

The Need for Analyzing Culture in Planning Curriculum

Woube Kassaye, Ph. D*

Abstract: The need for considering cultural elements in the curriculum has been an important issue in many countries. Even though, there is a will to consider culture in the curriculum, the way how it should be put into practice is one of the bottlenecks. Obviously, cultural consideration in curriculum requires a theoretical framework. To do so, reviewing curriculum practices and theories/models in relation to a particular culture of a country is very helpful for better understanding and action. Hence, the purpose of this article is to review the practices of planning curriculum particularly in relation to culture and come up with some suggestions and recommendations that take in to account cultural elements in a curriculum. In this study, qualitative study particularly literature review and personal experiences were used. The findings indicate that although emphasis is given for culture, there is no systematic way of incorporating it in the curriculum. Furthermore, there is a lack of common understanding on the concept of culture and selection criteria among curriculum developers. The main body of this article includes concepts of culture, Curriculum planning, Cultural analysis and practices of this analysis to plan curriculum in Ethiopia.

Concepts of Culture

Culture which consists of many related modes is complex and is constantly undergoing reconstruction (Unruh's, 1975: 143). The term is used almost as frequently as the term 'education' and with little precise meaning (Schofield, 1972). Williams (1976: 76-7 in Lawton, 1984) considers culture as one of the most complicated words in the English language because it has come to be applied for important concepts in several distinct intellectual disciplines as well as in several distinct systems of thought.

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people's individual experience (This refers to crude symbolic forms, gesture and mime); b) conventions of usage developed through interaction within social groups and c) systems of beliefs, values and actions. Culture could be explained through semiotic approach meaning that it focuses on the process by which patterns of meaning and significance in people's lives are developed, selected, bounded and coded.

Different definitions about culture have been provided by various authors. The classic definition of culture comes from the nineteenth century anthropologist (E. B. Tylor in 1871). Taylor defines culture as a complex whole that includes knowledge, belief, art, moral, law, custom and other capabilities acquired by man as a member of a society. After the emergence of this definition quite a number of definitions have been appeared, for instance at one time in 1952 Kroeber and Kluckhohn identified 164 alternative definitions of the concept. According to Smith (2001: 2-3) although there was a great deal of overlap among the various definitions identified by Kroeber and Kluckhohn, culture could be categorized into six major understandings: *descriptive, historical, normative, psychological, structural, and genetic*. (1) *Descriptive definitions* tend to see culture as a comprehensive totality making up the sum of social life and listing the various fields that make up a culture. (2) *Historical definitions* emphasize culture as a heritage which is passed on over time through the generations. (3) *Normative definitions* view culture in two ways i.e. as a rule or way of life that shaped patterns of concrete behaviour and action, as well as a role of values without reference to behaviour. (4) *Psychological definitions* emphasize that the role of culture is to serve as a problem solving device, allow people to communicate, learn, or fulfill material and emotional needs. (5) *Structural definitions* focus on the organizational interrelation of culture and highlight the fact that culture is an abstraction which is different from concrete behaviour. (6) *Genetic definitions explain* culture in terms of how it came to exist or continue existing. In other words, culture is explained as arising from human interaction and continuing to exist as a product of an intergenerational transmission.

Cultural analysis is explained differently by different authors. Smith et al. (1957), for instance, classified culture into three elements (*Universal*, *Special* and *Alternative cultural elements*) for their analysis. *Universal cultural elements* emphasis on those cultural elements accepted by all members of the society i.e. conventions about language, conduct, work, dress etc. *Special cultural elements* (or 'sub cultures') focus on vocational skills -- in farming, in industry, etc. -- and also on the customs and expertise vested in particular social groupings, such as folk culture, youth culture, 'high' culture. *Alternative cultural elements* focus on ways of thinking and exercising the elements divergently from the practice of recognized social groups, which often represent innovations and departures from *universal* and *special* cultures. The same authors believe that the well-being of both an individual and a community depends on the integration of these elements.

Berard (1999) also explains cultural analysis in terms of the conflict and the existential models. The conflict model which includes all the analyses considers culture, mainly, as a medium through which power is exercised and/or as a field of symbolic struggles, including Marxist and neo-Marxist theories of culture. On the other hand, the existential model which includes all the analyses views culture primarily as satisfying a universal human need for meaning and significance, as it has been reflected in Greetz's writings on culture, Weber's sociology of religion, and Schulz's sociological phenomenology. These are not the only competing models of culture. Cultural model (culturalism) is the other type which was advanced by Raymond William. William (1981) views culture, in its widest definition, as consisting of the structurally patterned ways of living', which is identifiable in institutional forms and behaviours everyday as well as in such more recognisably cultural forms as art, literature and music. Furthermore, individuals and groups -- or, more accurately, individuals in groups -- characteristically respond to culture and make meaningful the circumstances in which they are placed by virtue of their positions in a society and in a history (Bennet, 1981).

A model on cultural analysis focuses on the basis of the structure of feeling (the culture of a period i.e. the particular living result of all the elements in a general organization), where 'structure' operates in a most delicate and least tangible activity (Bennet, 1981). According to William (1981) the analysis of culture emphasises on the clarification of the meanings and values implicit and explicit in a particular way of life, and a specific culture which includes the historical criticism, in which intellectual and imaginative works are analysed in relation to particular traditions and societies. William (1981) concurs that it is certainly a mistake to suppose that values or art-works could be adequately studied without reference to a particular society.

Smith (2001: 3-4) reveals the four central points that the recent usage of culture revolves. First, culture is not only viewed in terms of the material, technological, social and structural elements. Since there may exist complex empirical relations among them, it is argued that it is necessary to understand culture as something that has distinctive form, and is more abstract than, an entire "way of life". Second, culture is understood as the realm of the ideal, the spiritual, and the non-material patterned sphere of beliefs, values, symbols, signs, and discourses. Third, its emphasis is placed on the "autonomy of culture" meaning that it cannot be explained as a mere reflection of underlying economic forces, distribution of powers, or social structural needs. Fourth, the study of culture is not only restricted to the Arts. It rather pervades all aspects and levels of social life. Furthermore, ideas of cultural superiority and inferiority play almost no role in the contemporary academic study.

Curriculum Planning and Cultural Analysis

It is argued that using an appropriate model (theoretical framework) for developing curriculum is crucial. A model or theoretical framework is part of a theory that is usually employed to explain a theory explicitly. Basically, theory could be defined as "a set of interrelated constructs, definitions, and propositions that present a systematic way of identifying relations among variables for the purpose of explaining

and predicting what may happen" (Unruh, 1975). Beauchamp (1981: 21-22) underlined that curriculum theorists need to think in terms of the precise activities they perform when theorizing. These include: a) the formulation of definitions, b) classification of relevant information into homogeneous categories, c) utilization of the inductive and deductive processes; d) making of inferences and predictions and testing of them in the crucible of research; e) developing models and f) forming of sub-theory.

Model building is usually considered as a process of theorizing. A model provides ways of representation, rules of inference, interpretation, and visualization (Fattu, 1965: 63-64 in Beauchamp 1981: 29). It is also viewed as analogies and construction. This is a way of representing a given phenomenon and their relationships (Beauchamp, 1981). Similarly, Quade (1968 in Hoos, 1972) defined model as 'a representation of reality which abstracts the features of the situation relevant to the question being studied.' To be specific, models are used to represent events and their interactions in a highly compact and illustrative manner so as to explain facts or events that are puzzling. They are essentially considered as patterns serving as guidelines to action (Oliva, 1988). The importance of a model for curriculum development includes (Unruh, 1975): a) aiding continual analysis, revision, and growth; b) relating complex decisions to one another and to force actions on schools; and c) applying in diverse situations and at all levels of curriculum development in the elementary and secondary schools. It directs curriculum developers towards thinking about the curriculum, and related factors. It also connects the approaches to the broader goal of education.

Ross (1942 in Schofield 1972: 112) indicated that culture is a gradual process to which many minds have contributed and each generation receives its culture from the previous generation and makes its own modification. The same author underlined that 'as the body of culture is increased, the task of education in transmitting it and securing conditions for its general enlargement continually grow more complex' (Ross, 1942 in Schofield, 1972). Culture can become *ad infinitum*

(without limit or forever), however, the problem only lies on selecting items from a culture to be considered in a curriculum (Schofield, 1972). Unruh (1975:144-145) indicated that the scope of available culture is almost limitless which involves societal conditions, academic discipline, professional knowledge about learning and educative processes, philosophical and value bases, future research, classroom, realities of the pluralistic ethnic backgrounds of the participants, and needs and desires. Lawton (1984), by comparing the simple and complex societies, underlined that any society has the 'problem' of transmitting its way of life, or 'culture', to the next generation. However, this is exceptional in simple societies because its transmission takes place easily and directly by a family or other 'face to face' interactions. Contrary to this, the accessibility of transmitting culture in complex societies is not as easy as the case in the traditional society for it mainly relies on formal education.

Lawton argued that curriculum planning should be based on a prior commitment to education as a process of transmitting culture from one generation to the next. Culture in this context is taken as everything that is man-made in society: tools and technology, language and literature, music and art, science and mathematics, attitudes and values - the whole way of life of a society. Pai (1990: 21) also forwarded similar definition of culture: culture is ... pattern of knowledge, skills, behaviors, attitudes and beliefs, as well as material artefacts, produced by a human society and transmitted from one generation to another. In other words, culture is the whole of humanity's intellectual, societal, technological, political, economical, moral, religious, and aesthetic accomplishments. Education is concerned with making available what is regarded as the most worthwhile elements of culture to the next generation though schools have limited time and resources to accommodate all. Hence, Lawton (1984) suggested that careful planning is imperative to ensure an appropriate selection. The selection should be neither arbitrary nor idiosyncratic from culture. Providing an opportunity for rational enquiry and justification is highly emphasized if one wants to consider culture in a curriculum.

Origins of the proposition regarding culture and curriculum development in the literature can be traced back to more than a century and are found in the writings of anthropologists, philosophers, psychologists, social scientists, and others (Unruh, 1975). Education is primarily aimed at improving individuals, and indirectly connected with improving the society. However, there is still much disagreement about how to translate the general educational purpose into curriculum (Lawton, 1984: 15).

Stenhouse (1967) stated that an immense store of written records and works of art (stored ideas) of the past allow us to bring 'the best that has been thought and said' into a dialogue with our contemporary culture; and it is of course a major role of the educational system to keep going this conversation of the past with the present.

Lawton (1984) stressed the need to develop a set of principles in order to plan a curriculum based on a reasonable or justifiable selection from a culture. He considered this process as a 'cultural analysis'.

The term cultural analysis may be used very loosely, both by those who simply wish to describe the relation between a society and its educational system, as well as by those who wish to prescribe certain necessary changes in curriculum (perhaps because education has lagged behind the 'needs of society', for example). What is nearly always lacking in discussions of curriculum, however, is any kind of systematic attempt to analyze the culture or cultures before a 'selection' is prescribed. What is often put forward as cultural analysis turns out to be no more than an individual, idiosyncratic judgment about the most important kinds of knowledge or the most worthwhile activities the schools ought to concentrate on (Lawton, 1984).

Another author Magendoz (1988) interpreted cultural analysis as a process of self-learning, growth, understanding meaningful content, consciousness, that is situated in the most profound roots of the

culture under analysis. Lawton (1984: 26) stated that a good deal of work by social anthropologists has been carried out in the field of cultural analysis. Although this is of considerable importance as a general background, very little can be applied directly to the task of cultural analysis for curriculum planning.

According to Lawton (1984), methods for cultural analysis could be classified into two. The first one focuses on checklists, tables, and elaborated systems of classification. The second concentrates on interpretations concerned with looking at the culture as a whole [in terms of qualitative elements]. Greetz (1973) stated that cultural analysis is more complicated and, much of it is at the level of description – semiotic. Similarly, Lawton (1984) stressed that the consideration of interpretative view of culture as essential since measurable features indicated by tables and checklists could lead to the risk of over-simplification if some one tries to reduce culture to these features. This, however, does not mean that tables and checklists have no importance.

Lawton (1984: 28) in his cultural analysis raised the following basic questions for the application of his model. a) What kind of society already exists? b) In what ways is it developing? c) How do its members appear to want it to develop? d) What kind of values and principles are involved in making decisions (c) what are the educational means of achievement? Furthermore, he raised the following issues that should get appropriate answers: the extent to which a school system already matches with the needs of a society, as well as the kinds of curriculum change that will be necessary to achieve certain kinds of changes. Lawton's (1984: 28) main considerations in the process of cultural analysis include:

- viewing culture as a historical as well as a contemporary process. In other words, an important aspect of analysis is not only to 'take a snapshot' of culture as it is now, but also to see how it has developed to that point.

- it is also necessary to look out for culture lag and curriculum inertia. Educational analysis, especially in rapidly changing societies for there is a powerful tendency for schools to lag behind other aspects of social and cultural change, become increasingly irrelevant for the curriculum.

Situational model which is developed by Shilbeck is connected with cultural analysis (Salia-Bao, 1989). The model emphasizes that curriculum planning should be developed for a particular context systematically. This links decisions to wider cultural and social considerations. In this model, cultural framework is emphasized to design and develop the curriculum, where it stipulates that teachers modify and transform pupil's experience through providing insights into cultural values, interpretative frameworks and symbolic systems. According to Shilbeck (1976) the Situational model consists of five major components a) Situational analysis, b) Goal formulation, c) Programme building, d) Interpretation and implementation, and e) Monitoring, assessment, feedback and reconsideration.

Lawton (1984) stressed that the essence of the cultural analysis approach is developing a method of matching the needs of individual children living in a specific society by means of a carefully planned curriculum. Beauchamp (1981), however, warned that it would be disastrous for curriculum planners to include in a curriculum all of the possible value concepts that might be identified in the culture. Thus, selectively including only those values that could have top priority or importance is highly recommended.

Lawton (1975) suggested five stages of curriculum planning. He considered them as a flow chart - a useful method of setting about the task of curriculum planning. The stages are: 1: Philosophical questions (cultural universals, a study of the essential similarities between all human societies); 2: Sociological question (cultural variables); 3: selection from the culture; 4: psychological questions and theories of learning, instruction, development etc, and; 5: curriculum organization (in stages, sequences etc.).The summaries of

the stages are as follows (see for details Lawton, 1972, 1975, 1986; Lawton (editor), 1986).

Stage one (philosophical questions) focuses on *Cultural invariants* (culture universals: a study of the essential similarities between all human societies). This stage assumes that all human beings appear to have something in common (the human universals and cultural invariants). Hence, the following eight main headings are points of consideration for analyzing cultures and cultural invariants to educational processes: 1) *Social structure/social system*; 2) *Economic system*; 3) *Communication system*, 4) *Rationality system*; 5) *Technology system*; 6) *Mortality system*; 7) *Belief system*; 8) *Aesthetic system*. The justification for these divisions in to eight systems is that "no anthropologist has yet found any group of people living in a society without all of these features". Lawton hypothesizes that all societies have ways of transmitting these systems from one generation to the next. If there are no other agencies that are better equipped to transmit culture with in a society, a satisfactory educational programme must pass on the essentials of the suggested systems.

A *cultural variable* (*a consideration of societal differences*) is the second stage in Lawton's model. It might be argued that the order of stage one and stage two could be reversed, i.e. the then practice of UK in education is likely to precede thinking about education in more general terms of cultural universals. This stage emphasises that it is necessary to move, temporarily, away from generalizations about all societies and to choose some descriptive examples from one society. Complex questions such as how and why the society has developed in that way i.e. the particular kinds of social changes are likely to have an impact in influencing education (technological changes, ideological changes, etc.). have to get answers. It is also underlined that during the course of this analysis, some important cultural contradictions which are important not only for social reasons, but also for educational and curricular implications will be detected.

The third stage concentrates on *Selection from culture*. Selection precedes once some of the following basic questions get answers: a) What are our aims? b) What do we mean by worthwhile?, c) What kind of pressures in society should we be influenced by?, and d) What situations will pupil be faced with when they leave school? In fact, the selection is based on criteria which can be made public even if total consensus is likely to be lacking. The selection may be ideal in the sense that it does not have to take into account either the limitations imposed by reality (such as shortage of teachers or equipment), or the means by which the selection from the culture is to be transmitted. It should mainly focus on identifying the 'gaps and mismatches' on the bases of the eight systems. Basically, the 'gaps and mismatches' concentrate on national issues, some of them are however more appropriately considered as part of school-based curriculum planning at school level. Stenhouse (1967) stressed that no curriculum development without teacher development, and, hence, detailed curriculum planning must be the responsibility of teachers themselves within a particular school. However, general principles or guidelines can be adopted as a basis for translating national guidelines into a working curriculum. Curriculum matrix analysis may be useful even if it is a time-consuming technique to identify 'gaps and mismatches'.

The fourth Stage has to bring into operation such as *psychological theories* as Piaget's work on stages of development, a Bruner's ideas about a theory of instruction, etc. Consideration of these factors would lead to the final stage of curriculum planning – Stage five.

Stage five concentrates on *curriculum organization in terms of stages, sequence etc.* Common culture curriculum (the publicly identifiable knowledge) should be interpreted widely and there should be planned timetable provision for interdisciplinary work. The school organization necessary to cope with this would be very different from the traditional subject-based structure. It is an integrated curriculum in the sense that it is carefully planned as a whole, not as a collection of disconnected 'subjects'.

Although the effort of Lawton in developing the model is appreciated, it can not escape criticisms. Magendoz (1988), a pro Lawton, taking the Latin America experiences, argued the model as useful though he criticized its shortcomings that include: i) there is a need to an important modification in the Latin American context which an inversion of the first two steps (cultural invariant, cultural variable) should be considered. The author goes on saying, "[I] am not proposing a semantic change, but rather a substantive and ideological one". ii) Lawton did not sufficiently stress the cultural heterogeneity of society - - the different cultural settings or subcultures particularly the Latin American countries. Similar criticism was forwarded by Donald (1991) on this issue. It is that cultural analysis should be undertaken in each subculture by the organized members of the subculture while a general cultural analysis is simultaneously done. Comparisons should be made in order to find similarities, common features and sub-cultural differences. The decentralized curriculum plan reflects aspects common to all as well as the differences – the commonalities and the disparities.

Magendoz (1988), on the modification and the application of the model, underlines two key points. First, a cultural analysis of Lawton is an interesting proposition that should be taken into consideration if changes in curriculum planning process are to be achieved in Latin America, although modifications regarding the model should be made. These include to: a) stimulate and include the participation of the members of a subculture in the cultural analysis process and in curriculum planning; b) organize the curriculum from the perspective of the cultural variables, and from these to introduce the cultural invariant; and c) dedicate the major effort to the analysis of the subculture. Secondly, the main constraints that restricted the application of the model in the Latin American context were specified by Magendoz (1988) as follows: a) a highly centralised curriculum-planning process regardless of the cultural heterogeneity of the society; b) curriculum planning on the basis of international models; c) elitism in the decision-making process about knowledge and regarding participation in curriculum planning; d) curriculum changes

undertaken under the form of structural and broad reforms within a political background; and e) lack of basic and applied research in curriculum and culture. The suggestions made by Magendoz (1988) to overcome the aforementioned problems (the necessary changes to be made) include: a) decentralisation of the curriculum planning process; b) a recognition of the cultural heterogeneity of the society; c) a specific approach to curriculum planning, d) a step-by-step approach, rather than a macro curriculum reform; and e) studies of the subculture and the curriculum on a micro scale.

The Practice of cultural analysis in planning curriculum in Ethiopia

Education is a socio-cultural process that takes place in a specific socio-cultural context implying that the relative worth of special goals and educative means are rooted in the social, cultural, political, and economic contexts in which people learn and educational institutions function' (Pai, 1990: 3). In other words, 'no part of the educative process, neither its contents nor its products, is free from cultural influence', there is no escape from this fact (Pai, 1990). In this process the role that curriculum plays is indispensable. As Montero-Sieburth (1992), underlines 'curriculum is not viewed as a separate entity that operates in isolation, but rather as one feature of educational processes that works in conjunction with the whole series of factors.' Similarly, Blakemore and Cooksey (1981) stress that "without considering the curriculum, studying education is like watching a race without knowing anything about the difficulty of the course, the nature of the hurdles or the aim of the competition."

The need for Ethiopianizing the curriculum has become a concern since the introduction of modern education in Ethiopia (Lillies, 1980 in Woube Kassaye, 2002). Ethiopia including other African countries is a cradle of man kind and many inventions. It has a vast range of cultural heritage. According to Elleni Tedla (1995) such cultural experiences and heritage are found and encoded in various forms i.e. symbols, rituals, design, artefacts, music, dance, proverbs, riddles,

poetry, architecture, technology, science and oral traditions. However, its inclusion in the curriculum is not easy. As Elleni Tedla (1995) stated 'though these [its inclusion in education] appear simple on the surface, it is not until one attempts to unravel the encoded philosophy or messages within them that one is struck by their profundity'.

There is a lack of clearly and precisely understanding the myriad ways that cultural factors influence the process of curriculum development, schooling, teaching and learning. Macdanield (1974), for instance, broken down the factor (sociocultural) into seven broad categories: demographics, technological, social innovation, cultural diffusion, ecological, information-idea shifts, and culture-value shifts. Pai (1990: v) stated that, 'more often than not, our insensitivity to and the lack of knowledge regarding the role of culture in education lead to unsound educational policies, ineffective school practices, and unfair assessment of learners'. The view that modern education has neglected the experiences and the needs of African society is acceptable by various authors. Ocitti (1994 in Woube Kassaye, 2002), for instance, writes the failure of African educators in conceiving education as part of the African culture include the following: i) education means schooling and anything outside the realm of schooling is not education, ii) the colonial distortion of [worthwhile cultural values of Africans], especially their valuable experiences are considered to comply with or pegged to the colonial interests, and iii) most of the frameworks considered in the publications are unfamiliar to professional educationists and educators to understand African education.

Elleni Tedla (1995) also noted that the educated elite (the determiners) who chose modern education in Africa were unprepared to foresee and minimize the resultant cultural clash, disruption of African life and alienation of the modern educated youth from its cultural heritage. She goes on saying that the determiners (elite) operate education on totally different system of values and philosophy of education rather than selectively borrow ideas and technologies

from everywhere and place them within their own cultural and conceptual framework. The other author Girma Amare (1973) states that implanting a foreign model without careful analysis is not only a useless exercise but also a dangerous one as well. That is why Salia-Bao (1989) emphasised that the basis for effective curriculum development is curriculum theorizing based on African culture and environment. The same author goes on saying that curriculum theorists must be involved in a serious of basic research on educational needs and practices. Hence, 'only then can Africa be truly independent educationally'.

Amare (1998: 4), discussing about the Ethiopian curriculum in relation to culture, argued that development strategies should incorporate the important variable-culture to attain development objectives. In relation to this issue Amare (1998) writes:

In the west, the content of the educational system was their culture-the totality of skills, knowledge, value, etc. These all are transferred from generation to generation through formal, non-formal and informal education. The new Ethiopian generation is over-burdened with the requirement of learning two cultures the imported and the domestic ones through the different i.e communication media. The result of attempting to learn all is to learn none.

According to Amare, culture must be the major content of curriculum, with a possibility of a synthesis with the imported one. The consideration of culture in the education has been indicated in the Education and Training Policy of Ethiopia (TGE, 1994) – promoting the culture of nation and nationalities. Although efforts have been made to realize the intent of the Policy, the consideration of cultural factors in curriculum development and its implementation is equivocal. In light of this Amare (1998) indicated that the implementation of "The Education and Training Policy (1994) -- which aims at making curriculum relevant by considering cultural factors -- will not, however, be as easy as the inherited curriculum which was developed on the model of modernization which requires a completely radical approach

to make operational the intent of cultural synthesis in curriculum development and implementation.

In the curriculum practice of Ethiopia, particularly at the Institute for Curriculum Development and Research (ICDR), the concept of theoretical framework or model is hardly known by curriculum designers (Feleke Desta, 1990; Woube Kassaye, 1993). Furthermore, in a study made recently, there is no common understanding on the concept of culture and its selection criteria among the designers at the ICDR, this in turn, could have an overall impact in achieving the objectives indicated in the Education and Training Policy (Woube Kassaye, 2004), although individual effort has been made by each designer.

Hence, it is indispensable to examine critically the role of culture in human life in general and curriculum planning in particular in order to understand and control the educative process. Furthermore, developing a theoretical framework that incorporates cultural issues in the curriculum undertakings is so significant. With this in mind, Woube Kassaye (2002) in his study has come up with a method of cultural analysis for planning the curriculum. The theoretical framework or the model developed by the same author consists of four main stages: 1st phase: Identification of the importance of the particular cultural element towards education; 2nd phase: Selection of the core messages that have significance from the cultural elements; 3rd phase: Organization of the selected cultural elements; 4th phase: Evaluation. Among the four stages, the first two were most considered in his study. Woube's (2002) study could be taken as a new dimension in a curriculum development that could be applicable in other cultural elements such as arts, history, language, science etc. in different cultural settings. However, it requires further study.

Conclusion

Although the role of education for mankind is indisputable, there is still much disagreement about how to translate the general educational

purpose into curriculum. This depends on various factors such as determining an appropriate curriculum approach and selecting or adopting curriculum approach. Each approach emanates from a different assumption, having its own merits and demerits. Thus, an approach chosen influences various educational activities such as instructional strategies, roles of teachers and learners, curriculum materials, and evaluation strategies etc. Selecting the necessary approach is a highly professional task that demands competence in understanding the various approaches and the values embedded in them. Depending on the political preference, economic development, technological advancement, educational development etc. each country determines its own curriculum approach that fits the system either systematically or haphazardly.

Understanding the different perspective in cultural analysis with particular emphasis on curriculum is vital in order to come up with workable model that incorporates cultural issues in the curriculum. Culture entails highly subjective connotations, despite in common every day use. Although the importance of culture is acknowledged, the problem lies on how to select the cultural elements and incorporate into the curriculum. As the body of culture increases, its transmission becomes complex implying that selection of cultural elements is also challenging. This requires a careful analysis. Sociologists and educators have suggested various cultural analyses. Denis Lawton, for instance, based on the cultural settings of UK, developed a curriculum model based on cultural analysis. Magendoz argued that Lawton's model could be applied in some countries particularly in Latin America with some modifications. Attempts have been made to develop a method of cultural analysis in Ethiopia (See Woube, 2001). However, such an attempt requires further verification and experimentation in order to become viable or valid. To sum up, since the emphasis given for cultural studies is little, academics, educators, curriculum developers etc. who have a depth knowledge and experience in the field and, institutions which are involved in curriculum undertakings should give due consideration for this noble task.

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