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# UNA DESCRIPCIÓN COMPLETA SOBRE LOS FUNDAMENTOS DEL DESARROLLO CURRICULAR: COMPRENDIENDO ASPECTOS TEÓRICOS INTERRALACIONADOS CLAVE A COMPREHENSIVE OVERVIEW ON THE FUNDAMENTALS OF CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT: UNDERSTANDING KEY INTERRLATED THEORETICAL ASPECTS

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## ABSTRACT

Learning about curriculum in general and the essentials of curriculum development may facilitate teachers and future curriculum workers make informed decisions and take part in the field of school curriculum more meaningfully. Thus it is paramount to examine the educational philosophies; the social and educational forces that impact the curriculum; models, process and the major stages of curriculum development; and its levels of control. Through analyzing and better understanding the aforementioned topics readers will be likely to have a more complete picture of what curriculum development entails. Therefore, this paper may be regarded as a contribution for (novice) educators' future work in the field of curriculum design, as well as it may be seen as an informative piece of work for those who are interested in taking leadership in this field by becoming curriculum specialists. In the end, the information of this paper makes us reflect on the notion that curriculum making is not confined to school administrators and specialists only, but especially to teachers who are involved in curricular activities on daily basis, such as planning lessons, selecting materials for classroom use, utilizing a variety of teaching methodologies, and creating assessment practices.

**KEYWORDS:** curriculum development, educational philosophies, education, school

## RESUMEN

Aprender acerca de currículo en general y de los fundamentos del desarrollo curricular en particular, permite a los docentes y a los futuros trabajadores curriculares tomar decisiones informadas y participar en el campo del currículo escolar de manera más significativa. Por tanto, es primordial examinar las filosofías educativas y las fuerzas sociales y educacionales que

impactan el currículo; los modelos, proceso y etapas principales del desarrollo curricular, y sus niveles de control. Por medio de un análisis y una mejor comprensión de los temas antes mencionados los lectores podrán tener una imagen más completa acerca de lo que el desarrollo curricular involucra. Por lo tanto, este artículo puede ser considerado como una contribución para el trabajo futuro de educadores (novatos) en el campo del diseño curricular, y también puede ser visto como un trabajo informativo para los interesados en asumir liderazgo en este campo al convertirse en especialistas curriculares. Al final, la información de este artículo nos permitirá reflexionar sobre la noción que el desarrollo de los currículos no está limitado a directivos escolares y especialistas, sino que abarca a los docentes involucrados en actividades curriculares día a día, tales como la planificación de lecciones, selección de materiales para el uso del aula, utilización de una variedad de metodologías de enseñanza y la creación de prácticas de evaluación.

**PALABRAS CLAVES:** desarrollo curricular, filosofías educativas, educación, escuela

## INTRODUCTION

It is key for those who are interested in taking leadership in the field of school curriculum and enhancing their classroom instruction to have a good understanding of the topic of curriculum development. In doing so, teachers and curriculum workers will be equipped with the knowledge and skills needed to carry out curricular activities and decisions as well as curriculum making more effectively.

First and foremost, in order to have a more complete picture of the topic at hand, it is paramount to be aware of the existence of these three main types of curricula: the explicit curriculum, the implicit curriculum, and the null



curriculum (Eisner, 2002). The explicit curriculum is known by the public, and it has publicly explicit goals, including teaching children about their country's history and teaching them how to read and write. In addition, people are well aware of the specific courses that are offered by a particular school. In short, the explicit curriculum is what a school intentionally teaches students. According to Eisner (2002), the implicit curriculum includes an unwritten group of expectations and rules that defines schooling as a cultural system, which is concerned with teaching important lessons on a daily basis. This curriculum also refers that the additional things schools teach, including social skills, which are commonly known by the public. Lastly, the null curriculum refers to the options students are not afforded, the perspectives they may never know about, and knowledge and skills that are not instructed over their school life. Put it simply, it is what schools do not teach, which has important consequences on the kind of life students may choose to lead in the future (Eisner, 2002).

Furthermore, the concept of curriculum itself needs to be clearly understood as well as to know what the study of curriculum involves. In this respect, Urevbu (1985) referred to curriculum as "what is laid down as the syllabus or that which is to be learnt by students. It is the officially selected body of knowledge which government, through the Ministry of Education or anybody offering education, wants students to learn" (as cited in *The Commonwealth of Learning*, 2000, p. 17). McNeil (1969) noted that the study of curriculum does not only involve describing particular courses and/or specific course content, but it also involves helping educators achieve knowledge intended "to answer perennial questions of what and how to teach" in better ways (p. 299).

By learning about the social and educational forces that impact the curriculum, models of curriculum development, levels of control within

the field of curriculum, and the process and stages of curriculum development, teachers and future curriculum workers will be able to make better, informed curricular decisions on a small and/or large scale, influencing positively the classroom setting and the broad context of the educational process, respectively.

## EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHIES

Philosophies of education have a major influence upon the work of curriculum developers. Ornstein (1990-1991) noted that "philosophy of education influences, and to a large extent determines, our educational decisions, choices, and alternatives" (p. 102). According to Ornstein (1990-1991), philosophy determines many important aspects at the schoolwide level, as well as it decides the learning experiences to be provided at the classroom setting. For instance, goals of education, subject content and its organization, the process of teaching and learning are determined according to the particular philosophy or mixed of philosophies used for curriculum decision making. Usually, a guiding philosophy of education also helps to establish criteria for selecting what workbooks, textbooks, or learning activities to utilize, what homework to assign and how much of it, how to test students and how to use the test results, and what course content to emphasize (Ornstein, 1990-1991).

## TYLER'S VIEW OF EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

Regarding the role that educational philosophies play upon the job of schools, teachers, and curriculum developers, Tyler's seminal work provided fundamental ideas. Tyler (2013) advised educators to establish an educational and social philosophy, which emphasized their viewpoints, values, and beliefs with regard to the aim of schooling within a democratic society. Tyler (2013) described that philosophies may



impact the educational system and its associated activities in the following terms:

If the school believes that its primary function is to teach people to adjust to society it will strongly emphasize obedience to present authorities, loyalty to the present forms and traditions, skills in carrying on the present techniques of life; whereas if it emphasizes the revolutionary function of the school it will be more concerned with critical analysis, ability to meet new problems, independence and self-direction, freedom, and self-discipline. Again, it is clear that the nature of the philosophy of the school can affect the: selection of educational objectives. (p. 36)

According to Bellack and Kliebard (1970), Tyler's work asserted that the creation of educational objectives and, in turn, what guided curriculum development were affected by the philosophy of a particular school or individuals. In his work, it is evident that Tyler had a predilection for the revolutionary process of the education. Most importantly, Tyler advised that educators and curriculum developers must make their educational objectives consistent with their educational philosophy. His work also helped them become aware of the importance of democratic values, nature of good society, and essential values to a satisfying and effective life. Bellack and Kliebard (1970) claimed that if educators and curriculum workers conceive "human beings as instruments of the state and the function of the schools as programming the youth of the nation to react in a fixed manner when appropriate stimuli are presented," both educational objectives and curriculum making would be derived from the ideas making up this old school philosophy (p. 63). It is imperative that people' guiding philosophy be consistently reflected on the acts of determining educational objectives and developing school curriculum (Bellack and Kliebard, 1970).

After looking at the Tyler's work in relation to educational philosophies, we will now discuss four major philosophies that impact the field of education and curriculum development. It is believed that one philosophy has no superiority over the other, but each one may shape the educational process and curriculum making in particular ways. These four philosophies, consisting of Perennialism, Essentialism, Progressivism, and Reconstructionism, have significantly influenced not only curricular decisions, but also instruction and teaching (Ornstein, 1990-1991). In the following lines, we will look at a brief overview of each of these philosophies and their relation to school's curriculum.

## **PERENNIALISM**

Ornstein and Hunkins (1998) observed that perennialism was the oldest and most conservative educational philosophy. "As a philosophy of education, perennialism relies on the past, especially the past asserted by agreement, universal knowledge and cherished values of society" (p. 38). Perennialism uses realism as its philosophical base; the objective of this philosophy is to educate the rational individual and to cultivate human intellect. The intended learning is focused on past and permanent studies, mastery of facts, and eternal knowledge. From a perennialist point of view, the role of the teacher involves helping students think rationally; teacher instruction is based on Socratic oral method and explicit teaching of traditional values. This philosophy has as its curriculum focus and related curricular trends the following things: traditional school subjects, literary analysis, unmodifiable curriculum, classic books, and paideia proposal (Adler, 2013; Ornstein, 1990-1991). Further aims of perennialism are the search for and dissemination of truth, which is universal and unchangeable. There are certain fundamental truths, frequent themes of daily life, and moral principles that should be emphasized



by the curricular experiences given to students (Morales, 2014a).

## **ESSENTIALISM**

Essentialists are concerned with learner acquisition of facts and knowledge as well as the learning of conceptual thought and principles of subject matter (Ornstein & Hunkins, 1998). Essentialism is rooted in realism and idealism, having as objective the promotion of people's intellectual growth and the education of the competent person. The knowledge to be provided is based on essential skills and academic subjects and mastery of concepts and principles of subject matter. This philosophy views the teacher as very knowledgeable who needs to be an authority in his subject discipline. Also, teachers are expected to provide direct instruction of traditional values. From an essentialist perspective, the curriculum focus and related curricular styles are concerned with essential skills and fundamental subjects, including English, arithmetic, science, history, and foreign language. Also, a notion of back to basics and excellence in education are promoted in this philosophy (Ornstein, 1990-1991). Morales (2014a) explained that the back-to-basics movement within an essentialist philosophy involved teachers' accountability for student learning, planning and delivering instruction based on textbooks, and teaching methods focused on regular homework assignments, traditional practices and evaluation.

## **PROGRESSIVISM**

Morales (2014a) pointed out that progressivism was developed in opposition to perennialism and essentialism, and it was intended to provide individuals with a practical approach to problems due to the notion that it was rooted in pragmatism. In early 1900s, progressivism was the part of a socio-political reform aimed at improving the US life and the nation's institutions.

Ornstein and Hunkins (1998) commented that John Dewey laid some of the foundation for the progressivist philosophy; Dewey's work claimed that democracy and education were meant to go together. As indicated by Ornstein and Hunkins (1998), Dewey viewed the school "as a miniature democratic society in which students could learn and practice the skills and tools necessary for democratic living" (p. 46). With this in mind, according to progressivists, the primary objective of progressivism was to promote democratic and social living. At the school setting, the learning experiences provided to students are to be based upon knowledge leading to growth and development through an active and interesting learning process. Within this philosophical model, the teacher is regarded as a guide for problem solving and scientific inquiry. Additionally, from a progressivist point of view the curriculum needs to base on students' interests, the application of human problems and affairs, and experiencing interdisciplinary subject matter, varied activities and projects (Ornstein, 1990-1991).

## **RECONSTRUCTIONISM**

A later philosophy known as reconstructionism came into existence; their advocates argued that progressivism gave too much emphasis on child-centered education. This education mainly served to the individual learner and the middle-class group, so for reconstructionists what was needed "was more emphasis on society-centered education that took into consideration the needs of society (not the individual) and all classes (not only the middle class)" (Ornstein and Hunkins, 1998, p. 50).

Ornstein and Hunkins (1998) went on to indicate that from a reconstructionist perspective it was not sufficient for learners and educators to analyze, interpret, and evaluate problems rather a commitment and action were necessary as a way to approach problems more effectively.



Moreover, for reconstructionists it is paramount that the curriculum needs to reflect changes over time since we live in an ever-changing society. This also involves that “students and teachers must be change agents [; therefore] a curriculum based on social issues and social services is ideal” (Ornstein and Hunkins, 1998, p. 51). Ornstein (1990-1991) added that student learning was involved skills and subjects needed to identify and work on problems of the society by means of curricular activities based on active learning about contemporary and future life.

### **SOCIAL FORCES THAT IMPACT CURRICULUM**

In the reviewed literature there are some common forces that impact the school curriculum, and there are also varied viewpoints expressed by scholars in the way such forces impact this key component of the educational process. Among the common forces found in the reviewed literature were religion, politics, economic influences, socioeconomic class, and family. The aforementioned forces directly impact curriculum decision making and development, the selection of subject matter, and learning experiences provided by educational institutions. Sturges (1976) noted that “directly or indirectly, almost every individual, interest or professional group, industry, legislative member or group, or local newspaper can influence the curriculum. Consequently, it is almost impossible to accurately describe the strengths and the interrelationships of the various forces” (p. 40).

McNeil (1969) emphasized that within curriculum as a field of study not only one force impacts its process of decision making, but a wide range of groups have become interested in the field and, in turn, had influenced curriculum development in one way or another. “Philosophers, psychologists, social scientists, instructional technologists, measurement specialists, and

pedagogues are laboring in the curriculum vineyard [; these are] forces advancing the subject matter of curriculum” (McNeil, 1969, p. 312). Peters (1976) explained that US learners were being nurtured, taught, and evaluated by schools in the name of learning. The learning was not determined at the schoolwide and/or district level; powerful governmental and social entities took leadership in establishing the intended learning to be provided by the schools.

Typically, this happened due to the authority and position held by these kinds of entities within the socio-political structure of the nation. For instance, powerful entities such as religion, enterprise sector, and government legislated guidelines and mandated change. This in turn created a schooling system “that reacts to the endless probing and prodding of several interest groups; interest groups which often have ambitions and motives rooted somewhere other than in educational philosophy or curriculum theory” (Peters, 1976, p. 6).

Peters (1976) commented that there were three major influential levels impacting the field of curriculum in one way or another: societal (national, state, and local), institutional (the individual school), and instructional (the individual teacher). According to Peters (1976), the societal level had a great impact upon the structures of schools and the content of curricula. The individual school, also referred to as institutional level, had a more limited impact upon curriculum, and it mainly involved an influence on “student attitudes, behaviors, learning, and values. Within restricted parameters, the individual school has great say as to how students will learn, how teachers will instruct, and what types of enrichment materials will be employed” (p. 11). Peters (1976) believed that the teacher had a central, key role in the success of the instructional work in the educational system; however, teacher involvement into the



school curriculum as a whole was restricted to the teacher domain of classroom. The scholar added that over the last few years there was “a greater emphasis placed upon direct teacher involvement in the curriculum development process” (p. 11). Peters (1976) went on to explain that only when the classroom teacher had a more direct involvement in curriculum development and related activities would the instructional level of curriculum “become a reality, a commonplace occurrence, and a living force in curriculum development” (p. 12).

## RELIGION

Vars and Lowe (1963) observed that organized religion played an important role upon curriculum decisions, which were later adapted by schools. For instance, Vars and Lowe (1963) listed the following as the typical factors that impact the job of curriculum workers: “bible reading, prayers, religious holiday observances, released time, transportation of parochial school students at public expense, and exemption from health instruction on religious grounds” (p. 255). The authors went on to discuss that public schools that were committed to further learners’ potential must be aware of the their present values, and provide effective learning opportunities that guide students to solve value conflicts. It was also noted that keeping communication open among home, school, and church may be key as a new approach for minimizing varied conflicts.

Flumkin’s 1961 research, (as cited in Vars and Lowe, 1963), indicated that strong religious values tend to be associated with high ratings of dogmatism. It was examined the relationships among dogmatism, social class, values, and academic achievement in Flumkin’s research; in this study it was pointed out that regardless of other variables, the more education the student had, the less dogmatic he was. It was also observed that further studies contended that dogmatism was related to social, economic, ethnic, and racial prejudice. Frumkin’s study

(1961) pointed out that the learning, curricular experiences provided by schools, may be key in moderating people’s dogmatic perspective, because “instruction that reduces dogmatism in some areas tends to open students’ minds in others” (as Vars and Lowe, 1963, p. 256).

## POLITICS

As the Commonwealth of Learning (COL) (2000) pointed out, education is regarded as a political activity, and national ideology and philosophy have a big influence upon a nation’s education system. COL (2000) provided a list aimed at providing the public with a better idea of how politics influence curriculum design. Among the major political aspects influencing school curriculum are the following:

Politics determine and define the goals, content, learning experiences and evaluation strategies in education[;] Curricular materials and their interpretation are usually heavily influenced by political considerations[;] Political considerations may play a part in the hiring of personnel[;] Funding of education is greatly influenced by politics [; and] Entry into educational institutions and the examination systems are heavily influenced by politics. (pp. 22-23)

In Sturges’ terms (1976) political influences from the federal government and states had a significant impact upon the educational system. It was evident that the federal government had more financial strength than state governments, which, in turn, state governments had more financial strength than school districts. The scholar added that federal decisions, including grants for innovative programs, must be recognized if a school was to survive. In the same way, state decisions, being text book approval and mandatory state goals, must be recognized if a school wanted to continue operating. According to Sturges (1976), if the



school district, administrators, and school personal were in agreement, districts recognized these groups as supportive forces, attempting to provide an appropriate curriculum for students. It was asserted that forces at the federal, state, and district level had different degrees of influence on school programs and curriculum decisions. As stated in Sturges' words (1976) "it would seem that the major decisions on school curriculum are being made, and will continue to be made, by the federal and state governments, in that order. Other forces will have the restricted freedom to find alternate ways of coming to terms with federal and state decisions" (43).

Peters (1976) agreed that laws enacted by federal and state governments had direct effects upon students and instructional curricula. For instance, these effects at the federal level involved curriculum content, instructional materials, and student evaluation. At the state level, funding was granted for special projects, such as early childhood education. At this same level, the contributions of state departments of education were recognized. These departments of education were empowered to make more efficient and reorganize the school systems. They also established guidelines regarding teacher education and professional certification and promoted community involvement into education. Peters (1976) insisted that the federal and state legislative levels did not only control "the flow of monies into the states, the counties, and to the local levels of the American educational structure but they also determine[d] its expenditure" (p. 7).

## **ECONOMIC INFLUENCES**

With regard to the forces impacting the school curriculum, the economic influence was a significant force identified across the reviewed literature. Peters (1976) observed that education was a very profitable business in the

United States, because the private enterprise sector played a central role in determining the curriculum content and the quality of intended instruction. In Peters' work some cases were discussed with the aim of supporting his above-mentioned viewpoint. The scholar claimed that due to the creation of federally funded projects, under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act and other federal legislation, a need for more and better materials was evident. In this respect, non-educational corporations such as Westinghouse, Xerox and Raytheon started educational materials divisions and made the new materials available to the public. As Peters (1976) described, "The new materials resulted in the need for new mathematics, new sciences, [and] new social studies [, and] the combination of the new programs and the new materials drastically change the curriculum content and structure" (p. 13). In addition, Peters (1976) indicated that the growing emphasis on accountability and objective evaluation in education caused the development of standardized and criterion reference tests that were made by educational service organizations, such as McGraw-Hill and Educational Testing Service.

Vars and Lowe (1963) wrote about economic influences impacting the school curriculum; they indicated that curriculum decisions were characterized by financial prosperity and increasing technological development. In the researchers' work, the implications of automation for education were observed. It was stated that one key implication was concerned with the need of "more advanced technical training . . . , although automation might require less training in specific skills and more attention to basic sciences and general education" (Vars and Lowe, 1963, p. 262).

Preparing learners more for their future rather than for their current lives is imperative, so school curriculum must be responsive to economic



changes that influence a particular job market. It was key that educators became aware of the importance of “study[ing] both the effects of technology upon students and ways to introduce better technology into the schools” (Vars and Lowe, 1963, p. 263). Technology should be employed for different, well-defined purposes along the instructional process, which may have an impact on the ways students viewed and used technology outside the classroom. Vars and Lowe (1963) commented that the exposure learners had to technology gave them “a broad but superficial acquaintance with much of the world that they are too young to understand” (p. 263). Therefore, this must lead schools to make efforts in order to “modify student values through curricular experiences and adapt the curriculum to the actual sophistication of the student population” (Vars and Lowe, 1963, p. 263).

### **SOCIOECONOMIC CLASS**

In order to provide a comprehensive account of the major forces impacting curriculum within educational settings, it is imperative to examine the influence of socioeconomic classes. Vars and Lowe (1963) pointed out that socioeconomic class is an influential force within the field of curriculum. According to the scholars, research seemed explicitly and implicitly to suggest a special kind of curriculum for children from lower socioeconomic levels. It was also noted that the incidence of problems was highest for students of low social status, lowest for those of high status. Vars and Lowe (1963) pointed out that levels of educational achievement of Spanish American and Anglo-American children was primarily affected by socioeconomic class, while biculturalism by itself had no impact upon achievement. Therefore, Rutledge (1960), (as cited in Vars & Lowe, 1963), demanded improved guidance and adjustment of the curriculum with the aim of meeting the needs of different socioeconomic groups. Rutledge (1960) found “a number of significant relationships between

social status and the personal-social problems of young adolescents revealed by questionnaires” (as cited in Vars and Lowe, 1963, p. 257).

With this in mind, the job of schools and their intended curriculum had a central role toward “making up for the disadvantages with which some children start out in life and to provide a climate which minimizes conflicts among socioeconomic classes” (Vars and Lowe, 1963, p. 257). It was also suggested that guidance and instruction should stress the relationship between education and career advancement along students’ learning experiences. With regard to socioeconomic classes, Dodson (1957) added that there were enormous pressures toward conformity to the values of middle-class individuals. In this respect both education and industrial organizations attempted to “manipulate people to such conformity by use of behavioral science technics” (p. 263). By doing so, a growing stratification of American society was evident, and attempts were made to evaluate curriculum in one way or another against class status. Dodson (1957) claimed that “not only were intelligence tests evaluated against this type of insight, but texts were restudied and teacher sensitivity to such problems was examined as well” (p. 263).

### **FAMILY**

Furthermore, family is a key force worth noting when it comes to societal forces impacting the field of curriculum. Parents have distanced themselves from educational institutions and have completely delegated the act of educating their children to these institutions. Therefore, without the active involvement of parents in their children’s education, schools do not find it easy to fulfill the job of educating student population through the years (Learningdomain, 2008). With this in mind, a responsive curriculum is needed in order to meet the needs of the family institution



and their young members taking part of learning experiences provided at the classroom setting.

Vars and Lowe (1963) asserted that as the family changed, the aspects of the curriculum devoted to family life and the like must also be modified. The aspects that were addressed in their work dealt with relevant aspects concerning today's family institution. It was observed that employment of both parents was not necessarily harmful to their children's academic achievement, and it was important that school curriculum included course content and guidance that helped girls to be aware of the appropriateness in combining career paths and homemaking in their future lives. Besides, relationships between early marriage, low intelligence, low social class status, and school dropouts were described.

Vars and Lowe (1963) pointed out that nearly all the young couples studied found it difficult to adjust to their new marital status, and early marriage might be considered an ideal choice for girls who were unsuccessful at schools. Additionally, it was recommended a special curriculum for young married girls, so course content needed to be organized around their new roles, such as wives and mothers-to-be. The intended curriculum must also include appropriate content for older girls, who made the transition to married life or decided to go back to school after starting a family; they were believed to need emotional support along with a curriculum that was well suited to their needs (Vars and Lowe, 1963). Efforts in reducing the incidence of student early marriages was a key aspect for curriculum developers to take into account, so suggestions that helped address these efforts were provided. One of the most effective ways to prevent student marriages involved "a challenging secondary school program, operating in cooperation with all youth-serving agencies in the community" (Vars and Lowe, 1963, p. 258).

## **EDUCATIONAL FORCES THAT IMPACT THE CURRICULUM**

For the purpose of this work, it is important to understand what a theory entails. It is a way of thinking, and it is also regarded as a model for explaining how things work, how principles are related, and what causes things to work together. Learning theories address these key questions at the school setting: How does learning happen? How does motivation occur? What influences students' development? (Hammond, Austin, Orcutt, & Rosso, 2001). Hammond et al. (2001) stated that the scientific study of learning took place in the nineteenth century. In this century, tests studying how people learn, and attempting to discover the best approach to teaching were carried out. In a systematic way, psychologists began working in the field of teaching and learning; their works were based upon the thoughts of Descartes, Kant, and Charles Darwin (Hammond et al., 2001). According to Hammond et al., (2001), in the twentieth century, attempts aimed at explaining how individuals learn were made, such efforts were mainly focused on behaviorist and cognitive psychology.

## **BEHAVIORISM**

One of the major theories of learning is behaviorism; the fundamentals of this theory are positive reinforcement and stimulus-response; the advocates of behaviorism believe that children are born with capacities to distinguish aspects of the environment, respond to it, and generalize (Strauss, 2000). Additionally, as indicated by Strauss (2000), the theory claims learning takes place as a result of the production of desired behaviors, without influence of mental processes. It is key to provide proper reinforcement to the student, emphasizing reward over punishment. The student approaches the learning experience in small steps through the use of unconnected skills, allowing students to move at their own speed. Hammond et al., (2001) noted that behaviorist learning theory



had a significant influence in education, guiding the development of curriculum, instructional approaches, workbooks, and other tools. This theory has been useful for the development of some types of skills, especially those skills that can be learned by means of reinforcement and practice. Research-based evidence has concluded that “tasks requiring more complex thinking and higher mental processes are not generally well-learned through behaviorist methods and require more attention to how people perceive, process, and make sense of what they are experiencing” (Hammond et al., 2001, p. 6).

### **THEORY OF COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Hammond et al. (2001) observed that Jean Piaget was the first to explain learning as a developmental cognitive process. In this process, learners are guided to create knowledge rather than receive knowledge passively. According to Hammond et al. (2001), Piaget viewed the learning experience as a process where “students construct knowledge based on their experiences, and that how they do so is related to their biological, physical, and mental stage of development” (p. 6). It is important to point out that Piaget’s work recognized the usage of behaviorist learning into education, while he also indicated “that other activities that support students’ exploration are essential” (Hammond et al., 2001, p. 6).

### **SOCIO-HISTORICAL THEORY**

Vygotsky’s (1934) socio-historical psychology theory holds significant importance in the field of education due to the underlying principles intended to better explain how learning and development take place. Steiner and Mahn (1996) noted that Vygotsky extended Piaget’s work regarding cognitive development by including the idea of social-cultural cognition. It is concerned with the notion that student

learning occurs through social interactions within a cultural context. Vygotsky believed that culture, language, and interactions with teachers and peer classmates had a central role towards developing learners’ thinking, new ideas, and skills. The scholars also noted that Vygotsky proposed the concept of the zone of proximal development (ZPD). Lui (2012) described ZPD in an easy way to understand, so the ZPD can be regarded “as the difference between what a child can do independently and what he or she is capable of doing with targeted assistance (scaffolding),” the author added that “this term . . . describes the sweet spot where instruction is most beneficial for each student – just beyond his or her current level of independent capability” (p. 2).

According to Steiner and Mahn (1996), Vygotsky’s work gave special emphasis on the explicit use of discourse and cooperative learning within the classroom setting. This led to the creation of the term of scaffolding, a type of assistance aimed at helping students learn in systematic ways. Scaffolding can be viewed as “instructionally supportive activities and social interactions that occur between the child and other individuals as they guide effective learning and development in the ZPD” (Lui, 2012, p. 3). Steiner and Mahn (1996) noted that Vygotsky’s developmental learning theory introduced into education the idea that by providing learning experience that was responsive to each child’s stage of development, educators could make their instruction more effective. Hammond et al. (2001) added that if teachers were able to make connections between the intended learning and students’ prior knowledge and experiences and “use the social and natural environments as opportunities for learning,” their instruction would be significantly consistent (p. 7).



## PSYCHOSOCIAL THEORY

Psychologist Erik Erikson (1950) explored the cultural and social aspects of development that influence a person's actions and interactions throughout life; Erikson called his psychosocial theory the "Eight Ages of Man," which consists of various stages that begins at birth and goes on through elderly life. Erikson described what adults need to provide at each stage in order to help children confront challenges (Research Foundation, 2010). As explained by the Research Foundation (2010), "Each stage builds on the resolution of conflict during earlier stages. During the first six years, children are challenged by the conflicts of trust vs. mistrust (infancy), autonomy vs. shame and doubt (ages 1–3), and initiative vs. guilt (ages 3–6)" (p. 4). In their work, the Research Foundation (2010) provided an in-depth description of each stage: Trust is developed when children experience a safe, reliable, and responsive environment to their needs; those who receive effective care are more likely to develop a sense of trust. On the contrary, children develop mistrust when they cry or get hurt, and not obtain consistent attention or they are not comforted in a supportive way. Children develop autonomy when they are allowed to do things by themselves. And children will feel doubtful about their skills if they often receive negative criticism. Children who develop initiative feel free to try new materials and ideas, as well as they accept challenges positively and take on responsibilities. When adults pay no attention and belittle children and their work, infants are likely to experience guilt (Research Foundation, 2010).

It was observed that childhood is a unique stage of life that has its own characteristics. Therefore, it is imperative to have an understanding of how children develop and learn in order to make informed planning and decisions within the field of curriculum development. In so doing, we, as teachers, can better support children's

development and learning by providing a curriculum that includes appropriate-age subject matter and the most effective practices.

## MODELS OF CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

The topic of curriculum development and well-known, influential models will now be addressed. According to Lunenburg (2011), the way curriculum development is defined reflects teachers and curriculum workers' approach to it. Examining different models for curriculum development it is a good way to get familiar with the key phases needed to effectively carry out the planning and implementing processes, as well as models can serve as guidelines to refine and evaluate school curriculum (Lunenburg, 2011). Oliva (2005) asserted that using a model to develop curriculum may have greater efficiency and productivity in the work of curriculum developers and teachers as well. The Commonwealth of Learning (2000) added that models of curriculum design include content that is based on specific objectives. The objectives are intended to describe "the expected learning outcomes in terms of specific measurable behaviors" (The Commonwealth of Learning, 2000, p. 29).

Oliva's work (2005) provided four models of curriculum development with the aim of helping individuals interested in the field of curriculum get familiar with the thinking and essential concepts and elements involved in each model. As Oliva (2005) explained, three of the four presented models, including his model as well as the models of Tyler (1949) and Saylor, Alexander, and Lewis (1981), used a deductive approach, that is, they progress from the general to the specific or from the needs of society to instructional objectives. While Taba's (1971) model is inductive, which involves that it "start[s] with the actual development of curriculum materials and lead[s] to generalization" (Oliva,



2005, p. 127). However, all the four models described in Oliva's work are linear in terms of the evident order of progression involved along the different steps. Additionally, the four models are prescriptive in nature, which means that they all include the things that need to be done in a specific manner. The four models also include major components and specify a systematic approach for implementing each component (Oliva, 2005).

### **TYLER'S MODEL**

The Commonwealth of Learning (2000) pointed out that the Tyler's model is linear in nature, and his model starts from objectives and ends with evaluation. Therefore, according to this model, evaluation is terminal. Oliva (2005) stated that Tyler's model is one of the widely known models for curriculum development, and this model gives special attention to the planning process as well as to the process for selecting educational objectives. First and foremost, Tyler's model suggested curriculum developers to come up with broad objectives based upon these three sources: the students, the contemporary life beyond the classroom, and the course content. Once general objectives are identified, the next step is to refine them by an evaluation process that involves the educational and social philosophy of the educational institution and the psychology of learning. Instructional objectives are obtained as a result of the refinement and evaluation process proposed by Tyler's mode (Oliva, 2005). Bellack and Kliebard (1970) pointed out that among all the prescribed steps included in Tyler's model "the most crucial step . . . is obviously the first since all the others proceed from and wait upon the statement of objectives" (p. 57).

### **TABA'S MODEL**

The next model that will be discussed in this paper is Taba's model. This model is an inductive approach to curriculum development because it

starts with specifics and builds up to a general design (Viray and Gamit, n. d.). In addition, Taba's model is regarded "as a grassroots approach to curriculum development" (Oliva, 2005, p. 134). This model is believed to follow this approach because teachers should be those who take leadership in curriculum decisions and making rather than authorities and specialists. Taba's model recommends teachers to create detailed teaching-learning units (Oliva, 2005). The model involves a process consisting of these five major steps: creating the units of work to be studied, testing the units with students, adapting units as necessary after the testing, creating a framework to test to ensure that all material is covered in a clear and complete manner, and putting the unit of study into practice (The Commonwealth of Learning, 2000).

### **OLIVA'S MODEL**

Oliva can be regarded as a comprehensive model in nature in the sense that it uses ideas, concepts, and key features from important, well-known models of curriculum development, as those described above. Oliva (2005) provided a twelve-component systematic approach for curriculum making. Oliva broke down his model into two parts called the planning phase and the operational phase, which is a workable and helpful way to view the act of curriculum planning and decision making. Both of phases of Oliva's model contain steps, elements, and characteristics intended to provide guide along the process of planning, implementing, and evaluating school curriculum. His proposed process involves aligning student needs with their particular locality. Viray and Gamit (n. d.) asserted that Oliva's model was a step-by-step process that takes the curriculum planner from the sources of curriculum to evaluation. It is important to point out that the model under examination employs a deductive and prescriptive approach, as well as it gives special importance to the stages of planning, implementation, and evaluation,



the close relationship between curriculum and instruction, the distinctions between curriculum and instructional goals and objectives, and the reciprocal relationships among components (Oliva, 2005).

To sum up, Oliva (2005) stated that models were inevitably incomplete; therefore, they did not often contain every element and detail. In this regard Oliva's work may be fundamental in one's efforts to obtain a better understanding of the topic at hand by becoming aware that no model should be regarded as the ultimate design to be followed within the field of curriculum development. Oliva's work also leads us to be aware that not any model is universally accepted as basis for curriculum development throughout the years, and it is key for those who are interested in taking leadership in curricular decisions and curriculum making to become familiar with different models. Most importantly, we should not lose sight the notion that when designing or refining curriculum, it is key to follow sound guidelines and/or research-based criteria.

## **LEVELS OF CONTROL OF CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT**

When it comes to curriculum decision making and planning there are many levels or sectors that control the school curriculum. It is important to point out that curriculum specialists are not the only people who are involved in the task of curriculum development but teachers also have a role in the field. Both teachers and specialists work hand in hand across the different levels, including nation, region, state, district, school, grade level/ department, and classroom (Oliva, 2005).

### **CLASSROOM LEVEL**

At the classroom level, teachers have control over the curriculum despite the fact that the most important decisions about the curriculum

are already made by other people from the school, the district, the state/ the province, and the nation. We, as teachers, are familiar with the most common curricular decisions that consist of the selection of materials that align best with the prescribed course content, usage of preferred teaching strategies and methods, and the employment of assessment procedures for tracking student progress and performance (Oliva, 2005).

According to Oliva (2005), teachers conduct activities in curriculum development in several different ways on a daily basis. At the classroom level, curriculum design takes place when curricular goals and objectives are established, content is selected and revised, materials and resources are chosen, the scope of topics is decided, curricular materials are developed, plans are constructed, learning profiles are addressed, and amount of time is allotted for the topics and units to be taught. Therefore, it is evident that the act of teaching involves curriculum decision making, participating in shared decision making, gathering information for informed decisions, implementing decisions, and evaluating programs.

### **THE TEAM, GRADE, OR DEPARTMENT LEVEL**

This level refers to the notion that curriculum decision making involves collaborative work and require cooperative efforts. Curriculum development is shaped when teachers transcend the classroom setting and join other teachers. By doing so, curriculum planning takes a more organizational structure. Oliva (2005) pointed out teachers' participation in curriculum implementation and planning in a team work fashion beyond the classroom. This happens when "teachers . . . organized into self-contained units participate at the grade or department level" and share curriculum planning responsibilities



(Oliva, 2005, p. 55).

According to Oliva (2005), within a given grade level or particular department there are many curricular decisions that are made by the group members, having an impact on several classrooms at the school setting. Among the most important decisions noted by Oliva (2005) are the following: determining content for instruction, organizing course content, modifying instruction for exceptionalities, determining grade level or department objectives, choosing materials and resources to be used by teachers of the same department, writing departmental tests, creating curriculum materials for multiple classroom usage, reviewing standards that students need to accomplish, and evaluating programs, students, and teachers.

## **SCHOOL LEVEL**

School is the next level in relation to curriculum planning. This level is concerned with the notion that curricular decisions can be reached only at the schoolwide level, requiring each school to provide an approach for articulating and integrating curriculum. This process involves agreeing on curriculum decisions to be adapted by the school personnel as a whole. Oliva (2005) asserted that changes have shifted centralized patterns of curriculum making toward more responsibility and freedom for the schoolwide level. One of the reasons for this include the late 1990s movement that promoted private organizations and individuals to organize and operate. It is evident that achievement levels, organizational arrangements, student body, staffing, resources, students' motivation, school personnel's, parents' support, administrators' leadership skills, curricular emphases, practices to respond to the needs of the individual school and the particular locality differ from school to school within the same region, province, and district (Oliva, 2005).

When talking about curriculum decisions at the school level, we need to take into account the two main patterns of curriculum designing—centralized curriculum designing and decentralized curriculum designing. As stated by the Commonwealth of Learning (2000), a centralized curriculum designing pattern is one in which the content is decided upon by a central national office. The actual work in designing the curriculum may be completed by a contracted consulting company and the Ministry of Education. While the decentralized pattern of curriculum design occurs when the local authorities or individual states draft their own curriculum. In some developed countries such as Britain, the United States of America and Australia, local authorities or individual states develop the curriculum. More importantly, the manner in which the curriculum is designed determines who designs the curriculum in that country (The Commonwealth of Learning, 2000).

With regard to the schoolwide level, Peters (1976) commented that school boards are empowered with certain legal authority and are charged with overseeing the operation of local level schools. He went on to observe that school boards managed US schools and greatly determine the content and structure of curricula. Oliva (2005) pointed out that curriculum councils exist in many schools, and the councils take action upon adding new programs for the school, deleting and revising existing programs, conducting schoolwide surveys, evaluating the school's curriculum, choosing series of textbooks, planning for exceptional children, and many more. The Commonwealth of Learning (2000) added that actions taken at the schoolwide involve examining the subjects being taught along with the content, methodology and materials in use for different content areas.

## **THE SCHOOL DISTRICT LEVEL**

It is the next hierarchy on the topic of controlling levels of curriculum. School districts work



closely with individual schools so that no work is carried out in isolation concerning curricular decisions and curriculum planning. Typically, school districts are under the direction of school boards and superintendents; their work must be coordinated with a central district office. The establishing of curricular goals and objectives at the classroom level, grade/ department level, and individual school must be aligned with the overarching goals determined at the district level. At the districtwide level, teachers, administrators, supervisors, laymen, and, even sometimes, students gather together for curriculum planning. And they are recommended by their respective groups and/ or appointed by administrators and school principals. Individuals at the district level meet to observe many issues, including adding new programs for the district, evaluating districtwide programs, making recommendations for improvement, and reviewing learner achievement at various schools (Oliva, 2005).

### **PROVINCIAL/ STATE LEVEL**

In some countries, the regional level may be referred to as the provincial or state level, and the boundaries are determined on political bases. Representatives of each district communicate the districtwide-level concerns to their counterparts at the state/ province level; concerns are usually compiled for submission to the national level (The Commonwealth of Learning, 2000). It is worth noting that it is evident that curriculum development and revision take place through the state involvement, which obviously transcends the authority of school districts. Therefore, curricular decisions at the state level have a greater impact upon individual schools of the district. Because the state holds major power and authority over the US educational system (Oliva, 2005). Oliva (2005) observed that several different channels were involved in the work of curriculum development at the state level. At this level, the work of school personnel from different

districts of the state and the state department of education constitutes the most common professional channel for curriculum development under the control and support of the state.

### **NATIONAL LEVEL**

Peters (1976) stated that legislation and programs at the federal level had a great effect upon curriculum decision making, such as content, instructional materials, and student evaluation. In many countries, curriculum development is coordinated by ministries of education, under the supervision of a particular unit or division, while in other countries it is performed by a parastatal organization (The Commonwealth of Learning, 2000). In either case, the nationwide level of curriculum development is comprised of several different public, private, and professional curriculum activates; school personnel from the above-mentioned levels also have important roles in curricular activities at the national level. Most importantly, the department of education or the ministry of education of a country exercise a strong influence in the nationwide educational system and take leadership in key activities towards curriculum planning, implementation, and evaluation. Usually, efforts at the national level are concerned about gathering data, distributing information, providing guidance and support, funding projects, and paying out state money (Oliva, 2005).

### **INTERNATIONAL LEVEL**

The worldwide sector also has an influence within the field of curriculum development. By gaining membership in international professional organizations, curriculum developers and others, interested in taking leadership in curriculum making, become involved in curricular activities aimed at having far-reaching effects in the field. The major professional organizations that provide opportunities to have firsthand experiences with curricular-related activities



at the worldwide level are the following: the International Reading Association, the World Council for Gifted and Talented Children, the World Council for Curriculum and Instruction, the International Association for the Advancement of Curriculum Studies, Peace Corps, the Agency of International Development, the Council of International Exchange of Scholars, and UNESCO. Of course, this is not an exhaustive list, but aims to informing of the worldwide organizations that offer opportunities to exchange ideas on curriculum, develop an understanding of different countries' educational systems and problems, teach abroad, and conduct research (Oliva, 2005).

### **THE PROCESS OF CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT AND ITS MAJOR STAGES**

Before looking at the process of developing curriculum itself, it is imperative to understand the concept of curriculum development, as well as the importance of following a process for curriculum making and the rationale behind the selection of a model. According to Viray and Gamit (n.d.), models are intended to help educators, planners and administrators to conceptualize a process consisting of certain principles and procedures. Additionally, a model consists of interacting parts, which serves as a guide or procedures for action. Curriculum development is a process that continuously looks for better and more efficient means to educate people (Learningdomain, 2008). Additionally, Lunenburg (2011) pointed out that "curriculum development can be defined as the process of planning, implementing, and evaluating curriculum that ultimately results in a curriculum plan" (p. 1).

There are many models of curriculum development. Therefore, it is quite important to follow the key steps and/ or necessary components regardless of the model of our preference. It is advisable for teachers not to

restrict to one model only but be receptive to different types of models (Viray and Gamit, n.d.). Those who are interested in taking leadership in curriculum development are "encouraged to become familiar with various models, to try them out, and to select and develop a model that is most understandable and feasible to them and to the persons with whom they are working" (Viray and Gamit, n.d., p. 15). Moreover, Viray and Gamit (n.d.) pointed out that a model of curriculum development must accomplish these two key purposes: "1) suggests a system to follow; 2) serve as the framework for explanation of phases or components of the process for curriculum improvement" (p. 16). By examining models for curriculum development, we can also analyze the phases essential to the process. Most importantly, the curriculum must be aligned with the needs of the students, community and society, as well as it must be dynamic and adaptable to change and practical to be implemented into a particular locality (Viray & Gamit, n.d.).

Furthermore, Albilehi, Han and Desmidt (2012/2013) stated that it was important to transform the understanding of the meaning of curriculum development, since educators tended to believe that curriculum development pertained only to the domain of specialists and/ or it was under the responsibility of researchers and administrators. According to Albilehi, Han, and Desmidt (2012/2013), teachers needed to be encouraged to participate in curriculum development because of the practical experience it brings to their teaching career and with them and their personal involvement in the educational process. Therefore, teachers must understand that they play an important role in curriculum design because they lead the instructional practice and decision making in alignment with the established curriculum. In addition, teachers are those "who bridge the gap between what has been described in



a curriculum and what is actually being done in the classroom. By understanding a framework of curriculum development, teachers can 'make sense' of what they are doing and not just do it" (Albilehi, Han, & Desmidt, 2012/2013, p. 188).

The general stages in the curriculum development process are planning for curriculum, planning for instruction, and evaluation. Each stage has its own components. Planning for curriculum, the first stage, involves establishing aims, which are based on the educational philosophy of the group and/ or the institution. Then it is determined the model of curriculum development that best fits the needs of our locality and aligns with the established educational philosophy. After that, we need to define a rationale, that is, a reason and purpose for the particular discipline. It is the statement that justifies the specific course of study, and it includes what learners need and will achieve, what society needs and will gain, and what content is of importance and why.

The establishment of curriculum goals and objectives is the next component, which includes validation process. Within the field of curriculum development, a validation process consists of identifying if goals and objectives are acceptable, appropriate, and are measuring what they are intended to measure. Ideally, goals and objectives should be reviewed by different individuals, including laymen, students, teachers, administrators, curriculum experts, and experts in particular disciplines. The last component of this stage is to identify the needs of the curriculum through needs assessment; students, society, and subject matter are the central sources from where needs will be established (Morales, 2014b).

### **OLIVA'S MODEL IN RELATION TO THE CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT PROCESS**

The Oliva (2005) Model may be used as a

guiding model of curriculum development for novice teachers. For the purpose of this paper, the model will be described in relation to the general stages of the curriculum development process. The components of Oliva's model follow the general steps of the curriculum development process in a similar sequence through a systematic process that involves twelve components. The first components of the model align with the first stage of the curriculum development process stated above.

The components one and two of Oliva's model are concerned with the steps of the first stage of the curriculum development process, planning for curriculum. The process of Oliva's model of curriculum development starts by stating the aims of education and by determining the educational and psychological philosophies. In this model, the aims of education are developed from the needs of our particular society and the needs of individuals as well. The model also includes an analysis of the needs of the particular community where the school is situated, the needs of the learners who attend school within that specific community or locality, and the demands or necessities of the subject matter (Oliva, 2005). Oliva (2005) believed that it was key to treat the sources of curriculum from a general and specific perspective. In this respect he held the view that the needs of students from specific localities need to be addressed in the school's curriculum, because students' needs are not the same in a particular community than their needs in the entire society.

The next stage is planning for instruction; this stage is concerned with establishing the instructional goals and objectives, conducting a validation process, and deciding on instructional strategies (Morales, 2014b). This stage is conceived in Oliva's model in the following way: components three and four involve specifying curricular goals and objectives based upon



established aims and identified needs, which all were determined at the beginning of the model. In the model, distinctions between goals and objectives are stressed, as well as instructional goals and objectives are established for different levels and subjects. Besides, a growing level of specification regarding initial goals and objectives need to be attained. Once instructional objectives are specified, the selection of instructional strategies for classroom use comes into play (Oliva, 2005). The second stage of the curriculum development process includes up to the eighth component of Oliva's model.

The last stage of the process is evaluation, including assessing the instruction and the curriculum and conducting an evaluation in these three major domains: cognitive, psychomotor, and affective (Morales, 2014b). The cognitive domain is concerned with mental or intellectual skills and abilities; the affective domain involves feelings, values and attitudes; and the psychomotor domain consists of physical skills (Learningdomain.com 2008). In Oliva's model components between eight and twelve involve evaluation. First, this is done by having the curriculum workers begin preliminary selection of evaluation techniques. Ways of assessing student achievement and the effectiveness of the instructor are considered as well. The instructional phase of Oliva's model gives the curriculum worker opportunities to improve and extend the set of strategies aimed at evaluating student performance. Evaluating instruction is specifically performed at the component eleven of Oliva's model, while the evaluation of the entire curricular program is conducted at component twelve. It is important to keep in mind that in the model being analyzed components one, two, three, four, six, seven, eight, and nine constitute planning phases, while components ten, eleven, and twelve comprise operational phases. Both a planning and operational phase is carried out at component five (Oliva, 2005).

According to Oliva (2005), before the curriculum making begins, it is imperative to agree that the model of curriculum development to be selected must show the following key criteria: major components of the process, which includes planning, implementation, and evaluation; established, usual approach, which does not have fixed beginning and ending points; close relationship between curriculum and instruction; clear distinctions between curricular and instructional goals and objectives; reciprocal relationships among the components of the model; a cyclical pattern instead of a linear pattern; feedback lines; the possibility of entry at any point of the model cycle/ process; an internal consistency and logic; enough simplicity to be intelligible and feasible; and components shown in the form of a diagram or chart. All in all, the Oliva Model can be understood as a comprehensive systematic process for curriculum making in which curriculum development and a plan for instruction have a central role. By following the components of Oliva's model, in conjunction with the three general stages of the curriculum development process, curriculum planners can have an effective guide for developing a school's curriculum in a more consistent manner.

## **CLOSING COMMENTS AND CONCLUSIONS**

After key aspects of curriculum development have been analyzed in this paper, including social and educational forces that impact school curriculum, models of curriculum development, levels of controls of the school curriculum, the process of curriculum development, stages of curriculum development, and the Oliva Model in relation to the process and stages of curriculum development, readers could obtain a better understanding of curriculum development as a whole. More specifically, this work may significantly guide (novice) educators' future work in the field of curriculum design, as they began their professional career.



An increasing interest in the field of curriculum development needs to be accompanied with an active participation in the development of school curriculum. This will contribute to the creation of a responsive curriculum that addresses the needs of the students and society within today's educational context. Therefore, this paper came in handy regarding the above-mentioned interest, and it may have a significant contribution to those who are interested in either learning more about the topic or taking leadership in the field of curriculum development.

The key aspects of curriculum development addressed in this paper have led us to the conclusion that the work of curriculum development and curricular activities are not confined only to curriculum specialists and school administrators. On the contrary, on a daily basis, teachers are directly involved in activities closely related to curriculum development, such as planning lessons, selecting materials for classroom use, utilizing a variety of teaching techniques, strategies, and methods, and creating assessment procedures. Teachers' daily work has a significant role upon school curriculum, and they can have a greater impact upon the field of curriculum making as they learn about and reflect upon the important aspects discussed throughout this paper.

Last but not least, it is critical to develop a clear understanding of the stages of curriculum development consisting of planning for curriculum, planning for instruction, and evaluation as well as the social and educational forces that impact curriculum and various models of curriculum development before it is attempted to start working on curriculum making or design. By doing this, teachers at varied educational levels and curriculum workers will be able to carry out the work of curriculum development in a more effective way. This in turn will help them make informed decisions when they collaborate

and/or lead the development of sound curriculum within their own context settings or localities.

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