curriculum. The researcher collected data over an 18 month period, using such sources as recorded observations, teacher interviews, and parent conferences. Significant findings included the following: (1) the culture of the school was both the primary vehicle for change and the factor that most hampered change, (2) the socioeconomic and cultural status of a community influenced parents' perceptions of the schools, and (3) successful curriculum implementation is facilitated when community values are understood.

**Powell, Kristen Ann.** Implementation of the California Curriculum Reform in English Language Arts: A Case Study of Six High Schools" Ed.D University of California, Los Angeles, 1990. 339 p. (51/12-A.3982)

This exploratory study investigated the implementation of new curricula based on California state guidelines in the English departments of six high schools. The author collected data through a questionnaire given to all English teachers in the high schools, interviews with selected teachers and administrators, and an analysis of curriculum documents. Five factors emerged as distinct in these schools successfully implementing the curriculum: (1) the adoption process, (2) central administrative support, (3) staff development, (4) school board and community support, and (5) interrelations among teachers.

**Swanson, Barbara Lynne.** The Development and Assessment of a Model for Planning, Monitoring, and Evaluating Curriculum Implementation" Ph.D University of Minnesota, 1990. 342 pp (51/11-A.3625)

This study developed a research-based model for planning, monitoring, and evaluating the process of curriculum implementation. Fifteen elements and 10 criteria of curriculum implementation were drawn from the literature. Elementary and secondary teachers and administrators critiqued the resultant model. The author found a significant difference between elementary and secondary teachers on every point. Overall, elementary educators were more receptive to the model than secondary educators.

**Syed Zin, Sharifah Maimuna.** "Curriculum Innovation—Case Studies of Man and Environment in the Malaysian Primary School Curriculum" Ph.D University of East Anglia (United Kingdom), 1990. 465 pp. (51/07-A.2258)

This study examined the problems of implementing a curriculum innovation mandated by a central authority. The researcher conducted case studies in four schools in Malaysia and undertook additional interviews and document analysis. Data revealed the complexities of curriculum implementation and the difficulties experienced by teachers when the curriculum model is imposed. The researcher urged the consideration of the grassroots approach.
Influences on Curriculum

**Funderburg, Jean Ann.** "Elementary Principals' Curricular Influence." Ph D Stanford University, 1990. 372 pp. (51/01-A:67)

This research investigated formal and informal strategies principals use to influence planned curriculum change. The author used case study methodology involving six principals in two school districts. She categorized curriculum as recommended, written, supported, or taught, and described three steps in the change process: adoption, implementation, and institutionalization. The researcher found that principals use both formal and informal strategies to effect curriculum change in each category. She concluded that teachers expect and desire principals' curriculum influence.

**Savidge, David Bryant.** "The Influence of Reading Nationally Circulated Scholarly Educational Literature as Manifested in the Curricular Leadership Performance of Middle School Principals." Ed D Ball State University, 1990. 171 pp (51/04-A:1105).

This study examined the extent of middle school principals' reading about curriculum change and the extent to which such reading affected their leadership. The researcher surveyed two groups of middle school principals—one from schools recognized for educational excellence by the U.S. Department of Education and the other randomly chosen. Findings revealed that middle school principals generally do not read professional literature about curriculum change, although they indicated they do have time for professional reading. Principals from Schools of Excellence were generally not more knowledgeable about nationally circulated reports on curriculum change.


This research documents the issues and concomitant needs that influenced the development of curriculum from the founding of Cuyahoga Community College in 1962 until 1988. The author considered five needs as they changed over time: (1) the academic and personal needs of students, (2) changing work needs, (3) community requests for programs, (4) the internal operations of the college, and (5) the college's attempts to address future realities. The author concluded that the college successfully responded to these needs and is meeting its mission by offering a varied curriculum.


This study describes the effect of groups that challenged North Carolina curriculum materials and instructional practices from 1983 to 1988. The main groups challenging the system were conservative the Eagle Forum, the conservative evangelical religious right, and the Ku Klux Klan. The author describes case law on censorship and documents the numbers and targets of recent challenges.


This study assessed teachers' influences and effects on a mathematics curriculum project along with their perceptions of their roles and of math teaching. The author used case study methodology with 16 teachers over a two-year period as they participated in the University of Georgia Geometry and Measurement Project. He discovered that teachers went through a three-stage process as they became increasingly comfortable with the materials. During the first stage, disorientation, they felt uncomfortable using the materials. During the second stage, negotiation, they tried to make the materials work. Finally, during the third stage, incorporation, the lessons became their own. After the project, teachers felt they were better teachers, more competent in the use of hands-on materials.

Curriculum Decision Making

**Arjona-Tseng, Ethlia Maria.** "Curriculum Policy Making for an Emerging Profession: The Structure, Process, and Outcome of Creating a Graduate Institute for Translation and Interpreta..."
This study examined the impact of institutional processes on curriculum decision making in a Taiwanese Catholic university. The researcher participated in the development of a graduate institute of translation and interpretation. She used ethnographic methodology to collect data. Analysis revealed that societal and institutional cultures had a strong impact on curriculum development. A multilayered network of institutional interactions constrained the process. Another impediment to the development of the institute was the traditional view of translation and interpretation as a quasi-professional area.


This study examined three local curriculum revision projects to determine the extent to which Schwab's commonplaces and Walker's platform concepts were apparent in the curriculum deliberations. In each case, curriculum committees met periodically to meet the mandate of the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) to develop a K-12 social studies course of study. On all three committees, teachers represented all of the commonplaces. Their concerns revolved mainly around the procedural requirements of the ODE. Other commonplaces were dealt with mainly on a tacit level. Platform issues were more significant with the two committees that had the most time to discuss beliefs.


This research used case study methodology to examine curriculum decisions in a new school. Klein's framework for curriculum decision making formed the basis for analysis. The findings revealed that the state framework was a major influence on curriculum decisions. Teachers were the main support to other teachers. The researcher recommended that if local autonomy is sought, teachers and principals need to learn how to create curriculum designs based on state guidelines but unique to individual schools.


This study surveyed two groups of teachers regarding their participation in school-based curriculum decision making and their perceptions of school climate. One group of teachers was chosen from schools identified as 1989 Georgia Schools of Excellence, and the other group comprised teachers in schools not identified as excellent. The author found no significant differences between the two groups in curriculum decision making and their perceptions of school climate.


This study examined whether a school culture that focused on a shared framework of theory and values reduced the typical isolation teachers feel when they make curriculum decisions and whether it affected their interactions with other teachers and their reflections on their own practice. Ethnographic techniques used by the researcher during the spring of 1989 included interviews, case studies, and artifact analysis. Six themes of the school culture were identified. Characteristic of the culture were a sense of belonging to a special group, a belief in the need for collaboration, and a desire to celebrate both teaching and learning successes. The researcher concluded that a shared culture does increase curriculum linkage, but it requires both personal and institutional commitment.


The purpose of this study was to ascertain the views of teachers regarding California educational reform movements and their impact on teacher curriculum decision making. The researcher conducted interviews with one primary and one upper grade teacher in each of seven elementary schools selected for the California Distinguished School Award. Teachers noted that their curriculum decisions were affected by the state frameworks, text adoptions, and standardized
tests. They viewed the tests as a constraint. Within the confines of the other guidelines, teachers indicated they felt creative and professional as they made curriculum decisions affecting their individual classes.

**Curriculum Theory**


The author of this study interviewed teachers, administrators, school board members, parents, and community members to determine meaning structures for curriculum change. Based on a theoretical analysis, the study identified three levels of meaning structure that define the initial state, the transition state, and the restructured state of curriculum change. The researcher concluded that the need for curriculum restructuring efforts differs according to which curriculum area and which group are involved.

Birnbaum, Larry J. *Curriculum as a Production Technology Case Studies of Four Allied Health Programs* Ph.D. University of Iowa, 1990 318 pp. (51/12-A.4004).

The proposition that curriculum may be the work of an organization rather than an individual plan for learning was set forth in this study. The author applied typological analysis to four allied health programs, describing their input, transformation, and output. The author posited that changes in knowledge or technology were largely the source of curricular change. Organizational technology and structure were seen as wielding more influence on the curriculum than the need to improve individual student learning.

Finney, Sandra Cecile. *An Examination of the Nature and Potential of, Limits to, and Normative Grounding for the Role of Curriculum Developer in Saskatchewan Education* Ph.D. University of Saskatchewan (Canada), 1990 429 pp (52/09-A 3166).

Using an analysis based on the critical social theory of Habermas and MacIntyre, this study examined how curriculum developers do, can, and should develop curricula. The author used case study methodology to collect data in Saskatchewan schools. She found that curriculum development required actions oriented toward understanding, but this was difficult to attain in a bureaucracy that placed restraints on communication. She argued that dialogue undertaken in an environment of autonomy and equality would be the most legitimate approach for the regulation of public education through curriculum means.


This analytic study focused on the question: What is the role of the teacher in the selection and development of curriculum in public schools? Analysis of the literature of educational reform and curriculum theory revealed ambiguity in the teacher role in the development of curriculum. Although many theorists support a strong role for the teacher, educational reformers limit the power of the teacher. The stress on uniformity of curriculum expectations across classrooms and inadequate teacher training in empowerment have led to the current situation. The researcher proposed three models for understanding how new curricula are introduced and urged the development of new models of curriculum decision making to account more accurately for actual practice.


This study sought a deeper understanding of instructional planning through an investigation of the year-long planning of six high school social studies teachers. The researcher analyzed their plans in light of three metaphors: (1) planning as dilemma resolution, (2) planning as brokering, and (3) planning as responding to rhythms. He found that teachers used plans to resolve such dilemmas as teacher-defined intent versus textbook- or curriculum guide-defined content, and professional judgment versus institutional expectations. Teachers brokered the academic curriculum to the specific school's cultural setting during planning by emphasizing application to daily life or relevant social issues. Long- and short-range planning responded to the rhythms of the academic and extracurricular calendars.

This study proposed a conceptualization of curriculum in higher education as the technical work of the institution. The researcher examined four allied health programs in a comprehensive research university to test this conception. She found that increasing complexity in the health professions resulted in the differentiation of program elements to meet the changes. Programs achieved coordination through a standardization of student preparation, course content, and a sequencing of courses. They protected themselves by adjusting admissions criteria and by assigning the major development of practice to clinical sites. The author found that efficiency was a major criterion of curriculum decisions.

Miscellaneous


This study sought to determine whether the perceptions of superintendents, principals, and teachers differed with regard to curriculum policies, practices, and procedures, and whether the groups differed about these matters as they occur at the school or district level. Usable surveys were returned from 187 Maryland educators. Statistically significant differences in responses occurred between the superintendents' responses and those of the principals and teachers. The researcher found no significant differences in the views of the respondents from urban, suburban, and rural school districts.


Teacher perceptions of differences between desired and actual educational goals were examined in this study. Twenty-eight education graduate students responded to 42 goal statements that grew out of ASCD's 1978 Task Force on Humanistic Education. Findings indicated that the respondents generally favored humanistic goals, perceptions of desirable goals were significantly different than perceptions of actual goals. Inconsistencies appeared in some cases, however, in which a respondent strongly agreed with both a humanistic and nonhumanistic statement in a pair. The researcher attributed this inconsistency to the ambivalence of the respondents about the role of educators in establishing educational goals.


The purpose of this study was to determine whether teacher involvement in curriculum planning was positively related to attitudes about curriculum planning and utilization. Teachers of middle grade exploratory courses comprised the sample. The researcher analyzed responses to Lingenbach's Curriculum Attitude Survey, along with personal data. Findings indicated that involvement in curriculum planning was not significantly related to attitudes toward curriculum planning and utilization. Personal interviews with 16 teachers revealed that they had very positive attitudes toward their involvement in curriculum planning. Teachers who taught in areas outside their department, however, preferred to have a plan prepared for them that they could then follow.


In this historical study based on approaches by Karlsson and Kliebard, the researcher examined the ideological, epistemological, and pedagogical views of the developmentalists and the traditionalists in relation to the Icelandic Social Science Curriculum Project. The project began in 1974, both the Taba Social Studies Program and Bruner's MACOS materials were influential to the project at that time. In less than 10 years, a countervailing point of view became dominant, which led to the resignation of the SCCP group in 1984. The author documents how the project took on an entirely new identity within these 10 years.

This study examined the relationship between the Olivero Curriculum Alignment model and student achievement. The opinions of teachers and administrators from 20 schools were collected pre- and post-implementation, as were the norm referenced test scores of the students. The researcher found that both teachers and administrators valued the Olivero model. A significant positive increase in student achievement occurred in grades 3 through 6, although there was no significant difference between the test scores of students whose teachers applied the model and those whose teachers did not. The researcher recommended that longitudinal studies be conducted to ascertain the long-term effects of the model.


This study analyzed the central curriculum policy-making processes of South Australia. The author sought answers to several specific questions, including: Is the policy making comprehensive or incremental? Is the source of the policy internal or external? Are the policies more closely tied to professional reforms or societal pressures? The use of tools designed to analyze public policy indicated that curriculum policy-making processes were generally serial in nature and led to piecemeal rather than comprehensive approaches. The researcher identified two stages of policy development. At the consultative and democratic stage, individual and organizational politics played a part. This stage was followed by a political stage, when other modifications were made to help ensure the achievement of political purposes.


This study sought to determine current curricular practices in the 555 operating public school districts in New Jersey. Survey responses from 380 districts revealed a wide gap between theory and practice. Some districts reported that they developed or revised curriculum in as many as 32 areas, while other districts worked in only 1 curriculum area. Mathematics, reading, writing, and social studies were the most common subject areas for curriculum revision. Respondents indicated a preference for internal curriculum revisions. 83 percent favored local curriculum development. The following practices were reported infrequently: piloting a program before it was implemented, and providing inservice programs to introduce a new curriculum, program, or curriculum philosophy.


Teachers and administrators were surveyed in this study about their perceptions of effective curriculum committees. Data analysis revealed that, in general, effective committees parallel what is described as effective in the literature. There was agreement, for example, that effective curriculum committees follow a plan of action, base decisions on research, focus on improving student achievement, and are headed by a leader who follows procedural rules and facilitates the actions of committee members.

DOROTHY HUENECKE is Associate Professor of Education, Department of Curriculum and Instruction, Georgia State University, Atlanta, GA 30303

Kincheloe, Joe L. Teachers as Researchers: Qualitative Inquiry as a Path to Empowerment. Philadelphia: The Falmer Press, 1991. 227 pp. $22.00 $47.00

This volume explores many facets of teachers as researchers from the perspective of critical theory. Included are discussions of positivism and certainty, the qualitative alternative, and the role of values and ideology in inquiry. This is a treatment of action research and its related epistemological basis.