The Critical Review of the Modern Ethiopian Education Philosophy in Different Regimes Gelan Gagura (MA), Lecturer in Educational leadership and Management, College of Education, Hawassa University, Hawassa, Ethiopia

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Abstract

The general objective of this critical review is to scrutinize the philosophical basis of modern Ethiopian education. To achieve this objective, conventional qualitative content analysis methods adhering to the naturalistic paradigm were employed. Peer debriefing, triangulation from different articles and negative case analysis were used to establish credibility. To come up with a relevant recommendation, both African indigenous and western-oriented educational philosophies were discussed. Based on a review of educational policies, proclamations and topically related articles, the values of philosophy are overlooked, deemphasized and have not been clearly stated in education proclamations or policy and other documents, consciously or unconsciously. The education system in Ethiopia has been derived by political ideology and the Euro-centric education system. Identifying an appropriate education philosophy, clearly communicating it with stakeholders and stating it in national education policy is required from ministry of education. Furthermore, the instigation of the Africa (Ethiopian) indigenous education philosophy with the social re-constructivism philosophy of education is needed. This is due to the fact that, in comparison to other philosophies, this one has well-developed assumptions, principles and theories regarding the influence of education in diverse societies like Ethiopia and is sensitive to global issues as part of the larger social order.

*Keywords**: Education Philosophy, Indigenous Knowledge, Western Education, Education*

1. Introduction

Education as the engine of national progress must be built on a solid philosophical foundation and the plant of education draws its nourishment from the soil of philosophy (Ekanem, 2014). The reason for this is that philosophy is a critical examination of reality characterized by rational inquiry that seeks the truth in order to achieve wisdom. Educational philosophy is a branch of philosophy that emerged from the intersection of philosophy and education that studies education through philosophical lenses (Dash, 2015). Our worldviews define our paradigms in terms of the ontological, epistemological and axiological aspects of education. A significant and meaningful change at all levels of our education system requires reconsidering our view of education and knowledge.

The philosophy of education serves several purposes (Dash, 2015). Similarly, Saragih (2012) claims that the philosophical foundation of education explains how a nation's educational system is influenced by its philosophy and its contribution to the field of education, with particular reference to the school setting, curriculum, role of the teacher and nature of the discipline. In general, the philosophy of education, in other words, is a landmark for making sense and setting goals. It should be noted that education philosophy is a touchy subject in the rest of the world right now (Nalivaiko N.V. 2012). Ethiopia is not exceptional in this.

Ethiopia, with its diverse cultural groups has its own calendar, writing, art, music, poetic forms and numerical system. This seems to have laid a foundation to establish traditional education for the purpose of transmitting this cultural heritage to the next generation. In addition, the introduction of different religions into Ethiopia has also led to the introduction of religious education in the country. These social and cultural foundations were influential factors that made the philosophy of Ethiopian education the training of the child in the beliefs and social values of society (Solomon, 2019).

The philosophical pillars of the Ethiopian Church-based traditional education are deeply rooted in the ideals of religion. The nature of man, the nature of truth, man's relationship with God, etc., constitutes the foundation for how education is understood and its roles are defined. In summary, the

main concept is that God is at the centre of every aspect of human life both in the body and in the soul. Knowledge and wisdom are from God and human beings are receivers. God installs some innate physical and intellectual attributes in human beings. It is the individual's responsibility to initiate, cultivate and expand that treasure through learning and then to apply it in the metaphysical realm. The individual is the means for the fulfilment of the grand design of the supernatural (Wagaw, 1990; & Woldegiyorgis, 2017). Similarly, Dagne (2015) summarized the tenets of traditional education in Ethiopia: a) this world is temporary; the purpose of one's life on earth is to be prepared for the eternal life to come after death. b) Because knowledge comes from God, it does not change, it does not improve, it is objective and universal. c) A student's personal desires and needs must be subdued while remaining obedient and disciplined. d) Because the purpose of education (church-based) is to impart eternal spiritual knowledge and service (religious) it is unconcerned with vocational skills.

Although the church continued to provide religious education since the 4th century, there was a felt need for modern education towards the end of the 19th century. Ethiopia had become a target for colonizers. Minilik II was interested in halting any colonizing movement against his state through diplomatic lines. To this end, there was a felt need to train young Ethiopians in western diplomacy, western languages and ideas so that they could represent the nation in international diplomatic circles. The establishment of a centralized government system necessitated the training of young Ethiopians to run the various government organs. c) Minilik II instituted numerous innovations in Ethiopia, including the national currency, telecommunications, postal service, state bank, hospitals and hotels. All these innovations required the training of skilled manpower pertinent to the demands of each of these institutions. d) The emperor's interest in education was not for its own sake but rather to use it as an instrument to make new things. Traditionally, males were the sole recipients of education. The inclusion of girls in the proclamation in itself is a step forward (Woldegiyorgis, 2017). Since the proclamation was issued in 1906, it has encouraged the people to give greater emphasis to modern education.

To this end, Minilk II opened the first modern government school in the country in 1908 with the opening of Menelik II School in Addis Ababa (Kiros, 1990). Following this, modern education in Ethiopia has been passed through various chapters under different foreign influences like Italy, Britain, America, the former East Germany and the USSR. first chapter (1908-1935), second chapter (1935-1944), which was called the no education period, third chapter (1941-1974), fourth chapter (1974-1991), fifth chapter (1991-2018) and sixth chapter (2018) up to now (Ali and Shishigu, 2020).

Despite the fact that Ethiopia began modern education more than 110 years ago, the application of philosophical categories in education has a limited history (Girma, 2013). Thus, this paper scrutinizes the critical review of the modern Ethiopian education philosophy during different regimes. The following questions guided the review:

1. Did Ethiopia have a clearly stated education philosophy in different regimes in educational proclamation or policy documents?

2. What is/are the driving forces of Ethiopian education philosophy?

2. Conceptual Framework

2.1 African Indigenous Education Philosophy

African indigenous education did not develop in a vacuum; it had a philosophical basis on which it was built. Having looked at the main characteristics of African indigenous education, let's examine its philosophical basis (Ocitti, 1973; Ebot-Ashu, 2016; Ali and Shishigu, 2020).

Preparedness (Preparation): The principle of a preparing philosophy implied that the role of learning and teaching was to equip boys and girls with gender-specific skills in order to prepare for their distinct roles in society. Children were prepared to take on adult accountabilities in the family, tribe or clan. These are cultural, social, economic and political roles. Currently, this does not imply that there should be a distinction between gender roles in terms of profession. Education, on the other hand should encapsulate citizens' future careers (Mushi, 2009).

Communalism: In African traditional education, all members of society owned things in common and applied the communal spirit to life and work. In communalism, community spirit is taught. Education was indeed an essential element of culture and history. African indigenous education was community-oriented and geared toward solving the problems of its people. In traditional education, children inherit knowledge and wisdom from their parents, community and traditional teachers through participation in group activities (Ocitti, 1973; Letseka, 2000).

Perennialism was a philosophical approach that required children to learn in order to perpetuate the culture and assumed that education was a means for preserving and maintaining cultural heritage. Knowledge must not be supposed to allow deteriorating and vanishing. If culture disappears completely, the entire society vanishes spiritually. As indigenous education is related to survival, it becomes the main asset and social capital that needs to be maintained. To ensure continuity, children learn and practice our culture. Indeed, education should incorporate the indigenous knowledge of the community to help live in

harmony with other societies (Banda and Morgan, 2013).

Holisticism or multiple learning: It is an educational philosophy that considers the learning of all societal activities by an individual (Collins, 2004). Holism underpins an indigenous understanding of human nature and the dimensions of the person, which include the emotional, physical, intellectual and spiritual. Under this philosophical foundation, the learner acquired and mastered a variety of skills and they were not allowed to specialize in a particular occupation or there was very little room for specialization. The holistic nature of education will enable young people to acquire a variety of skills that make them productive in many ways, thus making students all-rounded (Morcom, 2017).

"Hatatism": The Hatata is a philosophical treatise that emerged in the context of religious disputes and controversies, introducing a philosophy that is critical of religion and conventional conceptions of knowledge and truth and has serious implications for social, political and ethical philosophy by Zera Yacob (Merawi, 2017). In his work, Zera Yacob created a distinctive

indigenous philosophy-the Hatata-inspired by religious controversies and disputes over the nature of true faith in contemporary Ethiopia. In this work, he grappled with questions of religious disputes and mutual coexistence; the relationship between ethics and rationality; the laws of man, reason and God and social and political issues, among others. Through an interrogation of Zera Yacob's Hatata, it is reflected that (1) Zera Yacob's philosophy, by developing a system of philosophy guided by the light of reason, challenges Western stereotypes of Africa and Africans as primitive, barbaric and uncivilized; (2) The Hatata founded a logical and reasonable foundation for ethics that could be applied to everyday moral quandaries; and (3) the Hatata emphasized the notion of religious pluralism, which could be used to settle religious disputes and controversies at this point in time (Merawi, 2017).

This shows Africans' metaphysical beliefs, axiological values, and epistemological foundations that formed the foundation of indigenous education are depreciated as superstition by western educational philosophy. As a result, Western thinking dominates colonial education, even in non-colonial countries like Ethiopia. This philosophy and the education based on it are alien to Ethiopian students because their worldview and culture differ from the students' and community's real-world culture. Hence, the remedy will be to return to the source and inculcate the indigenous philosophy (Ali and Shishigu, 2020).

○ **Western Based Educational Philosophy**

According to Ornstein & Hunkins (1993), their most remarkable characteristics are commonly acknowledged educational philosophies, discussed below.

Idealism: For idealists, reality is made up of absolute truth. Truth is perfect and eternal, not found in the world of matter. The source of all knowledge is God. They believe that we can't rely on our senses as they deceive us. It seems like religious education and the aim of education is the transmission of cultural heritage. The teacher is a role model to be imitated by students and teaching is done through lecturing. Search knowledge by question and answer. This influence has been manifested in our education system. Students are tested to ensure that they achieve the required goal. Students read,

memorize and try to mimic. They search for the truth through ideas. However, an important aspect of idealism is that education must provide students with good wisdom, discipline, order and self-control (Shishigu, 2015).

Realism: For realists, the reality is made up of natural laws and facts. All knowledge is gained through sense organs and reasoning. We perceive the actually existing physical world. The goal of education, for realists, is to equip students with knowledge and skills that will be used to understand their environment. Realism is somewhat of an improvement over idealism on the continuum because reality and truth come from science and art, and they let students search for truth using their own senses rather than ideas. But it is not without weakness; the major limitation is that it is too dependent on the sense organs (Shishigu, 2015).

Essentialism asserts that the school has the duty to preserve culture and transmit it to the next generation. Teachers should teach validated facts to children and adolescents so that they can develop their cognitive abilities by memorizing these facts. It is as

such because, for civilizations to be furthered, human beings must learn the pre-learned facts and past experiences. This philosophy puts the emphasis on the teacher and subject matter. It advocates a student-centred approach where the teacher functions as a guide. The emphasis in this philosophy is on the teacher and the subject matter. The individual should relate the necessary knowledge to life, thus attaching meaning to it (Ergün, 2009; and Ercan, 2014).

It is a philosophy that encourages people to find processes that work in order to achieve their desired ends. The main theme of pragmatism is that an individual must adapt to the constantly changing world. They study the past, but they are generally more interested in contemporary issues and in discovering solutions to problems in the present day. This notion influences the educational system these days in that the focus of education is to solve current problems. The goal of education for pragmatists is growth and a better life. Education has a moral influence and should play a vital part in helping us to become the kind of moral people who are interested not only in promoting our own development, but

also in promoting the development of others. This philosophy influences and opens doors for modernization and post-modernization. An important feature is that solving problems scientifically and adapting to the changing environment is important (Ergün, 2009).

Social re-constructionism: In the re-constructionism philosophy, education is considered as a means of transformation. The main aim of education is to build world civilization, ensure peace and welfare, bring change through practice, and gain values such as love, cooperation, and stability. The aim of the school, in particular, is to reconstruct and reorganize society (Ekanem, 2014).

By focusing on the social problems of contemporary societies, social reconstruction educational philosophers strongly contend that reconstruction and transformation of societies should be the central functions of education, educational institutions, and teachers. Hence, proponents argue that society, societal issues, and social reform should be at the forefront of any educational agenda. For social re-constructionist educators, educational institutions should always strive to help students understand these societal problems so that they will later become major actors in the social reconstruction process (Dewey, 1916; Counts, 1932; Brameld, 1971; Ellis, 2004; Hill, 2006; Schiro, 2013).

If educational policies and practices give due attention to society, societal issues, social justice, and social reform, with appropriate curricula, pedagogy, and competent teachers having the spirit of society in mind, social reconstructionist contend, better societies that could benefit all members of a society, on the basis of equality and equity, can be established. They also advocate for a curriculum that emphasizes sensitive global issues as a component of the larger social order. In this regard, they maintain that understanding of other nations and their cultures is of paramount significance. For this purpose, they cherish the incorporation of an international component in the national curriculum (Brameld, 1971; Ornstein & Hunkins, 2004; Russell, 2012; Ellis, 2006; and Schiro, 2013).

2. Materials and Methods

To achieve the objective of this article, conventional qualitative content analysis methods adhering to the naturalistic paradigm were employed to describe a phenomenon. With a conventional approach to content analysis, relevant theories or other research findings on phenomena are addressed in the discussion section of the study (Kondracki & Wellman, 2002; Krippendorff, 2004; and Kübler-Ross, 1969).

For this critical analysis, the reviewer relied on extensive empirical investigations of Ethiopia's history of education, curriculum, and education policy documents in various regimes. These were critically examined in order to situate the arguments, conclusions, and recommendations within a larger corpus of philosophical and critical thinking knowledge. To establish credibility, peer-debriefing, extended engagement, persistent observation, triangulation, negative case analysis, referential adequacy, and member checks were used (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

As with reading a novel, data analysis begins with reading all of the data repeatedly to achieve immersion and a sense of the whole (Tesch, 1990). Following that, the reviewer approaches the text by taking notes on his or her initial impressions, thoughts, and analysis. As this process continues, labels for codes that reflect more than one key thought emerge. These are frequently derived directly from the text and serve as the initial coding scheme. The codes are then classified into categories based on how closely they are related to one another. These are used to group and organize codes into meaningful groups (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996; Patton, 2002).

The findings in this review were presented in narrative form. Narrative approaches to the analysis and presentation of data are invaluable in that they interpret people's stories. Elliott (2005) further argues that a narrative provides a relatively accurate description of experiences through time. Furthermore, the narrative offers an insight into how the narrator has chosen to interpret the events recounted. The discussions include a summary of how the findings from the review contribute to knowledge in the area of interest and suggestions for practice, teaching, and future research.

Findings and Discussion

Ethiopia is one of the oldest countries in the world, with about 3000-years of history as a nation-state (Bishaw, 2012). Ethiopia had its own traditional system of education before the introduction of modern education in 1908 (Henze, 2000). When we look at its history, the beginning of education in Ethiopia can be traced back to the period of the Axumite civilization. Until the turn of the 19th century, Ethiopian Orthodox Church schools and Muslim mosques took on the responsibility of running traditional religious and indigenous education for their respective subjects (Binayew & Tadele, 2016).

The lag of church and mosque education in being responsive to the material needs of the nations led the way to modern education, which started under Emperor Menelik II in 1908. Thus, in this section, the reviewer tried to critically analyze the modern Ethiopian education philosophy during different regimes. To limit the review, the review focused on Menelik II and Empress Zewuditus' education proclamations, education policies of the imperial (1941–74), socialist (1974–91), and the federal system of government (1991–current) to understand the education philosophy and its implications for educational development in Ethiopia.

4.1 Education Philosophy in Ethiopia during the Reign of Menelik II & Empress Zewuditu

Minilik II, Ethiopia's then-emperor, was so convinced of the importance of modern education that he issued the first education proclamation in 1906 (Mengistie, 2019). Consequently, he declared the historic educational proclamation in 1906, saying:

> *In other countries, people not only learn, but they also create new things. As a result, starting today, all six-year-old boys and girls must attend school. As for parents who would not send their children to school, when the former die, their wealth, instead of pass to children, will be transferred to the government. My government will prepare the schools and avail the teachers.*

Two other points from the preceding proclamation are also worth noting. The first one is that the emperor's interest in education was not for its own sake but rather to use it as an instrument to make new things. The second point was that the inclusion of "girls" in the educational proclamation is a step forward in and of itself, as traditional educational practices were the sole domain of men (Mengistie, 2019).

Although Menelik II valued vocational education and encouraged the advancement of science and technology, a greater emphasis was placed on languages (Pankhurst, 1974), and its objective was to cultivate a generation of Ethiopians who are fluent in foreign languages to properly serve as administrators, translators and technicians (Wubet Kifle, 2012). As a result, the curriculum included French, Italian, English, Arabic and Amharic (Birhanu and Demeke, 1995). Learners were not engaged in a curriculum that could make them innovative and problem solvers.

Education has been closely associated with ideological tents and associates the education philosophy with its own state ideology (Girma, 2012). Emperor Menelik II strongly believed that the building of Ethiopia as a modern state, as well as the strengthening of existing political power, necessitated the introduction of modern education (Bishaw, 2012). Despite his enthusiastic proclamation, the achievement on the ground in expanding schools and in making new things was small. Of course, there was a tendency to shift from idealism to basics (existentialism), but it failed to achieve the desired aim, i.e., creating new things, due to its foreign-based curriculum and teaching staff and the conservative nature of both the church and the people. The impetus for advancing education was largely halted by the death of Menilik II in 1913. After Menelik's death, the more religious and conservative Ethiopian leader, Empress Zewditu, came to power in Ethiopia, and she made an education proclamation in 1929 (Mengistie, 2019 and Ayalew, 2000) stating:

> *All those who do not send their sons and daughters to school so that they can learn writing and reading skills which are necessary to identify the good and evils*

and develop fear of God and the king, will be punished 50 Birr. The money solicited from punishment will be given to the church for the feeding and clothing of the poor. . . All God fathers should advice their religious followers ....to send their children to school and if they refuse to do so they have to report to local authorities as they have violated the proclamation. . The teachers are requested to teach children. .All church leaders in the rural areas apart from their religious preaching should teach reading and writing.

However, the type of education envisioned was more traditional church education, with the primary goal of education being the mastery of foreign languages (Binayew & Tadele, 2016). The proclamation stated at this point, "... after learning writing and reading to secure money for his life, the child must learn one of the handicrafts available in our country" (Ayalew, 2000).

Empress Zewditu is also noted for trying to give children free universal primary education and in her attempt to include vocational training, which enabled youngsters to secure money for livelihood (Mengistie, 2019 & Wuhibegzer, 2013). Actually, vocational training was included in the education system. A girls' school was also established to address the issue of gender inequality in access to education (Bahiru, 2002; Bishaw, 2012).

In a nutshell, although it is not explicitly stated in Menelik II's 1906 and Empress Zewuditu's 1929 historical education proclamations, the reviewer concludes that the idealism philosophy of education is from old Western philosophy, and the preparation concerns of African philosophy predominated at the time. The reason for this claim is that education was founded on established legend, was dominated by religious views, required strict spiritual discipline, and provided little or no material order, a focus on language (reading and writing), and rote memorization of content. The purpose of education is to develop a fear of God and the king, as well as to distinguish between good and evil and equip students with the wisdom of goodness,

discipline, order and self-control is another indication. According to the proclamations, all six and seven-year-old boys and girls should attend school in order to demonstrate a preference for the preparation philosophy. In this regard, it is worth noting how the Emperor and Empress attempted to transform indigenous education into western-style modern education while retaining Ethiopian values. However, the education system was primarily focused on strict spiritual discipline, with little or no emphasis on material order and irrelevant to the material needs of the students as well as time constraints, and it failed to achieve its goal or objective during this time.

4.2 Education Philosophy in Ethiopia in Haile Selassie I Regime

The accession of Emperor Haile Selassie to power, first as regent in 1916 and then as Emperor in 1930, was a watershed moment in Ethiopian education, aimed at enriching Ethiopian civilization (Mengistie, 2019). However, there was an enormous disparity between the educational program and the needs arising from educators, intellectuals, university students, government officials, conservatives, and students, often echoed by parents, for further improvement of the educational system (Binayew & Tadele, 2016). As a response, the Education Sector Review (ESR) was officially constituted in 1971, and in 1972, it approved a 4+4+4 education structure (Mengistie, 2019). Furthermore, until the end of this era, the government attempted to design political, economic, and educational policies that were similar to those of the West, America, and Britain (Wagaw, 1990).

This is due to the fact that, as stated by Mesay, the educational policy lacked clear direction and national objectives. They lack clearly articulated goals and clearly defined national educational ideology and alien curriculum material (Binayew & Tadele, 2016). Girma et al. (1974) discovered that, in support of this idea (a) Ethiopian education lacked a philosophy, and its goals and objectives were poorly implemented. (b) The use of foreign curriculum materials, teaching methodologies, and approaches required adapted instructional materials from other countries c) Ethiopian requirements; in particular the education system did not treat them well in terms of culture and language. (d) The social environment Ethiopian students' needs were

not clearly stated. The inequalities in education opportunities in the past had to be evaluated. And in the 1960s, the system of education was found to be less relevant to the needs of society and the country (Binayew & Tadele, 2016 and Mengistie, 2019).

According to the preceding discussion, there was no clearly stated educational philosophy in the imperial regime from the beginning until its demise (1916–1974). The change in structure and the introduction of the new curriculums followed by inconsistent educational objectives is an indication of this. Another reason is that four different countries have had their hands in Ethiopian education, i.e., the French (until 1934/35), Italy (1935-1941), British (1942-1955), and American (the 1950s). Not only that, but due to their interference, Ethiopians totally eradicated social values from the curriculum and led youths to wear western hats and engulf Euro-centric curricula, which has the power to eradicate social values from the country. Intellectuals, the fruits of Eurocentric modern education, became mired in identity and meaning crises with no clear ideology as a result of distancing themselves from traditional beliefs and

Ethiopian values as well as ignoring Ethiopian society, whom they considered backward. In their quest for ideology, students exposed to European liberal values became idealists or extremists, while others became radical socialists (Negash, 2006).

Contrary to the early calculations by the Emperor, the education system that ignored Ethiopian moral and cultural values made the students disrespectful of their country's values, tradition, and emperor. Rather, they turned against him and became instrumental in the downfall of the old imperial regime (Wagaw, 1999). The education system that was authorized and sanctioned by the Imperial system was not in any way engaged in the modernization of the Ethiopian political culture (Negash, 2006). The educational system was not expected to succeed due to a lack of materials, alien curriculum and educational content, and untrained and inefficient teachers (Yigzaw, 2009).

4.3 Ethiopian Education Philosophy in Derg Regime

The Derg Regime came to power in (1974-1991), and its educational philosophy, policies, and strategies were influenced by

the Soviet Union and other Eastern countries, all guided by Marxist Leninist philosophy (Bishaw, 2012). The fundamental aims of education were to cultivate Marxist-Leninist ideology in the younger generation, to develop knowledge in science and technology, in the new culture and arts, and to integrate and coordinate research with production to enable the revolution to move forward and to secure a productive citizenry (Tekeste, 1990). This view was articulated through the National Democratic Revolution in 1976, the General Directives of Ethiopian Education in 1980, and the guidelines of the Working Party of Ethiopia in 1984 (Bishaw, 2012). The educational philosophy of the Derg regime was absolute modernism, applying reasoning as its epistemology, but it did not have the appropriate native intelligence that could advance the borrowed thoughts by amalgamating them with the local needs of the country (Tekeste 1990).

There had been no other time in Ethiopian history that education was conceptualized as an important means to secure political power. Hence, during the Derg era, political ideology was what guided education (Ali and Shishigu, 2020; Negash, 2006; and

Tekeste, 1990). As a result, the curriculum during this period was highly politicized and students were required to take courses in political education (Bishaw, 2012). Since education was highly politicized, instead of promoting friendship, tolerance and modesty, class struggle was the fashion of the day and so was the killing of one another. This made the country lose its best-minded students of that generation.

The education system of the Derg regime failed to engage learners in the local needs and experiences of the nation since the curriculum was borrowed from the Soviet Union. Subsequently, modern education during the Derg was foreign-driven in its educational content. The inherited experiences of socialism were not useful in preparing learners for the Ethiopian mode of adult life by equipping them with the values of the required local thoughts and manners. In line with the socialist regime, scholars criticized governments for failing to incorporate Ethiopian local and traditional values into the education system. In other words, Ethiopian students have been engaged in irrelevant curricula and poor quality learning, which may be the causes of the dissatisfaction of learners and of their

failure to be creative and problem solvers (Negash, 2006).

4.4 Ethiopian People Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) and Educational Philosophy

In 1991, the socialist system of governance was defeated by the regional/ethnic armed insurgents and replaced by the EPRDF. Education and training policies operational in 1994 (ETP,1994; Negash, 2006; Binayew & Tadele, 2016). Though it is not explicitly mentioned, it has a philosophy rooted in liberalism, which follows an eclectic approach with no clear direction to guide the economic, educational, and social organization of the people (Ali & Shishigu, 2020). The notion of problem-solving was introduced in Ethiopia after the Dergue regime was destroyed by the EPRDF. The EPRDF destroyed the past philosophy of "education for educational purposes" and emphasized a pragmatic approach by valuing education in terms of only solving immediate problems (Areaya, 2008). But basically, the education system is not geared toward pragmatic philosophy. It is hampered by a previous epistemology that relies on

rote memorization and exams rather than growth and a better life (Shishigu, 2015).

In different ways, different scholars in relation to education philosophy in Ethiopia claim that, in the Ethiopian context, philosophical thinking in education lacks clarity and rigor (Tadesse, 2008) and (Amare, 2009). According to some Ethiopian educators (e.g., Amare, 2009), the country's educational philosophy has not been clearly and explicitly stated. Of course, a superficial examination of the country's ETP may lead one to conclude that educational progressivism (a student centred educational approach) is the dominant educational philosophy. However, this educational philosophy is not consistently found in the country's various educational issues. At the classroom level, different instructional activities are dominated by either perennialism or essentialism. As Amare convincingly explains, the country's education system appears to be suffering from the course coverage and knowledge mastery educational syndromes.

Thus, taken as a whole, the Ethiopian education sector is on the brink of collapse. Though there are numerous possible

explanations, one could be the education system's reliance on Western values and theories. Not only this, the heavy influence of revolutionary democracy on state functions, including the education system, is indirect and enacted through the behaviours and actions of the EPRDF leaders from top to bottom (Tadele, 2016).

As a result, education was used as propaganda to maintain the status quo rather than as a tool to transform society. This was insensitive to basic social re-constructionist educational thoughts and many societal issues and society centred educational views were not adequately incorporated (Ali and Shishigu, 2020). During this time, the quality of education declined to the extent that graduates could not express themselves and they were not liable to accomplish their jobs successfully. This demonstrates a lack of adaptation of authentic educational philosophy to provide a foundation for Ethiopia's education system. It is believed that without a philosophic basis, there is no direction, no authentic value to propagate (MoE,2020).

4.5 Reform Period and Current Education Philosophy in Ethiopia

The current initiative, the Ethiopian Education Development Roadmap (2018–30), states that Ethiopia's education philosophy is to decentralize the education system by enabling Ethiopians to excel in their knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values (MoE, 2020). This shows that the educational philosophy of Ethiopia is not even currently clearly stated in the national education policy documents. If the education philosophy of a country is not clearly stated, it closes the door to analysing and improving the education system and gives less chance to practice the pillars of education stated by UNESCO, including learning to know, learning to do, learning to live together, and learning to be.

In a nutshell, for various reasons, the values of philosophy, in my opinion, are overlooked and deemphasized, consciously or unconsciously. Our educational policy lacks a solid philosophical (ontological, epistemological, and axiological) foundation. Who can tell me what it is? Is it idealist or realist in metaphysical terms? Is it subjectivist or objectivist in epistemology? Is it better to be an axiological relativist or a cognitivist? The Ethiopian education and

training policy does not provide answers to these and other fundamental philosophical questions. Ethiopia, as a Sub-Saharan country, has faced the same scenario, with the exception of changes brought about by regime changes. In line with these changes, educational philosophy, education policy and the associated epistemology have all undergone significant changes. However, none of them address the country's socio-cultural aspects. As a result, for several years the quality of education at all levels of the system has been a source of contention (Ali and Shishigu, 2020).

5. Conclusions and Recommendations
5.1 Conclusions

Based on a critical review of proclamations, education policy documents and articles, the reviewer came to the following conclusion: The educational philosophy that Ethiopia has followed has not been clearly and explicitly stated in education policy documents or proclamations issued by various regimes. This implies that the country's education system lacks rational thought prior to education and that the entire educational process is aimless. Many of the issues we face in education are the result of

a lack of a clearly stated and communicated educational philosophy in the education system, which is regarded as a parameter to the achievement of the educational goal. For various reasons, the values of philosophy, in my opinion, are overlooked and deemphasized, consciously or unconsciously. Our education policy, I argue, lacks a clear philosophical (ontological, epistemological, and axiological) foundation, as do the educational philosophies that flow from it. Finally, I'd like to conclude by saying that if education is not designed based on a certain philosophical foundation, there will be confusion in teaching, learning, leading, and managing the education system since it lacks starting points for decision making and no framework for curriculum designers for planning and valuing education.

In addition, modern education in Ethiopia has undergone many changes, mainly based on the ruling party of that time. The education system of each subsequent regime has been changed based on their political ideology. In the past, educational philosophies were allegedly imposed by the ruling system's ideology, resulting in inconsistencies in orientation, policy, and

curriculum. The education system in Ethiopia has been derived from the political ideology of the ruling party and has been restructured and changed to reflect the political ideology of the ruling party without considering societal problems and individual needs. To this end, the government that comes to power never considers the previous but cancels it and begins with the new. This is a bad culture at all! This makes education a cripple.

This undermines the nature of Ethiopian modern education, which is exacerbated by a Euro-centric curriculum that is not meaningfully contextualized to Ethiopian reality, as evidenced by the absence of anything Ethiopian in the classroom other than the children. Despite the fact that Ethiopia has a long and rich tradition of indigenous philosophy and education that could have served as a solid foundation for its development and modern education, it has not done so. It has simply assimilated the Western system of education instead of integrating the important cultural and philosophical values with the new education system. Lack of this consideration creates the education-reality gap, not nourishes domestic cultures. Thus, the cycle of low-

quality education and its ramifications are looming threats for Ethiopia.

5.2 Recommendations

The above-mentioned conclusions imply that much effort needs to be exerted by different regimes so as to make education in Ethiopia a catalytic agent for development and civilization. The reviewer believes that this could be possible if the following issues are properly addressed.

First, a national philosophy of education must be stated and articulated to guide the country's entire educational process, from policy formulation to classroom curriculum implementation. This is why the reviewer believes that clearly communicating an appropriate philosophy of education will be the first step in the way of overcoming the crisis in education. It serves as a framework for curriculum development, educational management, and pedagogical decision-making to improve the quality of education, which is one of the most powerful tools for trying to break free from the shackles of poverty. As a result, in light of various societal and global issues, the Ethiopian Ministry of Education must reconsider the country's education philosophy.

The second important thing that could be implied from this review is that educational philosophy should put the public interest at its center in comparison with local and global trends and needs, regardless of the political ideology of the government.

3. Shifting the dynamics of Euro-centric curriculum that is not meaningfully contextualized as Ethiopian reality as evidenced by the lack of anything Ethiopian in the classroom other than the children. Due to the evolutionary nature of educational reforms, indigenous education should be the starting point for modern education, and educational reforms of any kind should emerge from the strengths of early educational practices. To do this, the instigation of the African (Ethiopian) indigenous education philosophy with the social constructivism philosophy of education is needed. This is because, in comparison to other philosophies, this one has well-developed assumptions, principles, and theories concerning the influence of education in a diversified society like Ethiopia

and is sensitive to global issues as part of the larger social order

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