Dimensions of Curriculum Development in the Era of Globalization

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Abstract: Presently there is an increasing interaction between the international communities in different aspects of social life. Moreover, with the tremendous development in modern communications and information technologies, knowledge and culture can be shared across the world. It is evident that globalization has caused wide range of changes. It is a new reality, an economic, political and socio-cultural phenomenon which has an increasing impact on the way enterprises function whether at the local or global level. Like other spheres of life globalization has also influenced the educational phenomenon to a great extent. It has revolutionized teaching-learning process along with the introduction of new fields of learning. The present study aims at determining the preferred dimensions of curriculum development in developing countries. In an email based survey through purposive sampling the university teacher educators from Bangladesh, India, Iran and Pakistan were asked to rate their preferences for curriculum development from the provided list of 10 preferences. The study revealed that the new curricula have to address the technical, vocational and peace education, ethical and religious harmony among the nations, elimination of gender inequality, transfer and absorption of cultures and promotion of social interaction among the nations.

Keywords: curriculum development, globalization, skill oriented, job professionals

Introduction

Because of globalization people now need more innovative thinking skills, cultural awareness, higher-order cognitive skills, and sophisticated communication and collaboration skills than ever before (Powell, 2004). But, it is the education which can help them to become effective and productive citizens in the prevailing era of globalization.

In fact globalization is an emerging phenomenon. It has been defined as "a set of processes by which the world is rapidly being integrated into one economic space via increased international trade, the internationalization of production and financial markets;

the internationalization of a commodity culture promoted by an increasingly networked global telecommunication system" (Graham, 1996). Globalization is a new reality, an economic, political and socio-cultural phenomenon which has an increasing impact on the way enterprises function whether at the local or global level. Globalization is also a hotly debated subject with its myriad of globalization supporters and opponents. Education being a social process can not be set aside from the social influences.

Therefore, globalization has affected the process of education to a great extent. It has brought a revolution in the process of teaching and learning along with the introduction of new fields of learning. As a result of the globalization there is a need to make the citizens of a state familiar with the different spheres of life along with there new demands and requirements.

Moreover, change is the law of life. And those who look only to the past or to the present are likely to miss the future. Therefore, it is necessary to handle the change due to globalization in a positive manner so that this change can be a productive agent in the developing countries. Hence, the creation of an educational system capable of preparing people to live in the changing world is one of the crucial tasks of modern society (Kinelev, 2000).

As far as the field of education concerns globalization is expected to have a positive influence on the volume, quality and spread of knowledge through increased interaction among the various states. In a globalized world, as technology becomes its main motor, knowledge assumes a powerful role in production, making its possession essential for nations if they are successfully to pursue economic growth and competitiveness (Stromquist, 2000). Education, being the most potent instrument of creation, assimilation and transmission of knowledge, assumes a central role in the process.

According to Azad (2003) it appears as though the phenomenon of globalization will mean many different things for education. Most certainly, in the near future, it will mean a more competitive and deregulated educational system modelled after free market but with more pressure on it to assure that the next generation of workers is prepared for some amorphous job market of 21st century. It will also mean… that educational system will increasingly provide the sites of struggle over the meaning and power of national

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identity and a national culture. And finally, schools will no doubt also be the sites of various counter-hegemonic movements and pedagogies (Wells, et al., 1998).

That is why Waters (2007) stresses that the curriculum should be treasured. There should be real pride in curriculum: the learning that the nation has decided should set before its young a marvellous future. Teachers, parents, the wider education community, the employment community, the media and the public at large should all see the curriculum as something that they embrace, support and celebrate. Most of all, young people should relish the opportunity for discovery and achievement that the curriculum offers to them. Therefore, for the students of the globalization influenced society, following requirements are regarded important:

  i.   Global Awareness
 ii.   Financial, Economic and Business Literacy
iii.   Civic Literacy
 iv.   Health and Wellness Awareness
  v.   Information/Communication Processing
 vi.   Thinking and Problem Solving
vii.   Personal and Workplace Productivity Skills

Looking at the list above it can truly be said that nothing happens until there is vision. Vision paints the picture of what is desired in the future. According to Sang (2007) the vision must have the following aspects of globalization:

  i.   Global Competition
 ii.   Global Cooperation
iii.   Information Growth
 iv.   More Jobs & Careers
  v.   Service Economy

But, according to AASA (2008) preparation of kids will require following necessary skills to match the above mentioned indicators of the globalized world;
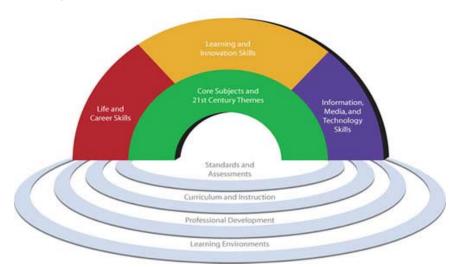
Global Competition:	● Global Awareness
	● Self-Direction
Global Cooperation:	● Global Awareness
	● Collaboration
	● Information & Communication Technology (ICT) Literacy
Information Growth:	● Information Literacy
	● Critical Thinking
	● Problem Solving
More Jobs & Careers:	● Critical Thinking & Problem Solving
	● Innovation & Improvement
	● Flexibility & Adaptability
Growing Service Economy:	● Communication Skills
	● Life and Career Awareness Skills

In the same way Pam (2009) consolidates the activities by adding certain more so that the educators can inculcate them in the future education

i.   Creativity and innovation

ii.   Critical thinking and problem solving

iii.   Communication and collaboration

iv.   Information, Communication, and Technology (ICT) literacy

v.   Life skills

vi.   Flexibility and adaptability

vii.   Initiative and self-direction

viii. Social and cross-cultural skills

ix.   Productivity and accountability

x.   Leadership and responsibility

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Therefore, in this situation curriculum ingredients, according to James (2004), should include;

i. Written exercises

ii. Individualized interpretations and feedback

iii. Modelling/vicarious opportunities

iv. Building support networks

v. Mastery experiences

vi. Verbal Persuasion

vii. Building social connections between youth, adults and peers

viii. Anxiety Management

With the help of these activities and the curriculum modifications the students can be prepared for the new era. Similarly, the framework for 21st century as described by www.21stcenturyskills.org reflects that not only the learning would be sufficient but there would be need of its practical application and utilization in every day life. The framework is;

In short, as states Azad, globalization has a wide ranging potential to influence all sectors of development. Besides its impact on the pace and pattern of economic development, it also casts its shadow on the system of education. It would therefore, be important to analyze its impact on the process and progress of education. The impact of globalization on education and the manner in

which the system should respond to the needs of globalization would require to be studied basically under two broad heads:

i.   The needed reforms within the educational system like content, equity and excellence etc. and

ii.   The fall out of globalization, which will entail determining strategies relating to the impending internationalization of education; finance related issues and privatization of secondary and higher education.

To review these aspects of the globalization and there relative influence on education the following methodology was adopted

Methodology

To determine the dimensions of the curriculum in the developing countries the survey method was preferred as Wiersma and Stephen (2005) state that survey is the best method to determine the needs and requirements of the people. It is also important that the relevant people can provide the first hand knowledge about the existing situation. In this study internet contact was used for survey instead of face to face or conventional methods. Email addresses of the concerned people were obtained and a simple type of questionnaire, rating scale, was mailed to them.

Sampling Technique

Purposive sampling was used as technique of sampling as the sample was spread over different countries. Purposive sampling is a way of getting representative members for the study in which the researchers select the sample according to their own convenience with some sort of similarities among the people to be selected (Gay, 2002). Hence four countries selected for the study were Bangladesh, India, Iran and Pakistan. These countries were selected because there exists almost similar circumstances. They possess a strict religious background with strong traditions in the customs and every day dealings.

Moreover, only the university teachers involved in teacher education having email addresses from four universities in each country were selected as sample. The teachers and their emails were obtained from the websites of the universities included in the study. The total number of such teachers were 277 and 194 of them responded to the

emails. A summary of the sample size and the responses received is given below

Table 1: Sample size and the percentage of responses

Sr. No.	Country Name	Sample Size	Responses	Response Rate
1	Bangladesh	74	46	62.16
2	India	89	65	73.03
3	Iran	43	30	69.77
4	Pakistan	71	53	74.64
	Total	277	194	70.04

Table shows that the highest response rate from Pakistan (74.64%) whereas, the Bangladeshi teacher educators' response was the lowest (62.16%). Likewise, Indian (73.03%) and Maldivian (69.77%) responses were enough to be considered significant for the validity of the survey.

Instrument

To determine the preferences of the selected teacher educators a rating scale was developed consisting of fifteen different dimensions of the education. In the tryout process 5 dimensions i.e. music education, physical education, inclusive education, distance and non formal education and virtual education, were eliminated from the preference list as the mean score for all of these was less than 2. Hence, the final list consisted of 10 preferences with 10 points rating scale ranging from 1 to 10. The respondents were asked to mark a preference number in front of each preference in the list to show their level of inclination towards it.

Data Collection

To collect data from the selected university teacher educators, the developed instrument was emailed with a request to reply within 10 days. In the first application a total of 103 (37.18%) teacher educators responded. Considering that the obtained responses were inadequate, the researcher re-requested the remaining teacher educators. On the second request 91 (32.51%) persons responded. A letter of acknowledgement was mailed to all the respondents.

Analysis of Data

Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used for calculations and analysis. To determine the preference of the university teacher educators the Mean Score for each country was separately calculated.

Results

The results of the study were quite astonishing in the perspective that even due to much emphasis on technology education and its wide range advertisement the preferences on the developing countries had not changed to a large extent. ICTs education is the fourth preference of the teacher educators (Mean Score 6.92) which is well behind the education of values and culture (Mean Score 7.45) and education for ethical and religious harmony (Mean Score 7.14). The technical and vocational education based upon the livelihood education was the first preference of the people in these countries (Mean Score 8.87). In the same way education for the transfer and absorption of cultures (Mean Score 5.38) and education for the promotion of social interaction (Mean Score 5.21) have got preference over the environmental education (Mean Score 4.83), peace education (Mean Score 4.59) and sex education (Mean Score 2.67). Education for the elimination of gender inequality (Mean Score 5.16) is also placed at the seventh place. A summary of the cumulative results is given below.

Table 2: List of preferences of the respondents of all the four countries

Sr. No.	Major in Curriculum	Mean Score
1	Technical and vocational education (livelihood based education)	8.87
2	Education of values and culture	7.45
3	Education for ethical and religious harmony	7.14
4	ICTs education	6.92
5	Education for the transfer and absorption of cultures	5.38
6	Education for the promotion of social interaction	5.21
7	Education for the elimination of gender inequality	5.16
8	Environmental education	4.83
9	Peace education	4.59
10	Sex education	2.67

The responses of the participants from Bangladesh showed the same preference but slight changes and shuffling in the results were observed in the responses of Iranian, Indian and Pakistani respondents. For example, in India ICTs education (Mean Score 8.92) was given much importance than the religious (Mean Score 8.76) and environmental education (Mean Score 6.54) and the promotion of social interaction (Mean Score 5.68). In the same way sex education (Mean Score 5.16) is rated higher in India as compared to other countries. The further shuffling is given in the table below.

Table 3: List of preferences of the Indian respondents

Sr. No.	Major in Curriculum	Mean Score
1	Technical and vocational education (livelihood based education)	9.15
2	ICTs education	8.92
3	Education for ethical and religious harmony	8.76
4	Education of values and culture	7.71
5	Environmental education	6.54
6	Education for the promotion of social interaction	5.68
7	Sex education	5.16

8	Education for the elimination of gender inequality	4.62
9	Education for the transfer and absorption of cultures	4.53
10	Peace education	2.10

But in the Pakistani perspectives the religious education (Mean Score 8.19) and the education of values (Mean Score 8.14) is given preference over the ICTs education (Mean Score 7.98). Moreover, environmental education (Mean Score 6.08) is preferred over the education of culture (Mean Score 4.82) and the elimination of gender education (Mean Score 4.96). The peace education (Mean Score 3.23) and sex education (Mean Score 2.52) remains at the last. Picture of the preferences of Pakistani respondents is shown in the table below

Table 4: List of preferences of the Pakistani respondents

Sr. No.	Major in Curriculum	Mean Score
1	Technical and vocational education (livelihood based education)	9.45
2	Education for ethical and religious harmony	8.19
3	Education of values and culture	8.14
4	ICTs education	7.98
5	Education for the promotion of social interaction	6.17
6	Environmental education	6.08
7	Education for the elimination of gender inequality	4.96
8	Education for the transfer and absorption of cultures	4.82
9	Peace education	3.23
10	Sex education	2.52

In the Iranian perspectives peace education (Mean Score 7.11) is rated much higher as compared to the other countries. Similar is the case with environmental education (Mean Score 6.49). But, sex education is at the bottom. The detailed description is shown in the below table.

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Table 5: List of preferences of the Iranian respondents

Sr. No.	Major in Curriculum	Mean Score
1	Technical and vocational education (livelihood based education)	9.02
2	Education for ethical and religious harmony	8.15
3	Education of values and culture	8.06
4	ICTs education	8.01
5	Peace education	7.11
6	Environmental education	6.49
7	Education for the promotion of social interaction	5.28
8	Education for the transfer and absorption of cultures	5.12
9	Education for the elimination of gender inequality	4.33
10	Sex education	2.01

Discussion

As Maslo (1956) stated that the fulfillment of basic needs dominates the other aspects of social life; the same results are evident from the study. Earning and struggle for livelihood are more hectic and evidence in the poor states as compared to the rich ones Ram and Chuhan (2004). So the people of the developed countries preferred that the curriculum of there states should include such aspects that can support their earning and can make the people skills oriented and job professionals. It is the reason that technical and vocational education got much importance. Education of the religion and culture is preferred because there are sound religious roots in these states and even the religious institutions have a distinctive and distinguished status in the society and are considered sacred. All of these countries are men e women folk is also happy at being at home and fed and looked after by their men counterparts. (Amin, 2007) therefore they do not consider that the gender inequality is of much importance. Issues like peace education, sex education and environmental education have not yet even been conceived by the governments of these countries Shafi (2007) that is why they are given as importance as it has achieved in the developed states Robert (2008).

But as viewed by Mardis and Perrault (2008) curriculum content alone is not sufficient preparation for children to function effectively as learners, citizens, and

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workers. It is the teacher who has to play a leading role in guiding the students about the ways and techniques to survive in the era of globalization. Moreover, the society has also an important role, especially the parents, to enable the new generation for surviving in the rapidly changing horizons of every day life and its relative demands.

Limitations of the Study

The study was conducted in the countries where the religion and culture well dominates over other indicators of social life and moreover, these countries are not technologically advanced. Therefore the results can not match with the studies conducted in secular or technologically advanced states. In the same way the study reflects the views of the teacher educators and it is possible that the people from other professions have their own choices.

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