School curricula between modernity and postmodernity at primary schools: A study of concepts and perceptions

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Abstract:

Discussing primary school models is a thorny issue that expresses each compound of ideology, the formulation of educational policies, and education and global openness. This study clarifies the moderity curriculum model that depicts rationality at the top, and prints personality on individualism and pragmatism in the development of knowledge with its methodology which dominated the educational system by taking a distinct model of transforming children into commodities for marketing its future ambitions. The postmodernity reaction and criticism of individualism and pragmatism arise towards intellectual freedom to guide the pupil's scientific criticism to extract what is right from what is wrong to build a good future for the children of this world.

Keywords: School curricula; postmodernity; meta-curricula; future generation.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The picturing of modernity and its dimensions will open up ways to realize the point we have reached in today's timeline. Therefore, to conclude whether we are stepping into the postmodern phase or not, we approach in this study how far in the age of technology we have come? What our values are in it? What is our relationship with the world? What is the situation of Arab identity now?

As the primary curriculum embodies the saying: "Tell me how you made your curriculum, and I tell you your future generation", and by analyzing the contents of curriculum models, we know the extent to which the ideas and ideologies of modernity have arrived. Thus, we can provide future readings of all that comes from modern paradigms of future curricula, whether they are modernity or postmodernity, to reach a clear vision of the future generation.

Accordingly, this study raises the problem of primary curriculum models and whether they are based on a modernist model of rationality and pragmatism, or on a post-modernity model which is based on different scenarios of emancipation and modernization.

The importance of the study:

- Looking at the picture of modernity and postmodernity in the curriculum.
- The importance of understanding the relationships between curriculum, modernity, postmodernity.
- Understanding the curriculum and its response to society's changes.

Objectives of the study:

- Clarifying the difference between modernity and postmodernity curricula.
- Provide an overview of postmodern curriculum scenarios.
- Knowing the importance of primary school curricula and their powerful effects on children in this decade.

2. Conceptual introduction to curricula, modernity, postmoderity and their dimensions

2.1 The concept of modernity and its foundations

Karl Marx, Emil Dorkheim, and Max Weber explain that modernity embodies both the image of an integrated social format, and the features of a structured and secure industrial format, as they are are based on rationality at different levels and trends.

Modernity, as defined by Giddens, is characterized by some entirely different patterns of existence, life and beliefs than in the traditional stages. Changes in modernity are known for their acceleration, diversity and inclusiveness, particularly in the area of scientific and technological knowledge, as well as for the growth of effective communication between aspects of human life, and covering regions and areas that are geographically remote (Watfa, 2001, p. 96).

In addition, the Oxford English Dictionary defines it as the novelty of personality or style, as well as the intellectual tendency or social perspective that is characterized by departing from traditional cultural ideas, doctrines and values in favour of contemporary or radical values and beliefs (especially those of scientific and liberal rationality (Hunt, 2020, p. 47).

We can say that modernity is a stage in which values have shifted from constants rooted in individuals' minds to individual

values based on reason, where the only constant is change. In this context, approaches may be a link between the power of modernity and the ideas that brings about the centrality of mind, and the shift towards pragmatism and the entrenchment of these ideas in society.

2.2 The foundations and characteristics of modernity

Modernity as seen by Mohammed Mahfoud is based on the following characteristics:

- It is a stage reached by societies through the process of historical accumulation and it departs from the circle of historical guardianship imposed on the human mind in the dark.

- Human freedom and confirmation of the free role of the human person in various fields and issues of society based on human rights and the promotion of democratic values.

- Rationality, where the mind manifests itself in the various aspects of social and political existence, reflects the principles and values of enlightenment and in this context a series of important points about modernity are preserved including:

• Modernity is not imported from abroad, but it is a situation that flows from the very heart of society. This means that a state of historical development and accumulation within the historical data of social life sets the stage for modernity and its presence (Watfa, 2001, p. 104).

• Modernity's historical phase needs to provide the necessary cultural conditions for its attainment. It does not occur with the principle of coincidence, but rather a process of humanitarian action which requires a system of conditions.

• The importance of human awareness in the idea of modernity is confirmed, and the cultural presence of such awareness in subjectivity and objectivity is needed. The presence of various fields of life confirms the growing of rationality, enlightenment and ability to possess the subjective moment in the social consciousness. Modernity itself is recorded in multiple manifestations. One of the most important foundations and prerequisites underpinning the philosophical level can be pointed out below:

• The mind and its role in life are the beginning and end of modernity. The dominance of the mind and its importance constitute the true starting point and central foundation of modernity.

• Science plays a central role in the concept of modernity for its important role, and this role is complementary to the importance of reason and enlightenment. Scientific knowledge is at the core of our understanding of the world and its realities, regardless of the heritage and traditional knowledge that has prevailed in past times in the history of humanity.

At top of the perception of time as a conscious human movement, the notion of human progress is the origin of the idea of destiny which is determined by the will of mankind and it is the freedom to depart from the custody of time. It is the will that extracts itself from the inevitable grip of the circle of time. The right is a central circle in the origin of modernity, because it is derived from human will and not from the world of nature or its superpowers. This means that human beings constitute their will, freedom and the size of their presence.

• Man is the core of modernity: the process of proper modernization does not start with forms and quantitative indicators, but it starts with the core and the form which is the human being. Without changing his

culture, self-perception, and perception of the others, the process of modernization remains fake and does not reflect reality faithfully (Watfa, 2001, p. 105).

The universe is the source and the maker of the first truth, and ultimately, human activity is the image of the will that makes man's social image with the beginning and purpose of the truth .

In this context, Constantine Zarig believed that modernity is based on the following positions:

• The belief of the natural world as the real world because it is not a lost world, or just a bridge that we cross into the other world. It is an authentic world which deserves our attention and care.

• The belief of a man as the most important creature in the natural world, and he is the norm of all things and the object of existence. For this purpose, society must surround him with all reasons of care and protection, and provide him with the conditions of creativity and a free-dignified life. This is based on the premise that human beings are the agents in history in the fields of urbanization and development. He is a master and ruler for his existence.

• The belief of the mind as the source of man's superiority and uniqueness in the kingdom of all creatures. Therefore, the belief that man, through this mind, can develop science and knowledge for controlling existence and destiny. Louie Damon sees modernism as based on the following axes:

• Individualism (against individual solutions in groups' Holism).

• The primacy of the relation with things against the primacy of the relation with humans.

• Absolute distinction between the entity and the subject matter. (Watfa, 2001, p. 106)

All these foundations of modernity find a place in the curriculum through lessons delivered to the pupil in textbooks, where each of the preceding values can take an idea into educational content at a certain stage, and here is the strength of the primary school's special curriculum.

3. Definition of postmodernity

Postmodernity is a contemporary theory, and it was founded to assess and criticize other sociological theories which serve as a critical theory. It also attempt to reinterpret social realities, the stereotypes of human thought, and it aims to explore new foundations for the interpretation of human knowledge (Touil, 2018, p. 178)

The Modern-day Dictionary of Received Ideas says about 'postmodernity': 'This word has no meaning. Use it as often as possible.' With a few notable exceptions, cultural theorists have been following this advice. The term postmodernity has been used with astonishing frequency in a surprising variety of ways. Its popularity seems to derive from the way it can mean anything to anyone. However there is more to the proliferation of the term than this , It signifies participation in the debate about whether there has been a radical cultural transformation in the world, particularly within Western societies, and if so, whether this has been good or bad. To define the postmodern is not just to define a term, but it is to characterize the present age and to assess how we should respond to it (Gare, 1995, p. 4).

What are the defining features of the present age? The most widely accepted characterization of the postmodern condition is that

offered by Lyotard. It is 'the incredulity towards metanarratives that is, the incredulity to any metadiscourse which makes appeal to some huge narration, such as the emancipation of the rational, the liberation of the exploited, or the creation of wealth, which can legitimate all particular claims to knowledge (Gare, 1995, p. 4)

4. Definition of curriculum

The term curriculum refers to lessons and academic content taught in a particular school or course. In dictionaries, curricula are often defined as school-advanced courses, but they are rarely used in this general sense in schools. Depending on the pedagogical definition or use of the term, the curriculum usually refers to the knowledge and skills students are expected to learn, which includes expected learning standards or achievable learning goals. It includes also modules and lessons taught by teachers, tasks and projects given to students, books, materials, videos, presentations and readings used in the course, tests, assessments and other methods used to evaluate students' learning. (COLLINS DICTIONARY , 2022)

The curriculum is a combination of educational practices, learning experiences and assessment of students' performance designed to produce and evaluate targeted learning outcomes for a particular cycle.

The curriculum is also defined as a detailed plan for policy makers' instructions. Sociologists of education and school curriculum theorists confirm that the primary school curriculum is the most important in which its content is highly influenced by the development of cognitive, moral and social aspects and even the political and economic dimensions of the governing ideologies.

5. Foundations of school curricula

There are a number of foundations on which the curriculum is formulated, built and developed, which are considered essential, as they are derived from the importance of the school and society.

5.1 Historical foundations

Ancient curricula in education have been influenced by concepts originated from theories of pedagogical theories of the antiquities. The theory of human mental value is the dominant pedagogical theory, so that the pupil's acquisition of knowledge and mental information was developed, while historical foundations are as important in modern curricula as history is for all nations (Manasiriyia, 2018, p. 31).

5.2 Philosophical foundations

It is a set of educational opinions and ideas, developed by philosophers in order to prepare anything. Philosophical foundations are clearly reflected in the philosophy of education adopted by the nation through the referential meanings including religious language, heritage, natural sciences, public logic, and cosmic truth. (Manasiriyia, 2018, p. 31).

The curriculum has gone through three stages which are the old philosophical foundations, freedom philosophical foundations, and modern philosophical foundations. There is a close and old connection between philosophy and education. Most philosophers in ancient, middle and modern times start with philosophy and end with the philosophy of education. Socrates has been saying that: philosophy and education are two different manifestations of one thing that represents the philosophy of life, and the other represents the way this philosophy is implemented (Manasiriyia, 2018, p. 31).

5.3 Social foundations

Due to the evolution of societies and the emergence of many delicate and narrow disciplines, life has become complicated and the family is unable to raise its children. Some institutions have been established in order to fulfill the message of the educational family and achieve the goals that individuals find important and essential for its survival and continuity. Therefore, the social foundations of the curriculum are concerned with the school curriculum and are derived from the values and beliefs of society to represent its customs and behavioral patterns of the community, as well as all the knowledge that society is witnessing and has remained as unframed knowledge. The school curriculum is more effective in equipping with varied social knowledge into a pupil's cognitive scientific framework (Manasiriyia, 2018, page 37).

5.4 Psychological foundations

The child is an important and valuable thing in life, satisfying his or her needs is no less than satisfying the needs of the society in which he or she lives, and it is; therefore, necessary to know the psychology of the child or the pupil to whom the curriculum will be prepared. In fact, knowledge of his needs, his tendencies and desires, his motivation to learn and how to grow, and facilitate his mission in life. This calls for the inclusion in the school curriculum of a variety of images, knowledge and activities that absorb the pupils' negative potential, and prompt them to work actively and break the routine by diversity (Manasiriyia, 2018, page 37).

5.5 Cognitive and Value Foundations

These foundations contribute to giving sufficient information to differentiate the content of curricula when testing and planning. The curriculum is preferred depending on the value learned from each curriculum, as well as the accuracy of the information contained in the curriculum. In fact, the school curriculum approaches the pupil's

knowledge by exploring the latest, most important, and most effective (Manasiriyia, 2018, page 38).

6. The importance of the curriculum in the educational system

The curriculum is the society's means of building a new generation capable of advancing, developing and solving its problems in education, and this is can be done through the implementation of educational curricula with clear objectives to view the curriculum with its components (objectives, content, methods, educational methods, accompanying activities and evaluation) should be an integrated system with different subsystems. Each of these systems is essential for a set of subsystems that are in a state of interaction (taking and giving) between them, and that such interaction has important implications for the educational process (Tamimi, 2020, p. 63).

7. Modernization curricula and pupils' ambitions

According to the curriculum modernist, curriculum models indicate the production of mechanized knowledge that is tested and verified. Pragmatic philosophy has laid the foundation of curriculum systems to produce people who are placed in pre-defined locations in the production system. Consumption and pupils with free will and choices to achieve themselves are sacrificed to a rational, technocratic development system. The conscious and unconscious mind is programmed through the experience it has developed to feed into its curricula consistent with current policies (Koutselini, 2006).

Modern approaches are designed to create one's own prospects and guide future aspirations in a pragmatic manner in order to serve the ideological and economic goals as we live in a globalizing world.

As social efficiency advocates tell the story of a methodology such as the aggregation line of children as raw materials and as marketable products. Modernists' curricula are non-differentiated which see students as a total involved superficially in routine activities. Teachers simply perform predetermined routine activities and are as far away from the task as their students (Koutselini ‹2006).

Generally speaking, the teachers of the primary school also participate in a routine role to enhance the impact and results of the planned curriculum and to reach the goal through an integrated system that enhances the outcome.

8. Postmodernity as a new reaction

The effects of modernity led contemporary societies to make a postmodernist reaction against the rule of rationality, which is the opinion of experts who lack the philosophical spirit and view as a consumed product. The postmodern movement since 1960's has sought to overcome the so-called desperation of modernization, which embodies contemporary public education and abolishes its personality, as well as to fragment the human experience under the control of the experimental model, self-alienation and the world. It violates it against bureaucratic rule-based obligations at all levels and rejects power in conjunction with the authority's decisions (Koutselini, 2006, p. 90).

The proposal for postmodernity curriculum is to go beyond rationality, where the new methodology model must be based on modernism. In fact, modernization, where humanity and universality are defined by the language of the educational framework, and where each child acquires personality and creates knowledge, and their presence in the world. There is no specific determination of

postmodernity curriculum, but some efforts can be summarized as follows:

-Openness is the main feature of supernatural modernity that goes beyond the inevitable closed system of physical realities and supports change, interaction and transactions. Supernatural modernity also involves a shift in the way we think about the human relationship in the world. This shift goes beyond a sequential and measurable understanding of the universe and enhances the experience of a network of relationships.

Experiences and reflections emphasize on the process rather than the results. Thus, the modern metaphysical model in the curriculum calls into question cognitive and stereotypical assumptions in all fields (Koutselini, 2006, p. 90).

Therefore, the postmodernity model of the curriculum calls for the assumptions of knowledge and introversion in all fields, and the quality of the postmodernity curriculum, or as the modern supermaterial curriculum promotes, in facilitating the relationship between the person and the world according to the protagonist model (Koutselini, 2006, p. 91).

The concepts of modernity and postmodernity, imposed on the curriculum scheme and its non-stylistic design, are taken into account in philosophical schools. The elements should be taken into account when designing curricula within the framework of the concepts of modernity and postmodernity, especially in developing societies, cannot go as far as modernity and postmodernity in developed societies (soar, 2015, p. 650) .

9. Perceptions of postmodernity approaches

As a way of life and thinking, modernity emerges as a modern global movement aimed at decriminalizing knowledge, supporting scientific thought, and organizing the state and school in a rational way. The support of expertise, measurement, experimentation and measurable linear and sequential curriculum development models help the search for practical usefulness and establish understandable structures in an uncertain and unexpected world. A world in which curricula gradually become the field of experts who develop the technocratic approaches, procedures and models through which the system's effectiveness aims to achieve predetermined objectives and actions. Likewise, teaching was seen as a set of measurable and realistic skills and techniques. (Koutselini ،2006)

However, Foucault's modernization movement set the mind as a fundamental rule, and established new boundaries for human communication and creativity (Koutselini, 2006).

Basic curricula within the framework of postmodernism concepts

1. Incorporate in the basic curriculum a level of sober knowledge and culture that defines the student as the concept of science, philosophy and give a relative role in solving human problems and society without overstating this role at the expense of man and his environment.

2. The educational curriculum focuses on multiculturalism, open thinking, tolerance and acceptance of the other, respect for human humanity, cooperation with others to coexist in a human and one-universe village, as if people are neighbors in one world.

3. Inclusion in educational curricula of religious knowledge, religious beliefs, and moral values by the scientific and technological system. This is for to achieve the humanization of technology and the value of knowledge in the total reliance on science, technology and the mind in human

life.

4.   Introduce information technology into educational curricula, and make it a basic culture and introduce it in cognitive structures of teaching so that pupils can adapt to cultural innovations and technology (Colin Lankcheer, 2001).

5.   Promote scientific and social tendencies and trends among primary school pupils through curriculum methods to help them accept the idea of disparity between peoples' social disparities and reject the idea of strict mechanical conformity in social construction

6.   Free pupils from the power of educational discourse and bullying through linguistic methods and introduce new uses to improve students' awareness of real problems in order to contribute to its development and advancement.

7.   Introducing modern scientific discoveries in educational curricula in order to adapt cultures and coexist with cultural, scientific, informational and technological developments to help students interpret and adapt life's phenomena for the benefit of people and society. (Aslanarjoun, 2007).

10. Post-curriculum scenarios

The following scenarios have not been formally framed, but provided according to a writer means of reflection on the post-modern state of the basic curriculum of primary pupils, especially as they have a significant impact on pupils' composition.

10.1 Scenario 1

In globalization, the West raises the idea of the need to keep pace with the changes imposed by globalization, as a result of its transformation and change of the world's economic system and the basic needs of the world. Therefore, the pupils of the primary level do

not accept or invest, but deal with them seriously and cautiously to pick up positive and negative criticism. That is, when a pupil is aware of the system of globalization and its dangers, we build a generation which is aware of what is negative and what is positive

10.2 Scenario 2

This model is based on the need for pupils to learn about the economics of global information and how the world becomes the knowledge industry. This is achieved by developing ideal models that shape children's prospects in their future to be beyond one of the makers of this knowledge.

10.3 Scenario 3

Knowledge and composition: at the basic stage, emphasis should be placed on national curricula shifting from knowledge to knowledge management and modifying primary curricula by introducing English and natural sciences to avoid commodifying knowledge (Lavinia NADRAG, 2015).

10.4 Scenario 4

Environmental sustainability: Postmodernity basic education curricula should focus on the development of sustainable environmental and development topics for pupils and make them more aware of the environment, its importance, its harm and its achievable contribution.

10.5 Scenario 5

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Information Technology: the information revolution requires new kinds of free learning for pupils and restricted techniques towards open and unlimited learning. This is what some developed countries like Japan have begun to do (Lavinia NADRAG, 2015).

11. CONCLUSION

At the end, we can say that the curriculum has kept pace with modernity as it will with postmodernism. Modernity in the curriculum has made students occupational projects tailored to the needs of the current economy. Therefore, modernity or postmodernity curricula are a reaction to new curricula. The post-modernity curriculum of primary schools must contain the basic principles of postmodernity in the areas of technology and sustainable development, as well as make human beings free and adjust their perception towards their relationship with the world.

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