

# Consideration of culture in development of home economics curriculum in Nigeria

**Uloma Charity Oguzor**

Department of Home Economics, Federal College of Education, Omoku, Rivers State, Nigeria

E-mail address: ozycee24@gmail.com

## ABSTRACT

This paper tries to examine the consideration of culture in the development of Home Economics curriculum in Nigeria. The cultural element which the school draws from includes society's values, norms, religion, belief, languages, customs e.t.c and other attributes which are transmitted and local acquired. The role of culture in school should be appreciated particularly in Home Economics curriculum development which is practically oriented subject that deals with people's clothing, feeding, housekeeping, e.t.c. This will be a guide towards helping the teachers of the subject know how to deal students with cultural diversity.

**Keywords:** Home Economics; consideration of culture; students Nigeria

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The concept of culture and curriculum have come with various meaning and definitions by different authors. A synthesis of all these meaning will put them as embracing all the activities experienced by an individual learner under the supervision of the school. Home Economics curriculum thus refers to the group of courses or planned experiences in the proper sequence designed to prepare an individual for curriculum should neglect the following features:

- Aims, goals and objectives emanating from the needs of the people.
- Subject matter content
- Learning activities
- Evaluation

Since the above is the aim of curriculum and culture is about the way of life people therefore, culture should be considered for curriculum development to be success and an effective implementation. Curriculum has been viewed as the analysis and study of how schools are created, organized and made to function. The concept and the field of the curriculum therefore should not be limited to the purposes, content and method in educational process. Rather, it should be extended to examine those critical factors in the social-cultural, socio-politicals, social economic, and social ecological environment in which schooling takes place. Consequently, and by its nature, what constitutes the curriculum is a selection from the

culture of the society is a critical reflection on the peculiarities of the most stable values of the society, the dynamics of members of the society and portions of the society's cultural heritage that deserves to be propagated.

Culture-curriculum is better understood when conceptualized in a socio-culture context. In this way, one attempts to analyze and evaluate the schooling process against the influence of the numerous forces or factors in the social environment bearing in mind that the knowledge which the school transmits derives from sort of ideologists values, philosophies, beliefs and norms all of which are peculiar to various socio-cultural groups. Besides their inability, culture therefore, is the nucleus of curriculum in any society.

The cultural elements which the school draws from include the society's values, norms, religion, beliefs, taboos, tradition, language, music, customs, occupations, skills, arts, aesthetics and other attributes which are society transmitted and locally acquired including modes of problem solving. To this extent, there is nothing that the school teaches that does not have a base in that society.

While appreciating the role of culture as the source of school knowledge, it is important to recognize the fact that these cultural elements are not the same in all cultures, neither are they static within culture.

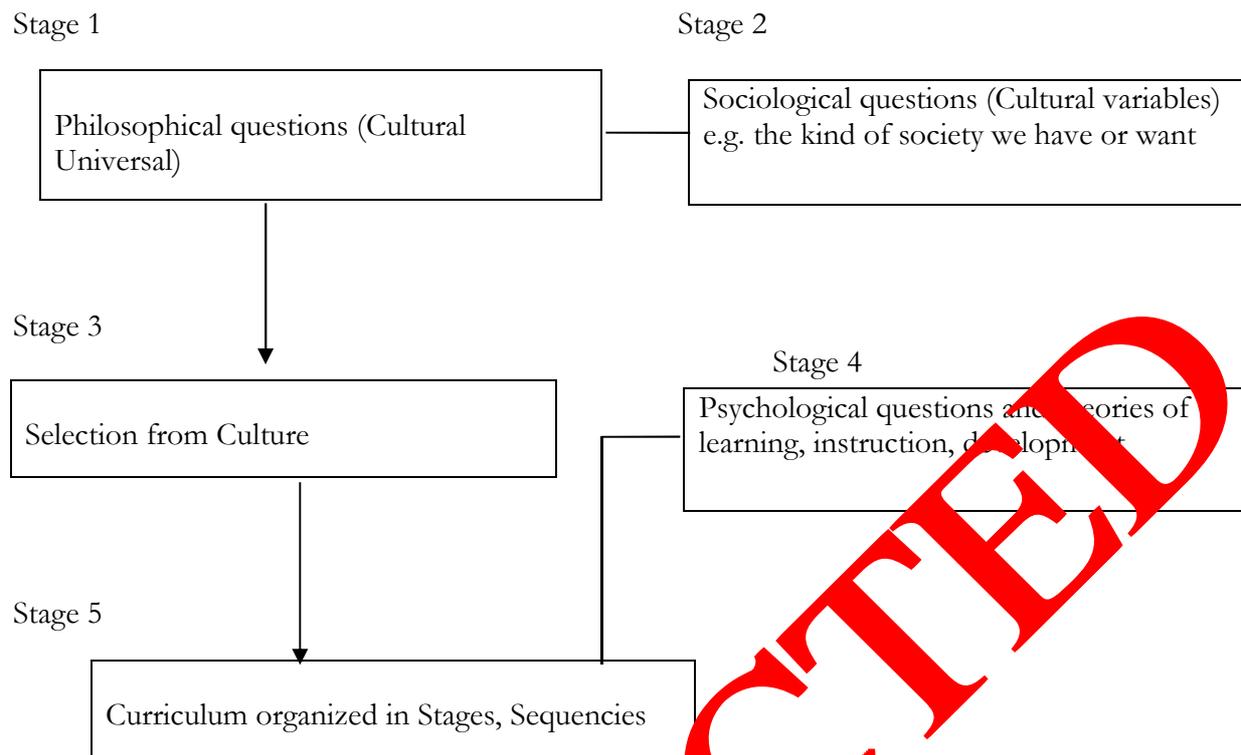
Culture differences among societies may account for some observed differences in Educational policies and practices in these systems. Since the curriculum cannot exist outside the socio-cultural environment, the curriculum planner/worker should be fully guided by a good knowledge of the culture of the society for which the curriculum is intended.

According to Urevbu, efforts will be largely wasted unless what we teach are relevant to the values of our culture and the resource at our disposal.

Drawing upon some of the theoretical ideas from Dennis Lawton's concept of common culture curriculum, some of the problems of planning Nigeria school curriculum, such as Nigeria school curriculum, such as Nigeria inability to evolve a philosophy of Education of her own, how to use education to preserve our diverse societal values: how to make judicious selection from the traditional Nigeria culture and from Anglo American values and resolving the conflict from the different between them, determine the extent to which psychological theories of learning are applicable to Nigeria children, and how to organise the curriculum in stages and sequences in order to achieve maximum psychological validity create a significant gap between the school curriculum and reality.

Society as the basis of educational process. It is the value system of the society that underlies the formulation of education purposes. Besides, the various aspects of the culture constitute diverse field of knowledge. Culture therefore produces the needed content for the curriculum. It selects the desirable and worthwhile aspect of the culture for propagation. Thus, the curriculum represents a continuous insight into the life of the society by the school with a view to bring about improvement.

The emphasis on aspects of the culture suggest that everything about the culture cannot fit in the school knowledge. It requires a selection. Lawton developed a model to elaborate on how curriculum planner could go about selecting from the culture of society. The model consists of five stages as illustrated below:



Thereafter, the educational implications of such experience are explicated and defined as educational purposes. Cultural universal is likely to cause serious problems in a societies such as Nigeria. An example could be drawn from the national language policy in Nigeria, which requires secondary schools to teach some of the practically oriented subjects such as home economics in the mother tongue of the students for example house, igbo, and yoruba.

Though the national policy on education provides a plausible justification for this in terms of promoting cultural heritage and national unity, critics are afraid of the political dangers of using the curriculum to legitimize the recognition, dominance of supremacy of three languages. Selection from the culture of the society as in stage three, is not an easy task even after all the philosophical and sociological question. If education is seen to preserve, transmit and reflect the cultural heritage of a society, then curriculum may be regarded as a structural series of learning experiences extended to individuals through education curriculum design, therefore, considered as a first and basic components needs of the society.

It is worthwhile to study society and see its problems, values and needs at any particular time. The students' interest, needs and level of development should be considered by the designer. Societal needs are subject to change; thus at different times society will have different needs. For example, technological improvements have affected home life in such a way that society now needs instruction in the science of home economics. Therefore, a curriculum in home economics should increase the basic principles of physics, chemistry and biology.

The objectives of education can be at either national or state level, they may include transmission of culture, establishing national unity, development of the potential of the individual, economic efficiency and self fulfillment.

The objective of home economic education may also fall within this definition. Specifically, objective may describe the standard to be attained to every student following a particular course. Some of the objectives develop for food and nutrition in a syllabus prepared

at a homeeconomics workshop held at Ibadan in 1972 can better illustrate Bloom's classification of curriculum objectives. The following are some of the objectives:

1. To appreciate the importance of health
  2. To teach the principles of cookery in relation to conserving the nutritive content of foods and to apply those principles to preparation of food locally available foodstuffs.
  3. To develop the ability to select a balanced diet from available foods.
- The first is from the effective field, the second cognitive psychomotor and the third cognitive capability.

The implication of analysis for the planners of homeeconomics programme therefore, is that the acquisition of fact, theories and principles and technical skills is needed for success on the practical side of the course. If this dictum is strictly followed, it will greatly help the planners to structure a suitable curriculum to give the students a balanced education.

Curriculum development serves as an input component for curriculum therefore, is a structural series of intended learning outcome. Curriculum prescribes the results of instruction. It does not prescribe the means i.e the activities, materials and even the instructional content to be used in achieving the results. Curriculum indicates what is to be learned, not why or how it should be learned.

When developing the curriculum, the homeeconomics teacher must use her knowledge of the basic principles of curriculum design. She must use the relevant curriculum approaches and procedures. Each pattern of curriculum organization adopts a certain idea or scope because it follows certain special criteria for sequence, continuity and integration. Each pattern therefore provides for these characteristics in a different manner, although they are related.

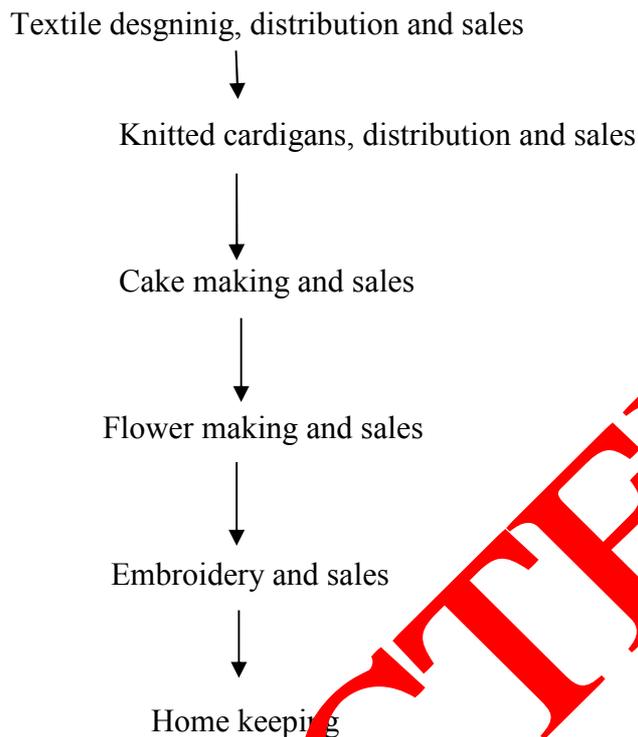
Some of the approaches to curriculum in HomeEconomics are: The subject matter approach, integrated curriculum, job analysis approach, the occupational analysis approach, competency approach, the modular approach etc.

The subject matter approach constitutes a logical and effective method of organizing new knowledge and therefore an effective method of learning it. By following organized bodies of subject matter, student can build his store of knowledge more effectively and economically. Integrated curriculum is a modification of subject curriculum and can be used effectively in homeeconomics. It provide flexibility in meeting students' need and interest and permits a gradual and distribution of course material in keeping with successive level of comprehension as such student gain maturity and understanding.

The analysis approach includes a number of task. This approach is one of the most often used to provide pre and in-service professional training to occupational teachers. It's place emphasizes on the knowledge, skills, attitude and judgements that are generally required for the successful performance of a task rather than all the components comprising the task.

The modular approach is the unit or standard of measurement. It is the unit of standard of curriculum based on the development of entry level competencies of the students. In the modular design the students and their occupational goals form the basis for programme planning. With the modular approach, the total homeeconomics programme divided into unit referred to as modules.

These modules will each take approximately thirty hours of instructional time to achieve with the average group of students. The homeeconomics design has the occupational clusters while developing the curriculum.



Every student irrespective of the culture will be able to develop at least to minimum entry level in one home economics occupation. In comparison, curriculum is not a system but the output of one system and input into another. Curriculum is a guide to instructional systems which begin with planning.

The main aim of home economics programmes is to prepare students to become teachers and professionals in home economics. The central concern of home economics teacher education should be the development of persons who find fulfillment in their commitment to the teaching of the subject.

The need to train professionally competent home economics teachers has led to the introduction of home economics education at three levels of the school system. These include higher elementary (or grade II) Teacher training colleges, Advanced teacher training colleges usually referred to as college of education. Undergraduate studies in the universities.

### Higher Elementary Level

At this level, the training is geared towards preparing teachers for primary schools. Students who are admitted into this programme need the minimum qualification of a first school leaving certificate. Their duration of study depends on the entry level qualification of the students. Those with the primary six or modern school leaving certificate spend a minimum of four (4) years, while those who have passed West African school certificate examination take one year to become qualified.

The programme at this level is made up of both general and professional education. Students at the end of their course offer subjects as geography, history, mathematics and home economics. Thus the programme prepares a student for teaching all subjects in the primary school curriculum. Those who teach home economics after completing their course are perhaps the one who distinguished themselves in the subject while at school especially interested in it.

### College of Education Level:

The at studies at this level is geared towards giving professional training to a student in one or two particular subjects, which will enable her to teach in secondary schools. Some of the graduates may also teach in the grade II teacher training institutios.

Students admitted in the department of homeeconomics in these institutions take some courses related to homeeconomicsand education alone, and at this stage the training is fairly specialised. The student also experience teaching practice for a minimum period of three months. They must possess a minimum qualification of either West African School Certificate with at least four credit in related subjects,especially biology, and che or needlework and cooking or teacher's GradeII certificate with either credit or merit in homeeconomics- related subjects and English or General Certificate of Education (G.C.E) of ordinary level. Both categories of students are expected to spend a minimum of three years training.

### Under Graduate Level:

The programme at this level is geared toward preparing technical skilled and professionally competent teachers of homeeconomics who will be expected to teach at the colleges of education. Grade II teacher's college or secondary school. As mentioned before, homeeconomics education has so far been introduced into two of our universities; The university of Nigeria, Nsukka, University of Benin and Ahmadu Bello University Zaria. These universitties offer a four-year or three-year programme, at the end of which Bachelor of science degree is awarded.

These are the three levels at which homeeconomics teachers are trained at present.

The private sectorsare not left behind. The following curriculum of homeeconomics programme, Furthemore, in order to gain a true knowledge of the standard of homeeconomics education on primary schools, an attempt will made to analyze:

- I. The curriculum for primary school homeeconomics
- II. The selection of teacher in homeeconomics in the primary school and
- III. The programme of training for the homeeconomics teacher in the secondary schools.

From the curriculum of homeeconomics in Edo State of Nigeria, the theme of the curriculum is seen as the child in the home; in developing this theme to realize the above aims and objectives, six areas of homeeconomics have been identified as sub-theme or units for the curriculum. Each area is expected to be taught at particular stage of primary education. These sub-theme include:

A. – Clothing and textile	Primary 1-6
B. – Home and family living	Primary 3-6
C. – Food and Nutrition	Primary 3-6
D. – Good grooming	Primary 3-6
E. – Home and family living	Primary 5-6
F. –Family and human relation	Primary 5-6

Unit A deals with all six classes while units B,C and D start only in primary three, and units E and F in primaries five and six. This arrangement is in recognition of the varying shapes of the child's maturity to ensure that more difficult concepts are introduced at the appropriate stage of development.

The planner advice that the teacher concerned with the use of the syllabus should be originally and resourceful in her lesson planning the contents of the curriculum tend to tally with the set objectives for the classes and are within the chronological age and expected performance of the students/pupils.

## 2. CULTURE AND CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT IN HOMEECONOMICS

In many communities today our general society is reflected in the cultural diversity of our classrooms. When we refer to students as being cultural different we are talking of those whose racial, nationality, religious, and ethnic characteristics distinguish them from the majority. Their speech, manners, attitudes and habits may be distinctive. They may have backgrounds and personality structure that differ significantly from others.

Culture diversity may present a variety of problems to a teacher. The students are exposed to two sets of norms, one set at home and another set at school. Often, these norms pull in opposite directions. Other students respond to their peculiar behaviour with prejudice. Teachers and students may be inclined to treat all members of a particular minority group, all too often the teacher fails to recognize special problems and potentialities of an individual.

The culture different helps to become acquainted with the community, the homes and families of students, and the individual students themselves. As you become acquainted, you will be able to identify which minority groups are present and to what extent.

A large group deserving of attention is comprised of culturally disadvantaged families some culturally different families may be culturally disadvantaged, but these terms are by no means synonymous. The major problems confronting disadvantaged families include; housing, shortage of adequate housing for low income families, opposition of community associations and individuals to having culturally.

## 3. CONCLUSION

The culture of any society affects its curriculum. Hence, culture includes everything that can be communicated from one generation to its successor. This involves a whole way of life, a structure of feeling and people's heritage which is made up of both material and non-material aspects of life since that word curriculum has come to be used in reference to education and is now taken as a council which students undertake as they compete for high grades, passes, certificates or other forms of academic rewards, in addition, there can be no education without culture because education is a process that led to continuity and meaning to lives. Hence, curriculum comes to be used in relation to education, The only general view about it is that it is a programme of studies to be completed by teachers and learners which need to be developed through the influences of the society's culture.

## RECOMENDATION

Conception and perception of culture in the development of homeeconomics programme should be considered and upgraded. Enough awarnesss should be created to the curriculum planners in the development of homeeconomics programme. The society sholud be encourage to ask psychological and sociological questionns that will imbibe culture in the curriculum of homeeconomics programme. The government should also know that culture of differnt ethnic groups will enhance the teaching/ learning processes of homeeconomics programme, therfore she should allow culture to be paramount in the curriculum planning of homeeconomics progrmme.

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