

C H A P T E R I I

BUILDING HOME SCIENCE CURRICULUM
AS A HOME-MAKING EDUCATION

The various beliefs concerning the characteristics of an effective programme of Home Science education have now resulted in the education for family living. It means the subject has family centred programme that takes into consideration the entire family in all of its stages of development from newly wedded couple through the young couple with little children and the family in which those children are grown.

How Philosophy Determines Curriculum Building?

Considering the Indian cultural background and traditions, the aims of Home Science education at secondary level are:

1. to improve the family living.
2. to help family to achieve its own goals by including all the members of the family for better planning.

3. to develop necessary abilities needed for satisfactory family living and to contribute to satisfy personal life and to get adjusted oneself in social and economical environmental conditions.
4. to help people to live better in homes with family members with what they have and thereby to develop a fine community in a democratic nation.

The programme of Home Science education along with above stated aims can be got prevailed through building a proper curriculum of it, because curriculum is the main frame work of instruction. Without it, the instructor of the school is in the same situation as is a builder without plans and specifications and proceeds with no better guidance. In the broader sense, curriculum is sum total of all the stimuli to which the pupils respond while there are in the school. It also consists a series of purposeful life experiences, growing out of the interests of the pupils and directed towards intelligent behaviour in regard to the surrounding culture. They are the planned experiences through which the schools bring about changes in the behaviour of the students.

To show how the choice of experiences for a curriculum is related to the role of Home Science education,

a brief resume of the evolution of curriculum building is given below.

Steps in Curriculum Planning

Uptil now courses were set up by analysing subject matter and selecting that to be taught to any particular group which was believed to be suitable and within the scope of the learner's comprehension because the purpose of education was to transmit the best of the heritage of the race to the next generation and very little attention was given to the interest of the students or the students or the use they were to make of what they learn. Also emphasis was on covering the subject matter.

Then some questions of adequacy of the purpose of Home Science education came. The researchers analysed the duties of the home-makers and thought to prepare girls by assuming them for taking the simpler duties first and gradually to add the most difficult responsibilities as they become older and more capable. This showed that many of the important responsibilities in home living are pertaining to human relationships and so the courses were broadened to include home management and family relationship. The whole programme was based on probable future activities assuming that the responsibilities of the home-makers will remain about the same but when social and economic conditions change

rapidly the responsibilities also get changed with equal rapidity. Sometimes, it is difficult to foresee the role one will have to perform in the near future.

Actually the real purpose of education in a rapidly changing world is to educate for present and future living so later on it was required to include units in personal grooming, social customs, sex relationship etc. Also observation and researches led to^a question of the purposes to be achieved. The results answered the adequacy of a programme built upon the present activities and personal interests of the pupils without recognition of the obligations and responsibilities of these pupils to society - both now and in the near future.

The basis for curriculum building are again rethought in order to meet the needs of the learners more effectively in a democratic society which itself is going under change. So experiences in living in a group and sharing in work towards ends of benefit to the group of learners continued in the schools.

Researches during recent years have shown that at each stage of development, each one has certain needs upto that particular stage. Adolescent stage being a critical time, special help is to be provided for:

1. accepting one's physique and role in life.

2. learning new and more mature relations with age mates.
3. gaining emotional independence from parents and other elders.
4. selecting and preparing for future occupation.
5. acquiring skills and concepts necessary to become a good citizen.
6. preparing for marriage and family life.
7. developing a scale of values of sound philosophy of life.

(i) Setting Objectives and Selecting Learning Experiences in Curriculum Planning

The steps in curriculum building are consistent with the philosophy implied as above and now the next step will be to plan and execute. For better curriculum planning it is essential to have student teacher planning for setting objectives and selecting learning experiences.

For setting objectives the pupils may list things they would like to learn and the way in which they would like to improve themselves. This list may be pooled and discussed afterwards and selection can be made. Even one may list the interest of the group in starting with a

project then as suggestions are made by the girls for things they would like to do later, may be recorded for use at an appropriate time for the rest of the year. One may also discuss a general problem one may be facing at home and one would like to learn at school and after the general discussion, one can set up the list of goals for achievement and also get aims set this way.

(ii) The selection of learning experiences to bring up pupils' growth towards chosen objectives is the next step in curriculum building. This too one can do by oneself but if one believes in the importance of pupil participation in directing the learning, their co-operation in selecting those experiences is important. After listing some of the topics, they could be asked what they think would be the best way to learn those topics and after offering various suggestions, they could be discussed and decided. As a result, the topic could be again divided into sub-topics and different methods could be employed to have the best learning experience then only the learning will be intensive, extensive and interesting - lasting for ever.

If the home-making curriculum is defined as including all those personal and family living experiences of the pupil for which the school assumes guidance, then any of the experiences will be a part of a curriculum and the teacher as the representative of the school has a

responsibility for providing better guidance. In this way, the teacher will also have much broad opportunity for guiding & teaching learning process as integrated experiences than class work alone to comprise the curriculum. Each individual may select those home experiences and other experiences which she believes will help her to develop in the way she as a home-maker thinks should be.

(iii) Evaluating the Learning Experiences
for Building Sound Curriculum

The next step in building curriculum is the evaluation of the learning experiences in terms of the growth of pupils toward the objectives set up. It is the step that is repeated continuously while the curriculum is built day-by-day. It is not necessary to wait until the end of a certain period of time to make such an evaluation. One must judge each experience as it is undergone and one should determine each step forward in the light of the evaluation of the pupils' development, resulting from what is just past or now at hand. Evaluation of progress towards goal is essential for a teacher and her pupils and it should be carried on as a co-operative process.

Bringing Order in the Course

Each teacher is facing a problem of selecting some scheme of organization that will bring order and coherence to the courses. She teaches the subject as a part of the

total home-making curriculum. The course can be divided as term or monthwise and may be held with certain phases of home economics separately to provide experiences in the many aspects of home-making. Moreover, within each course, the teacher is expected to follow the unit plan of the curriculum organization. For unit plan one has to use the recommended course outline of study to aid her curriculum building which she has to follow more or less closely as the needs require or arise.

Each unit of the course is composed of a group of closely related activities and experiences dealing with some special problems and projects, selected with specific objectives. The completion of the unit may require two or more days or weeks according to the importance given to it. The unit plan promotes clarity of thinking and definiteness of objectives of both - teachers and pupils. It not only allows careful planning for definite ends within the comprehension of the class but also ~~definite ends within the comprehension of the class but also~~ stimulates planning on the part of both teachers and pupils.

Within a large unit, there are sub-units which accomplish a definite small objective, each contributing toward the big objective of the large unit. So each unit should offer a greater challenge to the class with result in recognized progress towards the more comprehensive and

remote goals of the entire course. Thus, the relationship among the objectives of the lesson, units, courses, etc. is important. The break between the two units should not be so great that experiences do not flow from one into the other.

Thus, the Home Science course may be organized around life problems that are recurrent of young pupils and family life and weaves the experiences and activities about these. It could also be organized around project either class, group or individual type. Each project will involve solution of many problems and will supply its own motivation to carry out many activities. This type of activities will provide very purposeful activities and much of independent thinking for planning and doing. Sometimes the learning takes place in a very specific situation when this procedure is applied so the pupils may not be able to apply their learning to different situations. Even emphasis on accomplishment of the project may sometimes be emphasised by teacher and students rather than learning or developing through the project. Even for productive results sometimes the pupils' time, energy and money are exploited by but the learning through such activities will be permanent, accurate and extensive.

(iv) Revising the Course

The fourth step in curriculum building is revision

of the same after the evaluation. In recent years, the practice of teacher participation in the preparation of curriculum materials has become prevalent. The revision could base upon studies, evaluation, etc. which may result in recommendations.

One should not blindly follow the state syllabus but it may be used as a resource for one. If one gets suggestions for problems that are common among young people of the same ages and same socio-economic group, one may find a way to choose activities or methods of teaching suited to the problem. However, one must select such type of curriculum which fits the community, pupils' immediate needs, interests and capacities.