An Analysis of Curriculum Development

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Abstract—**This work aims at exploring the social and educational forces that impact any curriculum. It also provides an overview about how culture, ethnicity, linguistics, politics, economy, and history have impacted the curriculum in Ecuador in the past and today. The educational forces that intervene in the development of the curriculum in Ecuador are also discussed. Likewise, detailed information about the needs of the curriculum and the people who intervene in the curriculum development in Ecuador as well as in other contexts is also addressed. Finally, the set of steps to follow within the curriculum development process are explained.**

Index Terms—**social forces that impact curriculum, educational forces, needs of the curriculum, curriculum developers, curriculum development process, Ecuador, Ecuadorian curriculum**

I. INTRODUCTION

Curriculum development is a broad and complex process. But, what is curriculum exactly? Several are the answers provided to this question. For instance, Bobbit (1918) in Angulo (1994) defined curriculum in two ways. The first is as the range of experiences directed to develop skills in the individuals. The other one is as the series of training experiences that schools utilize to complete and perfect that development. Following this line, Tyler (1949) in Portuondo (1997) assured that curriculum is all the learning experiences planned and directed by the school to reach the school's educational goals. Similarly, Arrieta (1995) in Angulo (1994) defined curriculum as the series of things that children and teenagers have to perform and experience to develop abilities that would form them to decide upon issues in their life as adults. Being more specific, Taba (1974) in Montoya (1997) stated that in essence, curriculum is a learning plan. This learning plan, according to Taba (1962) in Portuondo (1997) is composed by several elements which include the establishment of goals and objectives, selection and organization of content, implication of learning and teaching patterns, and a results evaluation program.

Eisner (1979) contributed to this topic claiming that there are three types of curriculum. These are the explicit curriculum, implicit curriculum, and null curriculum. As reported by Eisner (1979), explicit curriculum refers to the aspects that are well-defined to be taught within a school, district, or nationwide. This type of curriculum includes the learning objectives, the subjects to be taught, academic content that should be taught within those subjects, the texts, the planning model, or any other required materials that support teachers to have students gain the knowledge and skills they are supposed to gain based on the standards or learning objectives that guide certain subject area. Explicit curriculum is public. Examples of this type of curriculum are the curriculum menu that a school offers to the students. The subjects that are taught in that particular school as well as the learning goals such as teaching children to read and write, to figure, and to learn something about the history of a country.

Implicit curriculum, on the other hand, refers to the set of moral values, classroom structure, classroom environment, class rewards, in-class competitiveness, classroom or school rules as well as the traditions, political, religious, or social aspects that frame the school mission and influence the way teachers teach and how students have to be treated based on a teaching pedagogy (Eisner, 1979). It also includes the way a subject is valued within a school. As an example to this type of curriculum, Eisner (1979) stated that some school districts provide a differential credit system for students who are enrolled in courses in different tracks within the school curriculum. A student who is in the highest track is given more credit for a grade than a student who receives the same credit in a lower track.

Finally, the null curriculum refers to the subject or content areas that should be taught in school but they are not taught as well as to what should not be taught but is taught (Eisner, 1979). Examples of this type of curriculum are those subjects that are taught by mere teacher interest or specialization such as law, anthropology, the arts, communications, and economics.

Knowing what curriculum is and what types of curriculum exist is just a little piece of this broad topic. Curriculum development entails much more than that. Throughout this paper, an overview about the social and educational forces that impact curriculum as well as an overview about the social forces that have impacted the curriculum in Ecuador is provided. Furthermore, detailed information about the needs of the curriculum and the people who intervene in the curriculum development in Ecuador as well as in other contexts is also addressed. Likewise, the set of steps to follow within the curriculum development process are explained. In the following section, an overview about some of the social forces that impact the curriculum is provided.

II. SOCIAL FORCES THAT IMPACT CURRICULUM

Several are the factors that influence education throughout the globe. As time passes, what is taught to the citizens in a country depends on the changes and advances of a particular generation and philosophic currents that dominate the population of that country in that particular time. All the factors influencing the curriculum of a nation are influenced by social forces. Barbour and Barbour (2010) considered the population diversity, globalization, technology, and religious and spiritual variables as social forces impacting the curriculum of the twenty-first century. In addition, Tyler (2013) recognized two types of philosophical groups: the essentialists and the progressives. Essentialists considered cultural heritage as a factor to frame curriculum, on the other hand, progressives such as Tyler himself valued contemporary life issues as well as social, political, and economic problems as forces that would impact curriculum (Tyler, 2013).

A. Culture, Ethnicity, Linguistics, and History as Social Forces Impacting the Ecuadorian Curriculum

Culture is a strong social factor that has influenced and continues influencing education all over the world. For instance, cultural and ethnicity mixture, as a result of immigration, in the United States has impacted the education of that country throughout the years. As stated in Barbour and Barbour (2010), such changes have implied that legislation and judicial modifications like the civil rights legislation be conducted and as a result, group minorities and immigrants be accepted within the educational system of the nation.

Ecuador is a multicultural country filled with a wide diversity of ethnic groups and linguistic variety. Accordingly, among the ethnic groups found in Ecuador one can see white-mestizos, fourteen indigenous nationalities, nineteen peoples that belong to the Kichua indigenous nationality, and afro-Ecuadorians (Actores del Sistema de Educacion Intercultural Bilingue, 2013; Conejo, 2008; Mejeant, 2011; Ministerio de Cultura del Ecuador, 2007; Raimundo & Robayo, 2013). These groups are throughout the country. The awas, tsatchilas, chachis, huancavilcas, afro-Ecuadorians, mantas, and epera in the coast region; the mountain quichuas and another group of afro-Ecuadorians in the highlands; and, the cofanes, secoyas, sionas, huaoranis, amazon quichuas, zaparos, achuars, and shuars in the amazon region (Conejo, 2008; Mejeant, 2011; Raimundo & Robayo, 2013). Due to this ethnic diversity, the Ecuadorian culture is also widely varied. As a consequence, even though Spanish is the main language spoken in Ecuador, there is a broad linguistic variation as well. Therefore, other languages such as the Tsafiqui, Awapit, Epera Pedede, Cha'palaa, Kichwa, Shuar Chicham, Achuar, Paicoca, A'ingae, Kayapi, Waotededo, and nine varieties of Quichua, are spoken in this country (Mejeant, 2011; Raimundo & Robayo, 2013).

This mixture of culture, ethnicity, and language plays a fundamental role within the Ecuadorian curriculum. So much so that over the years, there has been an increasing interest led by Ecuadorian indigenous movements together with government forces to make changes within the Ecuadorian educational system so that the cultural rights of indigenous people are taken into account in educational matters. An example of this interest was the application of the Modelo del Sistema de Educacion Intercultural Bilingue -Ecuadorian Model for Intercultural Bilingual Education, also known as MOSEIB by its acronym in Spanish- which was launched in 1993 as discussed in Actores del Sistema de Educacion Intercultural Bilingue (2013), Conejo (2008), and Oviedo and Wildemeersch (2008).

The Bilingual Model for Intercultural Education was led by the Confederacion de Nacionalidades Indigenas del Ecuador - Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador also known as CONAIE by its acronym in Spanish- with the purpose of promoting the recovery of cultures and indigenous languages of the indigenous peoples of Ecuador (Conejo, 2008; Oviedo & Wildemeersch, 2008). As stated in Actores del Sistema de Educacion Intercultural Bilingue (2013), Acuerdo No. 020-12 (2012), Conejo (2008), and Oviedo & Wildemeersch (2008), this would be achieved by providing indigenous people an education through the use of their native language and practices in order to reinforce the culture and language of those groups. As a result of this cultural recognition, Ecuadorian education was divided into two educational systems -a Hispanic and an indigenous educational system- to cover the interests of both Hispanic and indigenous people of the nation (Oviedo & Wildemeersch, 2008).

Based on the MOSEIB, today Ecuadorian education offers one single educational system model which is the Educación Intercultural Bilingue- Intercultural Bilingual Education also known as EIB. The EIB entails the Sistema de Educación Intercultural Bilingue – Intercultural Bilingual Education System also known as SEIB- as a subsystem of this model for indigenous peoples of Ecuador as well as the Intercultural subsystem -previously known as Hispanic- for the rest of the population (Actores del Sistema de Educacion Intercultural Bilingue, 2013; Aguerrondo, Crespo, Robalino & Van Damme, 2013; Consejo Nacional de Educacion, 2007; El circuito educativo, n.d.). Accordingly, the curriculum of the EIB is made up by the national curriculum -which is applied to the intercultural subsystem- and the bilingual intercultural education curriculum as stated in the Article 87 of the Ley Orgánica de Educación Intercultural – Organic Law of Intercultural Education (Ley Orgánica de Educación Intercultural, 2011).

The EIB is framed under the policies of the Plan Nacional del Buen Vivir -National Plan for Good Living- and the Plan Decenal de Educacion – Ten Year Education Plan- (Actores del Sistema de Educacion Intercultural Bilingue, 2013; Aguerrondo et al., 2013). As indicated in Aguerrondo et al. (2013), Luna (2009) as well as in Consejo Nacional de Educacion (2007), through Ecuador's *Ten Year Education Plan,* the Ministry of Education proposed a model of management which focuses on eight policies as a means to reach and fulfill educational priorities. Among its policies, this model promotes the improvement of the quality of Ecuadorian education. As a consequence, the Ecuadorian curriculum for General Basic Education and Baccalaureate have been strengthen and updated as a strategy to reach this improvement. Besides other points, the current Ecuadorian curriculum includes values and topics that aim at disseminating the Ecuadorian culture, pluricultural, and multiethnic identity through the integration and application the

curricular axes as well as, regardless of the region, the inclusion of students with any linguistic or cultural background in the educational establishments of the nation (Actores del Sistema de Educacion Intercultural Bilingue, 2013; Aguerrondo et al., 2013; Consejo Nacional de Educacion, 2007; Cortijo et al., 2010).

As it can be deduced and as stated by Aristizabal et al., (2005), from the cultural perspective, curriculum approaches may pretend that the curriculum have has an absolute focus in a determined culture or that a culture characteristics be internalized in certain way within the curriculum.

B. Politics, Economy, and History as Social Forces Impacting the Ecuadorian Curriculum

Political ideologies play an impacting role within the curriculum development of a country. Policies concerning educational matters are directly influenced by politics and the ideology of politicians (Bigham & Ray, 2012; Levin, 2007; Petrina, 2004; Primrose & Alexander, 2013). For instance, for curriculum development, the analisys of policies applied to education matters must be conducted (Levin, 2007). The political ideology of a political party that rules a nation in a period of time can put more emphasis on education than others. This can be seen in the amount of resources a particular government has invested in education as well as the changes that that government proposes for that area through different proposals, projects, agreements, programs, and others. A government may work on setting up an education model or may promote programs within the educational system of its country, however, that can be considered of little value, useless, or unimportant from the analysis, interests, points of view, and new policies of the next government. As a consequence, a deletion or change in those programs and education models can occur.

In Ecuador, the president Gabriel Garcia Moreno demonstrated an increasing interest on transforming the Ecuadorian education system during his terms (1861-1865 and 1869-1875). Garcia Moreno incorporated religious European pedagogical models within the Ecuadorian educational system and invested a lot in the public education of Ecuador (Davila, 2010; Gabriel Garcia Moreno, n.d.; Vargas, 2005). After Garcia's presidential mandate, political ideologies of the country changed with the following governments. A few years later, the Ecuadorian education started to suffer due to the political instability of the country as a consequence of economic changes, technological advances and globalization. Ecuador was not ready for it. As stated by Nuñez (2014) and MOE UE (2007), a brief example of this instability is the government disaster during 1997 and 2007, as it was the first time in Ecuadorian history when Ecuador had had eight presidents in one decade.

The lack of investment within the educational public sector brought with it a series of embarrassing occurrences such as strikes (during the 80's and the 90's) led by the National Union of Ecuadorian Educators –UNE- who were fighting for their rights regarding, among others, delays in their salary payments (Lucas, 2000; Fretes-Cibils, Giugale, & Lopez-Calix, 2003). These events created a chaotic image of public education in Ecuador. During those strikes, schools were closed, streets were closed and blocked nationwide as well, and teachers would not go to work for weeks, and several times for months (Lucas, 2000; Fretes-Cibils, Giugale, & Lopez-Calix, 2003). As a result, students finished their elementary, high school, and university instruction having received a short time of instruction.

Ecuadorian education has changed today. With the election of Rafael Correa Delgado in 2006 as the president of Ecuador (Cheresky et al., 2007; "Ganó Correa", 2006; MOE UE, 2007; Recalde, 2007; TSE, 2006). Correa started his mandate in January, 2007 ("Evaluación del primer año", 2008; Peregil, 2013) and since then Ecuador has experienced numerous changes. For instance, education has been one of the fields that Rafael Correa proposed to boost. As a consequence, the investment in education has increased in the last nine years (Concejo Nacional de Educacion, 2007; "La inversión en educación", 2014; Presidencia, 2013; Redacción Política, 2014). A new reform for the law of education of Ecuador which is part of the legal framework for education as well as a new management model have been elaborated (Ministerio de Educacion del Ecuador, 2012). In addition, new curriculums, new schools, technology integration, culture consideration, teacher training, and districts creations are just a few examples of the changes in education Ecuador is going through today as it can be seen in Ecuador's *Ten Year Education Plan* (Aguerrondo et al., 2013; Consejo Nacional de Educacion, 2007; Luna, 2009; Ministerio de Educacion del Ecuador, 2012).

Regarding English, in 1992, under the term of the president Sixto Duran Ballen the Ministry of Education and Culture and the British Council signed an agreement to create the Foreign Language Administration of Ecuador (Chuisaca & Paucar, 2010; Haboud, 2009; The CRADLE Project, Ecuador, n.d.). This agreement drove the CRADLE (Curriculum Reform Aimed at the Development of the Learning of English) project with the intention of "grant[ing] secondary students a firm basis in the handling of English, and thus offer them a starting point for their future. Development of the four skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing communicatively is attempted through a series of books adapted to the Ecuadorian reality" (Haboud, 2009, p. 66).

Currently, President Rafael Correa Delgado has an expectation for students in public institutions to receive an education of quality; therefore, English teaching and learning has experienced an enormous change. The CRADLE project has been put aside and a new English program named *Advance* has entered into functionality in the Ecuadorian public schools since 2012. With this change, other changes such as the creation of new curriculum standards aligned with the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages have occurred (Ministerio de Educacion, 2012; Fortalecimiento de Inglés, n.d.). Furthermore, the utilization of new books which would promote the communicative approach have been adopted (Fortalecimiento de Inglés, n.d.).

Also, as a part of this new restructure process, in service-English teachers of Ecuadorian public schools have gone through an intensive evaluation process, which unfortunately demonstrated that their level of English was not adequate

enough to provide instruction in this language (Correa, 2012; "Desde el 28 de Julio", 2012; "Docentes que imparten ingles", 2012; "Explican el fortalecimiento", 2014). As a solution to this problem, professional development programs for English teachers are being promoted as established in the standards for English teachers (Equipo tecnico de Proyecto de Ingles, 2012; Fortalecimiento de Inglés, n.d.). Accordingly, English teachers have been receiving training to improve their English and pedagogical strategies through the *Go Teacher* program ("Adenda Modificatoria al Convenio", 2013; "Convenio de Cooperacion Interinstitucional", 2012; Correa, 2012; "Desde el 28 de Julio", 2012 "Explican el fortalecimiento", 2014; Redaccion Sociedad, 2014) in different universities throughout the United States. The expectations are that public high school students really learn English and that by the end their secondary educational instruction, their English level will be aligned to the CEFR B1 English level (Equipo tecnico de Proyecto de Ingles, 2012; Villalba & Rosero, 2012).

As it has been discussed, some of the social forces that have impacted the Ecuadorian curriculum are the culture, ethnicity, linguistics, politics, history, and economy. However, there are other forces that are part of the changes of the curriculum as well. These are the educational forces, which will be discussed in the following section of this paper.

III. EDUCATIONAL FORCES THAT IMPACT CURRICULUM

Among the educational forces impacting the curriculum, Tyler (2013) considered the students themselves, the society, and the subject specialists. In addition to those agents, he also considered the school's philosophy, the psychology of learning and the teachers themselves as agents that impact curriculum.

Historically, education has been marked by different philosophical currents. Dewey (1997) constrasted two of the strongest educational philosophies that have prodominated througout the history of education: traditional and progressive education. According to Dewey (1997), traditional education emphasized the continuation of a pattern of oppression and imposition where the students were to be obedient and passive receptors. Within the philosophy of traditional education, students had to follow rules and learn what they were imposed to learn for the benefit of society not of themselves as individuals. The philosophy of this type of education maintained that what the teacher taught was the only thing that mattered, all the students were to have the same skills and knowledge. Consequently, students learned what was imposed in the books or what the teachers knew and their experiences or interests were not considered at all. In addition, students were only trained for the present, grounded on the thought that future would not bring any changes that might require them to be reasoning people (Dewey, 1997).

On the other hand, Dewey (1997) stated that the purpose of progressive education is to educate students to be individually free. The philosophy of progressive education supported the idea that the learning experience must be meaningful to the students as individuals. What students bring to class does matter and learning gives students the opportunity to develop new skills day to day. Finally, students are allowed to express themselves and fostered to become reasoning persons. Within this type of education, the ideology that teachers are not the only ones who bring knowledge to the class predominates (Dewey, 1997).

Other philosophical currents based on clinical psychology are cognitivism and costructivism. Cognitivsm, as described by Soler (2006), is a theory of learning that describes knowledge acquisition and processing as a mental activity tha requires the internal modification of the learner. This modifcation leads to a posterior estructuration and organization of the knowledge in different complexity levels.

Constructivism, as claimed by Carretero (1997, 2009), is an inner construction of the individual itself. This construction is produced by the interaction of the individual's cognitive, social, and affective aspects day to day (Carretero, 2005, 2009; Ordoñez, 2004-2006). Moreover, Gomez & Salvador (1994) stated that the knowledge construction process is a restructure and resconstruction process by which any type of knowledge is generated from the individual's previous knowledge. In other words, the new knowledge is built upon what has already been learned.

The Ecuadorian Context

Previously, education in Ecuador as in many other countries, followed the traditional model of education. Today, on the other hand, the Ecuadorian educational model has its foundations on the critical pedagogy on which the constructivist and cognitive methodological structures predominate, as stated by Cortijo et al., (2010). By following this philosophical model, the Ministry of Education promotes a model of education by which the students are expected to receive a productive and meaningful learning so that they can achieve metacognition. To achieve the metacognition, students are intended to work on processes such as reading comprehension, ordering ideas, comparing and contrasting, summarizing, conceptualizing, experimenting, problem solving, defend their ideology, among others (Cortijo et al., 2010).

Besides the theories/philosophies of education, there exist other educational forces that impact the curriculum in Ecuador. These forces refer to the agents of change who are in charge of elaborating or modifying the Ecuadorian curriculum. In Ecuador, it is the responsibility of the Deputy Ministry of Educational Basis (Subsecretaria de Fundamentos Educativos) to propose policies and standards to improve the Ecuadorian curriculum (Acuerdo No. 020-12, 2012)-This will be explained in more detail in the section about curriculum developers.

Apart from what the Deputy Minister of Educational Basis proposes as part of the Ecuadorian curriculum, teachers also have the power and responsibility to modify and adapt the curriculum for their specific groups of students when

they plan for their classes. As stated by Dewey (1938, 1997) and Tyler (2013), teachers can modify the curriculum by choosing learning objectives according to the needs and interests of especific groups of students in order to provide positive learning experiences that will ensure the students knowledge acquisition within certain subject area.

In order to take decisions about the curriculum, it is important that teachers have a teaching philosophy. By having a teaching philosophy, teachers are able to decide how to approach the curriculum inside their classrooms. More importantly, they are able to shape their instruction design, implementation, and evaluation according to what they believe is better for their students (Tyler, 2013). Their philosophy guides them to be confident on the work they do and to work for the benefit of their students in the context they are teaching. Finally, their philosophy helps them not to become followers of what superior authorities think is correct to do in the classrooms nationwide since authorities do not know the reality of every school or classroom context.

Besides the social and educational forces that impact a curriculum, there are other factors to considere when elaborating a curriculum. These factors deal with the needs that influence the curriculum. In the following section, a discussion about the needs of the curriculum is provided.

IV. NEEDS OF THE CURRICULUM

Both, Dewey (1938, 1997) and Tyler (2013) highlighted the need of learning experiences as part of the curriculum. These authors explained that experience plays an important role within the learning process of students. In order to do this, curriculum-developers should focus their interests on the students' needs and interests (Seaman & Nelsen, 2011). Teachers are responsible to provide students with positive experiences so that they feel passionate and be willing to continue studying and discovering new things. Bad experiences inside the classrooms may negatively influence the students desire to continue studying (Dewey, 1938, 1997; Tyler, 2013). For this reason, learning experiences must be meticulously planned and teachers are to think outside the box when choosing methods and materials to deliver their instruction so that they can give their students an opportunity to learn something meaningful and valuable for their life.

Furthermore, experience must be continuous. By referring to the continuity principle, every experience is followed by more experiences and it is the educator's role to make those experiences meaningful for the students so that they can go back to them and take them as a positive reference to new learning (Dewey, 1997; Seaman & Nelsen, 2011; Tyler, 2013). Moreover, it is important to bear in mind that within the new model of education, the teaching-learning process is not grounded on what the teacher wants. In this model of education, the students' interests matter and the classroom is seen as a community. Students and teacher make up a community where every individual is important and everyone is responsible for something and works collaboratively to the benefit of the group as a whole. As opposite to traditional education, the teacher is not the center of the class or the knowledge source anymore to whom the students have to obey and only memorize what he said, instead, he becomes part of the learning community as a leader of the activities the students develop (Dewey, 1997 and Tyler, 2013).

The experiences that have been explained by Tyler (2013) and Dewey (1997) refer to the objectives that shape any curriculum as they are the foundations that guide the curriculum development. In an attempt to compare and provide a clear scope about some of the most relevant curriculum models that have impacted the history of curriculum development, Oliva (2005) detailed Tyler's, Taba's, and Saylor, Alexander, and Lewis' curriculum models as well as his own curriculum model. Regardless of one's use of an inductive or deductive approach to curriculum development, all these curriculum models share similar characteristics that take the students, society, and the subject matter itself into account in the process of curriculum development. Moreover, they are prescriptive models which show in detail the design (studies of the individual, society, and the subject itself), instructional (selection of learning experiences), and evaluation (selection of methods and strategies to evaluate the learning experiences) phases of curriculum development Oliva (2005). Also, each of these models make reference to the need of a philosophy to shape the curriculum development at a macro, meso, and micro level Oliva (2005).

The Ecuadorian Context

In reference to Ecuador, I strongly believe that the Ecuadorian curriculum should be shaped according to Tyler's expanded model for several reasons. First, Tyler's expanded model considers the students, society, and the subject matter itself as the main source for developing general teaching/learning objectives. Also, it requires curriculum developers to consider the school philosophy as an important factor to weigh up the objectives that apply to the values of each particular school as well as knowledge about educational psychology and human growth and development to identify which learning objectives are appropriate to each group of students in a general form. Unfortunately, in Ecuador the school philosophy is not taken into account at the moment of developing curriculum objectives at the meso-level as the schools only follow what is imposed by the government authorities.

Additionally, within Tyler's expanded model, teachers or curriculum developers are given the power to create precise instructional objectives that will allow them to select, organize, direct, and evaluate the learning experiences students are to receive according to their philosophy of teaching. Once again, many Ecuadorian teachers only follow what superior authorities impose to them. Regularly, they only focus on covering the content and do not pay much attention to what their students need. Here, a focus on differentiated instruction to fulfill the students' needs and interests is necessary.

Furthermore, the aforementioned factors and steps are relevant as curriculum development should go through a funnel process which would serve as a means to sieve what is important for the students from general to specific. To me, bearing in mind the students' interests and needs, society aspects at local and general level as well as the importance of a subject itself plays the main role to create a general picture of what a curriculum would look like at a bigger level and from which the curriculum developer can refer back to create a curriculum that would adapt to his specific setting.

Adapting the learning objectives to the school philosophy is also important as students attending each particular school would learn what the school wants them to learn according to their values. Also, knowledge about psychology and human and growth development helps the curriculum developer to know what learning objectives would be appropriate to the students' development level-not too easy nor too complex. Finally, giving teachers the power to become responsible for their instruction by selecting, organizing, directing, and evaluating the learning experiences students are to receive, provide them the chance to accommodate their instruction to their classroom reality as well as to decide what is good or bad for each particular group of students. This ensures that they can reach the objectives proposed. In this context, teachers would not be rule followers but creators, innovators, and most importantly, researchers.

After having identified the social and educational forces that impact curriculum as well as the common needs of the curriculum worldwide, it is important to provide an overview about those agents who participate in the development of the curriculum. The next section provides information about curriculum makers/developers to understand who the persons involved in developing the curriculum in Ecuador are.

V. CURRICULUM DEVELOPERS

Curriculum developers are the persons in charged of making decisions about what has to be taught within the curriculum of a subject or subjects. Oliva (2005) stated that there are several people who intervene in the development of the curriculum of the United States. The development of the curriculum in this country passes through a process of decision making at different power levels. Consequently, curriculum developers in the United States are people who work and belong to different entities such as the state, the school district, individual school, team/grade/department, and the classroom itself. In additon, Tyler (2013) claimed that within the curriculum development or curriculum reconstruction in a school, the teachers or the whole school staff members participate in the process, consequently, they become in the curriculum developers in those cases.

The Ecuadorian Context

According to the Acuerdo No. 020-12 (2012), the Subsecretaria de Fundamentos Educativos (Deputy Ministry of Educational Basis) is in charge of proposing policies and standards that would improve the Ecuadorian curriculum and as a result, the improvement of the quality of the educational service in Ecuador. Even though the Deputy Minister of Educational Basis is in charge of this process, there are other agents that influence this process as indicated in the organizational organigram structured (for more information, see Acuerdo No. 020-12) to indicate the departments existing within the Ministry of Education entity.

To the head of this responsibility is the Ministry of Education of Ecuador followed by the Viceministry of Education. After this agent is the Deputy Ministry of Educational Basis who is preceding other departments such as the National Curriculum Director, the National Educational Investigation Direction, and the National Educational Standards Director respectively. In addition, under the direction of the National Curriculum director, other subagents are found. These agents are the curriculum especialist, curriculum analist 1, and the curriculum analist 2. All these agents are in charge of developing, modifying and evaluating the ecuadorian curriculum at a macro level.

Once all the government agents stated above have made choices about what to include and expect from the curriculum nationwide, at a meso level, it is the school which is in charge of adapting the curriculum by choosing learning objectives that are in accordance with its philosophy as well as a psychology of learning. However, according to my experience, this is not frequently done within the Ecuadorian educational context, as schools solely follow what is already dictated by superior authorities.

Following Tyler's model, the teacher is the agent who takes the role as a curriculum-maker at a micro level as he is in charge of modifying and adapting the curriculum for his classes. According to Tyler (2013), this modification is performed by choosing learning objectives in accordance with the needs and interests of especific groups of students in order to provide positive learning experiences that will ensure the students knowledge acquisition within certain subject area. From my perspective, as educational forces that impact curriculum in Ecuador, not all ecuadorian teachers have been devoted to this role as the many of them just focus on covering the content and complete the course plan they are supose to cover within a school year term. Accordingly, many teachers still follow the one-size-fits-all ideology and do not adapt their lessons the needs or interests of their students.

As a matter of fact, it is at this micro level where a teaching philosophy plays an crucial role as the teachers are the ones who decide how to approach the curriculum inside their classrooms. By establishing a teaching philosophy, teachers shape their instruction design, implementation, and evaluation according to what they believe is better for their students. Also, they plan their instruction reflectively in order to achieve the learning experiences they want for their students (Dewey, 1938, 1997; Tyler, 2013). If teachers believe in certain philosophy, they will apply it in their

classroom and frame what they do for the benefit of their students. Consequently, they will not only do what superior authorities think is correct to do in the classrooms nationwide as they are not aware of the reality of every school or classroom context.

As all the needs, social, and educational forces that impact the curriculum are identified, it is time to apply these aspects within an actual curriculum plan. In the next section, a detailed step by step explanation of the process of curriculum development is provided.

VI. Curriculum Development Process

Curriculum development process refers to the "improvement, change or modification on already existing educational programmes" due to the fact that curriculum development is a changeable variable (Primrose & Alexander, 2013, p. 58). In order to develop a curriculum plan, several steps are considered. Morales (2014) stated that curriculum developers should plan, implement, and evaluate the curriculum as part of curriculum development. Futhermore, she also claimed that within that process, there is a set of steps to follow. No matter what curriculum model developers choose, they will experience similar steps, though the order may differ. Morales (2014) refered to the steps that are detailed below as part of the curriculum process/cycle that curriculum developers should follow in order to develop a curriculum for any subject.

A. Establish Aims

Considering these steps, the curriculum developers should begin by establishing the aims of a particular subject curriculum. In other words, establish what the curriculum attempts or intends to reach since as stated by Oliva (2005), the aims are general expectations to achieve within a curriculum program. Besides this, Primrose and Alexander (2013) also stated that the aims should cover "the effort and resources provided by the department(s) concerned to enable students to meet these levels of achievement" (p. 57). For Tyler (2013) and Dewey (1938), these aims should be grounded on the philosophy of the curriculum developers as well as on the educational philosophy of the institution the curriculum is going to be applied. Regarding this point, Tyler (2013) stated that the school philosophy may include ideas about a good society or the purpose of the school in terms of citizens' preparation. Consequently, the aims have to be aligned to what the school's beliefs and values are in regards to what is better for the students as implied or stated in its philosophy.

B. Select a Model

The second step is to select a model for curriculum development. A model, according to Oliva (2005), is usually a prescriptive set of phases, components, or principles that guide curriculum developers when elaborating a curriculum plan. Oliva (2005) stated that the most known curriculum developing models are Tyler's model, Taba's model, Saylor, Alexander, and Lewis' model, and Oliva's model. Regarding this step, curriculum developers normally select the model of curriculum development that is most aligned with their educational philosophy.

C. Define the Rationale

After that, curriculum-makers must to provide a rationale for their plan. Morales (2014) stated that the rationale states "reason and purpose for the particular discipline" (SLD. 2). Regarding this point, Tyler (2013) stated that curriculum developers have to deliberate about the contribution certain subject can make to the students as they might not intend to become specialist in certain subject area. So, they must state the importance and functionality of the subject or curriculum unit for the students they are going to teach.

D. Establish the Curriculum Goals and Objectives

Continuing with the process of the development of the curriculum, curriculum developers have to establish what they want the students to achieve within the curriculum. These are the overarching goals and objectives that guide the curriculum purpose. They are expected to be achieved at the end of a school year period. These goals and objectives have to pass through a validation process (Morales, 2014). The validation process as referred to Tyler's model are the philosophy of education and psychology of learning screens (Tyler, 2013). According to Tyler's model (Tyler, 2013), the philosophy of education will guide the curriculum developer to select goals or objectives that go along with the school beliefs and values. The psychology of learning will help the curriculum developer to distinguish changes in human beings that can be expected to result from a learning process from those that cannot, to distinguish goals that are feasible from those that are likely to take a very long time or are almost impossible of attainment at the age level contemplated as well as to conduct grade placement for objectives which are educationally attainable.

E. Identify the Needs of the Curriculum

Within the phases that curriculum developers have to fulfill when developing a curriculum, they have to identify the needs of the curriculum (Primrose & Alexander, 2013). Morales (2014) mentioned that these needs should be focused on the needs of the students, society, and the subject matter itself. In his model, Tayler (2013) specified that curriculum developers should begin their curriculum development process by studying the students, society, and the subject.

Within the study of the learners, as Tayler (2013) stated, the curriculum developers should identify needed changes in behavior patterns in the students for the school to produce them. They must also identify the students physical (need for food, water, etc), social (need for affection, belonging, etc), and integrative needs (need for a philosophy of life) to help them meet these needs with a personal and social significance. Also, curriculum developers should identify students' psychological needs (e.g. motivation) to help them meet those that are not met outside of school.

Regarding the society needs, curriculum developers should develop the curriculum so that they can guide students to develop knowledge and skills needed in contemporary life as it is complex, constantly changing, and requires a transfer of training (Tayler, 2013). Also, they should consider critical and important aspects of today as well as develop the curriculum to provide students meaningful learning experiences so that they can transfer their learning in real life situations that are similar to the situations in which the learning took place. Finally, they have to consider the needs of the subject itself and find out what contributions can certain subjects make for those people who will not become specialists in the field as well as find out what contributions can their subject make to other large educational functions (Tayler, 2013).

F. Establish the Instructional Goals and Objectives

Once the curriculum developer has identified the curriculum needs and curriculum goals and objectives, they have to establish the instructional goals and objectives. The instructional goals are the instructional targets and the instructional objectives are the behavior or outcome the learner is expected to at the end of a lesson. Again, these goals and objectives have to pass through the educational philosophy and psychology of learning screens for their validation process as stated in Tyler's model (Tyler, 2013).

G. Decide on Instructional Strategies and Approaches

After that, the curriculum developer must decide what instructional approaches or approaches will guide their curriculum plan regarding the instruction level. Regarding this phase, in his model, Tyler (2013) referred to the selection of learning experiences and the general principles and characteristics they must follow. According to Tyler (2013), the learning experiences must follow the following principles: they should give the students the opportunity to practice the kind of behavior implied in the objectives, be adequate so that students obtain satisfactions from developing the kind of behavior implied in the objectives, be appropriate to the students' range of possibilities in terms of attainment and predisposition, be adequate so that students obtain satisfactions from developing the kind of behavior implied in the objectives, and bring about several outcomes.

Besides those general principles, the learning experiences must have the following characteristics: they should develop skill in thinking: students apply inductive, deductive, and logical thinking by working on solving problem activities. They should be helpful in acquiring information: students develop understanding of particular things that will lead them to develop knowledge about various things. Finally, they should be helpful in developing social attitudes: students develop social attitudes through assimilation from the environment, the emotional effects of certain kinds of experiences, traumatic experiences, and through direct intellectual processes (Tayler, 2013). Bearing this in mind, curriculum developers should select strategies that would help them to achieve the goals and objectives through the enhancement of learning experiences that will provide the students a meaningful learning.

H. Assess the Instruction

The next step curriculum developers are to follow is the assessment of the instruction. Curriculum developers are to evaluate their instruction in order to find out whether the strategies and activities performed during the teaching instruction have achieved the desired learning objectives or goals proposed for the class. Within Tyler's model, the process of instruction evaluation follows some basic notions. These notions maintain that the evaluation should determine the degree to which the objectives are getting the desired behavior they are expected to get in the students. Consequently, the evaluation must assess the behavior of the students (Tayler, 2013). Tyler (2013) suggested that the evaluation should be conducted at the beginning and at the end of the instruction process in order to measure the changes developed in the students. Curriculum developers can evaluate the degree of objectives achievements through paper and pencil tests, observations, interviews, questionnaires, artifacts, records, and sampling.

I. Evaluate the Curriculum

Finally, curriculum developers are to evaluate the curriculum. By evaluating the curriculum, curriculum developers intend to find out whether the curriculum of a subject has covered what it was supposed to cover as well as whether it has provoked the results it was supposed to provoke, and more importantly, if it is aligned with the needs of contemporary life. These evaluation can be conducted by analyzing the results of the instructional evaluation and determine whether the curriculum is achieving its aims (Hussain, Hussain Dogar, Azeem, & Shakoor, 2011; Primrose &Alexander, 2013).

According to Tyler (2013), depending on the evaluation of the curriculum, sometimes schools rebuild their curriculum. Schools may construct a new instructional program or they may also reconstruct the whole curriculum. It orders to conduct a reconstruction of the curriculum, it is important to count with the participation of all the people who are part of that school (Tayler, 2013). Roles are assigned and every individual has to participate on the evaluation and

determination of the global needs (students, society, and subject needs), then they have to determine the institutional needs (school, whole school students' needs), and they finish with the classroom needs (specific group's needs) (Tayler, 2013). Besides these, they have to conduct a control process so that they can evaluate the instruction to find out whether the curriculum objectives are being fulfilled or not. Consequently, as stated by Tayler (2013), the evaluation of the curriculum is a cyclical process that is repeated over and over to determine if the curriculum covers what it is supposed to cover aligned with the needs of contemporary life.

VII. CONCLUSION

Curriculum development is not a simple and steady process. Instead, it is a complex, changing, and ongoing process that requires lots of analysis from curriculum developers. Therefore, curriculum developers have to consider many aspects when developing curriculum. They must analyze the social forces such as politics, economy, culture, history, technology, and religion as well as the educational forces. The educational forces include philosophers and their philosophical currents, the curriculum developer's philosophy as well as the students, society, and the subject itself that impact the curriculum in the time it is being developed. Also, they must have a broad understanding about the needs of the curriculum. These needs involve the society, students, and the subject's needs at a specific time as life and time advance.

Moreover, it is also relevant that they know who the persons that influence the development of any curriculum are as well as the level of power they have. Finally, knowledge about to plan, implement, and evaluate the curriculum and the steps that are part of that curriculum development process or cycle should be understood by the curriculum developers. In addition, curriculum development can be developed at different levels starting from the classroom to school, district, zone, and nation levels. Teachers themselves are curriculum developers when they plan their classes, they are developing curriculum.

To sum up, curriculum development is not an isolated process. It is developed at different levels and requires a great deal of knowledge regarding the variety of aspects that intervene in its process. Furthermore, curriculum cannot be developed by one single person. It is a cooperative group work. Consequently, in order to develop a curriculum it is necessary the particiaption of many people starting from the students, the community, subject specialists, school staff, and society in general as sources for curriculum development.

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