The Social and Cultural Foundations of Educational Curriculum: Physical and Sports Education Curriculum as a Model

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Abstract: Curriculum is considered as the most important input of the educational system. It is the means of education to achieve its objectives, and accordingly raises the hopes of societies to achieve integrated development for learners within the school so that they could develop educational competencies practiced in real contexts. Considering that the curriculum is an inherently social phenomenon, the social and cultural foundations constitute a basic pillar in its construction and defining its features. Through this research paper, the researcher will provide a general vision about the nature of the social and cultural foundations in the educational curriculum in general and the physical and sports education curriculum in particular, given the social context that characterizes this subject. The process of including these foundations will be also discussed with the criteria of a well-designed curriculum in terms of implementation, evaluation, and development.

KEYWORDS : curriculum; social and cultural foundations; physical education and sports curriculum; culture

الملخص: يعتبر المنهج التربوي أهم مدخلات النظام التربوي، وهو وسيلة التربية لتحقيق أهدافها، وعليه تعقد أمال المجتمعات لتحقيق تنمية متكاملة للمتعلمين داخل المدرسة، لتصبح كفايات تربوية تمارس في الواقع. وبإعتبار أن المنهج ظاهرة اجتماعية بطبعه، فتشكل الأسس الاجتماعية والثقافية دعامة أساسية في بنائه ورسم معالمه. سنحاول من خلال هاته الورقة البحثية تقديم تصور عام عن طبيعة الأسس الاجتماعية والثقافية في المنهج التربوي عموما ومنهاج التربية البدنية والرياضية على وجه الخصوص بالنظر للمناخ

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الاجتماعي الذي تتميز به هذه المادة الدراسية، كما تم التطرق لعملية تضمين هذه الأسس، والمعايير التي يجب مراعاتها لاعداد منهاج فعال من حيث التنفيذِ، التقويم والتطوير.

الكلمات المفتاحية: المنهاج، الأسس الاجتماعية والثقافية ، منهاج التربية البدنية والرياضية ، الثقافة.

1- Introduction

The safety of society, the strength of its structure, the extent of its progress, prosperity, and cohesion are linked to the safety of the psychological and social health of its members. The individual, within a community, is the maker of the future; he is also the pivot, the center, and the desired goal. However, the achievements and plans surrounding this individual are nothing more than an estimate of the extent of this individual's effectiveness. For this reason, a conscious society is one that puts in mind the individual before its interest in material achievements and projects as an essential element for its prosperity and social and moral progress.

To be a prominent member in achieving social progress, the individual must pay attention to his social upbringing, for which psychological and social studies have paid great attention. This is due to its importance in shaping the personality of an effective and positive individual in society, not an inactive, helpless one with negative behavior and thinking. Thus, upbringing is one of the most important processes in an individual's life because it is the first pillar on which the components of personality are based.

Among the most important institutions that society has installed to be a reflective mirror of its values, principles, philosophy, beliefs, identity, and sociological structure is the school: it is affected by everything that happens in society, and affects it as a means, and place through which the individual moves from a state of self-centeredness to a state of centered in the group. It is the means by which the individual becomes an effective social member in society.

As defined by the owners of the organizational approach, such as Frederick Hutson: *"It is a complex system of organized behavior, which aims to achieve a number of functions within the framework of*

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the existing social system." (Barnawi and Boutra, 2021: 235). In addition, the whole of it is the desired image of the educational process that society wants in order to achieve its general goals, and to continue its presence as an active and influential factor in the flow of human life.

Since curricula are the primary means by which the school brings about the desired change in the behavior of members of society, the process of designing it must be based on clear educational foundations to carry out its basic duty towards preparing young people for living in a balanced way across generations.

Zahran (date unknown) points out:

> Curricula must be developed to keep pace with the political, social and economic development that is happening in society and the international cultures that affect it with its members as a result of scientific progress, the rapid transmission of information, and knowledge and the resulting changes in the culture of society. This requires the preparation of curricula." "Renewed in parallel with what is happening in society (Fakkar and Baradei, 2017: 02).

Designing the curriculum is based on certain criteria, including the social, psychological, and circumstantial foundation, and the philosophical, cognitive and technological bases of the curriculum. More importantly, the social and circumstantial factors can be considered as important issues in creating the curriculum (as a group of influential social forces represented by the cultural heritage of society and the values and principles that prevail in it).

The physical and sports educational curriculum constitutes an exception in the educational system in view of the specificity of this subject and its contribution to the formation of the student's personality in all aspects, as a result of the diversity of its motor and interactive activities. Therefore, when the social and cultural

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foundations of the curriculum are mentioned, the physical and sports curriculum must be a representation of them.

In the light of this, the present paper deals with the following main questions:

1. What is the nature of the social and cultural foundations that form the school curriculum?
2. What are the foundations for including it?

3. What are the social and cultural elements on which the physical education and sports curriculum is based?

So, the educational curriculum is a social phenomenon, based on the fact that one of its most important foundations is the social and cultural elements. Hence, the current study came to reveal and shed light on the place of the social and cultural foundations in the composition of the curriculum system, and the physical education curriculum, given the social nature of this subject.

2- Procedural Definition of the Study Terminology

- **Curriculum:** It is a set of experiences that the school prepares for students inside or outside it, with the intention of helping them to fully develop in most aspects (mental, cultural, religious, social, physical, psychological, artistic) in a way that leads to modifying their behavior and working to achieve the desired educational goals (Attiya, 2013: 27).
- **Social and Cultural Foundations:** they are related to the group of social factors and forces that affect curriculum planning and implementation. It relates to the needs of society and its individuals and their development in the economic, scientific, and technical fields, as well as the culture of society, and its religious, moral, national, and humanitarian values (Mohamed, 2017: 44).
- **physical education and sports curriculum:** it is a set of educational, cultural, social, physical, sporting and artistic experiences that the school provides for students within or outside its borders with the intention of helping them to

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develop comprehensively in all aspects, and to modify their behavior in accordance with the set goals (ibid: 56).

3- Factors Affecting the Curriculum Design

The factors influencing the curriculum are divided into two types:

3.1- External Factors: they are the factors that fall outside the elements of the curriculum but affect them and require that they have to be taken into account in the process of the curriculum design, including:

- *The educational philosophy on which the curriculum is based:* It is known that the curriculum must be based on a specific educational philosophy, and since educational philosophies differ in their view of human nature, which leads to a difference in the style and ideas of educators according to the philosophical orientation that the educator is influenced by philosophical approaches focused on the mind and neglected the body. On the other hand, other trends combine the mind and body in the learning process.

- *Characteristics and phenomena of the era:* social life witnesses continuous change at different levels and fields. This movement, in the social system, must respond to and deal with it because it affects the process of shaping life. For example, the curriculum is affected by the information and technology revolution, cognitive development, the phenomenon of globalization, information technology, and the democratic trend. Hence, the curriculum is the reflection of real life.

- *Community requirements:* after establishing the school, by the community, in order to take responsibility for the process of socialization in an organized manner and by relying on the curriculum as a means of conveying its values, principles and all its developments, the relationship became reciprocal between society, the curriculum and the school. So, each of them must be influenced by the other for the sake of one goal, which is forming generations and maintaining the cohesion of society.

- *Sources of the natural environment:* the human environment is formed from natural sources that God has given to the human

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so that he is in a constant state of interaction with them. So, the curriculum can be influenced by the resources available in the environment where the student lives (Fakkar and Baradei, 2017: 4).

3.2- Internal Factors

One of the main elements of the curriculum is its inputs where it is affected by this kind of elements in the following ways:

- *The objectives of the curriculum and what is related to it*: They can be determined in terms of its diversity; its connection to the characteristics of learners, their abilities and needs; and what is related to the social system and its requirements and the development taking place at the level of the academic subject itself, with the relationship on which it is based. In addition, it can be based on the educational philosophy adopted by society or the state.
- *The teacher and what is related to him:* the teacher play a central role in the curriculum design through his method of transferring knowledge to students; his knowledge of teaching methods; his good communication with his students; the school administration and its employees; and his belief in the educational philosophy on which the curriculum is based.
- *Teaching methods and techniques:* this element is included in the diversity of teaching methods within the classroom; their consideration of individual differences; the suitability of teaching methods to the topics and teaching objectives; the Level of learners, conditions of the educational situation; and their use of modern technologies in education.
- *The knowledge, experiences, and activities included in the curriculum:* It is concerned with its interconnection with the goals and objectives of the curriculum, its comprehensiveness, integration, diversity, and consideration of individuals' differences, and good organization.
- *Physical equipment and administrative facilities:* this element is associated as an influencing factor In the curriculum through the validity and adequacy of equipment, and the extent to which they respond to the requirements of implementing the

curriculum and providing an appropriate educational environment (Attiya, 2013: 38).

4- Social and Cultural Foundations for the curriculum Design

Social and cultural foundations are considered as major elements of designing, and implementing the school curriculum. They represent the group of social forces that form the features of the social system of any society and trace the cultural heritage of it, the values and principles that prevail in it, and its problems where the curriculum seeks to find solutions to it.

Thus, there is a direct relationship between the school as an institution of social upbringing and society, and the link between them is the curriculum, which has made it necessary for those in charge of educational affairs to take into account all social and cultural influences in the process of preparing the curriculum (taking into account the environmental difference between societies, which constitutes a social factor influencing the curriculum). Therefore, researchers tried to answer the question of the relationship between the environment and society and its relationship with the curriculum (ibid).

4.1- The Curriculum and Environment

The individual lives among a group of materials and immaterial conditions that surround and affect him. It is known as the human environment, which is characterized by expansion and development. Physical conditions mean natural components and resources, which are rivers, seas, sources of wealth, weather, terrain, and others.

Concerning immaterial conditions, they are the factors that arise as a result of a person's interaction with those around him, whether individuals or material circumstances, including social conditions that are represented by the social relationships that bind him to those around him, and the set of experiences acquired through interaction with different life situations, and the customs, traditions, and values of the society in which he lives. In the light of this, one can conclude that the components of the human environment are the natural and cultural

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components, which are the parts created by the human himself and has refined according to his own experiences (Mohamed, 2017: 49).

4.2- Natural Components

Natural components are the material part of the environment that God Almighty created and harnessed to serve the human as a source for his continuation of life. The human interacts with every environment with these natural universes to adapt with, continue and develop them.

The diversity of natural components within a single community leads to a multiplicity of environments and different types. The presence of rivers and seas helps the emergence of a coastal environment; the presence of mineral resources helps the emergence of an industrial environment; and the presence of fertile lands surface and rivers help the emergence of an agricultural environment (they are called local environments).

Local community environments are distinct from each other. Each environment has its own nature and the skills that the individuals living in it need. Education aims at preparing the individual to interact with his local environment and adapt with it, bringing them together and contributing to solving their problems. The curriculum is the means of education for achieving this goal via considering the following points:

- The curriculum must include, in its content, the knowledge about the sources of Natural wealth present in their environment. It must make them aware of its benefits in serving society and methods of utilizing and preserving it. It must also help them acquire the necessary skills to properly exploit these resources and invest them to develop the life of their community.
- It must Motivate learners to participate in all projects in the service of the environment, such as the literacy project and the neighborhood planting one, under the supervision of their teachers and guiding them in a way that enables them to interact with their local environments and serve them. Also, it results in acquiring many desired trends and values, in addition

to information and knowledge about the environment, including positive environmental trends such as preserving Natural resources, protecting the environment from pollution, cooperating with others, respecting the group's opinion and constructive criticism.

- It must provide appropriate opportunities for learners to understand their environment on a scientific basis. Furthermore, it helps them propose solutions to the environmental problems that their environment suffers from.

- The curriculum must Carry out initiatives aimed at sensitizing learners to the components of their environment by conducting field visits, scientific trips, educational films, photos, reports, and pamphlets related to the environment. It invites specialists from various sectors to manage seminars and lectures (Al-Khawaldeh, 2004: 32).

4.3- The Curriculum and Culture

Culture is defined as everything that a person has produced with his mind and hand through his life in a specific place, whether it is material, such as housing, places of worship, machinery, and means of transportation, or non-material, like customs, traditions, etiquette, laws, and systems (ibid). Culture includes three basic components that constitute its content: generalities, specificities, and variables or alternatives.

- *Generalities:* they are the elements that the majority share in society, such as language, fashion, method of greeting, methods of celebrating on occasions, and laws, which distinguish one society from another. So, it is one of the basic elements of community cohesion and unity, because it represents the individual's mind, conscience, identity and personality.

- *Specificities:* they refer to the cultural elements that exist among a specific group of members of society and distinguish them from others. This group may be professional or craftsman. It may be also religious or ethnic, or it may be related to rare specializations. Specificities represent positive data within a culture, as the diversity of culture serves its unity.

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- *Variables:* they are extraneous elements that occur in general culture. They remain for a certain period of time and then disappear. These variables may take the form of creative ideas or scientific innovations that raise the level of culture, renew it, and develop it (Muhammad, 2011: 107).

There are various sources of variables or alternatives in today's world. Some of them occur through modern communication technology and the international information network whereas some are imported from developed countries, and some occur through friction through visits, cultural exchange, study, and others.

Since education bears the responsibility of establishing culture, this means that the curriculum should consider all the levels of culture. It must be designed to preserve the culture of society and its development through alternatives useful to it. In this regard, curriculum developers must realize that culture is changing and evolving, but this change is characterized by speed in alternative, variables, and slowness in generalities. Therefore, the phenomenon of alternatives or variables is considered as one of the most dangerous phenomena facing society in developing countries in particular, and on the basis of the above, it should be taken into account.

In the light of this, specialists need to pay attention to the tips below when designing the curriculum:

- Including the content of the curriculum that leads to the development of social culture and the social system.
- Helping students understand the cultural heritage and forming positive attitudes towards their nation's culture.

- Paying attention to introducing students to the elements of cultural heritage in their society (Mohamed, 2017: 49).

The cultural basis is linked to socialization and awareness of the negatives of society, and from here comes the role of curricula to accommodate these two issues in building their content and design. Socialization is an educational method that aims at socializing social normalization through a process of continuous interaction between the person and his environment so that the individual can live in society

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with its standards, values and trends. Consequently, he can provide the proper response to social changes within the framework of a conscious strategy that takes into account all the factors affecting upbringing and work to prepare and build.

The primary goal is to serve the community, based on the fact that schools and other youth institutions have a significant impact on developing the culture and education of society, which achieves a large sum of cultural and social heritage and experiences for the benefit of the individual. It includes the socialization process that the school curriculum should work on, contributing to enhancing it, through controlling behavior by providing young people with social standards in the world as Beliefs, ethics, language, positive traditions, sportsmanship, patriotism, and the valuesof cooperation (e.g., brotherhood, tolerance, truth, justice, altruism, honesty, and honesty) (ibid).

4.4- Characteristics of Culture

- *Culture is humanistic:* Given the structure of human and his possession of the mind in its various operations, it is a characteristic that distinguishes him from the rest of living beings. As a result, the processes of interaction with his surroundings are carried out through it in a precise manner, which results in the formation of a cultural template that belongs to every society. Accordingly, culture is a purely human phenomenon.

- *Culture is inherited*: acquiring culture is the result of a process of formation and learning through the individual's coexistence with his environment and society and the customs, values, principles and thinking that permeate it.
- *Culture is transferable:* through the process of social interaction and communication, the process of cultural exchange takes place, and the means of communication help the transfer process faster, which proves this characteristic of culture.
- *Culture is distinctive:* what distinguishes culture is that it is characterized by change within its social circles, and that it is

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distinct in its components and at different speeds. Generalities are the slowest components of culture to change, and alternatives are the fastest. Continuous interaction between components of culture leads to the occurrence of cultural change, and helps advance modern means of communication and transform the world into a village. Small enough to cover all its parts in a limited time (Fakkar and Baradei, 2017: 12).

4.5- The Components of Culture and their Impact on the Curriculum Planning Process

When designing the curriculum, educationalists should take into account the following cultural factors:

- Focusing on the generalities of culture as a pivotal and strategic component for establishing a strong cultural identity among learners, which contributes to their awareness of social and cultural partnership and leads to the creation of a climate dominated by understanding, cooperation, interconnectedness, and community spirit, which helps in the cohesion of the group.

- Achieving a balance between culture generalities and specificities. So, one element must not prevail over another in the design process in order to achieve movement in the approaches of the process for ensuring optimal preparation of individual learners.

- The learners' competence of thinking must be developed. Also, they have to help them acquire scientific, innovative and critical thinking skills, enabling them to invent and innovate in various fields, enrich, develop and transmit their culture, benefit from the expertise and experiences of other cultures. The curriculum must enable them to understand the present they live in, as well as filter the culture of other communities transferred to them in order to preserve what is compatible with their customs and lifestyles and reject what contradicts them (Ibrahim, 2011: 28).

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- Pupils' ability to listen, understand, speak, read and write, whether in the national language or the foreign one, must be developed because of its great importance to the life of the individual and society.

- Paying attention to the experiences and wealth of the past to the extent that is sufficient to understand the experiences of the present, as well as paying attention to the experiences of the present to the extent that ensures that learners' needs are satisfied and helps them confront contemporary problems and prepare them for future life.

- In view of the cultural changes occurring in society, the curriculum must take this aspect into account by designing the content of the curriculum and linking it to modern scientific and technological developments, in addition to forming positive attitudes for learners towards cultural change and accepting adapt to other cultures. This can help them acquire the skills and thinking patterns that would help them become agents of change and renewal in their culture themselves, by developing their ability to analyze and deduce (Attiya, 2013: 137).

4.6- The Curriculum and Society

The term "community" refers to a group of individuals whose special character distinguishes them from other groups, and they are linked by a set of values, customs and traditions. They share the same goals and values which represent the components of their culture that enable them to belong to their group and be loyal to it. They build Institutions that can organize the relationships between them, provide them with services to achieve their goals, and improve their living conditions.

As mentioned earlier, it becomes clear that society consists of main components, which is that it consists of a group of individuals living together and linked by common cultural heritage, within an environment that is God's gift in the universe. Thus, it results in the formation of a social environment represented by institutions charged

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with providing services to individuals (Bernawi and Faiza Boutra, 2021: 4).

4.7- Community Systems

Every society has a set of systems that determine the relationships between its members to achieve a community top scorer. (1) The family system that is governed by its own rules, including the distribution of rights and duties among family members. (2) The religious system relates to the spiritual aspect of the individual and the quality of the teachings of his religion that guide his behavior. (3) The political system relates to freedoms, rights, public and private property, the organization of bodies and individuals, and the relationship of society with other societies. (4) The economic system defines the roles of the different sectors in the production process, and is responsible for commercial transactions. (5) The educational system stems from society's values, goals, and circumstances. Its educational philosophy is derived from the society's philosophy. (6) The educational system includes a group of institutions that play roles in accordance with the education policy set by the highest authorities in society (ibid: 08).

So, every society has its problems, and one of the social functions of education is to contribute to solving society's problems. Therefore, this requires curricula to work to solve the problems faced by society. Examples of these problems include: the problem of illiteracy, unemployment, transportation, the scarcity of food commodities, and health problems (Marai and Mahmoud, 2000: 60).

4.8-Requirements for Including social Foundations in the Curriculum

The curriculum must introduce to the students the most important social problems, their true dimensions, their causes, and the negative effects that will accrue to society and individuals from not solving these problems. Learners conduct field visits to places and sites where social problems are widespread and witness their dimensions and effects on nature in order to have a deep sense of their

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presence on the ground. Then, teachers have to develop students' abilities to think scientifically by solving problems using the scientific method, which requires determining the dimensions and size of the problem, imposing hypotheses related to it, and collecting the necessary data about it in order to test its validity and produce results. Furthermore, educationalists must encourage curricular and extracurricular activities in the school environment that create a collective, awareness-raising and competitive atmosphere for achieving educational scorer (Mohamed Z., 2017: 54).

So, the curriculum must include the following criteria: (1) Pre-determining the components and systems of the social structure. (2) Determining the philosophy that society adopts and deriving an educational philosophy for learners from it. (3) Full knowledge of the culture of society in terms of its customs and traditions, ideas and values, and tools of production. (4) Deciding the nature of social change and adapting the approach to deal flexibly with social change. (5) The nature of socialization and the role of the curriculum in it. (6) Taking into account environmental diversity within communities and the pattern of local communities. (7) Taking into account the nature of the learner, his cognitive, physical and emotional capabilities, his social and environmental conditions and the cultural frameworks to which he belongs (Hamdan, 2015: 30).

5- Social and Cultural Foundations in the Physical Education and Sports Curriculum

Through the content of its curricula, physical and sports education aims at preparing the individual to become an effective member of his society, connected its principles, values and laws. Its role continued in advancing societies and highlighting their cultural pattern, eventually becoming part of the social system because it is linked to the individual's primary motivations, such as movement and play, and is also linked to the individual's secondary motivations, such as gathering, recreation, belonging, enjoyment, and pleasure. These factors make physical education a social value and a multiple impact, and for this reason, the social and cultural foundations of its curriculum formed essential criteria in its organization.

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Given the nature of the activities included in the physical education curriculum and the social climate that characterizes it, the inclusion of these foundations is something that imposes itself. These foundations include everything that prevails in society in terms of norms, patterns of behavior, the prevailing values and morals, and prevailing principles such as justice, freedom, integrity, cooperation, and selflessness. Self, patience, fair competition, self-confidence, honesty, a sense of responsibility, friendship, respect, tolerance, dedication to work, and healthy recreational physical culture.

These foundations also include social problems, the process of social interaction, and emerging social changes, and these values are translated into practical behaviors practiced by students inside and outside the classroom.

Due to the specificity of the physical education subject and its comprehensiveness in forming the individual's personality, as it covers many aspects, including the social, cultural, cognitive, emotional, behavioral, and motor aspects, it has become part of the social system and bears a large part of the responsibility in transmitting the proper systems and laws of society.

Therefore, this subject has a fixed position in the school curriculum as it is considered one of its basic subjects, and sports culture has become among the main components of the culture of the individual and society. Not only that, but sports education has become one of the evidences of the cultural development of societies.

Hence, it is clear now what social and cultural foundations are included in the physical education curriculum, and the place they occupy in constructing and engineering its content so that it becomes a means of transmitting the correct education for what society has drawn for itself.

6- Conclusion

The process of designing the curriculum must take into account the social function of the curriculum, as the modern curriculum has come to represent the reality of countries. If we want to learn about

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the culture of a country, the educational curriculum can ensure the reference for this goal. Accordingly, the process of establishing the school curriculum requires a strategic and forward-looking view, and does not exclude any time period. The importance of all the foundations that form the curriculum cannot be underestimated.

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