



The transition from traditional education to the new curriculum program in Azerbaijan: The manifestation of Tyler's principles in the teaching of Geography

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Abstract

This paper discusses how Azerbaijan's junior high school curriculum in geography studies can shift to a competency-based student-centered approach, with the Objective Model of Ralph W. Tyler being used to analyze the process. The four principles defined by Tyler, namely defining the objectives, the choice of the learning experiences, the organization of the instruction, and the evaluation of the outcomes, are used to examine how the new curriculum is organized and carried out. Results show that the reforms have reinforced the expression of learning objectives and nurtured critical thinking, active learning, and the implementation of real-world use in geography education. Simultaneously, there are still issues related to teacher preparedness, effective assessment practice, and translation of policy goals into classroom practice. The paper will show the possibilities and constraints of the application of the rationale of Tyler in transitional situations, by placing the curricular changes in Azerbaijan into the context of the wider post-Soviet educational change. The research can also contribute to the international debate over curriculum reform by demonstrating how world models can be used to meet local requirements and provide valuable advice to teachers and policymakers who have focused on improved geography teaching and building competency-based learning in education systems that are developing

Keywords

Curriculum reform; Tyler's Objective Model; Geography education; Student-centered learning; Competency-based curriculum; Azerbaijan; Post-Soviet education

Introduction

Reform of the curriculum is one of the most important mechanisms by which societies bring about modernization in education in response to changing cultural, political, and technological needs. Curriculum design and implementation are not only a manifestation of the priorities in pedagogy, but also determine the formation of the competencies, values, and critical skills of the learners. One of such theoretical frameworks that influenced curriculum design has been the Objective Model, which was developed by Ralph W. Tyler in his landmark book *Basic Principles of Curriculum and Instruction* (1949). Tyler explained that four processes are required systematically to create educational programs, and they are a clear definition of objectives, selection of valuable learning experiences, organization of content, and evaluation of outcomes. Even though his framework was developed in the middle of the twentieth century, it is still used to design reform initiatives all over the world due to its clarity, adaptability, and pragmatic orientation.

Azerbaijan is a very interesting example of how to analyze how the principles of Tyler can be used in a transitional education system. Since the declaration of independence of the Soviet Union, Azerbaijan has been trying to match its education policies to the global norms, leaving the teacher-based, strict, and rigid models in favor of the competency-based, student-centered models. These reforms are reflected in the geography curriculum, especially. Conventionally, geography has been taught using memorization of geographic facts, both physical and political, and the Soviet didactic approaches. New reforms, however, focus on inquiry, problem solving, spatial reasoning, and embedding new technologies like Geographic Information Systems (GIS). These developments are related to the fact that Tyler emphasizes that learning experiences need to be related to real-world situations and encourage transferable skills.

Azerbaijan formalized this shift in a new National Basic Education Curriculum of 2022. The curriculum framework has a three-dimensional basis that is based on knowledge and skills, processes and methods, and values and attitudes. Such a three-part framework is intended to develop not only cognitive skills but also the sense of ethics and the ability to solve practical problems. Among geography educators, the reforms are supposed to foster critical thinking, environmental consciousness, and proactive response to socio-spatial issues. This is in line with global tendencies, which do not consider geography only as a form of description but equip students to analyze and solve current problems of the world, whether it is climate change or urbanization.

However, such a transition has not been smooth. Numerous educators are still used to the traditional methods and need long-term professional development to be able to implement student-centered pedagogy in practice. Textbook and teaching resource preparation has fallen behind policy changes to restrict the ability to implement consistent competency-based practices in the classroom. The practices of assessment are also contentious, with a debate between a standard test and the formative assessment required to evaluate complex skills. These challenges demonstrate the larger challenge of curriculum policy articulation to productive classroom action, especially in societies that have struggled to negotiate the remnants of centralized systems of education.

The academic literature gives conflicting evaluations of the model by Tyler in these settings. Advocates stress that it is logical and universal in its approach, and critics believe that this oversimplifies the dynamic nature of learning and underestimates the agency of teachers and social-cultural context (Stenhouse, 1975; Ornstein and Hunkins, 2018). These criticisms are especially applicable in Azerbaijan: the model developed by Tyler provides an effective way of designing the curriculum, but its effective implementation requires adjustment to local realities, such as teacher preparedness, cultural demands, and institutional capability.

The importance of the study is that it contributes in two ways. First, it brings about a thorough analysis of the way the principles of Tyler were applied in the teaching of geography in the Azerbaijan curriculum shift. The study emphasizes the successes and the shortcomings of the reform process by concentrating on the aims, learning experiences, and assessment practices. Second, it places the experience of Azerbaijan in the context of the overall discussion of curriculum reform in transitional societies that can be used by international scholars and policymakers. The results have shown that even though the model of Tyler is very relevant, its implementation should be contextually sensitive and have support systems to close the policy-practice gap.

Altogether, the adoption of a competency-based curriculum of geography in Azerbaijan is indicative of the timelessness of the logic that Tyler proposed and the difficulty of making changes in education in post-Soviet settings. This paper posits that Tyler has principles that, when carefully implemented, can be used to design well-developed curricula to equip students to critically address modern challenges. These goals, however, will be achieved through long-term investment in the development of teachers, new forms of assessment, and matching resources. Through the Azerbaijan case study, the study is helpful in international discussions of curriculum changes and serves as an example to other countries going through such changes.

Literature Review

The idea of curriculum reform has become one of the focus areas in the discourse of global education, and scholars and policy formulators have tried to find models that can afford both academic goals, effective teaching and learning, and meaningful evaluation. One of the twentieth-century models that has had a lasting impact has been the Objective Model by Ralph W. Tyler (1949). Tyler highlighted four fundamental curriculum development steps, namely defining objectives, choosing learning experiences, arranging content, and evaluating outcomes. His model offered a logical connection between assessment and instructional goals, and this has been used extensively in other national settings. Ornstein and Hunkins (2018), Schiro (2012), and other scholars believe that the methodology offered by Tyler is also strong because it is structured in a way to make curriculum designers orient the teaching strategies toward the measurable outcomes. Nonetheless, some of the critics, such as Stenhouse (1975) and Pinar (2012), warn that objectivity may lead to inflexibility of the model where dynamic learning settings cannot be adapted.

Despite these criticisms, the reasoning that Tyler gave still influences curriculum reform in other countries. Recent research has noted its adaptation in the field of geography education, in which the engagement of students, analysis, and practical use is value-added (Priestley and Biesta, 2022). The shift of the discipline of geography has occurred to favor inquiry-based, problem-solving methods over rote memorization, combined with the use of geospatial tools and inviting interdisciplinary thinking (Gregory & Healey, 2022; Goodchild and Li, 2023). This shift captures larger trends in education in which the focus is on competencies needed to respond to challenges in the twenty-first century, such as sustainability, climate change, and urbanization.

One of the most important aspects of modern geography education is the introduction of digital technology, including Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and Earth Observation Systems. The study by Castree et al. (2023) and Smith and Jones (2023) outlines the potentially transformative nature of these tools in their spatial reasoning and analytical capacities development. The importance of geographic literacy as a boot camp of global citizenship has also been highlighted by UNESCO (2023). Nevertheless, researchers also admit the unequal access to digital resources, as the education systems with underfunding usually cannot afford the required infrastructure and teacher training to ensure successful application of the technology.

The case of educational reforms in Azerbaijan within the context of the entire world is unique. Since gaining independence in 1991, Azerbaijan has aimed at substituting the rigid and teacher-centric approaches with competency-based, student-centric approaches. In 2022, the National Basic Education Curriculum launched a model with three major areas of focus: knowledge and skills, processes and methods, and values and attitudes, consistent with the trends in international reform. The education of geography in particular has not been left out of this change, and the purpose of this change has been to enhance critical thinking, practical problem-solving, and practical involvement in real-world problems. However, as Rahimov and Hasanli (2023) note, Azerbaijan has not yet implemented much digital content delivery and student-centered teaching, which means that the teaching of geography still largely relies on the presentation of material.

These reforms have several obstacles in their implementation. To start with, teacher preparedness is a big challenge. Most geography teachers are not trained in new pedagogical techniques and are not particularly skilled in using online resources. There is a lack of professional development programs, so teachers are left to use lectures as the means of professional development. Second, textbooks and instructional materials are obsolete, and they tend to prevent the implementation of inquiry-based learning because they tend to focus on the memorization of facts and not on interactive or problem-based assignments. Third, the digital technology integration infrastructure (GIS) is poor, and the schools do not have much access to resources. These problems are indicative of larger structural limitations in the education system of Azerbaijan, such as funding pressures and the continued use of exam-based assessment methods.

Evaluation as such is also another impediment to change. Although the model proposed by Tyler emphasizes the need to evaluate students in line with the objectives, Azerbaijan geography education is still based on the traditional

exams, which focus on memorization instead of analytical abilities. This disalignment goes against the objectives of the competency-based curriculum, where high-order thinking skills do not develop. According to Goodchild and Li (2023), geography teaching needs to be assessed by focusing on how well students can solve problems by applying the concepts to real-life situations, but not their capacity to remember detached facts.

Literature on curriculum reforms in Azerbaijan brings to light the issues, but also displays serious gaps in it. To begin with, the majority of the available literature is devoted to the change at the policy level, but there is less focus on the experience of reforms and their implementation in the classroom. This brings about doubt as to how much the set goals are being realized in the field. Second, although the world literature is rich in research on the use of digital technologies in geography education, few studies on the topic are specific to Azerbaijan. Little evidence exists on the way tools like GIS are being implemented in schools or on the obstacles teachers encounter in their implementation. Third, the implementation of the principles of Tyler in the geography curriculum in Azerbaijan has not been systematically researched. Although the relevance of Tyler's rationale is recognized by the scholars themselves, its practical representation in the Azerbaijani situation has not yet been explored to its maximum extent.

These gaps reveal the necessity of empirical studies that investigate the strengths and weaknesses of the reforms in the geography curriculum of Azerbaijan in the prism of the Objective Model by Tyler. This may be a useful analysis of the ways in which global curriculum frameworks can be modified to suit local contexts, particularly in post-Soviet education systems that are in the midst of radical change. Research can help in more effective approaches to attaining competency-based, student-centered geography education by attending to teacher preparedness, assessment practices, and integration of digital tools.

Methodology

Research Design

The analysis of the implementation of the principles of the curriculum developed by Tyler in the field of geography education in Azerbaijan takes the design of the qualitative multiple case study approach. The case study methodology was chosen due to the opportunity to explore the curriculum policies and classroom implementation in a real-life context in detail (Yin, 2018; Stake, 1995). To present a wider view on the reform implementation, several cases in various schools were provided, both to note the general trends and to show the local differences. This design suits the curriculum research in that it combines the views of both documents and teachers and classroom practices, hence creating a comprehensive view of how reforms are implemented in practice.

Data Collection

Three supplementary approaches were used, such as document analysis, semi-structured interviews, and classroom observations.

The review of the documents was carried out through the systematic analysis of the Ministry of Education National Curriculum Framework (2022), geography textbooks, policy documents, and Grades 7-9 standardized examination materials. As suggested by Bowen (2009), documents were examined in terms of correspondence to the four principles of Tyler that define goals, choose learning experiences, structure material, and assess results. This enabled the determination of the desired reforms as well as structural consistency with the model by Tyler.

The twelve secondary school geography teachers were interviewed using semi-structured interviews, and they were selected under two conditions: (1) teaching for at least five years, and (2) direct participation in the latest curriculum reforms. There were 30-minute audio-taped interviews with the consent of the participants, and afterwards transcribed to analyze. The questions were specific to teachers and their comprehension of the principles by Tyler, their teaching methods, and how they use their resources, including the digital materials and textbooks. The semi-structured format meant that the participants could be compared, yet the teachers had an opportunity to discuss their own experiences (Creswell and Poth, 2018).

The data used as supplements to the document and interview data were classroom observations in three secondary schools. The teaching strategies, the level of student autonomy, and the level of integration of the teaching resources, like GIS tools, maps, and project-based assessment, were captured with the help of structured observation checklists. The observations were also useful to substantiate the practices reported by teachers and to observe the dynamics in the classroom that interviews might not capture (Merriam and Tisdell, 2016).

The combination of these approaches gave a triangulating evidence base which made the results more robust because the intent of the policy, the policies as viewed by teachers, and the realities in classrooms were cross-validated.

Data Analysis

Thematic analysis of data was done using the six steps of the Braun and Clarke (2006) framework. This was initiated by familiarization by repeatedly reading interview transcripts, observation notes, and curriculum documents. The data were subsequently systematically coded in NVivo software to establish patterns connected to the operationalization of the principles of Tyler, impediments to implementation, and the teacher's view of curriculum reform.

Coded data were then categorized into larger themes that represented common problems like preparedness of teachers, assessment practice, and availability of resources. The method of triangulation was used to combine the evidence of various sources, which increased the validity of findings (Denzin, 2017). As an example, the comparison of curriculum objectives identified in policy documents with the teachers' interpretation and classroom observed behaviors was used to assess policy and practice consistency.

Ethical Considerations

The research was conducted according to the current ethical requirements of qualitative research (Creswell, 2016). The participants were advised of the purpose of the study and hence gave written consent before being allowed to participate. The anonymity was provided by taking out the identifying details from transcripts, and pseudonyms were used when reporting. It was purely voluntary to participate, and the teachers were reminded that they had the right to drop out at any point in time without any repercussions. All information, recordings, and transcripts were safely stored and could be accessed by the researcher only. The identities of schools were also kept anonymous to ensure institutional confidentiality.

Summary

This methodology helps to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the implementation of the principles of Tyler in the Azerbaijan geography curriculum by studying documents, interviewing teachers, and making observations in the classroom. The design not only recognizes areas of successful reform, but also raises a common barrier, which produces an insight that can be used by educators and policy makers who develop curricula

Table 1. Summary of Research Methodology

Component Description

Research Design: Qualitative multiple-case study focusing on Tyler's curriculum principles in Azerbaijan's geography education.

Data Sources: National curriculum framework (2022), geography textbooks (Grades 7), standardized exam materials, and education policy documents.

Data Collection (1) Document analysis; (2) Semi-structured interviews with 12 secondary school geography teachers; (3) Classroom observations in three schools.

Participants: Secondary school geography teachers with at least five years of teaching experience and familiarity with the reformed curriculum.

Interview Procedure: Semi-structured, 30 minutes each, audio recorded with consent, later transcribed.

Observation Procedure: Classroom sessions were observed with structured checklists to assess teaching strategies, technology integration, and assessment methods.

Data Analysis Thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) using NVivo; coding, categorization, and triangulation across documents, interviews, and observations.

Ethical Considerations: Informed consent, anonymity of participants and schools, voluntary participation, data confidentiality, secure storage of transcripts and recordings.

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Figure 1. Research process flow: The process map shows the main stages of the research: research design, data collection (data analysis through document analysis, semi-structured interviews, and classroom observations), data analysis (thematic coding and triangulation), ethical considerations, and integration of findings that were consistent with the principles of the curriculum developed by Tyler.

Results

The paper has looked at how the principles of the Tyler curriculum are applied in geography education in junior high schools in Azerbaijan through the triangulation of documents, interviews, and classroom observations. Results show that there is partial correspondence between the official curriculum structure and practice in the classroom, with a wide disparity in teacher readiness, availability of resources, and assessment practices.

1. Document Analysis

It was the analysis of the National Basic Education Curriculum (2022) that Azerbaijan had officially accepted some of the principles of Tyler. Learning objectives are clearly presented and competency-based, and the curriculum

emphasizes the need to focus on student-centered methods and the incorporation of critical thinking. There were, however, gaps between classroom implementation and policy-level intentions.

Table 2. Summary of Findings on Tyler’s Curriculum Principles in Azerbaijan’s Geography Education

Data Source Key Findings

Document Analysis - National Basic Education Curriculum (2022) aligns with Tyler’s principles by emphasizing competency-based, student-centered learning.

- Clear learning objectives exist, but limited flexibility for teacher adaptation.
- Assessment relies heavily on traditional written exams, with limited critical thinking evaluation.
- Digital tools (GIS, Earth Observation) are officially encouraged but unevenly implemented across schools.

Teacher Interviews - Teachers recognize Tyler’s framework (objectives, structured teaching, assessment).

- Implementation challenges due to rigid curriculum guidelines.
- Insufficient professional development in student-centered and inquiry-based pedagogy.
- Lack of digital resources limits interactive teaching.
- Assessment practices emphasize rote memorization over analytical skills.

Classroom Observations - Mixed application of Tyler’s principles: some teachers adopt student-centered, problem-solving approaches, while others rely on lectures.

- Traditional assessment (written exams) dominates, while project-based and oral assessments are scarce.
- Evidence of well-defined learning objectives, but weak support for critical thinking and practical application.

Table 2. Summary of findings from document analysis, teacher interviews, and classroom observations on the implementation of Tyler’s curriculum principles in Azerbaijan’s geography education.

Table 2. Classroom Practices Observed in Relation to Tyler’s Principles

Dimension	Observed Practices	Alignment with Tyler’s Principles
Teaching Approach	Mix of lecture-based instruction and limited student-centered activities.	Partial – clear objectives visible, but active learning inconsistent.
Student Engagement	Some interactive discussions and problem-solving tasks, but passive learning prevalent.	Partial – opportunities for inquiry underdeveloped.
Technology Use	Minimal integration of GIS, digital maps, or geospatial tools.	Weak – technological goals not met due to infrastructure deficits.
Assessment Methods	Predominantly written exams; few project-based or oral assessments.	Weak – evaluation remains rote-focused, not competency-driven.

Resource Utilization	Heavy reliance on textbooks and outdated visual aids.	Weak – limited use of diverse learning resources.
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Although the curriculum focuses on the structured goals, it gives very few opportunities to teachers to customize learning experiences to the needs of different students. Evaluation is still predominated by traditional and examination-based methods, where memorization is a common practice as compared to analytical reasoning. Though the curriculum suggests the integration of digital devices like Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and Earth Observation technology, there was evidence that it was not widely adopted in schools. The technology is not uniformly implemented across many institutions because most institutions do not have the infrastructure or training to meaningfully implement the tools.

2. Teacher Interviews

Through interviews with 12 secondary school geography teachers, more insight into issues of implementation was gained. Teachers opined that they were conscious of the framework of Tyler, especially the significance of integrating goals, instructional plans, and assessment schemes. However, the majority of educators emphasized the inflexibility of curriculum prescriptions as one of the factors that restricted their capacity to encourage inquiry-based or student-centered practices.

One such theme was the lack of long-term professional development. The teachers complained about the lack of training in modern pedagogical methods and the lack of access to online geography tools. Although teachers recognised the importance of competency-based and interactive education, most of them were limited by the poor training and insufficient technological resources. Another hot spot area was assessment. Educators realized the necessity to develop critical thinking, but were forced to focus on the exam-based training because of the systematic dependence on the standardized tests. This led to a conflict between the mentioned objectives of the curriculum and the realities of the classroom setting, which caused an imbalance between the purposes of teaching and assessment structures.

3. Classroom Observations

Surveys of three secondary schools showed a significant difference in the practice of the principles proposed by Tyler. There were teacher demonstrations with student-centered approaches that included the use of discussion-based learning, problem-solving assignments, and minimal project assignments. Some were relying on the conventional lecture-based approach, which in turn strengthened memorization and active listening.

There was a low level of integration of technology. The GIS applications and mapping software were not commonly used in observed lessons, although they were supported by the policy of using digital resources. Schools that were better equipped in infrastructure sometimes utilized electronic maps or web content, but the majority used old textbooks and stagnant images.

Evaluation was also conventional. Written tests prevailed, and other forms of assessment, including projects, oral, or application-based tests, were few. Such dependency on traditional forms of testing limited students in terms of proving their abilities to think on a higher level and measure geographic concepts, solving real-life issues.

Synthesis of Findings

In all three sources of data, the same pattern was observed: although the principles of the curriculum were clearly presented in policy documents, the practices were incomplete and disjointed. The teachers had theoretical knowledge and were not adequately trained, had no resources, and had no institutional support to implement the use of student-centered and technology-enhanced teaching methods. The classroom practice thus took the form of the hybrid model, which had clear objectives but, in most cases, was compromised by the conventional pedagogies and strict assessment frameworks.

These results imply that Azerbaijan has a geography system education in its transition phase. Though the national curriculum has officially adopted competency-based and student-centered reforms that follow the Tyler paradigm, structural obstacles, including inadequate infrastructure, lack of teacher training, and cultural biases of examinations, do not allow the practicality of these ideals in classrooms.

Table 3. Classroom Practices Observed in Relation to Tyler’s Principles

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Technology Use	Minimal integration of GIS, digital maps, or geospatial tools.	Weak – technological goals not met due to infrastructure deficits.
Assessment Methods	Predominantly written exams; few project-based or oral assessments.	Weak – evaluation remains rote-focused, not competency-driven.
Resource Utilization	Heavy reliance on textbooks and outdated visual aids.	Weak – limited use of diverse learning resources.

Table 3 outlines classroom-level practices, indicating partial conformity with Tyler’s curriculum principles but revealing major gaps in technology use, assessment diversity, and resource integration.

Discussion

This paper emphasizes the strengths and shortcomings of applying the principles of the Tyler curriculum to the Azerbaijan education system in geography. The findings indicate that although the curriculum on paper fits in the framework of Tyler, as it uses competency-based goals and student-centered orientations, there are major discrepancies when it comes to practical implementation in the classroom. The lack of alignment between planned design and classroom reality is not exclusive to Azerbaijan but a reflection of greater problems in post-Soviet

education systems, in which the strict structures and examination-focused practice are often prioritized over creativity in pedagogy.

The disjuncture between what the curriculum is supposed to be and what is actually being practiced is the dilemma outlined by Stenhouse, who cautioned that hard-lined objective-driven models might have a deleterious impact on the pedagogical discretion. This was supported by teachers in this study who reported that their curriculum restrictions did not allow them to use student-centered strategies despite their awareness of their importance. This means that although the Tyler model is a valuable tool that can be used as a guiding tool, it needs to be adapted to the context, not to become too prescriptive.

Another important dimension turned out to be digital literacy. Even though curriculum documents highlight the importance of GIS tools and digital resources, their application in the classroom is also underdeveloped because of the infrastructural shortage and lack of professional development. This result echoes the argument by Goodchild and Li that modern geography education has to incorporate real-life content and digital technologies to be relevant. The advantages of digital innovation in geography education will be underutilised without investments in teacher training and infrastructure.

Another misalignment is in the practices of assessment. Tyler was a proponent of the evaluation techniques that measure the ability to think at a higher level, but the fact-based testing prevalent in Azerbaijan goes against this goal. The classroom observations and the teachers affirmed that memorization is given priority instead of problem solving, inquiry-based learning or critical thinking. This trend is similar to regional trends in post-Soviet educational settings, where examination-oriented traditions prevail despite the policy changes to competency-based education.

The results also highlight the prime place of teachers in the implementation of the curriculum. The profession continues to be underdeveloped, with a lot of teachers not being sufficiently trained in inquiry-based learning or digital learning. This is consistent with previous literature that has identified a major cause of curriculum reform failure as insufficient teacher preparation and support. Reforms may be hollow rather than effective without an investment in professional capacity in a systematic way.

On a more general level, the study highlights one major learning point by education policymakers: curriculum design cannot be successful without infrastructure, teacher training, and reform assessment to bring about any meaningful change. In the case of Azerbaijan, it involves a more holistic one that balances the principles of Tyler with the flexibility of progressive educators such as Stenhouse. This kind of integration would allow geography education not only to pass on factual knowledge but also to develop critical thinking, spatial reasoning, and problem-solving skills, without which students cannot be equipped to negotiate the global problems of the modern day.

Table 4. Comparative alignment of Tyler’s curriculum principles with Azerbaijan’s geography education practices

Tyler’s Principle	Intended Curriculum (Policy)	Observed Classroom Practices	Key Barriers Identified
Defining clear objectives	Competency-based, student-centered objectives	Objectives often reduced to exam preparation	Rigid standards, exam-driven system
Selecting learning experiences	Emphasis on interactive, inquiry-based methods	Traditional lectures dominate	Teacher training gaps, limited resources
Organizing learning activities	Curriculum structured around progressive approaches	Implementation inconsistent across schools	Lack of flexibility, administrative pressures
Evaluation of outcomes	Encourages higher-order thinking and problem-solving	Standardized exams focus on factual recall	Assessment reforms not yet aligned

Table 4 Comparative analysis of Tyler’s curriculum principles and their practical implementation in Azerbaijan’s geography education.

Gap between Curriculum Design and Classroom Implementation in Azerbaijan's geography education

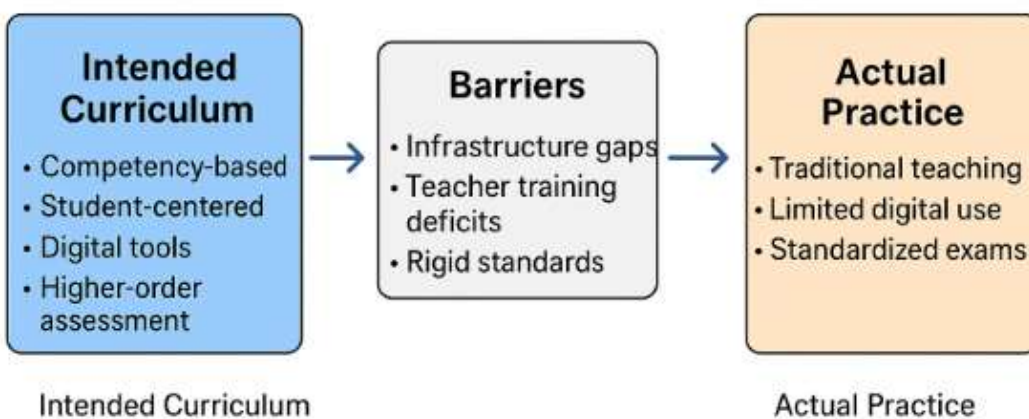


Figure2. Conceptual model illustrating the gap between intended curriculum design based on Tyler’s principles and actual classroom practices in Azerbaijan’s geography education system.

Conclusion

This paper has explored the shift of the Azerbaijan geography curriculum from its traditional teacher-focused model to a competency-based, student-focused model, and its analysis in terms of the principles of designing a curriculum by Tyler. The results prove that though the national curriculum officially follows the model of Tyler, it has articulated the learning goals, systematically structured the content, and introduced the aspects of digital and inquiry-based learning, the implementation in the classroom still indicates the structural and institutional barriers. Although

policy-level reforms have taken place, the teaching practices are still highly shaped by the Soviet traditions of rote memorization, strict standardization, and teacher-centered education. The absence of wider adoption of digital technologies like GIS and Earth Observation Systems proves that the lack of infrastructural support and insufficient training of teachers is still an obstacle. This can also be likened to the assessment practices, which are still mainly exam-based, and a gap exists between desired competence-based outcomes and the performance of the student. Such a discrepancy inhibits the development of critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills that are fundamental in the modern geography curriculum. These difficulties can only be dealt with through holistic policy and pedagogical interventions. The improvement of professional development should first include training teachers in student-focused and modern pedagogical methods and digital technologies. Second, there should be an investment in infrastructure that will facilitate impartial access to technology in schools and, therefore, the implication of the curriculum focus on interactive and inquiry-based learning. Third, the assessment systems should be redesigned to provide a balance between factual knowledge and analytical and application-based evaluation systems that are more outcome-based, as Tyler suggests. Lastly, longitudinal and comparative methods should be used in the future to monitor the implementation of curriculum changes over time and to compare the progress that Azerbaijan is making against other post-Soviet education systems that are in the same transition. With a focus on systemic barriers and capitalizing on the structured framework offered by Tyler, Azerbaijan will be able to improve the quality and relevance of its geography teaching by making sure that students will be more equipped to survive in the complexities of an interconnected and rapidly changing world.

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