

A STUDY ON CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT PROCESS IN INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE DIPLOMA PROGRAM (IBDP)

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ABSTRACT

The study focuses on study curriculum development process in International Baccalaureate Diploma Program (IBDP). School authorities have autonomy and are in charged with curriculum planning of diploma program have options in selection of content and experiences to be determined in part by the philosophy, mission and objectives of IBO and the school. It is unlike CBSE and other state boards' pattern of curriculum which a school need to follow. As there is only one the IB worlds School in Baroda city, it has been considered for the case study. The study adopted qualitative research methods and data was collected using interviews and a literature review of IBDP. The data collected helped to answer the following research question, how do IB School in Baroda, plan, develop and manage curriculum? A literature review and interview data from School Principal, One Diploma Program Coordinator (DPC) and Curriculum Coordinator had been conducted to know the process of curriculum development and designing. The findings of the study indicated that School authorities charged with curriculum planning and development of diploma program should keep a watch that collaborative planning and reflection can take place regularly. Moreover efforts and planning to expand programme availability of subjects and choice of subjects in the groups, so students get wider choice in opting subjects of their choice.

KEYWORDS: International Baccalaureate Diploma Program (IBDP), Curriculum Development Process, Curriculum Design

INTRODUCTION

Background and Rationale of the Study

The International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma was developed in 1968 and it's a two year curriculum aimed at students aged 16 to 19. It's a two year course of study comprising final examinations in six. The present school system which has been considered for the study is an IB World School in Vadodara (Baroda) since June 2006. It is situated in Bhaili in Baroda city and run by the trust offering. It is the only school in Vadodara offering IB curriculum. School provides a co-education. The School is affiliated to International Baccalaureate (IB), Cambridge International Examination (IGCSE) and Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE). The Schools is Day school and also offers boarding facility. It offers the IB Primary Years Programme (PYP), IB Middle Years Programme (MYP) and IB Diploma Programme (DP). Subject areas and it is widely recognised by the world's leading universities. The study focuses on study curriculum development process in International Baccalaureate Diploma Program (IBDP). An IB school has flexibility and autonomy to tailor their curriculum. School authorities charged with curriculum planning of diploma program have options in selection of content and experiences to be determined in part by the philosophy, mission and objectives of IBO and the school. International Baccalaureate Diploma Program (DP) curriculum is different from Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) & other State Boards of Secondary Education. No school other than IB awards Diploma, moreover there are no prescribed textbooks in IB DP and here students can choose their own books. It us unlike CBSE/ICSE and

other state boards which have a fixed syllabus and standard textbooks. Even the IB Diploma program (11th and 12th Grade) students are not divided in standard streams viz. science, commerce or arts. Like CBSE/ICSE and other school education boards, the Diploma Programme is open-ended & encourages problem-solving activities with the help of three requirements i.e. the Extended Essay, Theory of knowledge and Creativity, Action, Service. Given this scenario it is imperative to study the curriculum development process in the present IB school for its Diploma Program and to what extent localization of international curriculum takes place.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

To study curriculum development process in International Baccalaureate Diploma Program (IBDP).

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Curriculum

For the present study Curriculum is the totality of learning experiences that an institution can provide to the learner within and outside the institutional context. Learning experiences enables the learner to understand and acquire the skills. Curriculum has strong power of enabling students to acquire – Habits, knowledge, understanding, application and habits. More specifically, curriculum refers to what is written to be taught, and what is tested at different student levels, in specific areas or courses.

Curriculum Development

Is a process involving many different people and procedures. Thus, it is usually linear and follows a logical step-by-step fashion involving the following phases: curriculum planning, curriculum implementation and curriculum evaluation.

Curriculum Design

Curriculum design is the architecture of a course of study that embodies a philosophy of learning and teaching, articulates a clear set of desired learning outcomes and describes how the planned learning environment will support the student to achieve those learning outcomes.

LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

It is important to emphasize that this study is only limited to the curriculum development process of IB Diploma Program in one of the local school in Baroda city. Only Diploma Program (DP) is considered for the present study excluding the other programs of International Baccalaureate (IB) viz. Middle Year Program (MYP) and Primary Year Program (PYP)

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted qualitative research methods and data was collected using interviews and a literature review of IBDP. The data collected helped to answer the following **research questions**: How do IB School in Baroda, plan, develop and manage curriculum?

SAMPLE, TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES USED FOR DATA COLLECTION

One of the IB worlds School in Baroda city has been considered for the case study. Primary research methods were used in the study. One Diploma Program Coordinator (DPC) and Curriculum Coordinator (CC) were been selected. Interviews with the DP coordinator and Curriculum Coordinator (CC) had been conducted to know the process of curriculum development and designing along with the curriculum inputs. The table 1 presents an overview of the objective, corresponding respondents and Tools and Techniques for the present study.

Table 1: Overview of the Sample, Tools and Techniques for the Present Study

No. of Schools	Purpose	Respondents	Tools
01	To study the process of curriculum development in DP	Principal – 1 Diploma Program Coordinator (DPC) 1 Curriculum Coordinator (CC) – 1	Interviews

ANALYSIS OF INTERVIEWS

Researcher conducted two personal interviews with each Diploma program Coordinator (DPC) and the Curriculum Coordinator of the school. In total, four interview sessions were conducted and Running hand-written record was kept for the Interviews.

The focus of the interviews was to reveal specifically the procedure and practices of curriculum development of diploma program, and the extent to which the IB philosophy, mission and objectives, was being incorporated and institutionalized within the school DP curriculum. In order to find out about the practice procedure of management of IB diploma curriculum, interviewees were asked to report on how the IBDP curriculum's planning, implementation and evaluation is been conducted. These discussions incorporated following dimensions for Curriculum Planning –

Impressions of the Diploma Program Coordinator (DPC) and Curriculum Coordinator (CC) in Planning and Developing the IB DP Curriculum

The primary role of DPC is to ensure that the subjects are taught correctly, assessment and submission by students do not cross the timelines prescribe. The DPC is a liaison between the IB and the school. IB contact diploma program coordinator for necessary communications. On the other the curriculum coordinator's role is to ensure smooth transition of all the three programs viz. PYP, MYP and DP, for which even vertical planning activity is carried out. Curriculum Coordinator need to ensure proper continuity of the all the programs without any kind of repetition of skills to be nurtured. Curriculum is taught step by step at each level. Discussion started with a positive approach of pursuing IB DP that the students are taught to question teachers at early level, teaching methodology is interactive and most important higher education becomes easier for IB students and IB DP curriculum is comprehensive in its breadth and depth.

For IB DP curriculum planning the schools adopts and adheres to IB philosophy, values, mission statements and DP objectives by inculcating learner profile in its students. The school followed content and syllabus prescribed by IB for through its each subject guide for specific group and particular subject and there is no deviation from it. All he subject guide contains IB mission statement, learner profile, pre-set course content and the assessment both internal and external method and pattern. Partly it appears the curriculum contributes to this scenario too. The teacher's guidebook is very prescriptive. It suggests activities, methods and time to spend on each activity.

Before the new academic year starts curriculum coordinator in in coordination with all HODs arrange and conduct vertical planning and horizontal planning. Attention is being made to the vertical planning i.e. continuity and smooth transition from PYP to MYP and DP. Vertical planning is being done subject wise for example all the teachers form grade 1 to 12 of science will meets to plan out and give suggestion on maintain continuity without any repetitions of skills. Horizontal planning i.e. within the same grade by all grade 11 and 12 teachers is been conducted. Previous academic year's loopholes and mistake are taken in to consideration in respect of what worked well and what not for next year's academic planning. But the researcher was not provided with any highlights of what worked well and what not for DP curriculum in the previous year's program.

The **structure** clarifies curriculum planning followed by curriculum implementation. But it nowhere highlights about curriculum evaluation which form an equal and a very important component of management of curriculum.

Structure Followed by the School for the Curriculum Management of DP

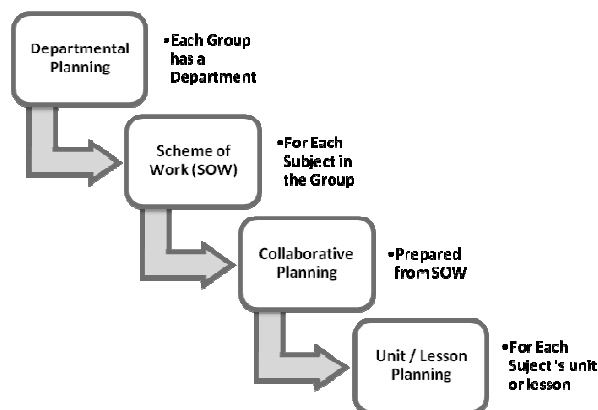


Figure 1: Curriculum Planning Structure of the Present School

At first, planning at the **Departmental level** takes place. In all there are six departments for each group presented in the hexagon. Hence the departmental structure of a school replicates the IBDP 'hexagon' (i.e. grouped subjects); i.e. head of the department is appointed for each group. The head of the department (HOD) conducts a meeting with their respective subject teachers. Here the guidelines, timelines, standards and practice of IB DP curriculum are overviewed by the HOD and the teachers are expected to perform subsequent work further accordingly. Here, there is no specific content procedure it's an open ended discussions. Planning takes care about previous academic years loopholes and challenges in its implementation. The teachers share ideas on effective teaching strategies for some of the slow learners'. The next task for teachers is to plan Scheme of Work for their respective subject.

Scheme of Work (SOW) contains planning for components viz. the in which month and week a specific topics would be covered. It is a strategic comprehensive long term planning. It focuses on objectives of IB DP and the skills to be inculcated in the learners. Teaching strategies on how integration and make possible extension in TOK and the learning outcome or the impact on the learners'. Assessments both internal external allocations are kept in considerations'. The planning also describes regarding various resources and teaching aids to be implemented to attain specific and required learning experiences in the class and inculcation specific learner profile within the students. The components of the IBDP core (CAS, extended essay, Theory of Knowledge) is taken care by each subject teacher in one's own teaching; and CAS

coordinator takes care of its respective activities. **Collaborative Planning** is being carried out, but diploma program coordinator and curriculum coordinator did not provide much information on its content and procedure to the researcher.

During the **Unit / Lesson Planning** Transdisciplinary and cross-curricular teaching (however those concepts are defined) within and between departments and are looked in precisely while unit / lesson planning by the subject teacher. Unit planners are the product of sustained collaborative work involving all the appropriate staff. Teachers work together to develop units and mapping of the programme of inquiry has been undertaken during this implementation stage. Single subject teachers are to be commended on the work they are doing to begin to develop stand-alone planners.

Hence for DP curriculum planning the school follows rigidly the content prescribed by IB i.e. pre-set curriculum from IB gave an impression to the researcher that nothing concrete is being done to conceptualise or institutionalise IB DP curriculum to suit their local district students or their resources. With the completion of five year span IB incorporated major amendments and changes its IB DP Curriculum. The whole planning activity showed a passive role played by the school principal and his dependence on DPC and curriculum coordinator for smooth and effective functioning of IB DP is quite high.

Curriculum Implementation

Concrete examples based on interviewees' own practice were sought, for example: The teachers' content knowledge which relates to the changes made in subject-specific content knowledge and other knowledge relating to the IBDP based on what they have learned. Teachers' pedagogical knowledge relates to changes in teachers' methods of selecting, sequencing, and pacing of course content and the teachers' pedagogical practice in terms of changes in how they will organize their teaching-learning experiences and how they will assess learning how these assessments can be put best uses.

However, the IBO's own IBNET is an excellent online Centre, which the exam office in the school uses to communicate with Geneva. The Online Curriculum Centre (OCC) also allows colleagues to obtain resources, leave messages on discussion boards and to be a part of an international learning community of nearly 2,000 schools worldwide. For example, if an economics teacher is not sure about the standard of the commentaries or extended essay for higher-level, the teacher posts a message on the OCC and receives replies from several schools offering advice and examples. The teachers can gain more clarity with procedure, practice and standard to be observed in implementing IB DP. Being an IBO school the present school system under study is a part of this network that assists and helps schools, and enhances its ICT facilities through this global learning community for benefiting themselves and the learners. Here every DP teacher has access with its login ID and password. Every subject teacher needs to incorporate TOK element in its teaching methods. One TOK coordinator appointed as well, but during the survey was conducted absence of TOK coordinator was felt. TOK coordinator should possess six different groups or areas of knowledge. This plays a very crucial role in alignment of written and taught curriculum of IB DP. Committing to the IB is a risk-laden enterprise for any curriculum manager is very crucial. In implementing the IB DP curriculum the school did not rush the process but did recognize the IB's philosophy and diploma objectives. Successful anticipation and reflection has ensured the school has not had regrets and is only looking forward. This is due to careful long-term planning and preparation; vision and leadership; successful management and the commitment of staff.

Curriculum Evaluation

Curriculum evaluation ranges from estimating the performance of a single child in a course through the evaluation of specific instructional materials, methods, activities and techniques to the evaluation of an entire curriculum. Hence curriculum evaluation thus become the systematic learning process for the collaborative review, improvement and development of policies, programmes and practices.

As per the discussions in the interviews with DPC it's been highlighted that no precise evaluation method or model is observed. Here merely previous academic year's achievements and limitations are discussed and incorporated during the next academic plans. But through what specific procedure, objective, method or the model is not reflected to the researcher. Therefore in the present IB school the DP curriculum evaluation exercise needs an improvement. There is no evaluation of any teaching activity specifically by DPC. Teachers merely send relevant reports to DPC.

MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

Researcher has analyzed the results of interview session with the curriculum coordinator and diploma programme coordinator regarding planning and development of DP, perception of teachers regarding school learning environment in the context of IB DP. Researcher has analyzed the outcomes of classroom observation schedule and group discussions conducted with grade 11 and 12 students along with students' self-rated questionnaire. The following are the major findings of the study

- The study revealed that school authorities charged with curriculum planning and development of diploma program should keep a watch that collaborative planning and reflection can take place regularly.
- It was found that no precise evaluation method or model was been observed by the DPC and the curriculum coordinator for DP curriculum. Here merely previous academic year's achievements and limitations are discussed and incorporated during the next academic plans.
- It was found that more subjects in each group should be offered which can provide more choice to the students while opting for their course. Planning should be made to expand program availability and wider choice of subjects in the groups for the students

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings of the study obtained through statistical analyses indicated that

- School authorities charged with curriculum planning and development of diploma program should keep a watch that collaborative planning and reflection can take place regularly. Even efforts and planning to expand programme availability of subjects and choice of subjects in the groups, so students get wider choice in opting subjects of their choice
- Researcher observed through classroom observations need for teachers training for more effective teaching practices, use of additional supplementary materials other than course companions. Moreover enhancing instructor enthusiasm and for organized CAS activities, school needs to plan effective course of actions.

Focus on Early Preparation

The IB diploma promotes independent learning through its course structure and emphasis on 'learning how to learn' with a focus on inculcating Independent learning. From the beginning, IB students have been required to take responsibility for their own learning. This has occurred in both covert and overt ways. The core elements (TOK, CAS and the Extended Essay) enable students to choose their own learning paths alongside more directed learning of subject specialism. However, within this specialism, there is a great deal of scope for students to make choices about how, what and when they study. This emphasizes on sound vertical planning right from PYP to DP. Initiatives aimed at raising overall student achievement by increasing rigor their PYP and MYP, school may help prepare larger numbers of students for the academic rigor of the Diploma Programme. Structuring the Diploma Programme as part of a 4-year course of study, with students entering in 9th grade can be very effective in formulation of strong foundation.

Curriculum Planning and Development of IB DP

Curriculum developers must always be concerned about what should be included in the curriculum and how to present and arrange what is selected. In other words, they must first deal with content or subject matter and then learning experiences. These tasks are preceded by formulating behavioural objectives, which act as a road map for the curriculum development and implementation process. Regardless of the curriculum approach or development model used, curriculum leaders cannot ignore these three components of management of curriculum viz. curriculum planning, implementation and evaluation.

School authorities charged with curriculum planning of diploma program have options in selection of content and experiences to be determined in part by the philosophy, mission and objectives of IBO and the school. Expand programme availability of subjects and choice of subjects in the groups of DP, so students get wider choice in opting subjects of their choice.

Collaborative Planning

Collaborative planning and reflection support the implementation of the IB DP. It is necessary for the DPC Enhancement of teacher collaborative planning and reflection is necessary. The school should keep a watch that collaborative planning and reflection can take place regularly and moreover it is required to ensure that regular collaborative planning occurs involving all teachers including single subject teachers, teacher librarian and teachers across all grades.

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