LV LIJIE & MA YUNPENG

6. THE NEW CURRICULUM DESIGN OF BASIC EDUCATION IN MAINLAND CHINA

INTRODUCTION

Decker F. Walker, an American curriculum scholar, summarized valuable information on curriculum design from the 1960s to the 1970s. He conducted this by large-scale tracking and description of the curriculum design process.

In the late 1960s, Walker was appointed as the evaluator of the Kettering Art Project. Over three years, he recorded the actions, arguments, and decisions of the curriculum design team. Walker stripped out the important elements of the curriculum design process by analyzing sound recordings of the meeting and data collection activities of the design team. Walker described the natural process of curriculum design and compared it with several important national curriculum designs in the United States (Marsh, 1992).

Walker explained several key concepts. "Platform" refers to belief, theory, purpose, and intended procedure. He believed that each team member must address values and beliefs in curriculum development activities. Thus, the most basic step is that everyone participates in expression, discussion, and even argumentation. Walker used his position in the project to provide a platform for future discussions. During deliberation, curriculum designers focus on certain controversial issues, present a number of possible solutions, and carefully consider the advantages and disadvantages of several options. The deliberation process is a confusing and time-consuming phase. Consideration is not inborn but is based on common faith, doctrine, purpose, and procedure as common ground. If a position cannot be chosen, "concrete evidence" should be used to explain particular views. "Design" refers to the final stage of action-oriented decision-making.

Influencing Factors in Curriculum Design

Numerous factors influence curriculum design. Clark (1988) proposed ten factors in his research: the public, political leaders, textbook publishers, examination intermediaries, media, faculty of colleges and universities, professional education groups, central government ministries, teacher groups, and individual teachers. Aside from the above human factors, social ideological trends, social changes, especially education reforms, international relations, national politics, and overall development level of social productivity are all involved in the curriculum

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decision-making process directly or indirectly. Certain factors do not influence the curriculum design process but rather produce the curriculum by interacting with each other.

Clark (1988) suggested that each kind of influencing factor is conditioned by other factors and that decision makers continually influence each other. This produces an overly mutual dependence system. As a result, the final decision is far from everyone's original intention. The curriculum is therefore a political problem rather than a technical problem.

Research Questions

How is deliberation conducted in designing the Chinese national curriculum? Is deliberation similar to other procedures used in large-scale national curriculum design? Should specific principles or routines be followed? What is the effect of deliberation on the design of future Chinese curricula?

METHODS

More than 20 curriculum designers were interviewed from May 2003 to January 2004. A written record was transcribed word by word based on tape recordings of these interviews. All interviewees were core members who had experience in designing the Chinese national curriculum. Moreover, certain meeting records were collected with the help of related government departments. This chapter intends to present the structural pattern of curriculum design and the necessary and difficult points during this process based on the records and the reflection of the interviewees.

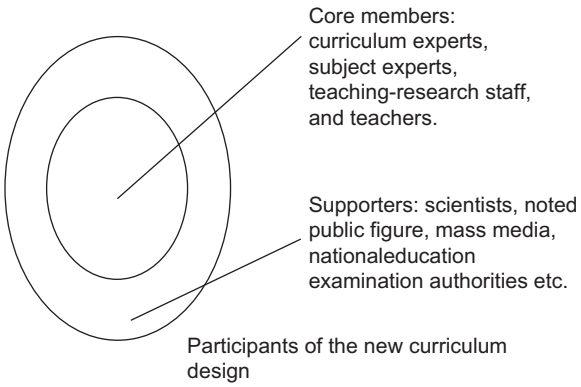
FINDINGS

Seeking the Difference: Personnel Structure of the Deliberation Team

Participants in the design of the new curriculum came from different areas, including researchers from universities, middle, and primary schools; primary and secondary school teachers; and press researchers. People from universities included subject experts and curriculum experts. The subject experts were generally subject researchers in normal universities and ordinary universities. The curriculum experts had background knowledge in pedagogy, psychology, or curriculum and were from normal universities and education research departments. Teaching-research staff and teachers from primary and secondary schools were the pillars of their respective positions; some were well-known national special-grade teachers. Publishers were present in every standard curriculum research team because of their extensive knowledge about teaching materials and past and present curricula. Establishing a clear hierarchy for the team of different experts was difficult because of their complex professional and career backgrounds. Take the mathematics research

team for compulsory education as an example. A total of 31 team members were from 14 provinces. Of these, 29 preferred to be grouped under mathematics education, whereas the other two prefer fundamental mathematics and pedagogy, respectively. However, some experts who preferred mathematics education majored in mathematics during their undergraduate studies, and then switched to pedagogy in their graduate study. Some had work involvement in the university and had abundant teaching or management experience in primary and secondary schools. Some curriculum designers had been engaged in scientific research work in normal universities. Obviously, these designers with various and complex background held different views in dealing with the new curriculum.

A large group of people and institutions were involved in the deliberation of the new curriculum besides the core members. This group included scientists in different fields, sociologists, CPPCC (Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference) members, mass media institutions, social education testing agencies, and national and local Department of Education management personnel. In addition to the Department of Basic Education, which was the leading institution in this curriculum reform, the Department of College Student Affairs, National Educational Examinations Authority, and other departments were all involved in the coordination and formulation of new curriculum standards.



These researchers had different levels of involvement in curriculum design based on their individual knowledge structure and social status, all relevant for a team of curriculum designers. Huang (1991) demonstrated that the core members of curriculum design are curriculum experts, subject experts, and teachers. Other participants, including school administration and educational department staff, mass media experts, students, parents, and related institutions, served as consultants in curriculum design. The structure of the new curriculum design team corresponded to the findings of the two experts. With regard to the combination of experts in different

fields and officials of MEPRC (Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China), Mr. L remarked:

> We do not guarantee that the quality of the new curriculum would be the best, however, it would not be too bad.

Seeking the Similarities: Negotiation in the Deliberation

The design team comprised different people in various research areas, social status, roles, and regions. The positive side of this team is the combination of various viewpoints; the values and interests that people hold are preconditions for the complementary blending of ideas. Establishing a team with different groups of people and demanding all of them to hold the same values and interests is counterproductive. As a result, quarrels, negotiations, compromise, persistence, and even bargaining occurred throughout the curriculum design process. The production process culture itself formed the unique design culture.

Conflict and Negotiation of Designers

The value of the new curriculum is to "boost the revival of the Chinese nation and each student's development" (Zhong, 2001). A student's innovative spirit, practical ability, and scientific and humanistic quality are supposed to be promoted in the new curriculum. The macro ideal demonstrated each team member's negotiation and argument skills. These skills were influenced by each member's profound and potential understanding of the curriculum, their thinking modes and understanding of certain subjects, their viewpoints in various academic groups, and their personal feelings on certain subjects. The different values and interests of the designers, due to their individual occupations and living places, developed the curriculum in the presence of conflict. The confrontation came from numerous directions: between teaching-research staff and university researchers, amongst subject experts, curriculum experts, and government officials, and between subject experts and curriculum experts. The communication between subject experts and curriculum experts is one example. Both groups are good with theoretical knowledge, are used to instrumental discourse in communication, and are completely confident in terms of professional knowledge. However, the supporting theoretical bases of these groups varied greatly, which resulted in a hard fusion of viewpoints. In the interviews, the groups expressed their opinions concerning the roles of other members in the design of the curriculum. Subject expert Professor Y had this to say:

> I think that some contents of curriculum theories are too idealistic to be implemented in practice. Both ideas from curriculum experts and us are to be considered. It is impractical to accept the curriculum experts' viewpoints without careful thinking because of the distinctive characteristic of each type of subject.

Curriculum expert professor C stated the following:

> I heard that some Chinese subject experts say " If Chinese people could not learn Chinese well, what would they do?" I may question them with the truth that some Chinese farmers live their happy lives although they did not learn how to read. These subject experts' viewpoints are too extreme because they did not put their focus on the curriculum standards of the compulsory educational stage. They did not consider what skills students would need if they are not to work as a Chinese expert. They only put their subject on the first place and ignore other subjects. Obviously, other subject experts are the same. Geography experts said that human beings live on the planet for their whole lives. As a result, geography is the most important subject than others. Foreign language experts said that leaders of our country had already learned the importance of foreign languages and recommended that learning foreign languages start from very young age. I think these foreign language experts' ideas are too extreme because foreign language is not too much important to some people.

The former is a subject expert of the curriculum standard design team. The standpoint of the curriculum experts is too idealistic in his view, because subject experts follow the rules of logic and regulation in addressing the subject itself. On the contrary, curriculum experts think that subject logic makes subject experts address the education of students in a paranoid manner. Therefore, subject experts and curriculum experts hold different standards in the content layout, selection, and representation of the curriculum. The curriculum program proposed by curriculum experts will be ahead of curriculum standards in terms of time and logic. Therefore, subject experts felt restricted in their confrontations with curriculum experts.

The core issue of the debate between subject experts and curriculum experts is the role of curriculum experts in curriculum design. The main causes of the arguments are the different ideals on curriculum design because of diverse theoretical backgrounds. Curriculum experts have been important, especially in the field of progressive educational practices in western countries, since the birth of the curriculum in the 20th century. However, the dominating position of curriculum experts was replaced by subject experts after the 1960s. "A variety of subject experts replaced the traditionalists in curriculum field and became decision makers and reformers. Neither private foundation nor official authority thinks curriculum experts could lead the curriculum reform" (Zhou, 2000). Curriculum study is on the verge of decline. Moreover, American curriculum reform is inadequate. The effort of subject experts in making scientific curriculum content and design processes led to the decline of student academic performance.

The subject expert Schwab recalled his painful experiences in the 1970s. He proposed practical curriculum research paradigms in which the deliberation process was placed on key positions. The importance of curriculum experts in curriculum design was again established. Furthermore, after the 1970s, American curriculum

research was involved in such a new stage that a hundred schools of thought contended the appearance of phenomenology and critical theory (Pinar, 1995). The curriculum system of our country is different from that in the United States. In addition, the development history of curriculum research between our two countries is different.

Officer L of the Ministry of Education proclaimed the following:

> "In the curriculum design history of China, it is the first time that large quantities of curriculum experts took part in the work of curriculum design."

In other words, subject experts and curriculum experts cooperated for the first time during deliberation. The superior position of curriculum experts in the design team made subject experts uncomfortable. Furthermore, how do curriculum experts consider their function in the curriculum design process?

Curriculum expert professor C answered the question with the following:

> "Experts played two roles in curriculum design. One is the role on conceptional level, the other is the role on technical level. Curriculum experts worried about students themselves, however, subject experts were concerned with their subject. Thus, they have to conduct dialogue and try to see the situation from respective perspectives. When subject experts stressed that certain knowledge point be covered, curriculum experts are supposed to keep clear minds and develop their functions. On the other hand, a series of technical matters such as curriculum development, design and planning could provide support for subject experts. Taking the selection of action verbs used in curriculum standards as an example, we could provide these verbs to subject experts so that they could organize subject content. This is the way that curriculum experts gain foothold in curriculum design."

Professor C divided the role of curriculum experts into conceptual and technical levels, which are also involved in the concept of curriculum design. In his view, curriculum experts develop functions in the whole process of curriculum design and provide frameworks for ideas and thinking. The roles of curriculum experts are super-ordinate in logic and are originally needed in curriculum design. Two kinds of curriculum design standpoints, caused by different professional perspectives, are apparent; these work together in the curriculum design process.

Discipline boundary is distinctively implemented in different schools of thought during this type of communication. The original cognitive structure of each participant determines the information selected and defines the standards and proportions between students and subjects. Hermeneutics states that the human cognitive structure provides a so-called "legal bias" for all designers in understanding and mastering curriculum elements. Understanding is impossible without bias. Thus, bias is the premise of knowing the world. Intellectuals are chosen to create culture because they possess this kind of particular legal bias. The bias should not be an obstacle to the cultivation and development of common culture. Debaters are willing

to listen to others and empathically understand the rationality of other biases when presenting their own biased views. Subject expert professor ZH stated the following:

> 'At the beginning of the compulsory educational curriculum design, it was a little uncomfortable when I confronted with those who learn education and psychology because I held the opinion that something they suggested was unrealistic. Later, I felt that their suggestions are reasonable and it is helpful to combine different ideas and improve each other. Some of the curriculum experts' ideas, such as three-dimensional educational object, are pretty good. They also put forward something that we had already been aware of and made it systematic. It is indeed a good promotion for curriculum design.'

The attitude of subject experts toward curriculum experts changed from "curriculum experts are realistic" to "curriculum experts are reasonable" and then to "curriculum experts provide good improvements". The cause of the change is that subject experts have begun to understand the ideas that curriculum experts advocate and the roles of curriculum experts in the curriculum design process. Therefore, subject experts begin to accept and even use the thinking that is logically similar to people who learned education or psychology in addressing curriculum problems. As a result, subject experts conclude, "combining different ideas in improving each other is helpful".

Decision-making Generation

A discussion mode ran through the entire process in each curriculum standard design team. How was the decision making step generated after all the conflict in communication? Various answers are provided by different researchers. Professor X, a member of the curriculum standard design team one of the curriculum standard design teams answered with the following:

> At the beginning, all team members expressed their opinions actively and energetically, but gradually there would emerge a key person in the end. The reason is that there must be someone to make the final decision and responsible for the whole team. This key person in our team is working in university. For instance, when we are discussing whether the fundamental part should be included in curriculum structure, Professor A was the person insisted in setting up this part most, as it is he and we who have done the pilot studies, and we know well the current status in China. We put forward the compulsory and fundamental part, but this proposal had been rejected and navigated in the first three/four discussion meetings. Afterwards in the following meetings the only statements he had made each time was to declare the reason for it, otherwise, he would just keep silence. In our fourth or fifth team discussion meetings, all the members finally had reached a certain level consensus. All in all, suggestions and proposals of the person who had done researches in the field in depth were most likely to be adopted.

Professor Y, from another curriculum standard design team responded with the following:

> Who is the final decision maker? There is no such a person. The process is all the people discussing and arguing together, and making decisions based on most people's opinion, but not that the person in charge of the team has the final say, and that is a scientific process of decision-making. For example: about one option of one certain content, it is not that just one people can speak for all, but all people argue and demonstrate it together, repeatedly. You raised your opinion, and I put forward mine. Through this whole process of arguing, the major thought were gradually getting clear, and in the end, all the people reached a certain consensus. I think this whole process is rational, that it, one person cannot decide everything in the end, and it is the fact in our team. It is a scientific and democratic decision-making.

An obvious decision-making center is present in the former situation. This center is the authority figure that emerges during the process of discussion. The authority figure, however, is not the convener (administration executive). As the person of authority and final decision-maker, they possess two characteristics:

- Have conducted in-depth pilot research in the field of curriculum design and have put forward rational opinions or proposals.
- Insist in stating reasons with great patience and cultivates perceptions of team members to a certain consistent level.

The objectors might not hesitate to propose their opinions constantly because the person of authority and the convener are different persons. Finally, all different voices reach a consensus.

However, in the latter situation, no obvious decision-making center is present. The interviewees constantly mentioned "all the people" and "consensus". The different suggestions of the people are adopted in different issues. The removal of the administration executive's authority made all participants equal in the discussions and arguments. Therefore, conclusions are generated naturally during this process.

A person in charge from the Ministry of Education once said that they expect to abide by the *principle of evolving democratically and making decisions scientifically*. This was the reason that the convener of the Curriculum Standard Team was not appointed team leader. Group members had the courage to express their opinions, even bigotedly, and seized the principal decision authority in an administrative organization with a relatively free and comfortable atmosphere. As a sociologist once said, "Democracy is a very important characteristic in leadership authority. Only when the one values and has faith in his/her special preference, can he or she create valuable things" (Cooley, 2000). In addition, this kind of confidence and bigotry is not fanatical.

Professor X, from one of the curriculum standard design teams, stated the following:

> Before joining the Curriculum Standard Design team, we have compiled several series of senior high school textbooks, and have done empirical study topics for three years. So we felt we had the say particularly when we were stating our points. We think we have run through the whole process in the past, and we have the empirical research experience and results to based on, in addition to textbook compiling background. I think, subconsciously, all these experiences are useful and valuable for the Curriculum Standard Design.

Professor Z, from one of the curriculum standard design teams, recounted thus:

> "A Taiwan professor Ou Yongsheng once asked when he gave an lecture on curriculum design that "Who has the final say in whom the curriculum reform should listen to? The answer is we listen to the person with the loudest voice. " I think this loud voice implicates that one's professional competence has been approved and acknowledged by others in the team or in this academic field. His words make sense actually, because it happened a lot in Curriculum Standard Design team. Many issues cannot be settled by everyone sticking to their own stand, and in this circumstance, the person approved and acknowledged by others were identified as authority and his or her opinions are regard as the dominant ideas."

These two professors have already begun to consider the basis of decision-making because they have experienced the process of curriculum design deliberation. They have both reflected on how to make decisions rationally. Whether based on cumulative academic research experience or based on *excellent professional competence*, their answers are consistent with those of each other.

Therefore, it seems that if we set aside human factors such as interpersonal relationships, one or more informal organized decision-making centers would emerge. This center does not defend the bureaucratically administrative organizational structure, but is generated from their convincing and persuasive point of view.

If all the members in one team reach a consensus at this point, they will determine that stating their opinions is not only their right but also their obligation and responsibility. Likewise, all members in the team need to respect knowledge, science, and reason. In this way, the decision-making center will be regarded as legal and reasonable.

Content Choice of Deliberation

Core value of subject curriculum. In terms of the factors that curriculum designers should consider in setting the standards of the curriculum, Professor H, the convener of the science curriculum group, said thus:

> The purpose of science curriculum in elementary school is not to learn systematic knowledge but to inspire students' interests in science. We are

> supposed to basically focus on how to carefully protect children's inherent interests in the first place and then to protect their cognitive style. Different subjects, such as philosophy, social studies, history and science vary a lot in nature. In science thinking mode, evidence is placed on the top and supernatural things are ruled out. Whatever a person says, evidence is needed. Therefore, we should make people know what elementary school science is, and then consider some specific contents.

When science curriculum experts select the elementary school science content, they assign high priority to educational significance. They see science education as a significant way of developing student interest and forming in them a scientific way of thinking, which gives precedence to evidence. These ideas will help clarify the nature of elementary school science. The designers do not know what kind of content they will choose until they are totally aware of the meaning of elementary school science. Furthermore, the implementer would understand why a particular content group was included and how to demonstrate this content to students.

The change in study content in basic education is referred to as curriculum revolution, because its guiding ideology, value, and significance are reviewed; it is not conducted simply to change the teaching outline or materials. The rationale is not to explain certain educational phenomena and make up for the deficiency but to determine a particular principle or standard against which to judge, interpret, and evaluate all relevant educational activities of a certain subject.

When Professor Z in the chemistry curriculum group was speaking about grade 7–9 chemistry, he stated thus:

> When we talk about something on theory, we can tell a lot about what it is. However, when we confront with certain subject, we are supposed to reflect its core value. The educational idea of chemistry is based- on-experiment and its core concept is material, structure and energy, whose importance is not recognized before.

Professor Z is confident in the achievement of his group because he thought that he had identified the soul of chemistry, or that at least his knowledge on it had improved. A designer from another group is not as satisfied with their product, and mentioned thus:

> Ideas should reflect the national overall development target and each subject is at service for the general idea. It would be appropriate and reasonable to combine subject curriculum standards with the educational goals of our country and make them adapt to each other. However, our designers focus too much on how to phrase certain concept…

Regardless of their satisfaction and dissatisfaction, both of these designers hold similar ideas on the current situation; the curriculum standard is supposed to be superior to the subject content and is supposed to reach the ideal level. However, the task is not simply to copy the general rules or to wildly accept curriculum concepts.

"Break" the traditional subject system. Although chemistry experts hold the idea that "based-on-experiment is the educational idea, and that material, construction, and energy are core concepts of the course," many possibilities arise when concepts are converted into the knowledge system.

If the traditional discipline system were more typical and systematic, we would edit the new version by its theme. We are going to break the structure of the discipline system. Differences exist between "break" and "give up," because the logical structure of the discipline will be retained. "Chemical substance living among us" has its own system, and the rigid and traditional discipline logical structure must be broken; this includes the thinking methods that science students follow. Professor Z interpreted an important concept: the meaning of "break" concerning the establishment of the knowledge system of the curriculum. The ideal of establishing a new curriculum cannot be fulfilled if people adhere to the strict knowledge system. However, the goal of "breaking" is not to destroy the logical structure of the knowledge system. The general rule is that human beings recognize the world by experiencing the actual process, such as from simple to complex and from cause to effect. Multiple choices for the style of curriculum development exist, such as straight-line and spiral, traditional system, and core theme mode.

The existence of different knowledge systems in curriculum causes different educational effects. Furthermore, these systems help students form various ways of thinking and intelligence structures. The Chinese hotly debate what knowledge structure should be given to students and what knowledge structure the educational system will change into. Regarding the consideration of different opinions on curriculum design, a professor from the physics curriculum group said thus:

> It is not infeasible to break the traditional curriculum system; however, it is definitely wrong to demand all students in China to follow the same rules. There is some sense to say that Chinese students need not learn too much knowledge about new technology because they could learn that fast in university if they grasp basic knowledge skillfully. Nevertheless, not all Chinese students could follow the mode mentioned above. There would be abundant information in different textbooks of which students could have various choices. Consequently, the general curriculum standards are supposed to be flexible. The standard in compulsory education is more flexible in comparison with the standard in the senior high school. In a word, the curriculum standard is a response to the demand of society. Whatever you choose, the flexible or the fixed curriculum standard, it is not one standard over another but providing a relaxed environment in which students could make choice by themselves and editors could make different styles of teaching materials.

Know the scale on how to select course content well. A possible scale exists between the ideal and the real course content. Different designers hold different opinions on how to achieve balance. Professor D of the information technology group said thus:

> Although it is understandable to encourage technology learning in the selective course now, there is a problem about to what extent the technology learning should be. In my words, we take two steps forward for every step back. We need take a big step in theory; however, each plan of course content demands an adaptable stage in practice. We need to know the current situation such as where we are and where we are going. It takes time to know changes of course content and it is not a good time to choose information literacy as target.

Positioning course content is an inevitable puzzle to curriculum designers. One of the goals in making a curriculum standard is to have an agreeable standard for all schools in China. If the demand of the general standard were too high, conducting it in different areas would be too difficult. On the other hand, the standard would only be nominal if too low, which does not help the quality of education in the country. Therefore, "in a centralized education administrative system, a low level of curriculum standard has not appeared yet" (Huang, 1991). The distance between the ideal and the real in curriculum design follows the requirement of the guiding function of national curriculum, but this could not be applied in practice if the gap between the new course content and the old is too great. Compromise between these two types of content is necessary, albeit easier said than done (such as the compromise between different areas). A professor of foreign language described his problems in curriculum design thus:

> As to how to make the lowest content standard, people in our group argued a lot. Because we came from different areas, including Beijing, Dalian, southern cities and rural areas, we focused on the respective situation of our places to consider the standard. For example, when we decided it should be 800 English words that graduates of junior high school is supposed to grasp, teaching-research staff from Dalian thought it would be too easy for their students and experts from Jilin holding the same idea said that 2,500 words are not too much. However, experts from Mongolian area said 800 words are enough for their students. Consequently, it took us lots of time to discuss how to make the standard.

Finally, according to the average level of different areas, a graduate of junior high school is supposed to grasp the meaning and usage of 800 commonly used words in the *Standard of English Course (Experimental Draft)*, which was released in 2001.

Contrary to the capacity problem of the language course, some courses are closely related to the equipment used in class, which may cause dangers in operation. A professor from the information technology senior high school group said thus:

> If this standard is going to be carried out in 2005, what effect should it have? We can make some assumptions based on the current regulations in our country. For example, we are experiencing great risk in our curriculum and some selective courses are unable to apply. It is assumed that all facilities problems in senior high school are going to be solved in five years. The comprehensive ability of teachers in senior high school is superior to elementary school teachers

> and they have the ability to improve by themselves. With the development of teaching material, students begin to change their study style. Our course is particularly special in which teachers show the materials and students tell teachers how to deal with these stuff. Although it is unusual, the problem could be solved based on the abilities of students in the senior high school.

These assumptions reveal the designers' worries due to their considering the best human and financial resources as given. Faced with the differences between cities and rural areas, a national curriculum standard that is either too high or too low could be far from reality in a certain region.

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

Curriculum Design That is Based on Deliberation Actually Meets Ou Pursuit of Practical Rationality

Deliberation is not the settlement of theoretical issues but the consideration of feasibility behavior in practice. Cognitive rationality can seek freedom from contradictions and absolutes in thinking. Therefore, theoretical issues could find a unique, correct solution to the problem. Practical issues are different from theoretical ones. A certain curriculum scheme may be an excellent solution in city schools but not in rural ones. It may be feasible in large-scale schools but not in small-scale ones. It may be the best for gifted children but not for average students. After deliberation, no solution seems correct, but one may be the best method (Schwab, 1969). The scheme draft depends on the current situation, and this kind of judgment and decision is rational intuition that is based on a profound knowledge of practical problems. For this reason, a more specific and authentic current situation results in more rational intuitional judgments that we are inclined to form.

"Fundamental Research" is the Basis of Curriculum Deliberation

During the process of new curriculum design, each team conducted a current situation investigation, comparative study, investigation of social needs, research on subject development, and research on student psychological development. All these investigations and research are the summary and reorganization of existing theoretical research, as well as a comprehensive grasp of the current state of the curriculum.

This step is the foundation of curriculum deliberation, because all this knowledge and information is the basis for judgment and decision-making. The researchers in deliberation require this kind of basic consensus platform.

Deliberation Process is Decentering; it Repels Authority But also Relies on It

Deliberation makes sense and develops only when it relies on each member's initiative and various interpretations. However, the deliberation process always

involves many different voices persistently adhering to their own stand, as the scheme has not yet been tested in practice, and the theory alone cannot judge and estimate the validity and rationality of the scheme. Therefore, suggestions from the "acknowledged" and "approved" person with high-level theoretical attainment and comprehensive knowledge of current curriculum practice will influence others.

Fusion of Horizons is A Difficult Course, Requiring Tolerance, Patience, and Even A Bargaining Strategy

All kinds of viewpoints during deliberation are not fused and integrated easily. Curriculum standard designers have different experiential backgrounds, ways of thinking, and decision-making principles, which are covered by seemingly the same curriculum value. Only by the exploring, judging, and decision-making of a specific issue can these differences be revealed. The success of deliberation requires that all participants engage in certain principles or expectations. These principles and expectations include listening attentively to others' opinions and the discussion; accepting or objecting cautiously to different points of view, instead of saying yes or no without thinking or hesitation; compromising in the process of "negativizing" part of oneself and approving the value in another's point of view; and accepting the final curriculum standards after deliberation. Dogmatic and non-cooperative people cannot achieve these practices (Short, 2000).

The Generation of Decision-making in Deliberation is not a Unidirectional Linear Mode but a Bidirectional Multi-interactive Way

No one can be capable of or has the authority to pre-assume a fixed result. The nature and significance of deliberation is to be balanced with multiple feasible optional schemes and to create new ideas.

The Conflict of Content Choice in Course Deliberations (such as logical sequence and psychological order, policy making and practical implementation, the consistency of curriculum standard and the unbalanced development of different areas) Must be Confronted.

Course design should find a proper place between the ideal and reality, which are not two separate polar points but a continuous belt. Each designer has to make a choice on a certain point of the belt. No rules are required; mere ranking values are needed for a particular problem.

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AFFILIATIONS

Lv Lijie & Ma Yunpeng
School of Education Science
Northeast Normal University
Mainland China