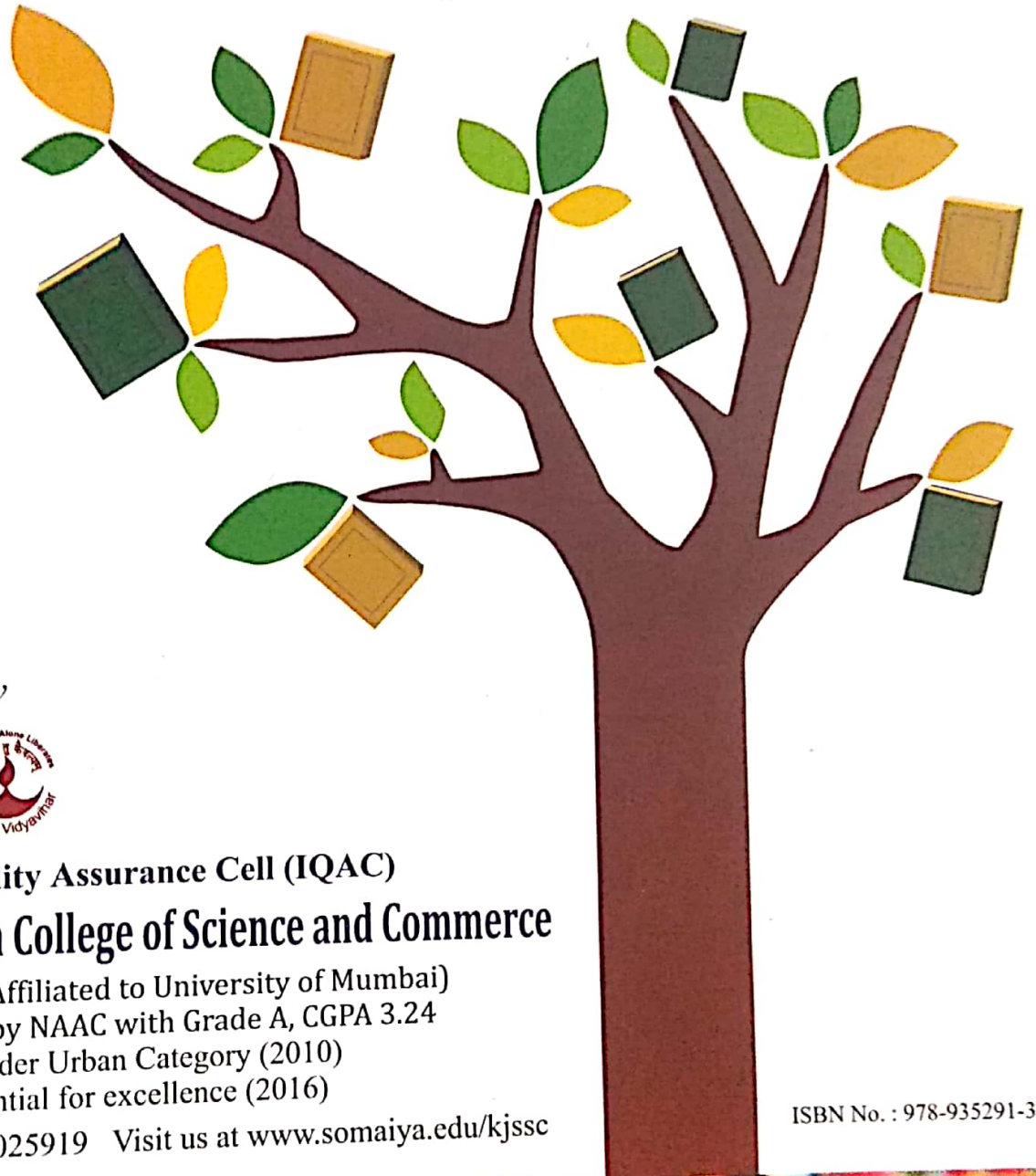


*Proceedings of
National Conference on*
**CURRICULUM DESIGN
& EVALUATION**



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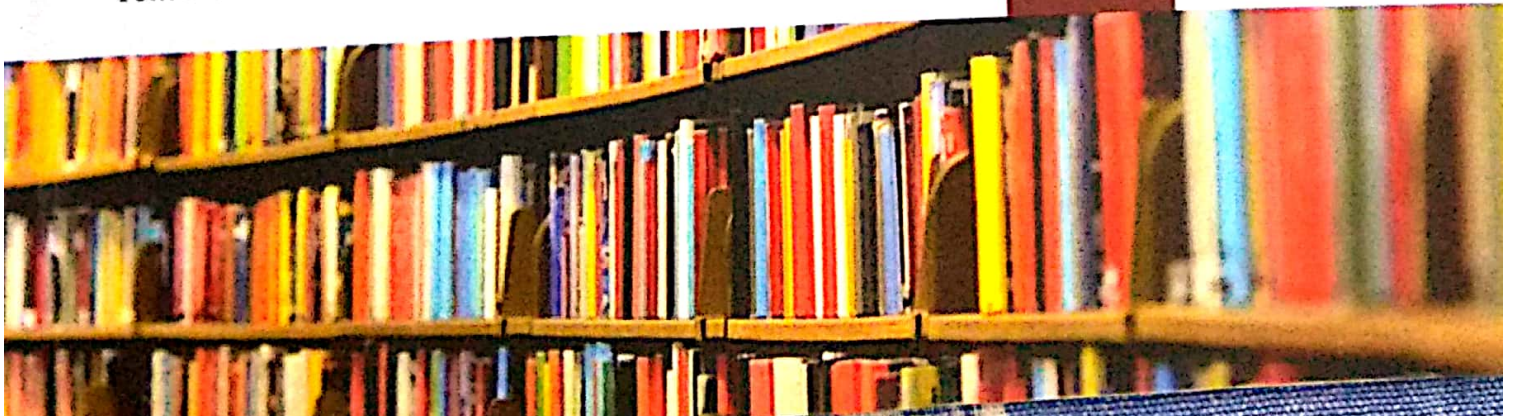
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ISBN No. : 978-935291-343



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Analysing Curricular Innovations for Embodiments of Cultural Components

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Abstract: The precocious attitude of human has invariably lead to the introduction of teaching learning system as a means for the transfer of the traditionally acquired skills and spread of the popular culture. The curriculum has seen diverse view points and is still in an evolving process. The present study talks about the simple curricular innovations and embodiments in the form of small talk and process of culture, which are linked to the main content using the visualization of the cultural components. The visualization is achieved using discussions that traverse the cultural embodiment. The study was carried out on the students of primary school using simple concepts of mathematics. The research question addressed the level of cultural appreciation pre and post intervention. The experimental study assessed the cultural appreciation of the students which was found to be significantly higher post intervention. This signifies the realization of the fact that the epitome of any education system which is basically translating culture into practice can be significantly achieved using these methods. It ensured that the used of effective visual representations not only ensure the conceptual clarity of mathematical terms but also ensures some sustainable curricular innovations.

Keywords: Curriculum, Culture, Curricular Innovations, Research

Introduction

Knowledge is imperative for the human survival. Human with its survival instinct and proactive & precocious attitude is always in an attitude to build upon the existing system so as to spread its wing and ensure acquisition of power and spread of popular culture. This has invariably lead to the introduction of teaching learning system which was considered as the easiest tool available at the doorstep for the transfer of the traditionally acquired skills and spread of the popular culture.

The institutionalization of this thought process led to the establishment of the adobes of transferring knowledge. These adobes through their masters started spreading the information and skills that were available to them. Gradually, with the realization that the acquisition of knowledge leads to a wiser human being, the people started pursuing the education vigorously and suddenly there was a mass surge in the demand of the education.

The surge led to the establishment of the formal education system wherein the students were taught in the class in the standardized pattern. This in the true sense was the first attempt for standardizing the human behavior. Classical theorists like Taylor, Weber and Fayol (Daft, 1995) proposed standards to be adopted as guidelines for planning, framing objectives and evaluating the system. Behaviorist's Maslow and McGregor (Daft, 1995) proposed motivators as stimulator of behavior and basis for planning, organizing and controlling. Modernist curriculum proposed propagation of popularist view as fit for curricular knowledge while post modernism proposed learner centered curriculum which is uncertain, fluid, flexible and empowering.

These shifts in viewpoints led to the increasing conflicts about what to teach and how to teach. In spite of these conflicts the education has evolved and taken its own course which is diverse and all-inclusive.

This paper talks about integrating curricular content with

the elements of culture so as to bring about the sustainable development not only with reference to the information that needs to be delivered but also with reference to the values that needs to be developed and culture that need to be transmitted.

Why culture as sustainable element

The curriculum changes directly or indirectly are always linked with the social, political, economic and historical changes and are generally driven by beliefs, aspirations and imaginations. Thus the curriculum should be such that promotes richness, recursions, relationships and rigor. (Doll, 1993). Richness talks about interactive nature of the curriculum and allows teachers and learners to develop appropriate contextual richness. Recursion refers to the interactive nature between the learner and the knowledge. Recursion ensures reflections of the learner on the knowledge learnt. This is done by using interactive process that does not have any definite start and end. Relationships talks about two dimensional interactions - 'pedagogical relationships' (interactions among the curriculum structure) and 'cultural relationships', (interactions among the curriculum with the local as well as global context). Rigor deals with the continuous interactions among concepts and theories which is ensured by developing the right attitude of exploration and interpretation towards curriculum.

Bruner says that education is a bridge from culture to mind. Thus any curriculum is an inherent display of culture and language. The transaction of the curriculum needs to integrate these elements of culture in the subconscious mind. The visual art makes up most of the visual culture and includes triable arts, popular films, folk arts and anything that may be depicted in the curriculum as visual representation of the culture. People can be manipulated through the images that are often antithetical to the individual nature. (Baudrillard, 1983). This manipulation in curriculum leads to conflict and disruption of peace. The society at present is in huge pressure

and impressions of the conflict are seen in almost every society world over. The cause of conflict in most cases is fight for identity in the name of preservation of their own culture. The perpetrators of such violence often consider their culture and thought process as supreme.

Materials and Methods

The experimental study was carried out on the students of upper primary to assess whether the visual curricular transaction strategies are effective in developing a cognitive understanding to the curricular content along with the embodiments of threads of culture and peace.

The content selected for the study was a simple topic from mathematics involving concepts like area and perimeter. The intervention program developed embedded the components of culture and peace in the conceptual explanations. These threads were preferably built in the visual art forms which were depicted using images either on the chart papers or on the power point presentations. The cultural awareness of the learners was assessed pre and post intervention. The intervention was carried out precociously so as to ensure that the curricular transaction is carried out so as to instigate the visual imagery of the child and also to ensure that the cognitive thought process is ignited.

Results

The research question – What is the level of cultural awareness among the students?

Cultural Appreciation During Pre Intervention Phase: Level of cultural awareness among the students was very low. Although they have a separate subject of History or Social Studies, they were unable to comprehend about the term 'culture and its components'. They were quite surprised when researcher, who is a mathematics teacher, asked about it. Most of the students asked laughingly whether researcher has forgotten that this is a mathematics period and why there was need to bring history in the class. History is a complex and rote-memorizing subject and it has already happened in the past then why is it important to know it now? How it is going to help children in their future? How is mathematics and history related? These types of queries surfaced in the class during pre-intervention.

Cultural Appreciation During Intervention Phase: The modules for five mathematical concepts that were- Area and Perimeter for Squares and Rectangles, Symmetry, Pattern and Congruency through Visual Imagery strategy where the methodology was innovative like picture studies, PPTs, discussions, quizzes, questioning, storytelling, poem recitations, dance demonstrations, experience sharing.

Examples were purposely taken from cultural components like images of monuments, dance forms, ethnic paintings, artifacts, sculptures and musical instruments so that

students will be aware of different beautiful cultures and their unique heritage. Students were very excited and they also shared their knowledge about it. The researcher used those examples to solve the numerical for the concerned topic. The students were amazed to know about the use of mathematical concept in daily life. Interlinking of subjects and topics was done so that holistic development of students could be possible.

Level of Cultural Appreciation Post Intervention Phase: The researcher observed the increase in level of cultural awareness after the intervention. Similar discussion was carried out post intervention and the learners were able to correlate the concepts with cultural elements. Class engagement were at its fullest. The needs of diverse population of the class were fulfilled. Learner were happy and gave positive comments about other cultures. Their respect and tolerance for other castes, cultures and religions had increased. They shared their views to the researcher about the same. The analytical thinking of the students was enhanced and the impact was felt by the researcher in teaching hat class. Their mathematics marks improved and the class average performance also increased.

Table 1: Level of Cultural Appreciation Among Students

Range	Level	Pre Intervention Phase	Post Intervention Phase
22-51	Poor	-	-
51-81	Average	50%	30%
88-110	Good	50%	70%

From the Table 1 it can be observed that the level of cultural appreciation during the pre-intervention phase was 50% average and 50% good while post intervention the level of cultural appreciation in average range decreased from 50% to 30% and in good range increased from 50% to 70%.

Discussion

The question of what is right knowledge that is fit for dissemination and what is the right process of dissemination have always been the big questions that destabilize the curricular culture and innovations. Ideology is a thread that relates the levels of base and superstructure. (Apple, 1982) and investigation of ideological roots becomes imperative to choose the valid knowledge in a given curriculum. Further guiding students to create increasingly complex knowledge structures requires us to progressively scaffold their thinking.

If one is not engaged in full-fledged systemic reform of a school system, scaling up requires designing educational innovations to function effectively across a range of relatively inhospitable settings (Dede, 2004). The embedding curriculum is an answer for innovation and sustainability.

Since art is therapeutic in its visual imagery (Lyotard,

its educational importance lies in the fact that visual culture is concerned with freedom of information in the range of visual art forms integral to creation of individual and group knowledge. Visual culture dissuades verbal protest and continuously creates new knowledge and new symbols of identity and environment. This aspect can effectively be utilized in developing strategies of curriculum transaction for sustainable development.

Conclusion

The study reveals that the well thought curriculum with planning to ensure effective transaction has the power to control the curricular outcomes. Further the visual imprints can be considered as a strong contender for ensuring the conflict free environment to transact the cultural embodiments. The study revealed significant difference between the pre and post intervention stages and ensured that the used of effective visual representations not only ensure the conceptual clarity of mathematical terms but also ensures some sustainable curricular innovations.

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