

CHAPTER - SIX

SUMMARY AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

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CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

6.0 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, a brief summary of the study is presented under relevant heads. Beginning with, a brief theoretical background of the problem is given followed by the genesis of the problem, wherein a review of relevant studies which generated this specific problem is traced. Significant features of the study followed by the statement of objectives are given next. This is followed by the methodological details of the study namely, design, sample, instrumentation and data collection. After this is presented a brief description of the analysis of the data and the findings of the study. The chapter concludes with a discussion on the implications that can be derived from the present study for future research in the field of Family Life Education.

6.1 Theoretical background of the study

One of the main functions of Education is 'individual development', the conception which includes the concern with the developing individual and with his fullest opportunity for self-realization in an intellectual as well as emotional sense, especially at his adolescent stage. But unfortunately, the way education functions and especially the way it is distributed to adolescents hardly caters to the developing age of adolescents. Though the Secondary and the Higher Secondary have a great responsibility for the mental health of adolescents, its syllabus, its methods and its organisation hardly takes care to fulfil the needs and requirements of physical, psychological, social and sexual aspects of adolescents. Adolescence is a complex process taking place in a complex world. Biological change

alone poses a number of quandaries, even in simple societies. The developmental changes that occur at biological, intellectual, psychological, social and sexual levels cause certain disturbances in adolescents varyingly because of which, adolescence is viewed as a traumatic period. In order to help adolescents cope up with their developmental disturbances, many educational centres, state bodies, the social and family welfare centres and other agencies planned and carried out certain programmes and activities which resulted in the areas like Sex and Family Life Education.

The area of Family life education reveals varying definitions. It bears number of titles depending upon the objectives and the content it emphasizes in its course. Besides the varying definitions and content, the body of knowledge included in the area of Family life education has grown in a pragmatic way, depending upon the social pressure and other pressures of the times, the places where it has developed and the view points of those who perceived the needs and tried to meet them. This has happened gradually and unevenly over a period of time in different parts of the world, especially in Europe and North America. The studies reviewed show the trend in the development of the field and the different assumptions on which it was based in these countries. For instance, a few Family life education curricula emphasized on 'Home Membership' and 'Home Economies' as being their main objective, whereas certain other curricula paid importance to life adjustment, marriage and family relationships. Following this, was a trend where most of the curricula of Family life education had sex education as their main constituent. The real impetus behind this, was the desire on the part of parents and educators to reduce the number of premarital pregnancies and Venereal diseases. The curricula even imparted the propagandistic and moralistic elements of codes of behaviour. In Asia, teaching Family Life Education in an organised manner hardly exists at all. Though contributions of social agencies, churches

and other organisations where extensive programmes of Family life education exist, they restricted their content only to the Biological aspects of family. At National level, population education is more in prominence, where the objectives were more directed towards controlled fertility and norms of small family. Reviewing those studies pertaining to Family life education, it is rather difficult to say how much and how well they help in promoting the healthy personality of an adolescent. Looking into the needs and the requirements of adolescents which emerge out of developmental changes, if one has to prepare them for a productive and satisfying life in today's stressful and challenging world, a curriculum must be established that will help in adolescents' personality development, contributing to the family stability and to a healthy and a positive attitude towards the sexual aspects of man's nature. Therefore, an attempt was made in the present study to develop a curriculum of Family Life education aiming at the above aspects.

Constructing any curriculum, requires to know the nature of the individual, his growth needs, the sequences of his development, his experiences, interests and motives. If a curriculum of Family life education has to be developed for adolescents, it must take into account as mentioned above, the developmental aspects, the problems and tasks associated with the development, the factors influencing the development and the needs and the requirements of adolescents. In developing a curriculum, one must take into account, not only all that is known about the nature of man, but also the nature of learning process, because the sound suggestions for curriculum development can be derived only from a sound psychology of learning. This is so because the curriculum development has instructional domain as its major portion. Arrangement of instructional conditions based on the principles of learning in ways which

can stimulate the learner to attain the set cognitive and affect objectives is the main thrust of curriculum development in any field, because of which the process of learning becomes an optimally effective one. Considering the process of curriculum development, it is mainly a search for a common platform around which content and techniques are organised in a scientific manner. The process of curriculum development includes phases like, diagnosis of students' needs, formulation of objectives, selection of content and learning experiences, Organisation of content and learning experiences, Evaluation and modification of the curriculum in the light of results obtained. Hence, if a curriculum of Family Life Education has to be developed, it should form the psychology of learning as its foundation and adhere to the phases of curriculum development in its process.

6.2 Genesis of the Problem:

As mentioned, the area of Family Life Education has grown gradually and unevenly over a period of time in different countries of the world and to some extent in India. Initially, Family Life Education was considered to be having a major objective of 'worthy home membership' in West, and the course concentrated on topics like Home Economics. Later, it was thought that the curriculum should include practical education in marriage and family living, especially for girls. After a span of time, there was a growing realisation about juvenile delinquency, rising divorce rate and breaks in family and marriage. To reduce the rising rate of these factors, it was decided to teach the course to all students irrespective of sex concerned. By then, the concentration on Home economics declined, because it largely devoted to foods and clothing in which major enrolment comprised of girls and hence, it was beginning to be considered as a mere skill course. Slowly, the topics like physical aspects of marriage, venereal diseases, promiscuity, prenatal growth and development were included in Family Life Education. Besides Family Life Education, there were courses like Sex Education

concentrating on similar topics. Even after this change, there were few Family life education courses concentrating on topics like Home Economics, Budgeting, Clothing and leisure activities. For nearly five decades, Family life and Sex education have struggled against an array of disciplinary, conceptual and public relations to achieve a secure place in community and School programmes. In the sixties, Family life education began to recognise more fully the sexual dimensions and the psycho social dimensions of their subjects. This brought a theoretical unity to the whole field. However, the studies reviewed showed that many issues were not settled like

- i) well defined goals and objectives of the area, which was due to the different set of assumptions and prejudices about the aims of family life education; and
- ii) Lack of proper curriculum designs, learning techniques and evaluative procedures.

In Indian context, not much of studies have been done, though the field has gained some kind of awareness. In considering about the effectiveness of Family life education on students, the studies reviewed in the West show that there is generally an increase in knowledge, though change in attitude was not measured by most of these studies. In Indian context, it is found that there are hardly few studies in measuring the effectiveness of Family life education on students. The studies conducted in India are in the area of population education differing from Family life education in their aims and objectives, though they cover certain topics similar to those under Family life education. Certain studies conducted are of exploratory in nature, about Adolescents' problems, parents, teachers and Adolescents' attitude towards the introduction of Family life education in school. The findings of these studies support the idea of Family life education in school and emphasize the need for such a course. In order to know the content aspect, the curriculum studies reviewed reveal certain common topics like Human Reproduction, Human

Sexuality, Venereal diseases, marriage and so on, thereby concentrating more on the biological dimension and neglecting the psycho social development of the adolescent.

The study reported attempted in its curriculum to cater to all dimensions (biological, psychological, social and sexual) of adolescents, along with which an attempt has been made to prepare the adolescents for responsible parenthood and function as effective family members. Since the instructional domain constitutes the main part of the curriculum development, those researches conducted in the area of instruction were reviewed, in order to select the appropriate media and methods for the development of Family life education curriculum which is reported. The curriculum was developed phasewise, and implemented in the actual setting of the school and the effectiveness of it was explored. The study was titled as follows:

'Development of a curriculum of Family life education for Higher Secondary students and a study of its effectiveness'.

The study had certain significant features which are mentioned in the following paragraphs.

6.3 Significant features of the study

1. Based on the literature related to Adolescent psychology, the adolescent development, the needs and the requirements of adolescents and the developmental tasks associated with the adolescent development were kept in focus. In addition to this, the needs of students were diagnosed by administering a questionnaire. These provided indices for selecting the subject matter as well as for the other aspects of curriculum development. The curriculum development followed a sequence like, diagnosis of students' needs, formulation of objectives, selection of

content and learning experiences, organisation of content and learning experiences, evaluation and modification of the curriculum in the light of results obtained.

2. Against earlier studies wherein, the content was more confined to the biological aspects, the study reported here expanded the coverage of content in which the development of adolescents' personality was taken cognisance of. The curriculum developed was also inclusive of biological, psychological and social dimensions of Human sexuality, marriage and family.
3. Unlike the other investigations in this area as well as in the allied areas like, population education, Health and Sex education, where the programmes are evaluated by just questionnaires and interviews, the present study made an attempt to study the performance of students by cognitive evaluation which reflect a set of behavioural objectives supposedly achieved by a replicable instructional sequence. The students' performance on each category of objectives laid by Bloom, namely, knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, skill and the test as a whole, were evaluated. Synchroniously, the study evaluated the objective 'Attitude' which is the main component of the affective domain. It was expected that the indepth analysis in this manner would provide a detailed feedback for improving the curriculum.

An attempt was made to study the attitudes of students towards the i) self, ii) opposite sex members, iii) sexual matters, iv) marriage and v) family. It was thought that the cognitive

inputs provided in the curriculum would change the attitude structure of students towards the above mentioned elements. To know the change occurred, the attitudes of students were measured before and after the implementation of the curriculum.

4. An attempt was made to examine the practicality of introducing such a curriculum in real class room situations as a regular phenomenon. The possibility in terms of time involved in the implementation of curriculum and the cost involved in the development of the instructional material for the entire curriculum was studied.

6.4 Objectives of the Study

1. To develop a curriculum of Family life education phase-wise, for XII Standard Science students.
2. To validate the curriculum of Family life education in terms of students' achievements, attitude and reactions.
3. To study the relationship between the socio-economic status and the family adjustment of students.
4. To study the relationship between the family adjustment and the self-attitude of students.
5. To study the relationship between the achievement and the attitude of students in the curriculum of Family life education.
6. To study the cost and the time involved in developing and implementing the curriculum of Family life education.

6.5 Design of the Study

The investigation was a one-shot study where-in the curriculum of Family life education was developed and validated on a single group for a period of three months. There were ~~two~~ two main phases of the study: one, the developmental phase and two, the validation phase. The former involved the development of the curriculum of Family life education for XII standard Science students and the latter involved the implementation of the developed curriculum.

6.6 Development of the curriculum of Family life education

Initially, a deep insight was paid into the literature related to Adolescent psychology to know the adolescent growth and development and the tasks associated with the development. Along with this, the students' needs were diagnosed by administering a questionnaire. Based on this, the broader objectives of the curriculum were formulated. Accordingly, the curriculum focussed on the themes like, Perception of the self which included the biological, the psychological and the social self perceptions, understanding others, building up relationships, the biological, psychological and the social aspects of Human Sexuality which included the basic response to parenthood, Human Reproduction, population growth, contraception and venereal diseases and finally, the marriage and family. The selected contents comprising of thirteen units was structured logically in a sequential manner, so that the objectives specified for each unit are attainable by students and this has been presented in the form of Flow Charts. The next step was to determine how best to achieve the designed objectives. In consideration to the behavioural objectives to be achieved, availability of time and resources and the instructional inputs were identified. The instructional inputs provided were, introduction, lecture-cum-discussion, question-answer sessions, discussions, dialogue-form, case

studies, audio-visual, summaries, exercises, deviated programmed learning, glossary and assignments. The suitability of the content, instructional experiences provided in terms of terminal behaviours to be developed and the evaluation instruments were examined by experts and necessary modifications were made.

6.7 Implementation of the Curriculum

To find out the suitability and the appropriateness of the content, instructional components and the evaluation in terms of language ability and comprehending level, the curriculum was tried out on XII Science students of I P.C.L. School. On the basis of the data obtained, certain modifications were made like, presenting the matter in a more simple and lucid form with the support of case illustrations and diagrams. These modified units were later implemented in the final field experimentation.

6.8 Instrumentation

The instruments used in the present study were:

a) Questionnaire measuring pupils' needs and interests:

To develop the curriculum of Family life education, a questionnaire seeking pupils' needs and interests in areas like, biological growth of a male and a female, Human reproduction, Human sexuality, understanding oneself, venereal diseases, Boy-girl relationships, Family planning, Homosexuality, masturbation, marriage and family was developed. The questionnaire was developed using three point scale (Yes; No; Indefinite) and it consisted of total 52 items.

b) Socio-economic Status Scale:

To measure the socio-economic status of students, Kuppuswamy's SES Scale was used.

c) Family Life Inventory:

This inventory was constructed in order to measure the students' adjustment with their family members. Using this inventory, the adolescents' relations with parents, brothers and sisters were studied. Along with this, the students' attitude towards Home was also studied. The inventory measured all the above components on a five-point scale (True, nearly true, Half true, Slightly true, Not true). It consisted of total 95 items.

d) Criterion Tests and Comprehensive tests:

Seven Criterion tests covering nine units of the curriculum were developed. Criterion tests were not developed for the rest four units of the curriculum, because of two reasons: One, the content under those units were of more affective and of debatable in nature due to which it was not possible to develop criterion tests. Two, the insufficiency of time allotted for the conduct of the study. Hence, these units were evaluated by giving assignments and exercises to students. Comprehensive tests covering all thirteen units were developed in a parallel form in order to administer them as pre and post tests. This was done in order to avoid the sensitization of the instrument. The objectives covered in these tests comprised knowledge, comprehension, application and analysis comprising the cognitive domain and the objective attitude which is the main constituent of affective domain and the skill objective.

e) Attitude test:

The attitude test was developed based on Likert's scale. The attitude of students was measured towards five elements, namely, attitude towards the self, attitude towards the opposite sex members, attitude towards the sexual matters, attitude towards the marriage and attitude towards the family. A total test comprising of 502 items measuring students' attitude towards the above elements was standardized on a sample of 113 pupils selected from two local secondary schools. For standardization purpose, item correlation method was used. The final test constituting all the above chosen elements comprised 374 items.

f) Reaction Questionnaire:

A reaction questionnaire was developed to know pupils' reaction towards the following components: i) content of the curriculum, ii) instructional inputs used in teaching the content, iii) criterion tests; iv) place of curriculum in school as a separate course^{or} as an integral part of the school subjects; v) teaching of the subject by school teachers or by the specialists from outside; vi) the curriculum as a whole. The questionnaire contained 35 questions on the whole.

6.9 Sample

A total of 28 students of Standard XII of an English medium Higher Secondary School in Baroda constituted the validation sample, among whom 18 were the boys and 10 were the girls. Validation of the curriculum besides constituting the sample of 28 students as Experimental group, also involved a total of 28 students belonging to a different Higher Secondary English

School in Baroda, which served as a Control group. Both Experimental and Control group belonged to the Science stream.

6.10 Validation of the Curriculum

The developed curriculum was implemented for a period of three months. Criterion tests were administered at the close of certain instructional units. Assignments and exercises were given to evaluate students on the remaining units, where it was not possible to administer criterion tests. Comprehensive test and attitude test were administered before the implementation of the curriculum (pre test) and on the completion of the curriculum implementation. (post test). Reactions were sought after the implementation of the entire curriculum.

6.11 Analysis of Data

The data on achievement and attitude have been analysed descriptively computing mean, SD and percentiles and inferentially using students' 't'. The analysis on achievement is made for knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, skill and attitude objectives and for the total test. The analysis on attitude is made for the chosen elements, namely, self, opposite sex members, sexual matters, marriage and family and for the total test. The relationship between the socio-economic status and the Family adjustment, Family adjustment and Self-attitude of students, achievement and attitude were studied by using the coefficient of correlations. The reactions expressed by the students towards the Family life education curriculum on the questionnaire were noted and reported qualitatively. The feasibility of the curriculum has been studied in terms of time and cost. The expenditure that would be incurred for prepared 50 sets of instructional material has been worked out and the cost per student has been examined.

6.12 Major findings of the Study

1. Those units which were evaluated by criterion tests indicated either average or high level of performance of students on total test, excepting the first two units. Validation of the curriculum inferred from the achievement of students on comprehensive test also indicate quite a good performance of students, thereby showing that the curriculum has been effective on the students. Also, post test performance of Experimental group on comprehensive tests was found significantly higher than the Control group.
2. The curriculum was found effective on students' attitude towards their self, opposite sex members, sexual matters, marriage and family. A high performance was noted for the Experimental group on post-test over the pre-test. Also, the post test performance of the Experimental group was found significantly higher than the control group.
3. Validity of the curriculum was inferred from reactions expressed by the students, in order to improve the curriculum, content and method-wise. Reactions obtained towards the content and the learning experiences used in the curriculum and the curriculum as a whole, were found highly positive and hence, speak of the validity of the curriculum. Suggestion like lecture method and summary presentation should be substituted by some other form of presentation was made by some students. Regarding the placement of Family life education curriculum as a separate or as an integral part of other school subjects, most of the students opined that it should be taught in school as a separate subject. About teaching the subject,

most of the students felt that either the school counsellor or a specialist from outside should handle the subject.

4. There ~~was~~ no relationship observed between the socio-economic status and the family adjustment for boys and girls belonging to Experimental and Control group.
5. A significant relationship was found between ~~the~~ Family adjustment and the self-attitude in case of i) boys belonging to Experimental group, ii) boys and girls belonging to control group. There was no significant relationship observed between the Family adjustment and the self-attitude in case of girls belonging to Experimental Group.
6. A significant relationship was found between the achievement and the attitude for boys and girls belonging to the Experimental group, whereas, in the Control group, such relationship was not observed for boys and girls.
7. The curriculum was found feasible when seen in terms of its reproducibility and the cost management by schools.

6.13 Suggestions for further research

In the present study, the effectiveness of the developed curriculum of Family life Education for Standard XII has been realised. Deriving implications from the present study, the following suggestions are discussed for future research.

1. The investigation was an attempt at developing a curriculum of family life education and studying its effect on the students' cognition and affect. It is a research effort aimed at better personality

development of adolescents and preparing them for a responsible adulthood and help them in functioning as effective family members. Though the results obtained, speak of the effectiveness of the curriculum, it is rather difficult to generalise the findings to the whole adolescent population, since adolescents from various cultures and sub-groups differ due to the cultural and environmental factors of their own, though fundamentally the psychological phenomenon of adolescence obey similar laws and result from similar causes. In fact, as adolescents grow older, any function or tendency tends to show itself within steadily widening and more varied human contexts. Hence, differentiating factors in the environment gain an increasing influence on the adolescents' fine socio-psychological areas of personality development- the physical, the psychological, the social, the sexual and the cognitive aspects. This in turn, influences the adolescents' attitude towards his or her own self, own sex members, his or her relationships, sexual attitudes and his or her attitude towards marriage and family. Hence, it is felt that there may be a differentiation among adolescents coming from various backgrounds in responding to the curriculum. Therefore, the present study suggests exploring into variables operating in the adolescent environment that may affect the response of the adolescents to the curriculum of Family life education in a positive or in a negative manner.

2. Besides socio-economic and family environmental factors and interaction with family members, school plays an important role in building up the self-image of an adolescent, where he or she interacts

with his or her teachers, his or her peers, and experiences various kinds in and out of school. So the present study suggests studying the school as a variable in influencing the adolescents' self-image and his or her attitude towards the opposite sex members, sexual matters, marriage and family.

3. It is felt that the students at different socio-economic levels might respond differently to the developed curriculum of Family life education. If the curriculum has to reach the pupils in a better communicable manner based on their background, a general comparison of the effectiveness of the curriculum upon students belonging to different social class becomes necessary. For this purpose, it becomes essential to sub-divide the original sample on the basis of social class in order to conduct the further analysis. Such analysis often provide worthwhile knowledge and interesting theoretical insights, but they can be carried out only if the original groups are large enough so that, after such divisions are made, the sub-groups still have sufficient numbers of cases to permit a statistical analysis.
4. It is difficult to pin point very specifically how a single research study on a sample belonging to one particular school and a place can contribute to, in enriching and stabilising the field of Family life education. Methodologically speaking, the development of curriculum would undergo several implementations and testing on different population, belonging to different places and cultures, before being pronounced for its validity. Identification of strengths and weaknesses on repeated implementation of the curriculum will help to indicate whether the curriculum may need improvements. This will not only help in establishing the area of Family life education, with clear-cut objectives on strong grounds, but will

also help the field in gaining a respectable academic position among other school subjects. Against such a perspective for the development of the area of Family life education, the present study suggests implementation of the curriculum in a repeated cycle, so as to arrive at a rich educational product.

5. Developing and implementing the curriculum of Family life education in actual school context does answer valid questions of research interest, but the extent to which such practices have receptively in the school as a whole, and Homes from where adolescents come, need to be examined. This may be studied from the attitudes of school authorities, teachers and parents towards the content included in curriculum of Family Life Education, and towards the placement of this area permanently among the other school subjects. This would provide as a relevant data to decide upon the placement of Family life education among the other school subjects as a permanent subject.
6. Another point to be decided is, whether Family life education should be treated as a separate subject or an integral part of other subjects. It is rather difficult to arrive at a decision on this issue, based on the positive responses obtained from the small sample used in the study. Moreover, research data on Family life education being taught as an integral part of other school disciplines is not available. Hence, research in this direction would be three fold: one, is to explore the possibilities of integrating Family life education concepts in school subjects and try it out on students. Two, is to teach Family life education as a separate subject to one group and as an integral subject to another group and then compare the results obtained to study the effectiveness of each.

Three, is to obtain the opinions of school authorities, teachers, parents and adolescent students in a large sample towards this controversy, that is whether it should be treated as a separate subject or as an integral subject.