 CHAPTER II

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF CURRICULUM MOVEMENT

Curriculum is at once one of the most straightforward and most elusive concept in education, while the term itself, in English has a long history, it has come into common use relatively recently, mainly as a consequence of the efforts in Western Europe and the United States to develop a systematic or scientific pedagogy in the late nineteenth century. The concept at its simplest and most orthodox sense, refers to the content of a programme or a course of study. This content has been, for centuries defined in three crucial ways: (a) The structure and content of scholarly texts; (b) the syllabus or written outline of the topics and themes of a course of study; (c) examinations, usually but not invariably discussions include the notion of a time tabled, institutionalised course. In most national systems of education throughout the world these three items, viz. the structure and content, the syllabus and the
examination, still provide the definition of curriculum as perceived by teachers, students and parents. The curriculum, accordingly, has its fullest statement, first, in the text or texts, which constitute the mainstay of teaching, second in the syllabus, to which the texts often correspond very closely, providing a framework or outline of required study items, third in the examination which tests the student's mastery of the text and the teacher's adroitness, in anticipating the examiner's perception of what is significant in the prescribed courses, syllabi and examinations according to certain criteria, preparing appropriate texts, and devising units of instruction.

Closer consideration of these three elements in curriculum suggests that there are more fundamental factors which must be taken into account in curriculum theory and design of these factors, the subject-matter to be taught has for centuries regarded as the most crucial one. It was a recognition of the significance of this factor in learning which led the Greek and Roman educational theorists to outline the content of schooling in terms of forms and fields of knowledge, the ancestors of the present day disciplines of knowledge. The liberal arts of the mediaeval period, focused on the formation and development of cognitive skills, but including also an attempt to educate the whole man.

By derivation, the idea that the school curriculum should largely comprise of an induction in to fundamental subject-
disciplines, has always exercised a powerful hold on education. For many curriculum connotes basic or fundamental knowledge and skills to which are added a variety of enlightening, useful and socially relevant accomplishments. The relationships between subject-disciplines, fundamental forms of knowledge and the concepts of liberal and general education are of great importance in forming a general theory of the curriculum.

Whether or not the forms of knowledge and the disciplines are capable of yielding an adequate and sufficient content, structure and methodology of the school curriculum in an age of universal schooling is still one of the major areas of controversy amongst the theorists and practitioners. Whatever standpoint is adopted in controversy, subject-content always features in school curriculum decisions and in efforts to design and develop curriculum, subject-matter in the school curriculum is still widely treated within or as a direct derivative of discrete disciplines of knowledge. From Comenius in the seventeenth century to Dewey in the twentieth, subject-matter may be stated with explicit reference to children's views of the world and to selected aspects of contemporary social life, and deliberate attempts may be made to inter-relate subject-matter from different disciplines. Some writers, notably Dewey have argued that curriculum making requires that the content of the disciplines of knowledge be analysed into subject-matter that reflects knowledge of both
children's learning and contemporary social interests and trends. Thus, for these theorists, the starting point for curriculum design is not a subject-matter to be learnt, but an analysis of the child, his interests and needs as a learner, and the society with its needs for knowledgeable and trained citizens.

In educational theory, the emphasis on the content of knowledge as the key element in curriculum has along history. The tradition of academic disciplines of knowledge derived from the liberal arts has come to be increasingly questioned as a sufficient basis for a school curriculum ever since the introduction, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in Western Europe and the American colonies, of compulsory schooling. In the present century, throughout the world, schooling has begun to resemble a universal social process, involving whole populations throughout childhood and, increasingly, into adolescence and early adulthood. The modern phenomenon of the whole youth of a nation being schooled has led to criticisms of the academic, specialised, selective and demanding nature of studies deriving from knowledge disciplines. Subjects, which are the staples of communities of specialist scholars in universities and research institutions, have been queried as a foundation of mass education, and their relationship to the interests of intellectual and social elites offered as a reason for seeking a different kind of knowledge basis for the curriculum of the universal or common school.
Despite criticism from the field of pedagogy, subject-based curricula have retained much of their strength partly because of their adaptability — the disciplines are dynamic, not static — and partly because, not least in developing third world countries, an education based on the recognised disciplines is understood by parents and students to provide access to positions of status and influence in the new society.

Another challenge to the subject as the starting point of curriculum analysis has arisen with the emergence of the science of psychology in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Dewey was one of the early critics of teaching which does not ground itself in an analysis of the characteristics of the learner. While in the subject-centred approach, the teacher's major curriculum reference points are his own subject expertise, deriving from his own schooling and university training, the texts, the syllabus and the examination, in the "learner-centred" approach, the teacher acts more as a multi-disciplinary diagnoser and designer of learning situations. For this purpose, single texts are of limited value, syllabus cannot be predefined except in very broad outline, and orthodox examinations are frequently irrelevant, at least on educational grounds. Since the 1930's, and especially after the second world war, the major influences on curriculum theory from the standpoint of children's learning have become very diverse. They include the Swiss 'developmental epistemologist'. Jean Piaget, the Russian
behaviourist, I. Pavlov, American behaviourists and learning theorists, including Hull, Skinner, Thorndike and more recently, an expanding group of instructional theorists and technologists, such as Gagne, Popham and Bloom. Much of the work of the latter group attempts to bridge the gap that appeared to be developing between some of the child centred members of the Piagetian school, who focused on broadly defined phases or stages of human development and the subject-centred tradition.

Most powerful challenge to the subject-centred curriculum has come from progressivist movement in pedagogy. This challenge has been of such strength as to have resulted in a redefinition of the term curriculum itself. The older and narrower view, which relates curriculum to syllabus and to predefined content to be learned, has had to be abandoned as a consequence of the displacement of one pedagogy by another. This transformation referred to as two models, model A — termed as 'limited pedagogy' and model B — termed as 'extended pedagogy'.

Model A sees the school as one of many educational agencies and its role is specific. The curriculum regimen is essentially that of subject-centred teaching, time-tabled, text-supported, examined, adult-directed and adult-oriented.

In model B, the meaning of curriculum is largely transformed through replacement of one educational ideology by another. Views of Dewey are of most significance in the whole modern movement in curriculum. He identified a number of elements — interests and
learning capacities of the individual child; the child's life history of experience; a generalised, scientific method of inquiry; different types of subject-matter, the social context; democratic values, which are central in curriculum making.

In the curriculum development movement which gained popularity amongst educators during the 1950's, there was initially a tendency to ignore ideological underpinnings and the movement was widely heralded as a 'neutral' application of managerial and design technology to the problems of schooling.

The criticisms of writers such as, Broudy and Eisner in the U.S.A. and Stenhouse in the U.K. brought out the ideological basis of managerial-type curriculum designs and they have been followed by numerous attempts to change or broaden this basis. Nevertheless, a prevailing mode of project-based curriculum development emerged during the fifties and sixties. Wide use was made of design models incorporating many of the emerging techniques of managed change, including predefined objectives and preplanned dissemination of curriculum products.

The curriculum development process given by modern curriculum development movement was adopted in many of the early mathematics and science projects. Two notable examples were the Secondary School Biological Science Curriculum Study and the Physical Science Study Committee.
Two most significant refinements of the original project team concept emerged during the sixties. The first of these refinements is the emergence, in education of the so-called research-developments-diffusion model, and the second is the school-based curriculum development movement. The research-development-diffusion model addressed itself primarily to the design, manufacture and distribution of quality products, relying too heavily on untested assumptions, drawn from the learning sciences, about design criteria and from the commercial sphere. The roots of the school-based curriculum development lie in the progressivist ideology and its concern for teacher-pupil-parent initiation and sponsorship of learning processes. Research-development-diffusion models were one, not fully satisfactory, attempt to give structure and a permanent dynamic to the projects-based movement which mushroomed during the early sixties. Another attempt was made through the insertion into educational development planning of the procedures of management-by-objectives. In the design, the general objectives of the instruction are specified and converted in behavioral objectives—which are statements of actions considered desirable by those who formulate them. A brief history of objective movement in curriculum is given below:

A History of the objective movement in curriculum:- Statements of goal and value have consistently reflected the prevailing
philosophy of their time. Plato's proposals for education, for example, sought to create a stable society in which men could resist evil and follow the path of virtue. Cicero, saw the educated man as an oratier, for whom he designed a crude taxonomy of activities as the basis for a curriculum in rhetoric. Milton in a similar time of great social upheaval, sought to prepare men for public and private offices in the time of peace and war by changing the goals of English education away from narrow religious aims to greater participation in the life of times.

Herbart (1924) developed a systematic method of teaching and emphasized the importance of clearly stating the aim. Spencer (1860) proposed a classification of human activities as a basis of educational objectives. He recognizes five primary objectives for the curriculum of the school. These include self-preservation, securing the necessities of life, rearing and disciplining offspring, maintenance of proper social and political relationships and activities that make up the leisure part of life by gratifying tastes and feelings. They represent a complete curriculum, in which each objective has a value both as knowledge and as a discipline or mental exercise.

The first systematic treatise on the theory of curriculum was by Franklin Bobbitt (1918). He distinguishes between ultimate objectives (written in a non-quantitative form) for the complete
school curriculum and 'progress objectives' for each age group or class. General unanalysed objectives he suggests, should be avoided since they are practically useless for curriculum making. According to him, ability to care for one's health, is too general to be useful. It must be reduced to particularity e.g. ability to care for the teeth etc.

Werrett charters in his text, curriculum construction in 192*, puts functional theory of systematic curriculum design. In the rules for curriculum construction he states, first determine the major objectives of Education by the study of man in its social setting, second analyze these objectives into ideals and activities, arrange these in the order of importance, determine the number of the most important items of the resulting list which can be handled in time allotted to school education, collect the best practices of the race in handling these ideals and activities and finally arrange the material so obtained in proper instructional order, according to Psychological nature of the children.

Clearly influenced by characters, Ralph Tyler (1932) kept the lamp alight by taking the idea of detailed objectives in to the area of test-construction. He argues that teachers concerned should formulate the course objectives, define the objectives in terms of student behaviour, collect situations in which students are to indicate the presence or absence of each objective and provide the method of evaluating the student's reactions in the
light of each objective. It was not until 1950, however that the idea of objectives as a cornerstone of curriculum development and classroom teaching was carried further with the publication of a new book by Ralph Tyler - "Basic Principles of Curriculum and Instruction". The book outlines one way of viewing an instructional program as a functional instrument of Education. Educational goals became the criteria by which materials are selected, Content is outlined, instructional procedures are developed and test examinations prepared. All aspects of Educational Program are really means to accomplish basic educational purposes.

Encouraged by the idea of Ralph Tyler on testing and evaluation, in 1948, Benjamin Bloom and his colleagues in Chicago and Michigan decided to put together a needed theoretical framework which could be used to facilitate communication among examiners. It was finally decided, that such a framework might best be obtained through a system of classifying the goals of educational process; since educational goals provide the basis for building curricula and its testing and represent the starting point for much of our educational research. In their meetings which spread over eight years before the publication in 1956 of their first report on educational cognitive domain; taxonomy of educational objectives, a number of problems arose. Could educational objectives be classified? It was felt that educational objectives have their counterpart in the behaviour of people and since
behaviour could be observed and described, so the objectives could also be classified. The original plans called for a complete taxonomy in three major parts—cognitive, affective and psychomotor, only two have been published but the work of Harrow (1972) on the psychomotor is significantly in tune with Bloom (1956). In all three instances the taxonomies are designed to classify, the intended outcomes of the educational process. Cognitive domain is seen by Bloom and his colleagues to be composed of six divisions of which knowledge is the first. The other subdivisions of intellectual abilities and skills consist of comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation. Anita Harrow's classification for the psychomotor area consists of six levels: reflex movements basic-fundamental movements, perceptual abilities, physical abilities, skilled movements and non-discursive communication (i.e. expressive and interpretative movement). In all three domains, these primary levels are broken down into further subdivisions all of which re-emphasize the necessity of attending to the great richness and variety which objectives can take.

Since the publication of the taxonomy a number of writers have applied the ideas of their own. Wood of the national foundation for educational research, applied the taxonomy in 1968 to the teaching of mathematics. Eggleston and Lobel applied it in 1969 to the teaching of science. Edgar (1972) proposed a taxonomy of educational objectives for educational psychology which relates closely to the problems of teaching practice.
Hilda Taba (1962) published her book, curriculum development, theory and practice and argues that curriculum development is sterile if it fails to encompass change in classroom practices. Taba considers the objectives of Education, their functions as the principals that should guide their formulations and schemes of classification before she outlines various types of behavioural objectives. She feels that a platform of objectives is needed to provide a common and consistent focus for the multifarious activities we call curriculum.

Robert Mager (1962) tried to design criteria for deciding whether an objective was usefully stated. He wrote a book about instructional objectives in which he stated that "before you prepare instruction, before you choose material, machine or method, it is important to be able to state clearly what your goals are."