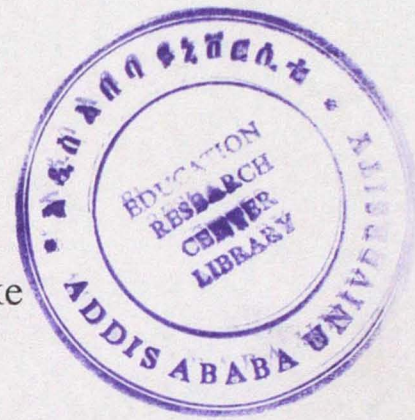


*The Practice of Curriculum Planning in
Addis Ababa University: The Case of the
Department of Business Education*

By

Mekonnen Baweke



A Thesis

Submitted In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree
Of

Master of Arts in Management of Vocational Education

In the Addis Ababa University

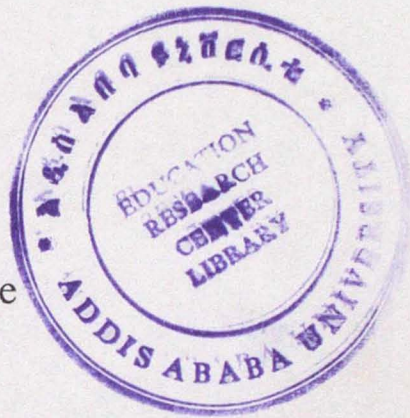
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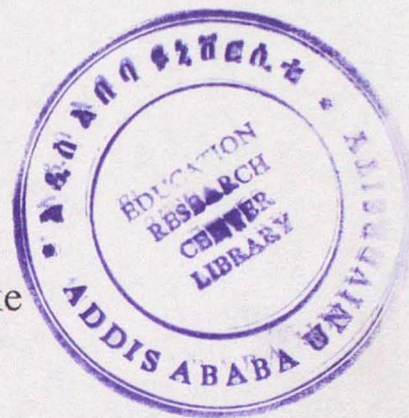
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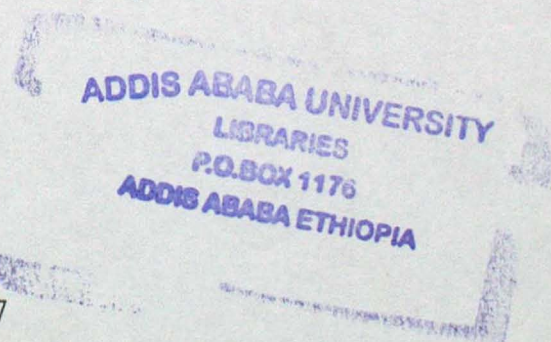


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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to examine the practice of curriculum planning in Addis Ababa University with a particular emphasis on the Department of Business Education. To that end, the descriptive survey method is employed, in which both qualitative and quantitative techniques were devised. Moreover, a purposive sampling technique was chosen whereby 16 and 36 samples were taken from the total population sizes of 28 and 177, which constitute the Teaching staff and Student cohort, respectively. The findings of this investigation include lack of well documented statement of program objectives, diverging responses among the academic staff with regard to the derivation and formulation of program objectives and subject area contents, the prevalence of lecture type teaching method, curriculum evaluation confined to student exam - not broad enough to serve as a base for program review and development, exam questions requiring the reproduction of lectured materials, the absence of a separate unit/agency to undertake curriculum planning for this level and types of programs, at University and National levels, the absence of explicit inter and intra-institutional links, and the absence of curriculum planning model across the forgoing institutional levels. Based on the forgoing findings, the thesis concludes that the prevailing institutional arrangement has many flaws which impede sustainable program review and development. Moreover, the performances of the undergoing programs cannot be measured in full perspectives as they lack clear and shared educational purposes. Based on these findings and conclusions, it recommends that there must be a central coordinating body at National level entrusted with higher education curriculum planning so that the coordination and integration of manpower requirements of the relevant socioeconomic sectors across the nation and educational efforts at the University and Department levels can be possible. It also proposes for the establishment of separate curriculum planning functions at the University, Faculty, and Department levels. The explanation for this kind of proposition is that such institutional arrangement reduces the possible mismatches between demand for competences and the supply of such competences, when looked at from a national perspective.

Chapter One

I. The problem and its approach

1.1 Introduction

Tertiary education involves the creation, development, refinement, and the diffusion of knowledge to the social context in which it is a part through the application and coordination of appropriate research-based curriculum. The impact of such knowledge, in terms of, say, creating competent workforce and visionary leadership across the board with respect to increasing economic productivity, progressive and equity based social change, however, depends on its quality, and accessibility.

Conversely, the quality, accessibility, and, by and large, the degree of impact exerted by the kind of knowledge is determined by the kind of educational system in general and the methods of generating and designing an appropriate curriculum. Curriculum planning in higher education is thus a crucial element that determines what the system of education at that level might produce. It is crucial because all the decisions related with the issues of intensity, mix, quality, and relevance of knowledge are undertaken.

A sound curriculum is, therefore, believed to be one that is founded on a clear vision and educational goals derived from both educational theory and the needs of the contemporary society and individual learners. Such a curriculum stipulates for proper blend and balance between theoretical and practical knowledge across the programs for which it stands. In such a situation theory of curriculum serves as a guide for action, i.e., educational intents and actions are undertaken based on sound reason where outputs and outcomes can be predictable within acceptable range of error. Moreover, a sound curriculum is characterized by sustainability, responsiveness to changing contextual needs and/or values, and steady development.

However, sustainable curriculum planning presupposes the existence of a relatively

independent institution conferred with all necessary decision powers and expertise knowledge as well as the assumptions of accountability for any flaws due to improper undertaking of entrusted responsibilities. Here, the word independence should be taken in relative terms; it signifies the need for a specialized subsystem within a given higher level system or institution focused on curriculum planning activities. With this regard, such institution or sub institution has its own leadership and expertise to execute curriculum planning activities based on pre specified roles and responsibilities. In this connection, curriculum matters are the prime issues requiring primary efforts of those assigned to work for the unit; other activities should be subservient to such prime purposes.

Curriculum planning, like the actual educational process itself, is a continuous process. It requires a devotion of organized expertise, leadership, time, and other related resources in order to sustain. Without committing and devoting such efforts, the educational process in this higher level of institution cannot be expected to transform itself into the successive levels of excellence.

Essentially, the issue of curriculum planning in higher education is concerned, with the issue of planning for appropriate knowledge that is consistent with the objectives of the institution. The decisions that might be made about what curriculum planning should tend to answer, thus, involve the identification and making choices of the kind of knowledge that might fit to the needs of individuals or contemporary society-resulted from some assessment and analysis of the socioeconomic environment for which this educational institution presumably stands.

Knowledge can be explained in terms of its aspects; basic (intellectual) and applied (vocational) knowledge. In this mode of thought, applied knowledge may be obtained and/ or developed by deducing basic (intellectual) knowledge implicated in the abstract form. Conversely, applied or working knowledge may serve as a basis for formulating concepts and/or theories representing reality in the form of generalizations.

There are certain functional relationships between basic (intellectual) knowledge and applied (vocational) knowledge: the former may permit us to derive practical knowledge from it, which explains the name "applied" knowledge; but sometimes it is the other way around—that is, the discovery of some pieces of practical knowledge may suggest the need for new basic knowledge and may provide clues for finding it (Card, 1962:16-7).

Bolton (1977) on his part forwards the existence of interdependence between the two, as "concepts are essential for the development of practice ... a concept is simultaneously the representation of a reality and the expression of an intention, a generalization from experience and a hypothesis from which future experience might be predicted." Accordingly, conceptual knowledge permits us to make sense of the world and apply this sense making to new contexts and circumstances.

The function of curriculum planning revolves, then, around the issues of making, in advance, decisions on knowledge areas and relative depth, the mixes and balances across the branches of knowledge, the ways of organization necessary to achieve and sustain educational results, and the setting forth of the means that enable to see the degree of attainment and the appropriateness of the ends and the means. Furthermore, it takes into account the interest of the society as well as the learners. With this regard, it can be said that curriculum is a fundamental necessity. It is fundamental because it permeates across all educational decisions. The issues related with derivations of educational programs and objectives, the decisions about the selection and organization of educational experiences, and the determination of evaluation methods that serve as bases for successive reformative and developmental decisions.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Curriculum planning in the educational system in general and higher education in particular is a demanding and pervasive issue that requires the devotion of expertise and

other nonhuman efforts. Particularly, curriculum planning that is related to vocational programs should be dictated by the current and changing needs of the relevant sectors for appropriate competencies. A thorough information base about the purposes and operational methods of the relevant industries is a necessary, though not sufficient, condition for the development of effective educational programs of this kind. This, in turn, requires the establishment of close links between the educational institution of this type and level, on the one hand, and the relevant industries, on the other, whereby the integration of educational efforts with the existing and emergent requirements for the skills and/or competencies by such industries can be possible.

It seems, however, that curriculum planning in AAU in general and in the Business Education Department in particular is not thoroughly understood and practiced. The trends in the University in general and the Department of Business Education in particular indicate that the issue of curriculum planning at both levels seems to have been the area of "no mans land", lacking a mission defined body to undertake relevant curriculum planning activities as its primary tasks.

It is not clear whether curricular decisions in the department have ever been taken based on evidences resulted from appropriate researches undertaken internally or not.

Likewise, the repeated failure to obtain organized information by the researcher about the past and present trends of the Department cues for some organizational deficiencies.

Moreover, the relationship between the Department under study and the non educational sectors, which are supposed to be relevant to the programs of the Department, is not clear. These difficulties by themselves are indicators that without systematic record, organized and easily accessible data, one cannot claim for the existence of viable curriculum planning and developmental activities. Indeed, this task necessitates organized and accessible data that tell about past activities and current situations of the program that might be assessed and improved.

For example, data concerned with number of students, types of programs, etc., may be required as an input for making rational decisions with regard to the future requirements for graduates of business at lower, intermediary, and advanced levels of training. As this area is, mainly, concerned with educating and developing vocational or professional capabilities of students to meet a multilevel skills and knowledge requirements in the industrial, trade, and the public sectors, the mix of graduates across each level should match with the occupational/job structures in such sectors. A study by Davis (1964) in Davis (1966) in Mexico with this respect indicates that:

Professional (college level) engineers were being trained in sufficient numbers for Mexican industrial development of the present, but the highly trained engineer-scientist types and the engineering technicians to support them were not being produced in sufficient number to man the research and development activities that Mexico will need to create new industries and markets for the future (Davis, 1966).

This finding indicates how curriculum planning in higher education is not only linked to manpower requirements of a given nation at different developmental stages, but also is required to determine the mix and balance of competence requirements at each level and type of the occupational contexts. It seems, thus, implicit that the structures of educational programs need to be dictated by the current and emergent structures of the relevant socioeconomic environment.

This, however, requires organized and integrated efforts of the educational and the other relevant sectors. Particularly, this becomes true when the educational program in place focuses in vocational education.

Therefore, curriculum planning in higher education is a demanding endeavor which calls for all time readiness and dynamic organization to shape the educational process in a way that it meets the needs of the society and learners.

In connection to the educational context of the country, Tekeste Negash (1990), cited in (Woube Kasaye, 1995), pointed out the general educational and curricular situation in

the country as revealing many flaws. He observes that modern educational delivery systems generally, and curriculum planning practices particularly, in Ethiopia ... has been criticized for its shortcomings with respect to a) relevance and the clarity in defining educational objectives, b) unbalanced emphasis given for theoretical knowledge-with little linkage to life, and c) learning strategies predominated by rote methods over critical/reflective ones.

It is to indicate that organizational inadequacies and deficiencies seem to have been prevalent in the overall educational system of the country; and Addis Ababa University cannot be an exception. A draft document on strategic planning of AAU (2006:3) affirms this in explaining the weaknesses of the university. The problems include, but not limited to, "lack of clear statements on visions, missions, and goals of the university, lack of institutional capacity for strategic planning, university leadership perceived as not being accountable to the academic community, lack of internal autonomy of colleges and/or faculties within AAU...lack of managed public relation."

Professor Mogessie Ashenafi on his opening remark in a conference at Awassa in (1998) on the deliberation issue "A University on Quality Education" confirms the idea in saying that "...some of the issues here, like curriculum, Teacher Education, Quality access, ...have always been points of our everyday concerns. Nevertheless, we have never managed to address them in an organized and systematic manner to make any noticeable difference."

The important point is the University seems to have hardly treated the educational and curricular problems in an "organized and systematic" way. Being cognizant of prevailing situations is, indeed, a first step before taking some corrective measures; but knowing without taking initiatives for action in a systematic manner seems to be futile

Moreover, according to the researcher's personal observations, it seems that there is a

loose link between the efforts of the University and the other socioeconomic sectors. In this regard, professor Ashenafi has the following to say:

The underlying principle in revisiting our educational approach at all levels is that we have to make our education relevant to the changing environment and societal development in the country. The relevance of higher education is considered primarily, among others, in terms of its interaction with other levels and forms of education (Deliberations AAU.1998).

Though integrating higher level institutions to the lower levels of the educational systems is necessary, it is also indispensable to integrate the educational efforts to the other socioeconomic sectors, as the competence and performance level of the other sectors is highly affected by the performance and competence of the university. It means, the competence level of graduates who are employed in those sectors would determine the performance levels the occupations in which they are engaged. Without integrating the efforts of the university to the realities of the socioeconomic system, with respect to occupational knowledge and skill requirements across the board, however, it becomes difficult to judge whether the university in general and the Department in particular has been dealing with relevant national/social issues to the desired level.

Therefore, revisiting the practice of curriculum planning in the Department seems imperative. Hence, this study is conducted to examine the issue so as to make viable recommendations.

1.3 Purpose of the study

Given the foregoing situations, then, the purpose of this research is to identify and analyze the organization and practices of curriculum planning in the Addis Ababa University, particularly, the Department of Business Education. Specifically, this study seeks to analyze and examine the ongoing practices of curriculum planning in the University in general, and the Department in particular, with respect to: (1) the organizational set up of Curriculum planning within the institution (organizational arrangement) (2) the linkage to the relevant sectors outside the educational system (3)

the procedures or methods of deriving and formulation of program objectives (4) selecting, and organizing the educational experiences (5), monitoring or controlling the appropriateness and attainability of educational program and, (6) the kind of educational model pursued.

To that end, framing the following questions and treating the issue accordingly seems to be necessary:

1. What forces /values were behind the emergence and/or the establishment of the business education department of the Addis Ababa University?
 - How were needs assessed and analyzed so as to justify program efforts of the Department?
 - To what extent were stakeholders involved in finding out the needs for its establishment?
2. Were programs and relative objectives stated clearly and formally; or were they documented and made accessible to all involved in the programmatic endeavors?
 - How are programs developed or reformed?
3. What vocational areas were selected?
 - What were the criteria for selecting subject area contents?
 - How were contents organized?
4. What strategies of teaching/learning have been designed and employed to realize program objectives?
 - What instructional methods were instituted as a guiding principle?
 - What appropriate media were devised to facilitate learning?
5. What mechanisms were employed to evaluate the curriculum?
 - Have evaluation results been used as prime basis for program reform and /or developmental planning?

6. How was the curriculum planning function organized within the overall institutional structure?

7. What curriculum model has the Department of Business Education considered?

As it can be seen in due course of this research, the investigation process is carried out in light of the forgoing questions. The presence of the questions in this form enables to gather and treat data in a systematic manner. The questions were developed based on the scientific (behavioral) model of curriculum planning. It involves the integration of the sub elements of the whole system in a way that each subsystem contributes something to the achievement of a unifying purpose.

According to Diamond (1989), curriculum planning practices based on a certain model help planners "identify key factors that should be considered in a sequential order," (serving as a procedural guide) and allowing participants to know where they are in the process. In addition, it improves efficiency by "reducing duplication of effort" by presenting clear explanations of each step and roles of each participating planner.

Hannun and Briggs (1980), as cited in Diamond (1989:4), characterize curriculum planning, implementation and evaluation based on the systems theory/model as emphasizing on the internal and external situations of a given setting as basis of analysis and the development of objectives. For example, the needs for specific skills and entrepreneurial competence by industries may serve as point of departure for curriculum design and the development of general and specific performance objectives of potential graduates of a program. Then courses, methods of instruction, and evaluation techniques are set in consistence with the vocational and leadership needs and objectives of the program.

1.4 Significance of the study

The creation, development, and dissemination of advanced and high quality knowledge must be the concern of higher education. Generally speaking, high quality higher education curriculum, and hence, educational quality determines what at the lower levels of the educational subsystems might happen with respect to the provision of educational opportunities to the young who are the potential university students. It seems so, because the curriculum of these subsystems is designed by experts and the teachers who graduate from the university.

In a like manner, leaders of industries, the public and private sectors, experts across the board come from higher level institutes. Thus, the competence and effectiveness of these people and the productivity and growth of the various socioeconomic sectors in which they work, mainly, depend on their training qualities.

The importance of this study can therefore be seen from the following possible contributions:

First, it can serve as a starting point for further research - by provoking the interests and motivations of researchers on the area;

Second, it may shade light on the problems of curriculum planning at this level of the educational system and thus creates awareness among concerned officials so that it may serve as a stepping stone for further action;

Third, it may serve as a source of educational debate among scholars and practitioners, and so on.

1.5 Scope of the research

This study is focused on the practices of curriculum planning in the Addis Ababa University, particularly, the Department of Business Education. With this regard, an effort is made to address some of the aspects of curriculum planning including the

ongoing process with respect to the involvement of immediate and distant stakeholders in program planning, the selection and organization of content and methods of instruction, as well as the evaluation methods of the curriculum in this institution.

It also makes an attempt to touch the inter and intra-institutional relationships with respect to the availability of established communication channels that facilitate the devotion of concerted efforts from all stakeholders toward common developmental ends. In sum, more emphasis is given to scrutinize the organization and management of curriculum development, program evaluation and the resultant successive measures within the University in general, and the Department in particular.

1.6 Limitations of the study

As regards to the limitations of the study the important aspects may include:

- a. Time is an important factor – as the issue is fundamental and broad in scope, which requires extensive studies, an extended time horizon is required to address all-important aspects of it. With this respect, however, the available time horizon for this research was extremely short that made it difficult to fully address many of the vital aspects of curriculum planning.
- b. This study has also required availability of sufficient financial and technical support. The financing scheme available in the University for this Kind of a project is, however, highly limited relative to the workloads and the needs for appropriate technical and material support to meet the expectations of such a study. Due to such shortages, many dimensions of the topic couldn't be covered. This include activities such as making extensive discussions and interviews with industry and public agencies, other faculties within the university, former graduates of the department, and other stakeholders, which may, one way or another, be affected by the quality of curriculum and educational delivery in the university in general and the department in particular.

1.7 Operational Definitions of Terms

Assessment: is simply the process of determining what really is in practice in a given setting. With respect to the educational context, assessment means the examination and explanation of what actually the educational setting looks like and how it works in practice.

Evaluation: is both a judgment on the worth or impact of an educational program, procedure, or the progress of individual learners, and the process whereby that judgment is made (Dressel, 1976:1).

Need: for the purpose of this study, a need is a condition marked by the lack of something requisite, (Random House Webster's Dictionary). It can also be defined as the difference between the desired state of affairs and the status quo.

Need assessment: a systematic search for identification, analysis, and description of the problems of program target groups.

Occupational assessment: the survey study over relevant occupations or industries to identify, analyze, and specify occupational objectives, jobs that lead to the accomplishment of occupational objectives, actual and desired work methods, and the identification and specification of skill requirements of tasks or jobs that enable the accomplishment of desired objectives across such occupations before launching skill development educational programs.

Stakeholders: those individuals or groups who are either positively or negatively affected by the actions and results of a certain scheme, or those who have the influence over them..

Tertiary Education: according to the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, (Proclamation No 351/2003), it is a higher level of educational system which is provided for advanced learners who seek to and have successfully completed the secondary level education.

Values: according to the Random House Webster's Dictionary, are the abstract concepts of what is right, worthwhile, or desirable; principles or standards. According to Phenix (1961) values are purposes that worth devotion for their realization

Chapter Two

II. Review of Related Literature

This chapter deals with some theories and models in curriculum planning and attempts to relate their significance to the context of higher education. The various approaches and differing views and conceptions of curriculum, which have been written in the last century or so by various scholars, are presented in some detail. Furthermore, this chapter makes attempts to present and discuss the historical and current situations in AAU, with respect to the status of curriculum planning, though not much literature in connection with curriculum efforts of the university has been found.

2.1 Conceptions and approaches of Curriculum

It seems that the views and approaches to the term curriculum vary with contextual differences.

Particularly, the varying value systems in different socioeconomic contexts seem to have contributed to such differing views and assumptions.

2.1.1 Philosophical Foundations of Curriculum Planning

The differences in views and beliefs of the way curriculum should look like among the various models or schools of thought emanate in a large measure from their value bases, and hence, philosophical differences. Such differing views in the philosophy of education may be attributable to the socio-cultural contexts in which the thoughts of philosophers are influenced by the particular problems, issues, and challenges that exist in their relative culture(s). As Elias and Merriam (1980) put it, "it must be analyzed within the context in which it has originated and developed."

According to Elias and Merriam (1980), the major schools of philosophical thought with respect to education are thus distinguished as liberal, progressive, behavioral, humanistic, radical, and analytical philosophy of education; and the first four are discussed briefly as follows:

Liberal... education has its historical origins in the philosophical theories of the classical Greek philosophers: Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle....It became the predominant educational theory in the Western world and is still a strong force in educational thought today. The emphasis in this tradition is up on liberal learning, organized knowledge, and the development of the intellectual powers of the mind, (Elias and Merriam, 1980:9)

This school of thought is essentially concerned with liberating and/or freeing the human mind from the anomalies and constraints of life. Its basic objective is the creation of educational opportunities that enable the individual learner to actualize his/her potential. This school of thought regards education, and thus the resultant knowledge, as valued for its own sake. Other forms of education that are directed to serve other ends are not considered as education, according to this educational philosophy.

Two characteristics evolve around the central value of education with respect to the concept of liberal education:

First, if the free man in the required sense is taken to be one whose choices are subject to no external constraints, whose conduct is grounded in his own free assent (intrinsic value), it follows that he is a man who is liberated from the need to perform tasks of a purely instrumental kind and who can therefore attend single-mindedly to such things as are worth pursuing for their own sakes...; second, liberal education has traditionally been thought to consist in the development of mind, the enlargement of knowledge and understanding, the gaining of a wider and surer grasp of reality (metaphysics). But it is precisely this enhancement of awareness, this attainment of richer perspectives of experiences and knowledge, in which, we have claimed, that development of persons which is the defining purpose of all education also essentially consists, (Paterson, 1979).

In fact, the theory of liberal education is rooted back into the classical Greek educational and thought system; it is the oldest of all the other thought systems with respect to

curriculum and educational theories. However, the assumptions of early classical educators with respect to the recipients of liberal education on the one hand and vocational education on the other has long been changed. According to Elias and Merriam (1980) modern liberalists believe in the entire humanity, they assume every human person can and should receive liberal education. For the liberal educator, the educated person is the one who is trained and developed in knowledge for its own write; persons trained in the various vocations for the purpose of preparations for the world of work are not considered as educated.

If a man is being educated, then, he is receiving a liberal education; and if he is not receiving a liberal education, he is not being educated, (Paterson, 1979:54).

With regard to progressive educational philosophy, Elias and Merriam, (1980) have the following to say:

Progressive education has its historical origins in the progressive movement in politics, social change, and education. This approach to educational philosophy emphasizes such concepts as the relationship between education and society, experience centered education, vocational education, and democratic education.... Behaviorist education has its roots in modern philosophic and scientific movements.... behaviorism emphasizes such concepts as control, behavioral modification, learning through reinforcement, and management by objective.... Humanistic education is related.... To existential philosophy and humanistic psychology.... key concepts ...emphasized ...are freedom and autonomy, trust, active cooperation and participation, and self-directed learning (Elias and Merriam, 1980:9-11).

2.1.2 Conceptions of Curriculum

Theories and conceptions of curriculum have been and are presented in different ways and categories. Different educators and educational philosophers have, across the centuries bygone, proposed and asserted in their own terms and categories the concept and the base on which curriculum should depend. In general, the definitions of the term curriculum differ depending on the value base and educational philosophy of the thinkers and what they perceive as the purpose and focus for curriculum, for example, the present needs of society, the needs of individual learners, and the needs of the ideal society in the future. These differences, in fact, indicate that there remains a lot to work

out on the area in pursuit of common framework with respect to the concept and/or meaning of the term.

Moreover, blurred conceptions with regard to the distinction between curriculum and education, as much as the definitions of the term curriculum itself have long emerged-as it might be seen in the next sections.

In connection with the reasons for the differing views and conceptions of curriculum, Derebssa Dufera (2004:4), is of the opinion that the reasons for such conceptual variations might emerge from the views of these scholars toward the function of schooling. In his words: "Perhaps, the reason why curriculum is defined differently in current educational literature is because different scholars have different views about the function of schooling."

According to Derebssa, the differences might have occurred due to the differences on the bases around which curriculum should be designed; such, for example, propensities toward preparation of a curriculum as in their own ideological terms as can be seen from the proliferation of 'educational sects': 'child-centered', 'subject-centered', 'society-centered', 'technology' and what not.

Saylor and Alexander (1954) defined curriculum as "The sum total of the school's efforts to influence learning, whether in the classroom, on the playground, or out of the school." However, this definition does not indicate the distinction between the actual educational delivery process and planning aspects (curriculum). In other words, it seems that the term education and curriculum have been taken interchangeably/synonymously. Davis (1966:Vii) distinguishes education and curriculum precisely: "Educating humans and planning for their education are two quite different bits of business."

Pratt (1980) after having underlined the need for clear definition of the term in the face

of competing values and meanings assigned to it by different thinkers, has defined it as: "*A curriculum is an organized set of formal educational and/or training intentions.*" In clarifying this definition, Pratt (1980:4) identifies points that make it explicit. The implications of this definition are firstly, the curriculum is an intention, rather than action; it is an educational plan/blueprint based on which activities carried out; secondly, a curriculum contains many other kinds of intentions, "such as what learning students are to develop, the means of evaluation to be used to assess learning, the criteria according to which students will be admitted to the program, the materials and equipment to be used, and the qualities required of teachers;" thirdly, "a curriculum involves a formal intentions, i.e., deliberately chosen to promote learning;" fourthly, the curriculum..."articulates the relationships among its different elements (objectives, content, evaluation, etc.,)" and integrating them into a unified and coherent whole-"in a word a curriculum is a system;" fifthly, both education and training are implicated in it. But one thing that remains open for debate is the confinement of the term to only 'formal' intentions; what about training plans in the non-educational institutes? Though non educational institutes may not have the mandate to grant formal certifications, the content and methods they employ in program development may take the form of curriculum.

UNESCO (1981) defines the term as an educational 'project': "A curriculum is an educational project defining (a) the aims, goals, and objectives of an educational action; (b) the ways, means and activities employed to achieve these goals; (c) the methods and instruments required to evaluate the success of the action. The term 'project' should be taken to mean both a design and a plan."

This definition is essentially linked with the conceptions of the behavioral school of thought; that educational objectives should be defined before anything else. UNESCO characterizes curriculum as having two levels:

On the one hand, the actual project which guides an educational action, and,

on the other, its material implementation. In the latter case, the term 'project' refers to that which has been achieved, rather than to that which is yet to be undertaken. Where the distinction between the two is necessary, we will refer to a 'project curriculum' and an 'implemented curriculum,' UNESCO (1981).

Tanner and Tanner (1980:38), tentatively defined curriculum as the reconstruction of knowledge and experience developed systematically under the aid of the educational institution so as to enable the learners to enhance their accessibility and control of such knowledge and experiences. What is not clear is, however, the distinction between knowledge and experience. Whether these terms interchange or complement, no clarification is presented.

Macdonald (1978), has described curriculum as "the study of what should constitute a world for learning and how to go about making this world." And he asks questions like what a good person and what the good society should look like; implying that there is an ideal good toward which a person must pursue so as a good social system with that respect might be constructed/achieved by applying such a curriculum.

Similarly, Print (1988), describes Curriculum as "all the planned learning experiences offered to learners by the educational institution", along with the experiences that learners encounter when those intentions are implemented. According to Print, the "experiences" outside the explicit intents of the curriculum that learners encounter when those curricular intentions are implemented are considered as part of the curriculum. However, such experiences must be considered as extracurricular experiences, because they might not be intended to occur and they may vary from individual to individual, whatever the role of the curricular environment might have played.

Kliebard (1992) characterizes curriculum as an ambiguous outcome of a complex interplay; "between certain social conditions and prevailing conceptions of how schools are supposed to function...affected by social, political, economic and intellectual forces. However, this idea focuses on the driving forces of curriculum, not its meaning; the only

thing that has something with the meaning of the term is its "ambiguity" resulted from the complex interplay of socioeconomic forces.

In another paradigm, the term curriculum is closely related to the concomitant culture. In this connection, Smith, et. al., (1975, p.3), describe curriculum as successively planned experiences set forth in schools for purposes of disciplining learners in group ways of thinking and behaving. This kind of conformist view has, however, a danger of impeding critical thinking and reflection in individual learners in an attempt to create different perspectives based on learned experiences in a school. This means that, though culture is an essential attribute of a cohesive and stable social system, individual talents differ and require freedom in order to generate different and innovative patterns of thought, which in turn serve as enrichment to existing cultures.

Hirst (1974:132) conceives curriculum as "intended activities and consciously organized educational experiences" that are planned in advance so as to enable students to attain certain educational ends. This view has some commonalities with the behaviorist school of thought that educational objectives could be identified and preplanned so that learners may achieve these preset ends and bring about desirable outcomes.

To Derebssa Dufera (2004:269), the term curriculum is "what students should know, be able to do and committed to (content), how it is taught (instruction), how it is measured (assessment), and how the educational system is organized (context). It is also considered as a practical reference source for teachers containing the range of strategies that can be utilized to achieve course outcomes."

From Derebssa's definition, one can take the term as a system of producing an educational opportunities to those who intend to learn, able to access it, and capable of learning can learn.

2.2 Models of Curriculum

The following curriculum models have been distinguished though, as one can observe, no one of them can stand-alone. A little introspection over these models can show that they complement; they are not self-contained. According to Smith (1996), the behavioral model focuses on outcomes while the process and praxis models stress on action and interaction of learners with the environment, regardless of the results. They give more importance to the ways students and teachers should interact; no need of pre specifications for objectives/products. The subject model is interested in the kind of prescribed knowledge accumulated across generations as reflected in the concurrent cultures.

2.2.1 Curriculum as Syllabus

As McNeil (1996:1) puts it, educational thinkers, who characterize curriculum as a body of knowledge to be transmitted to the learners, give little or no considerations to the real experiences and needs of learners. The contribution in advancing existing knowledge via involving the learners in action and critical thinking has no place in this school of thought.

Persons with an academic orientation see curriculum as the vehicle by which learners are introduced to subject matter disciplines and to organized fields of study. They view the organized content of subjects as a curriculum to be pursued rather than as a source of information for dealing with local and personal problems.... they assume that an academic curriculum is the best way to develop the mind-that mastery of the kind of knowledge commonly found in such a curriculum contributes to rational thinking, (McNeil,1996:1).

In this school of thought, many people tend to equate a curriculum with a syllabus (subject areas to be taught). Basically a syllabus involves a statement of the topics of a discourse, the contents of a treatise; the subjects of a series of lectures. It is associated with courses leading to examinations. This view ignores the needs and interests of the learners, which, as a matter fact, emerge from the real life challenges and experiences.

It simply proposes the transmission of information as written in the books or lectured by the teachers. No significance consideration is given to the experiences of students as sources of synthesizing real world experiences with theoretical knowledge.

According to this school of thought, curriculum is a body of knowledge-content and/or subjects. Education in this sense is then the process by which these subjects/contents are transmitted or 'tunneled' to students by the most effective methods that can be devised.

Where people still equate curriculum with a syllabus they are likely to limit their planning to a consideration of the content or the body of knowledge that they wish to transmit. This thought patterns ignore the possibilities that students can generate and innovate new knowledge that might disprove the validities of old knowledge presented in a form of textbooks and lectures delivered by instructors (Blenkin et al, 1992: 23).

2.2.2 The behavioral model

The behavioral model of curriculum planning has essentially its origins in the modern philosophic and scientific movements. Elias and Merriam (1980) have to say about the origins of this school as:

Behaviorist ...education has its roots in modern philosophic and scientific movements. Behaviorism in... education emphasizes such concepts as control, behavioral modification, learning through reinforcement, and management by objective...the most prominent behaviorist philosophy is that of B. F. Skinner. His ideas have permitted many disciplines and fields of study...various ...education practices are inspired by this philosophic view: programmed learning, behavioral objectives, and competency-based teacher education, Elias and Merriam (1980:10).

This model of curriculum planning assumes that behavioral changes due to the experiences acquired in the course of learning/teaching process are measurable and can be preplanned in advance. That means, like any courses of activities, educational outcomes can be identified in advance and performances achieved can be measured.

In this mode of thought, education is most often seen as a technical exercise. Educational objectives can be set, operational and strategic plans drawn up, and then applied, and the outcomes (products) measured. It is a way of thinking about education that has grown in influence in the educational settings around the world since the beginning of the 20th century. This way of thinking is believed to have been influenced by the concurrently emergent scientific management systems thinking which appeared in response to the needs of factory managerial competence in the western world.

In this connection, as Smith (1996) states it, the works of prominent educational thinkers and writers such as Franklin Bobbitt (1918; 1928) and Ralph W. Tyler (1949) dominate this school of thought within the field of curriculum. In this connection, Bobbitt has the following to say:

The central theory [of curriculum] is simple. Human life, however varied, consists in the performance of specific activities. Education that prepares for life is one that prepares definitely and adequately for these specific activities. However numerous and diverse they may be for any social class they can be discovered. This requires only that one go out into the world of affairs and discovers the particulars of which their affairs consist. These will show the abilities, attitudes, habits, appreciations and forms of knowledge that men need. These will be the objectives of the curriculum. They will be numerous, definite and particularized. The curriculum will then be that series of experiences which children and youth must have by way of obtaining those objectives. (Bobbitt, 1918: 42)

According to Smith, M. K. (1996, 2000), this way of thinking about curriculum theory and practice was heavily influenced by the development of management thinking and practice during the 1920s. The rise of 'scientific management' is often associated with the name of its main advocate F. W. Taylor. Basically what he proposed was greater division of labor with jobs being simplified; an extension of managerial control over all elements of the workplace; the desire to enhance productivity and efficiency by setting scientific standards to compare actual performances and ensuring such attainments via applying tight supervisory exercises; based on systematic time-and-motion study (Smith,

1996).

This approach of curriculum planning, according to the forgoing author, is based on systemic thinking. Starting with the ultimate aims of an institution, it is an attempt to achieve such ends by defining the means. It requires the creation of harmonious relationships among the subsystems of the institute so as to bring about efficient interplay among these subsystems toward achieving the preset aims/goals. Tasks are broken down into the smallest sub elements; defining the required skills and knowledge to perform such tasks efficiently, etc. Similarly, the behavioral model takes the curriculum as the product of systematic study; system based educational planning.

According to Smith (1996), this model was highly challenged, and nearly lost its ground in the 1920s and 1930s due to the growing influence of 'progressive', child-centered approaches, the leading exponent of which was John Dewey. The child-centered movement dominated curricular thinking and shifted the ground to more romantic notions of education.

Later, in the 1940s, the Progressive movement, in turn, lost much of its momentum and give way back to the behavioral school of thought. Particularly, in the 1940s, the work of Ralph W. Tyler, who shared much with Bobbitt on rationality and relative simplicity, has made a lasting impression on curriculum theory and practice (Smith, 1996).

Particularly, Ralph W. Tyler is known by his basic and systematic questions related with curriculum planning in any educational institute. Actually, his questions apply to any social institution; they involve the basic reasons for being, the ways and means of achieving those reasons for which the institute stands, and the means of determining whether such reasons/purposes have been achieved or not. The basic curriculum questions according to Tyler (1949:1) are listed as follows:

1. *What educational purposes should the school seek to attain?*
2. *What educational experiences can be provided that are likely to attain these purposes?*

3. *How can these educational experiences be effectively organized?*

4. *How can we determine whether these purposes are being attained?*

Like Bobbitt he also placed an emphasis on the formulation of behavioral objectives. Accordingly, he writes:

Since the real purpose of education is not to have the instructor perform certain activities but to bring about significant changes in the students' pattern of behavior, it becomes important to recognize that any statements of objectives of the school should be a statement of changes to take place in the students. (Tyler 1949: 44)

Thus, the educational process may be given significance if only it enables learners to achieve the preset goals of the institution, according to this school.

Following to this rationalist mode of thought, it seems, Taba (1962), presented the fundamental questions of Tyler in a more expanded and detailed manner; which is implicit that this school has had its genesis in the industrial scientific management system. It means that the model is one of system based. According to Taba (1962), curriculum planning, generally, has to follow the following steps: diagnose the need, formulate appropriate objectives, select and organize subject area content, select and organize learning methods, and determine the method of curriculum evaluation.

Central to this approach is the formulation of behavioral objectives - providing a clear notion of outcome so that content and method may be organized and the results evaluated. The dominance of this way of thought over the years is largely attributable to its being systematic. In this thought patterns, the educational purpose is the unifying theme

Furthermore, this school of thought stresses on setting criteria before accepting educational objectives as suitable for the selection of learning activities. McNeil (1996) has put such criteria as "congruency with values and functions;" if authorities for the institution value general education, objectives must boost common understanding; if they value specialization, then objectives must be related to the development of

specialists in a field. And also, Comprehensiveness (encompassing), consistency (objectives should be consistent with one another); "One should not have objectives stressing both openness or inquiry and dogmatism or unconditional acceptance" (McNeil, 1996:130). Another criterion deals with attainability that educational objectives must be capable of being reached without great strain.

According to Smith (1996, 2000), most critics of this model are concerned with the measurability of educational outcomes that the model claims. That educational objectives can be specified in advance and outcomes can be objectively (or mechanistically) measured is mainly the point of contest on the part of critics. Put this differently, the uncertainty about what is being measured has become an issue of debate; it is often very difficult to judge what the impact of particular experiences has been; sometimes it is years after the event that we come to appreciate something of what has happened. In a nutshell, the point of the critics seems to be that programmed learning is for 'robots', not for humans.

Moreover, the model is criticized for overlooking the possibility of emergent/unanticipated results. The focus on pre-specified goals may lead both educators and learners to overlook learning that is occurring as a result of their interactions, but which has not been specified in the statement of objectives.

2.2.3 Curriculum as process

In contrast to the behavioral model, the process model and the praxis model emphasize on the ways of organization and interaction learners might do with their environment that what makes a difference.

The proponents of the process model argue that curriculum is not a physical thing, but rather the interaction of teachers, students and knowledge. In other words, curriculum is taken as something that actually happens in the classroom and what people do to prepare and evaluate. It specifies the context in which the learning process takes place;

that it is distinguished from the informal interaction, and hence the learning process, because it takes place in the school in which teachers and other institutional facilities and resources involve.

A prominent scholar in the field, Lawrence Stenhouse (1975) defined curriculum within the context of this model as: "A curriculum is an attempt to communicate the essential principles and features of an educational proposal in such a form that it is open to critical scrutiny and capable of effective translation into practice."

He further suggests that a curriculum is like a recipe in cookery and proceeds:

It can be criticized on nutritional or gastronomic grounds - does it nourish the students and does it taste good? - And it can be criticized on the grounds of practicality.... A curriculum, like the recipe for a dish, is first imagined as a possibility, then the subject of experiment. The recipe offered publicly is in a sense a report on the experiment. Similarly, a curriculum should be grounded in practice. It is an attempt to describe the work observed in classrooms that it is adequately communicated to teachers and others. Finally, within limits, a recipe can vary according to taste. So can a curriculum (Stenhouse, 1975: 4-5).

Two things appear to deserve attention here. The first is the development of a tentative proposal subject to test/experiment; the second point is creating the context- the school in which the educational proposal is to be tested through action involving the teachers and the students for viability. Nonetheless, the resultant situations might vary depending on the context and learners experiences with that regard. It seems that this kind of thinking has emerged in reaction to the behavioral model, in which learning experiences and educational objectives are supposed to appear in advance (prior to and outside the teaching and learning process).

In a similar way, Newman & Ingram (1989:1), forward their definition of curriculum, within the context of the process model, as: "Those processes, which enhance or, if they go wrong, inhibit a person's learning...this leading to the exercise of curricular development and a curriculum becomes an organic process by which learning is offered, accepted and internalized."

This definition, however, seems in shortfall of characteristics that distinguish curriculum from education itself. With this respect, Robin Barrow (1984) points out that 'what this does is to widen the meaning of the term to such an extent that it just becomes interchangeable with 'education' itself'.

While the behavioral model predetermines results before students and teachers have come into the interaction process, the process model takes the school as a laboratory where educational proposals are tested and checked for making differences in learners' behavior via the involvement of the students themselves; As Stenhouse (1975:142) puts it: "The idea is that of an educational science in which each classroom is a laboratory, each teacher a member of the scientific community... The crucial point is that the proposal is not to be regarded as an unqualified recommendation but rather as a provisional specification claiming no more than to be worth putting to the test of practice, such proposals claim to be intelligent rather than correct."

In this sense, then, a curriculum from the process model perspective is a particular form of specification about the practice of teaching. It is not a package of materials or a syllabus of ground to be covered. 'It is a way of translating any educational idea into a hypothesis testable in practice. It invites critical testing rather than acceptance' (Stenhouse 1975: 142).

While outcomes are the central and defining features of the behavioral school, the process model contends that content and means develop when the students and teachers come to interact, dialogue, and negotiate about the meanings and relationship patterns of facts. The process model asserts that students are subjects not objects to be acted upon. They have a clear voice in the way that the sessions evolve. The focus is on interactions. This can mean that attention shifts from teaching to learning. This model values the educational interaction over any preset objectives; with little or no values accorded to examinations and resultant scores. According to Stenhouse (1975), the process model is essentially a critical model, not a marking model. He adds:

The process model can never be directed towards an examination as an objective without loss of quality, since the standards of the examination then override the standards immanent in the subject. This does not mean that students taught on the process model cannot be examined, but it does mean that the examinations must be taken in their stride as they pursue other aspirations. And if the examination is a by-product there is an implication that the quality the student shows in it must be an under-estimate of his real quality. It is hence rather difficult to get the weak student through an examination using a process model. Crammers cannot use it, since it depends upon a commitment to educational aims. (Stenhouse 1975: 95)

In contrast to the foregoing statements offered by Stenhouse, the process model is criticized for it limits (reduces) curriculum to day to day activities and skillful problem solving. According to Grundy (1987), the process is reduced to sets of skills. When students are able to demonstrate certain skills, they are deemed to have completed the process. Grundy (1987:77), comments that "*the actions have become the ends; the processes have become the product. Whether or not students are able to apply the skills to make sense of the world around them is somehow overlooked.*

2.2.4 Curriculum as praxis

According to Smith (1996), curriculum as praxis is, in many respects, an improved version of the process model. While the process model is driven by general principles and places an emphasis on judgment and meaning making, it does not make explicit statements about the interests it serves. The praxis model of curriculum brings these to the centre of the process and makes an explicit commitment to emancipation in that action is not simply informed, but is also committed

Critical pedagogy goes beyond situating the learning experience within the experience of the learner: it is a process, which takes the experiences of both the learner and the teacher and, through dialogue and negotiation, recognizes them both as problematic... [It] allows, indeed encourages, students and teachers together to confront the real problems of their existence and relationships... (Grundy,1987: 105).

Here, this model, unlike to the process model, takes account of the informed actions and reflections, both, on the part of students and teachers based on shared ideas and purposes towards which to pursue.

In this approach the curriculum itself develops through the dynamic interaction of action and reflection. That is, the curriculum is not simply a set of plans to be implemented, but rather is constituted through an active process in which planning, acting and evaluating are all reciprocally related and integrated into the process' (Grundy 1987: 115).

The important theme with this regard, according to the forgoing author, is looking for practice that does not focus exclusively on individuals, but paying a careful attention to collective understandings and practices and to structural questions. The important point in a praxis model is its action orientation; informed action involving all stakeholders. Action based learning is a solid foundation for sustainable educational development.

In sum, the differences in views among the models mentioned above emanate from the values each has espoused over other values. Nonetheless, a little bit introspection over such differing views suggest that the differences, essentially, lie more of in approach or methods of education rather than of objective. The emergence of these differences can, indeed, be traced to the philosophical roots from which each has outgrown. For example, the syllabus model can be traced to the philosophy of liberal education, which gives primary emphasis for accumulated wisdom of society found in the cultural heritage in the form of books.

Similarly, the behavioral model can be traced to the combination of psychological and philosophical systems preceded it.

Though modern psychological behaviorism has arrived at its conclusions through scientific research, it is clear that behaviorism as a system of thought has its roots in a number of philosophical traditions. The first...is materialism, the theory that reality can be explained by the laws of matter and motion, without any appeal to mind or spiritual reality. This materialist viewpoint ...is found in the writings of Hobbes who...contended that the psychological make-up of persons could be explained in mechanistic terms. A second

philosophic tradition is scientific realism and empiricism...the preference for the "hard" data of science over the "soft" data of the humanities. Positivism is the third philosophic tradition...that one arrives at knowledge not through theology or traditional philosophy, but through scientific observation and the measurement of facts, (Elias and Merriam, 1980:80)

It implicit from the foregoing statements, therefore, that, like any program of action, curriculum can designed, implemented and be evaluated based on empirical data.

In basic principles of curriculum and instruction (1949) as paraphrased in Elias and Merriam (1980), Tyler presents a generic model for designing an educational activity "whether it be a single instructional unit or a comprehensive program". Tyler bases his model upon the assumption that "education is a process of changing the behavior patterns of people"...each educational program should have clearly defined purposes... "purposes can be derived from many sources including the learners themselves, contemporary life outside of school, and the subject specialists."

With this regard, the liberal educators, like the advocates of subject-centered curriculum makers, emphasize on the importance of accumulated knowledge that should be preserved via transmitting to new generations. The scientific/technological curriculum makers, like the behavioral school, focus on the predetermination of educational objectives based on ongoing socioeconomic needs and systematic measurement of achievements based on preset objectives. According to McNeil (1996:58-9): "Early in the twentieth century, curriculum specialists such as Franklin Bobbitt thought that methods used by industry for increasing productivity could be applied to education. Decisions about what to teach were to be reached by analysis of what was required in the performance of jobs."

This means that educational objectives were measured in terms of vocational skill requirements sought to meet industry needs for educated workforce.

The developmentalists/student-centered (humanist) curriculum makers, like the advocates of the process model, give emphasis to the creation of conducive learning

environment based on the real needs and interests of the learner, but with no clarity as regards the goals of the setting; and closely connected to the progressive philosophical thought. In the words of McNeil (1996), this model of curriculum planning 'is based on interests, natural mode of growth, and impulses for student action'. In this mode of thought, self-actualization of individual learners is the guiding principle of curriculum planning.

Finally, the social Reconstructionists or radical philosophy, in some respects, go hand in hand with the exponents of the praxis model-which insists that informed action and interaction among learners and the environment matters in transforming the existing and traditional social system into more developed and just social order. As McNeil (1996) puts it the primary purpose of curriculum planning in this school of thought is to "confront the learners with the many severe problems that human kind faces". Accordingly, the curriculum (learning opportunity) should meet three criteria: first, it must be real; second, it must require action; and thirdly, it must teach social values.

2.3 Perspectives in Higher Education vis-à-vis national development

Many educational and development authorities and experts proclaim that educational institutions, especially those of tertiary level, play critical roles in achieving broad based sustainable development of any society. That is tertiary educational institutions have a decisive role in supporting knowledge-driven national socioeconomic developmental strategies and in the construction of democratic and socially cohesive societies. Moreover, tertiary level education supports the improvement of institutional capacities of the public and private sectors via the training of competent professional and/or specialists for sound macroeconomic and social sector management (World Bank, 2002). For example, Harrison and Huntington, (2000), in The world Bank (2002), asserts that tertiary education institutions impart students, in addition to the basic technical fields of studies, the norms, values, attitudes, and ethics which are the foundation of the *social*

capital necessary for constructing healthy civil societies and cohesive cultures. **Social capital is** the building up of common values and networks among the individual members of society which are necessary for constructing healthy civil society and cohesive cultures – the very bedrock of good governance and democratic political systems (Harrison and Huntington 2000: in the World Bank 2002).

Here, the undergoing advocacy towards *broad based sustainable national development*, rather than just development, is receiving emphasis of increasing scale by many developmental scholars. According to Weaver and Rock (1997), broad based sustainable development is long-term social activity toward the achievement of continuing social well-being and /or the improvement of the quality of human life. The same authors characterize such a development by four integral parts: First, a healthy, growing economy undergoing structural transformation; second, an economy in which the benefits are widely distributed; third, a political system that provides for human rights and freedoms, effective governance; and, fourth, a political economy that is consistent with preservation of the environment.

The aforementioned assertions assume that tertiary education is founded on democratic social values; educational endeavors at these levels seek and pursue the development of adult learners in terms of all aspects of knowledge including vocational, intellectual, ethical/moral, and aesthetical excellence, by creating enabling environments for all citizens who need and desire to access. What matters in the attainments of equitable development is thus the equity in availing opportunities and the creation of encouraging and supporting environment whereby all citizens can maximize individual and societal problem solving and living skills. It is believed that open social systems are fertile grounds for living creative life. Curriculum planning practices within these assumptions focus on the most fundamental values underlying harmonious social systems.

2.4 The Role of Higher education in sustainable socioeconomic development

Defining the functions and objectives of higher education cannot be made in isolation to the socioeconomic context in which it operates. It means no functions or objectives of this level of education can be identified and analyzed without considering the political, social, and economic context of the society. What is the purpose of education in general and higher education in particular? Who are the beneficiaries and/or stakeholders of tertiary level educational institutes? What is the relevance of the efforts of such institutions with respect to society in general and individual learners in particular? These questions deserve appropriate answers. UNESCO (1995), on the "Role of Higher Education suggests:

The relevance of higher education is considered primarily in terms of its role and place in society, its functions with regard to teaching, research, and the resulting services, as well as in terms of its links with the world of work in a broad sense, relations with state and public funding, and interactions with other levels and forms of education, (UNESCO,1995).

UNESCO (1995) justifies the need for relevance of higher education as:

The need for relevance has acquired new dimensions and greater urgency as modern economies demand graduates able to constantly update their knowledge, learn new skills and with the qualities to be not only successful job seekers but also job creators in continuously shifting labor markets. Higher education has to rethink its mission and redefine many of its functions, particularly in view of society's need for life long learning and training, (UNESCO, 1995).

Higher education has a central role to play in the overall educational endeavors with respect to socioeconomic development. Thompson and Fogel (1976) forward the following points with regard to the role of higher education in enhancing sustainable national development: define social needs and problems; prepare effective contributors

to social development; apply knowledge to the solution of development problems; strengthen education at lower levels via training teachers, common language programs, curriculum research and development, designing teaching materials, etc; and help society define values and purposes.

ESAURP (1987) distinguishes three basic purposes that higher education should fulfill: first, the production of higher-level manpower through teaching and learning; second, the development and application of new knowledge for the benefit of society through research; and, third, the provision of public service to society through consultancies and orientations. With this connection, the role of higher education with respect to the public service dimension is presented precisely by Gove and Stauffer (1986:176) as: "essentially, public service means the delivery and application of our knowledge resources to the identification, analysis, and solution of public problems." The research and public service dimensions of tertiary educational institutions are linked reciprocally. That is, undergoing research on the operating socioeconomic realities via the creation of links between the educational institute and the socioeconomic sectors is a necessary condition for achieving the basic goals implicated above.

However, such roles of these institutions can be played effectively if there exist cooperation and integrations among these institutions and the other stakeholders (industries, the civil service, professional associations, and the informal sector). One of the major interventions in this regard is curriculum planning to be considered at all levels.

2.5 Curriculum planning in higher education

2.5.1 Needs analysis and formulating of objectives

The decisions concerned with the identification and choices of values on which higher educational objectives may be founded are very difficult, yet necessary endeavors. The difficulties emerge from the controversies in determining primacies and precedence with respect to the needs and interests of individual learners, the contemporary societal

needs, and the interests of the educational institution.

According to Saylor and Alexander (1954), 'one essential source of curriculum goals is analysis of contemporary community problems'. Likewise, as higher educational institutions are social settings whose primary purpose is the promotion and enhancement of higher level of Knowledge that serve the contemporary values of society.

In most rational models, the decision making process follows an orderly pattern. The determination of goals is the first priority. Other decisions about structure, content, activities, materials, and accountability are tied to the goals. Goals themselves are determined by means of a logical problem solving approaches (McNeil, 1996:122).

It means that according to the systems/scientific model of curriculum planning, there is every reason for every consequential curricular decision. Educational objectives are set based on reasoned out needs or problems derived from the socioeconomic milieu in which they emerge/operate. The issue is however as to which needs/problems should take precedence in the order of the list of such problems or needs. With this respect, then what sources of objectives are valued most so as to serve as building blocks in the process of constructing curriculum in higher educational institutes?

Generally speaking, higher education can be characterized by a learning community dedicated to the pursuit and dissemination of advanced knowledge, to the study and clarification of values, and to the advancement of the society it serves, as its primary objectives. Values are meanings derived from social/individual needs or problems. Values are those beliefs which worth devotion.

With respect to the identification and selection of sources of objectives in curriculum planning, values range from the need for fulfilling immediate physical and biological needs to higher level and abstracted spiritual and intellectual needs. Values are diverse

and overlapping. Concerning the question, as to which values should the curriculum reflect, the answer depends on the socioeconomic context. For example, Phenix (1961), with respect to the ideals of democratic education, proposes four pivotal value systems. In his words: "Four pivotal values to be developed in a democracy of worth are here proposed. These are: intelligence, creativity, conscience, and reverence"(Phenix, 1961:28).

Intelligence in this connection deals with intellectual competence (the power of reasoning); creativity involves the ability of appreciations and pursuits of aesthetic excellence, individual and/or group conduct of behavior (manners), propensity to work, and recreation; conscience is concerned here with social/individual self conservation, health, family life and political economy; reverence as value encompasses and undergirds all the rest, as the key to the principle of devotion upon which the democracy of worth rests (Phenix, 1961).

Dressel (1976), on his part makes nine categories of values, which curriculum designers might consider when setting educational objectives. These are: purposive (clarity of purpose as individual and society), ethical/moral, aesthetic (beauty, taste, order, harmony, balances, etc.), epistemological (related with the methodologies in the pursuits of knowing), economic, hygienic (health), social, empathetic (interpersonal relations), individual freedom from being alienated from sociopolitical and economic activities, and so on.

Whatever the diverse and differing approaches in determining and the analysis of value systems, needs assessment should be a necessary requisite to setting rational objectives in higher educational institutions.

The rationalists stress on setting criteria before accepting educational objectives as suitable for the selection of learning activities. McNeil (1996:130) has put such criteria as "congruency with values and functions;" if authorities for the institution value general

education, objectives must boost common understanding; if they value specialization, then objectives must be related to the development of specialists in a field. Thus, the first and primary step in curriculum planning and /or development is the analysis of needs of society they are established to serve; and the selection and setting forth of appropriate objectives based on preset priorities.

According to the Newsletter of the National Academy (2000), tertiary education curriculum should be "founded on a carefully thought-out philosophy of education and should be clearly connected to its respective institution's mission statement; presented with clear goals: what graduates should know and be able to do and those attitudes and values a faculty believes are appropriate to well-educated men and women".

The basic and perennial educational question 'what students should achieve at the end of their schooling' is the primary concern of higher educational institutes. In connection with the formulation of objectives, Paul Ramsden (1992) in his 'Learning to Teach in Higher Education' strongly believes and asserts the necessity of objective setting with respect to the desired changes in students.

These are educational aims/objectives. Accordingly, the reason for setting educational objectives is based on the assumption that education is all about changes in students' knowledge and /or behavior. Accordingly, educational objectives signify what we aspire and/or desire to attain in order to meet the needs upon which such objectives are founded.

Educational objectives may be stated in terms of the desired and appropriate/relevant skills and/or competences based on occupational requirement manifestations. As any educational pursuits are directed toward changes of learners' behaviors, objectives could be stated in terms of the ideal graduate profile within each respective program of study. A graduate profile signifies what a student should be and do after having completed his/her study. Amare et al (2000) describe what a departmental graduate profile is:

A departmental graduate profile is a series of itemized descriptions explaining

the capabilities of an individual graduate. These capabilities are the outcomes of the training program of the department...these changes of behavior should be observable in the overall behavior of the graduates...in the work place (Amare et al, 2000:82).

Basic points that should come forth before stating the graduate profile, according to (Amare et al, 2000: 83) are the activities the graduates should accomplish in the work place, the discipline and senses of responsibilities they should reflect, the levels of intelligence in decision making and reflections they should exhibit in the social and occupational context in which they would be a part. Accordingly, to these authors, the sources of information for such purpose include the specific skill requirement manifestations of the socioeconomic context related with each respective specialization, market trends for the kinds of skills relative to each specialization, the views of former graduates (alumni) through tracer studies, studies into the possibilities of generating new jobs, views of current and potential employers, and so on.

Particularly, program objectives particularly related with vocational education, as is the case in the Department of Business Education, should be stated in terms of relative occupational competency; as they are presupposedly derived from occupational requirements of the socioeconomic environment. Tyler (1949) as recited in Elias and Merriam (1980) states this precisely as: " Each objective should specify both the kind of behavior to be developed in the student and the content or area of life in which this behavior is to operate" (Elias and Merriam, 1980:100).

To sum up the issue of deriving and formulating objectives in higher education, the Association of American Colleges (AAC) (1994) states precisely what higher educational objectives should look like. According to this Association, particularly the undergraduate studies in higher education should base on three basic objectives: *First, the cultivation of thoughtful and responsible persons and citizens; second, the preparation for the world of*

work (vocational development); and third, the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake, (AAC, 1994). That the first involves with developing moral and/or conscientious persons, the second with the development of technically competent people, and the third deals with the development of an intellectual mind that devotes for knowledge as an ultimate intrinsic value in its own right.

2.5.2 Identification, selection, and organization of subject area content

Course identification, analysis, selection, and organization is another vital element of curriculum planning in higher educational institutions. The selection and organization of courses is, however, the function of the kind of objectives sought to achieve at that level. If the objectives are based on vocational needs, then, courses are, in a large measure, oriented toward the development of technical/occupational skills, for example. That is, appropriate courses to the objectives of a given institution are selected and designed to enable learners achieve the desired level of professional or occupational competence. A sound curriculum of higher education necessitates a rational sequence of educational activities by which courses are carefully ordered in a developmental sequence to form a coherent learning based on the stated intended outcomes of both the curriculum and its constituent courses.

Course design in higher educational institutions should come as a result of thorough need analysis and the development of appropriate educational objectives. Toohey (1999), in her book 'Designing Courses for Higher Education,' informs us that 'most models of course design suggest that a comprehensive needs analysis should be the first step' in such an endeavor. Toohey is of the opinion that "Once the need is established, and the decision to go ahead with the course design or redesign is approved, the goals and objectives can be determined, the structure of the course decided, the teaching methods and materials planned and assessment methods set down" (Toohey, 1999:21).

Nonetheless, though need identification and analysis should come in the first step in

order to decide as to which needs are most important and valued most by the immediate and ultimate stakeholders, it is not clear with respect to the logical order of formulating goals and objectives. As the rationalist model of curriculum planning suggests, setting objectives must follow immediately after establishing the most pressing needs of stakeholders.

It seems a natural order to identify the critical needs of learners and the contemporary society before resorting to formulate educational objectives and designing corresponding courses. In this regard, Toohey (1999) proposes to raise what she calls a central question which needs to be answered through the course design process: 'what is most important for these students to know and what might be the best ways for them to learn it?'

In the same token, the issue of vertical and horizontal integration of contents is an essential part of the design process. As stated in Amare et al (2000: 95), after having selected the courses of a program, the next step is the determination of their arrangement in consistence with the learning behavior of learners. The basic requirements of course design (organization) with this regard involve the consideration of sequencing (the arrangement of selected courses in time) and integrating based on some complementarities. The points that should be taken into account in sequencing the courses are: continuity-implying the progression from simple to complex, and from the concrete to the abstract, ascertaining the existence of mutual reinforcement among the courses (complementarity principle), and so on.

According to the behavioral model of curriculum planning, as mentioned in Elias and Merriam (1980:101), learning experiences must be organized in light of three criteria: (1) continuity-providing recurring opportunities for experiencing particular elements of the course(s); (2) sequencing – each successive experience builds upon the preceding so as to increase the learner's depth and breadth of understanding; and (3) integration – contents (learning experiences) are arranged so that the segments/elements of learning

experiences can be united into the learner's behavior.

It is worthy noting that, according to the behavioral school of thought, particularly, Tyler (1949) as is indicated in Elias and Merriam (ibid), learning experiences are used interchangeably with contents of relative subject areas. It means that the actual learning activities within the educational environment constitute the contents of courses of study, on the part of the learners.

2.5.3 Determination and adoption of teaching methods

Methods are means to an end, not ends in themselves. The best methods ensure the attainment of the maximum educational objectives. Methods help in unfolding and cultivating students' potential. Methods that do not facilitate to stir up students motivation for continuous effort toward achieving the maximum possibilities are waste of time and energies of students and other members of the educational institution. Several principles have been developed, among which, Tyler (1949), as recited in McNeil (1996) has proposed five general principles for developing learning experiences (or learning in its real sense). These are: first, appropriate practice of students on the given issues in the classroom or outside to it. In this principle, Tyler believes that the nature of objectives determine learning opportunities (the means to an end).

This principle states that learning opportunities must give the student practice in what is called for by the objective. If the objective is to develop the skill of problem solving, students must have opportunities to solve problems and not merely to watch how others solve problems, Tyler (1949) as paraphrased in (McNeil, 1996:149).

This kind of educational principle calls for the creation of the real operational context within the educational milieu so as to help students develop the capabilities of solving real occupational or life problems when graduating and leaving for their future socioeconomic life. It is the way of synthesizing theory into practice.

The second principle is student satisfaction. The learning opportunity provided must

satisfy the learners. "Unless students enjoy the process, they will not cross unexplored frontiers."

The third principle of teaching methods is success. "The principle of success requires deciding whether the learning activity is within the range of possibility for the student..." teachers should design activities that link new content to the student's prior experiences and teach prerequisites to critical tasks; the actual experiences of the student is supposed to be the best predictor of success.

The fourth principle is concerned with diversifying the approaches of the teaching/learning process-multiple approaches. According to this principle, many different activities can be used and take to the desired preset purpose.

The Fifth and the last principle is multiple outcomes. "In one sense there will always be multiple outcomes from a learning activity because each student interprets and applies ideas from the classroom in his or her own way, depending on prior experience. Tyler stressed that it is economical to arrange activities that are likely to contribute to multiple desirable outcomes.

Sawyer (1943), as cited in Ramsden (1992), comments that "bad teaching is teaching which presents an endless procession of meaningless signs, words, and rules, and fails to arouse the imagination" of students.

2.5.4 Curriculum evaluation

Some authors in the area of study urge that curriculum planning in higher education, in any educational setting for that matter, requires a builtin evaluation program. Because, at the very least, defects related to design and the implementation phases must be assessed, measured, and corrected timely. Thus evaluation must be taken as a vital integral part of curriculum planning.

Melrose (1999), defines curriculum evaluation:

Curriculum evaluation refers to the process by which a judgment is made about the worth or merit of a curriculum or its appropriateness for the individual, the group, the organization offering it or the society within which it operates. This judgment depends on the value system of the judges, the questions that they ask and the evidence collected by them (HERDSA, 1996)

Accordingly, evaluating the curriculum usually involves collecting data before, during and/or after the intended learning events have taken place, depending on whether the evaluation is for approval or for developmental purposes or part of the quality assurance systems in place for the curriculum.

As Amare Asgedom et al (2000) mentioned it, curriculum planning comprises of a comprehensive evaluation method that should be a built-in part and parcel of the plan.

Curriculum design should also involve planning of an in-built mechanism for monitoring and evaluation of the program. This ensures maintenance of quality. With effective management system, developing mechanism of quality control and an evaluation guide facilitates the process of quality assurance... Both formative and summative evaluations should be used for the purpose of quality management and improvement. Formative evaluation is done while the program is still in progress. Summative evaluation is undertaken at the completion of the program and its purpose is to judge the overall effectiveness of the program...Programs can be tested in terms of their outputs and processes (Amare et al, 2000:98-9).

A Continuous assessment, evaluation and improvement of quality and amount of education are as fundamental as the formulation of educational objectives themselves. Valid and reliable evaluation must be preplanned so as to facilitate monitoring on a continuing basis for the effectiveness of the curriculum in fostering student development. Close monitoring on a continuous basis enables to detect emergent anomalies so as to make timely corrections to assure the achievement of defined institutional and curricular goals.

Before launching evaluation of any sort, however, specifying the purpose for which the evaluation program stands is very important. Because, it is very difficult to know whether evaluation results are of any help without having clearly stated purposes.

Basically, the need for evaluation emanates from two presumed perspectives: firstly, the need for certainty that program objectives are being met in the light of the assumptions underlying them; secondly, developmental initiatives must be taken based on past performances-thus assessing for what has gone in the past becomes necessary in planning for successive activities.

Curriculum evaluation in higher education is a multidimensional and complex endeavor. It requires preparedness in terms of organization, expertise, and commitment. Program evaluation at this level can be viewed from three perspectives: first, from the educational institution, with respect to its competence and commitment; second, from the learning performances of the learners (educational achievement with respect to expected behavioral change); third, from the stakeholders' point of view. For example, the productivities and competencies of industries and other sociopolitical sectors where graduates of the program work in (impact assessment).

Even though educational objectives may differ in approach or philosophical bases, evaluation for relative achievement and worth in each respect is necessary. According to Dressel (1976), curriculum evaluation can take place in different contexts and varying assumptions, i.e., the approach adopted may depend upon the people involved and the purposes to be served.

The evaluation of the classical curriculum was implicit and based largely up on historical considerations and philosophical presuppositions. The content and the substance of the classics – the cognitive and affective heritage of the Western world – was viewed as incontestably valuable in its own right...contrary, in professional or technological education, the specification of particular courses may be important. Hours and types of field works, clerkships, and internships become standards for curriculum evaluation in these circumstances (Dressel, 1976:313-4).

The issue here is, more than any human endeavor, curriculum requires a continuous and rigorous evaluation. Because it is the issue of human development, it affects the quality and amount of knowledge we acquire, and it determines the kind of social just and order

that is a crucial element for harmonious socioeconomic life. The kind of education we aspire to achieve can only be attained through a continuous and institutional control system.

Curriculum evaluation feeds into decision-making about the curriculum. It is used to improve the curriculum in a cyclic process, or to justify the inclusion or continuation of a program within the Institute.

Nevertheless, a method or a group of methods employed to assess and evaluate program effectiveness must be comprehensive enough to cover all factors that might have effect on the performance results of the program. Two basic criteria that an educational/curricular evaluation should be in consistence are validity and reliability of the methods it employed. Validity is a condition where an assessment method, such as a classroom test, assesses what it claims to assess and thus produces results that can lead to inferences that are congruent to the premises and help making sound educational decisions. Reliability, on the other hand, signifies the dependability of the results of an assessment for successive uses; for recurring educational decisions The National Academy for Academic Leadership (2000) puts this explicitly as: "For example, a classroom test claiming to measure higher-order thinking skill but actually assessing only memorized knowledge lacks validity. Inferences and decisions, concerning students' thinking skills, cannot justifiably be made from evidence produced by such an assessment."

Moreover, program assessment and evaluation should be designed and be carried out to support the development and/or improvement of the program for which it is assumed to serve. As Tyler (1949) in Elias Merriam (1980:101) puts it, "evaluations should be used for both individual and program assessments. ...Curriculum planning is a continuous process in which evaluation leads to re-planning and redevelopment."

Finally, an instituted assessment and evaluation aspect of curriculum planning is the

most important aspect. It determines whether educational improvement and development can be achieved on a sustainable basis or not. It is so because none-system based practices may not continue to operate on regular basis. Uninstituted evaluating programs may also be susceptible to biases characterized by the inclusion of one and leaving another aspect of the educational process.

2.6 The Experience of Addis Ababa University in Curriculum Planning

2.6.1 Historical perspectives

It was after about five decades of the introduction of modern/secular education in Ethiopia that the establishment of the AAU realized. According to studies made on educational history of the country, secular education took a start in between the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries: Emperor Menelik II made the initial efforts and followed by more systematic approaches to develop these efforts by Emperor Haile Selassie I, at the early part of his reign. According to Maaza Bekele (1966), "Between 1905 and 1908 Menelik caused to be built and opened in Addis Ababa the first Government school, the Menelik II School," followed by the establishment of similar schools in some of the regions – Harar, Dessie, and Ankober. Though the efforts continued until 1936, however, almost all the establishments were nullified or closed during the Italian invasion.

Though the introduction of modern and Government sponsored education system in the country is said to have dated back to 1905 or so, it was in 1943, after over three decades that the educational sector received a due institution-the formulation of MOE, the only formal agency for the entire educational system of the country.

The then conflicts between the customary/traditional thought system and the newly emerging thought system that was change oriented during the introduction of modern education in the nation are explained by another researcher, Girma Amare (1964), cited

in Abdullahi (1971) "Education and the Conflict of Values in Ethiopia: A study of the Socio-Moral Problems Arising out of the Introduction of Modern Education in Ethiopia":

The old feudal order can no longer stand the pressures of industrialization and urbanization. The traditional values, customs and morality can no longer appeal to the newly emerging elite of the population. Amidst such conflicts of values and revolutionary changes that are taking place in to-day's Ethiopia are found the elements that undermine the strength and vitality of a nation (Abdullahi, 1971:21).

In his conclusion, Girma Amare seems to be of the opinion that the western paradigm of modernization should not have been the only way out of backwardness and poverty. He writes in Abdulahi (1971) "Ethiopia, or any other developing country, for that matter, does not have to westernize in order to modernize. In its traditions are preserved values, that with skillful redefinition, could be made to function in a modern situation. Only in this would it be possible to avoid the many threatening problems of conflicts of values and consequences that result from it."

Converting the forgoing comments particularly to the history of the Addis Ababa University, Sen (2001) in Amare (2005), characterizes the situation as:

...the Addis Ababa University destroyed itself as a result of a context produced by the disharmony of the alien culture with the indigenous one. It had completely missed the disharmonizing discourses of the West and the East and was swallowed in a political turmoil that had still made it difficult to get ride of (Amare, 2005).

The foregoing ideas go in line with the educational models that advocate education systems must consider contextual values. That means sustainable development and transformation into modernity require foundational efforts and missions to primarily

consider indigenous values and ideal systems on which to build on further development.

According to Bakri (1971), the Ethiopian educational system has had foundational fallacies and difficulties:

For the last sixty-five years or so, Ethiopia has been a workshop for different systems of education – French, British, German, Swedish, and America; each being blended with the traditional approach to education (Bakri, 1971:38).

Generally, the lack of National institutional base of the country with respect to well-founded higher educational institutes seems to be the reason for such patchwork and unsteady educational efforts for no fruition. After having had extended studies of the situation in the country, Gene S. Jacobsen (1967) has to say:

It seems past time for the Ethiopians to quit jumping from one idea to another and approach education in a much more scientific manner through careful research procedures, and conclusions as to how the public can be best served with the educational fund available (Jacobsen, 1967:14).

Aklilu Habte (1967) on his part mentions the situation of the then educational system as follows:

Ethiopia's education is harassed by the absence of carefully worked-out educational policies ...the patchwork character of the school curricula; the inadequate supply of suitable textbooks – even when suitable textbooks exist: the language situation, which bristles with difficulties, political and linguistic as well as pedagogic; the hasty and uncritical acceptance of recommendations from foreign advisors – or their equally uncritical rejection: ... (Habte, 1967:27)

It was, thus, after over five decades of tremulous and troublesome times since the introduction of modern education in the country that the Addis Ababa University came to being, which was in 1961. According to the publication of the 30th anniversary of the Addis Ababa University (1980), its establishment is forwarded as follows:

A survey of the situation of higher education in Ethiopia was conducted by a team of seven renowned educators in 1959. The team felt that keeping each college autonomously would not be fruitful for the effective functioning of higher institutes, and recommended the establishment of a national university, which would coordinate the activities of each of the colleges. Thus, on 28 February 1961 ...was inaugurated with a charter of its own, bringing all the five colleges together with one board of governors, one faculty council, one president, one registrar and one dean of students (AAU, 1980:12).

This investigator made an attempt if any document other than this one that may contain such data but for no results.

Following the establishment of the university as centralized national higher institute, the faculty of education (as full-fledged faculty), and the college of Business Administration as a separate unit of the university, were established in 1962 and 1963, respectively, (AAU, 1980). Though myriad efforts have been raised to expand and /or diversify the programs of the university, which was the only higher institute in the nation, some important areas, which have direct relevance to the context of the country, it seems, were overlooked. For example, no mention was given about water management and irrigation, environmental science/conservation, and other crucial areas.

With respect to the number of graduates we see a daunting story. Though no sufficient data with regard to the number and program level (diploma /degree) of enrolments during the time of its establishment is available at the moment, in 1972, after about ten years, the number of enrolments was only .7% of the total enrolments across the formal educational system (primary, secondary, and tertiary levels). The total enrolment of students throughout the country (figure in 1972) was 800, 000 (Thompson: 1977, 57). This means that only 5,600 diploma and degree level students enrolled in that year across the various faculties and colleges of the university. With respect to the contemporary population size and acute socioeconomic problems, this figure is extremely low.

According to the study on 'University Capacity in Eastern and Southern African Countries' by ESAURP (1984), the number of university students in Ethiopia was 13, 176; (compared with the 5,600 in 1972, this indicates an increase of about 7,576 students-which is after about 12 years) the total population of the country in that time was 31million. Putting this in terms of ratio, it is about 2,353:1(number of citizens per university student). Relative to the educable age cohort, which was estimated to be 40% of the total population (equal to 12.4million), was extremely insignificant-which was about less than half percent.

From the foregoing perspectives, it is difficult to understand whether tertiary education in the country was considered as a privilege and accessible to selected groups or taken as a developmental necessity that should be accessible to all who need it and capable of studying at that level remains open for discussion.

Thompson (1977) comments on the background of the establishment of modern education in the country as preceded by the highly elaborate, largely status quo-oriented system of education of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church and the koranic school system. His comment had been based on the concurrent bias toward the elite based educational system.

Most importantly, the curriculum design and development function was not instituted as a separate unit of the university, i.e., no such a separate institution entrusted to deal with curriculum planning and development for the university was instituted; for that matter this function, to the best opinion of this investigator, dose not exist even today.

2.6.2 Historical and present perspectives of the Business Education Department

The Department of Business Education was established in the same decade the AAU was founded; in fact, after a few years of the establishment of the latter. According to a working paper, Department of Business Education (1995), the establishment of the

department "goes back to the late 1960s," precisely in 1967, as one unit of the Technical Teachers Education Department. Three parties according to the same document took the initiative for its foundation: the Ministry of Education, the AAU, and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) were involved. According to the same document, its establishment was sought in order to train secondary school teachers for the vocational areas of studies at this level of the educational system. Accordingly, funds for the purpose of establishing the program were secured via credit grants from the World Bank.

The potential graduates of such a program were sought to teach, "general vocational subjects...in the then newly developing comprehensive secondary schools" so as to "gradually replacing: foreign craftsmen and technicians employed in the country, contracted and volunteer expatriate teachers, graduates of local vocational and technical schools of grade twelve level, and Ethiopian graduates of foreign universities who were staffing these schools earlier," (Department of Business Education, 1995).

But why was replacement taken as an objective? How was the need assessed? Had any involvement and consultation of the stakeholders in the industries-private and public alike, undertaken? Why was the objective restricted to training secondary school teachers? And so on... are questions that remain seeking explanation.

The objectives of the department are to effectively train individuals to teach commercial subjects in secondary schools and to prepare them to engage themselves in related activities...as per the policy of the Ministry of Education, Business Education Department (1995:3).

Though objectives were presented in the above form, the working document referred does not mention anything about the underlying needs and relative assessment before setting such objectives. According to this document, opening graduate program at a Masters Degree level was also intended to launch in order to train advanced teachers

who would teach at secondary and college levels. But no mention was made as to what areas of study within the Business stream to launch and their organization, the required prearrangements with respect to the number and ranks of instructors needed, the kind of financial and physical facilities required. Furthermore, was not indicated whether needs were assessed to that end and whether such efforts (if any) had involved stakeholders or not, etc.

With respect to organization, the department seems to have many shortcomings. But more serious problem than this is the lack of recognition of such shortcomings.

... The department has the following courses to offer by its own staff: 36 out of 69 for Diploma and 48 out of 134 for Degree credit hours; in total 84 out of 203 credit hours. The rest of the courses are offered by other departments (The Department of Business Education, 1995: 4).

However, it is not clear that firstly, as full-fledged department, it has no full-fledged courses to deliver by its own; secondly, the document doesn't mention the modus operandi by which it could undertake such 'cooperative program'; thirdly, no philosophical and educational criteria with respect to such arrangement is presented; fourthly, but most importantly, the issue of accountability – as courses are fragmentarily provided by more than one department, it is not clear as to which department is responsible for controlling whether the organization of courses for a program is based on proved educational principles or not.

Furthermore, as indicated in the foregoing working document, the number and qualification of the teaching staff, for all the programs provided by the department, is extremely low. In the academic year 1993/94, the department had three M SC s (one having the rank of Associate professorship) and five B SC s only; the total students in that year were 781 (BUED, 1995:5).

Currently the department is undergoing its programs by diversifying into specialized

divisions of the Business education program, namely, Marketing Education, Purchasing and Supplies Management Education, Secretarial Science and Office Technology, Accounting Education, Banking. Notwithstanding that this can be taken as a good start, one cannot say for sure this improvement shall sustain. Because, as data obtained from some administrative staff members of the Department confirm, the diversification initiative was not emerged from the department. Rather, "it was launched based on the instruction of Ministry of Education."

Furthermore, based on information obtained from academic and administrative staffs of the Department of Business Education, no such important section concerned with curriculum research and development has been instituted to deal with the design and development of vocational programs of study. Based on the same sources of information, from its very inception to date, the department has been and is operating its programs as instructed from the Ministry of Education.

Chapter Three

III. Research Design and Methodology

3.1 Research Design

For the purpose of this investigation, both the qualitative and quantitative methods of inquiry were employed. To that end, fact based information was sought from sources indicated in the next subsections in order to make explanations and reach reliable and valid conclusions. A qualitative method of research is a way of investigation and explaining the area of concern emphasizing on non numerical approach. It means, the facts and their causal relationships within the issue of investigation are described in a way how they work based on the data obtained through the survey. In contrast, the percentage tool is employed to measure the variations of responses with respect to supplying information related to the issue.

3.2 Sampling Method

In an effort to undertake this study, a purposive sampling technique was devised. This sampling technique was believed appropriate because the population size was relatively small and the data sought were more of fact based, involving historical and current practices of curriculum planning in the institution understudy. With this connection, the researcher believes that the subjects selected for this purpose have better attachment and experiences about the area of study than any other sources.

Moreover, applying the purposive (non-random method) sampling was believed to be relatively convenient and manageable within the limits of time and resources available and /or accessible to this investigator.

To prevent some errors that might occur due to some inherent weaknesses of the foregoing sampling method, this investigation has made use of the documentary review and extended personal observation instruments of obtaining data to supplement

information collected via the questionnaire and interview techniques.

3.3 Source of Data

The sources of data for this study include Books, Journals, unpublished Theses, some relevant documents inside and outside of the Department under study, academic and administrative staffs, students of the Department, as well as Personal observation of the investigator.

Information collected from the teaching and administrative staff of the department under study is given a prime importance, as they are the prime actors in the teaching and learning process. This is so because of the assumption that the teaching and administrative staff have a relatively good deal of knowledge in the area of investigation. It must be clear, at this point, however, that the terms "administrative staff" and the "teaching staff" should not be taken as separate groups of people. The investigator has realized that, the administrative function in this Department is undertaken by one of the teaching staff members assigned on "turn- by-turn" basis in which the relative tenure lasts, according to the Senate Legislation (AAU, 2006, Rev.) for "four years." It means that members of the teaching staff undertake the role of administration upon assignment for a maximum of four years.

Likewise, as the overall aims of higher education are related with the desired changes of behavior in the students, seeking data from the appropriate cohort of the student population seems to be realistic. Therefore, fourth year students, relative to junior level students, are assumed to have experienced the educational process and hence expected to provide with relatively rich and real information with regard to the methods and/or strategies this educational system employs.

3.4 Instruments of Data Collection

This study has employed personal observation/experience, interviewing and distribution

of questionnaire to selected groups of appropriate people (see No. 3.3 source of data), and reviewing of relevant books and documents to collect data.

Primary data were gathered via interviews of appropriate staff and students, questionnaire, personal observation, document review - working papers both at Department and the University levels. On the other hand, secondary data were collected via the review of books, journals and historical studies related to the AAU.

3.5 Data Collection Procedures

3.5.1 Formulation of Questionnaire Items

Questionnaire items were developed based on the basic questions of this research. Information sought through this instrument was by and large fact based. Moreover, all items were close ended.

3.5.2 Undertaking the Pilot Test of the Questionnaires

Before distributing the finalized questionnaires to the pre specified participants, it was found necessary to distribute the final draft of questionnaire items to four senior members of the academic staff and to the head of the Department under investigation; this Researcher believed that it was appropriate to seek such comments in order to improve the quality, relevance, and clarity of the instruments.

Out of the four academic staff members, two of them returned the questionnaires with useful comments. Particularly, comments related to formatting of the questionnaire, the need for including items that seek the identification of academic ranks of participants, suggesting the restriction of questionnaires to closed ended rather than adding open ended ones in order to encourage participants to provide responses for all items-for reasons of time constraints and convenience on the part of participants, as open ended items are more time consuming and inconvenient than closed ended items. Three of the Questionnaires distributed for piloting were not returned.

3.5.3 Re-examination and Reformulation of Questionnaire Items

Based on comments obtained from the foregoing pilot test, the questionnaire items were reshaped; items that were not included previously now included, redundancies were checked for and corrected as possible. Moreover, questionnaire items were limited to closed ended type.

3.5.4 Distributing the Questionnaires

Sixteen questionnaires were distributed to the academic staff members. Out of these, fourteen were filled and returned. It means, more than half of the academic staff members have received one each: the total number of the academic staff members during the time of investigation was 28. Accordingly, the number of participants who filled and returned the questionnaires represented half of the total academic staff members: 14 out of 28.

On the other hand, out of the total of 177 fourth year students, 36 (about 20% of the total population size) of them received one questionnaire each. Thirty one questionnaires were filled and returned; these represent about 86% of the total distribution. Out of the 31 returned questionnaires 28 (about 77.8% of the total distribution) of them were complete for the analysis, while the other three were incomplete, thus disregarded.

3.5.5 Conducting Interviews

The interview items, though unstructured in form, were developed in a similar way in which questionnaire items were developed so as to supplement and /or complement information obtained through the other means, including the questionnaires. Additionally, these items were developed in an open-ended manner. It was done this way for simplicity and flexibility in which participants might feel free to discuss what they know and feel, without restrictions. With this regard, the researcher strongly believed that many aspects of the issue could not be covered in the initial draft interview items but, rather, these initial items could create a stimulant situation in which participants could generate new ideas. In this way, five senior academic staff members were

interviewed and provided much useful information relevant to the issue.

3.5.6 Reviewing and examining appropriate Documents

An attempt to find out some relevant documents was made by the researcher. Unfortunately, organized and clearly defined formal documents in connection with curriculum planning practices of the department under study couldn't be found. The only way out of this difficulty was, thus, to resort to collect, review, and examine some unpublished but reflecting historical and present situations of the issue at hand. Among these fragmented papers, the intent of strategic planning draft document: "Consolidated and Classified Strategic Planning Issues," (AAU, 2006), "A Working Paper On The Future Plan Of The Department Of Business Education (Revised)," Department of Business Education, (1995), (the SENATE LEGISLATION, AAU, 2006, Rev.), and the "General Information Hand Book For Faculty" AAU (1981) were assessed and examined. Information obtained from these papers has been incorporated in the data presentation section, too.

3.5.7 Method of Analysis

Percentage was employed for analyzing pertinent quantitative data. On the other hand, the views of the respondents and documentary sources were taken as they are.

Moreover, only 2 out of the total 14 academic staff participants responded that they had work experience other than teaching. Their work experiences in this regard fall within the range of 6-10 years. This point indicates that though the Department under study is vocational in focus, it seems, the operational experience are not given due consideration in the effort of staffing the teaching function.

Table 2: Population Characteristics with respect to Academic Qualifications and Ranks of the Teaching Staff:

Academic qualification	Number by qualification	Number of teachers attaining the rank of				
		Assistance lecturer	Lecturer	Assistant professor	Associate professor	Professor
Bachelor's Degree	2	2	--	--	--	--
Masters' Degree	12	--	11	--	1	--
PHD Degree	--	--	--	--	--	--
Total	14	2	11	--	1	--

It was observed that no one had PhD. Similarly, there is only one member of the staff who has attained the rank of professorship (associate level). Additionally, it was also realized that no one of the regular Academic Staff has attained the PHD level of academic qualification. However, though not yet officially declared, this investigator has realized that only one member of the staff was at the completion phase of his Doctoral Degree when this study was underway.

Chapter Four

IV. Presentation and analysis of Data

4.1 Respondents' Background Information

This study has involved two groups of people (Teaching Staff and Fourth Students) as sources of gathering data. The distribution and collection patterns of the data forms are as indicated in Table 1.

Table 1: Population Size, Proportional Distribution and Collection of Questionnaires:

Group category	Total Population	Distributed	Returned	%Age Returned	Usable	%Age Usable
Academic Staff	28	16	14	87.5	14	87.5
Fourth year students	177	36	31	86.1	28	77.8
Total	205	52	45	86.54	42	80.77

In connection with qualifications, out of the participants within the academic staff, 12 out of 14 (85.7%) had Masters' Degree. The remaining two (14.3%) were serving the Department with academic qualifications of Bachelor's Degrees. Only one out of the 12 teaching staff members who hold Masters' Degrees is in the rank of associate professorship.

Similarly, while 12 out of the 14 respondents had over 10 years of teaching experiences in higher education, the rest two fall within the range of 1-5 years of teaching experiences.

It was further realized that the department has declared and started to offer graduate programs, even though the level of preparation in terms of qualified staff was prohibitive. With this respect, the Department has succeeded only in one program, namely, "Management of Vocational Education". Other programs have still been halted due to the lack of appropriately qualified teachers. Respondents added that even the one that succeeded to operate remained in critical shortage of appropriately prepared teachers. To close the serious gap, the Department has been forced to rely on external sources - based on part time arrangements (according to the same source of information).

According to information obtained from a respondent working for the Department, "these new graduate programs were offered or launched based on the directive of the Government toward the transformation of the Addis Ababa University into a graduate level educational institution; not based on internal readiness of the Department."

Something that requires clarity at this point of the discussion is thus the degree of institutional relationship: how are government educational directives formulated and communicated to the appropriate sub educational institutes? What comes first and what follows? And similar questions remain open for further research.

According to the Draft Document for Strategic Planning, (AAU, 2006), among the list of institutional weaknesses, "Lack of Internal autonomy of Colleges and Faculties within AAU," "Lack of coordination and communication among functioning units," "Over-reliance on part - time academic Staff," "Lack of active staff development scheme," and the like, are found. Such shortcomings can thus have a stifling effect on institutional performance.

4.2 Derivation and Formulation of program objectives

An attempt to find out documents related to the departmental foundational history by this investigator was not fruitful. It means no document indicating formal need assessment programs based on the contemporary relevant sectors could be found.

Interviews with the academic staff indicated that no clear evidence could be established with respect to whether need assessment in the form of formally instituted survey research was undertaken or not before setting program objectives of the Department of Business Education. In other words, no documented evidence indicating the (1) survey of relevant sectors directed to assess and analyze occupational characteristics and structures; and, (2) survey to assess the needs and interests of potentially enrolling students, before setting educational objectives could be found in the department under study.

Table 3 shows respondents' reactions to the questions relevant to derivation and formulation of departmental and/or program objectives. Accordingly, the great majority, 13 (about 92.9%) out of the total Academic Staff respondents had no clear information with respect to whether program objectives were founded on occupational and/or learners' formal need assessment or not.

Though one respondent has given a positive answer, in this regard, it cannot be taken as significant because institutional based factual information should only be taken as real and valid if it is shared formally to all members who work toward the achievement of institutional objectives. It means that institutional programs can be effective, in a large measure, if all concerned members who play some part in the overall efforts of these programs toward the achievement of common (institutional) goals get informed and be clear enough about the desired intents and the ways these intents have been developed and organized. In short, unshared institutional mission among its members cannot serve its underlying values in a sustainable manner.

In a like manner, all the respondents asserted that no formal document involving curriculum planning exists in the Department. A formal document in this connection can be taken as the one that has an underlying authority of creation, and that clearly exhibits

the statements of program objectives (foundational missions), the definitions of roles of those involved in its direction and execution, as well as related policy and legal frameworks to guide the actions of organizational members.

Similarly, such a document is not also available at institutional (AAU) level, as the responses to the survey questionnaire indicate, 10 (about 71.43%) out of the total participants within the academic staff responded in conformity to its absence while the remaining are not clear with its presence or otherwise.

Likewise, all participants asserted that the Department has not a separate unit of its own instituted to manage curriculum-planning activities relevant to the ongoing and intended programs.

This situation is confirmed in the draft document mentioned previously, in which, among the major problems or weaknesses of the university:

"the lack of institutionalized program reviews at regular intervals...no tracer studies to evaluate performance of past graduates, curriculum design not demand driven and dynamic, lack of support system, ...lack of research centers of excellence in areas of national need, donor- driven research agenda...poor research support services...relationship with the Ministry of Education not allowing sufficient autonomy in the areas of curriculum design..."(AAU, 2006:7-12).

Moreover, Article 20 of the revised Senate Legislation, AAU (2006) indicates that curriculum affairs of the university are entrusted to a Committee whose members have come from different functions of the University. With this regard, it is implicit that the primary and regular assignment (responsibility) of members is the accomplishment of the missions of each respective Office or Department from which the Committee members are represented - curriculum issues remain of secondary importance.

In the same way, 10 (about 71.43%) out of the total respondents believe that the establishment of the Department was based on Government instruction (Table 3) - actually through the Ministry of Education; the rest have no information. These responses correspond to the statement in the "Working Paper of Business Education Department (1995) that its foundation was realized based on instruction of the Ministry

of Education. Accordingly, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Addis Ababa University were participated for its realization.

The examination of the working paper (AAU: 1995) and interview made to a senior academic staff in the Department indicate that the objectives of opening the programs within the Department, though not published in terms of well defined document, were to train secondary school teachers for the then "growing vocational streams in some high schools operating in the country." And these programs were limited to training teachers at a two-year diploma levels. The respondent adds that "The trends of program planning linked with the Department, as we have experienced, do not involve the majority of members of this Department, but simply transmitted in the form of instruction."

In the same token, another senior staff interviewee, commented that: "this Department was opened based on individual experts working within the Ministry of Education who were working in cooperation with the then mission experts of "Point-Four", now "USAID", whose advises were very important because of educational and developmental experiences in their home country (United States of America) relative to the less developed experience of Ethiopia with this regard; and the advises were taken as provided without an attempt to make studies to link or adapt to the Ethiopian context." In this regard, the draft document for Strategic Planning (AAU: 2006), stresses the fact that there has been a weak or no link to industries: "lack of linkages with industry."

As it can be seen from the frequency of responses in Table 3, a quite significant proportion of the academic staff has no clear information about the derivation, selection, and formulation of the program objectives of the Department for which they work; about 21(30%) out of the total responses indicate having no information in connection to the history of the Department with respect to its foundational mission.

Other studies related with the issue of integrating educational programs to the

socioeconomic sectors in Ethiopia indicate that connections have been extremely loose.

According to Girma (1994):

Individuals who are physically away from the community which must be served by the schools were entrusted with the responsibility of developing a curriculum which is supposed to be relevant to the skill requirements in the nation...there is no evidence that economic development planners, educational planners and curriculum developers worked in consultation for the purpose of achieving a balanced and positive result (Girma Zewdie, 1994:4)

It seems that the forgoing comment can also be taken as true in the context of higher educational curriculum planning in the country. As it can be seen from the responses of the subjects and documentary assessments, formal lines of inter institutional (looked at from horizontal perspectives) and intra-institutional (from vertical integration point of view) links hardly exist.

*Table 3: Derivation and formulation of program objectives:
Data as provided by the Academic Staff*

Item	Type of items and relative frequency of responses				
	Items	Yes	No	Uncertain	Total
1	Program objectives were set based on formal occupational need assessment with the involvement of appropriate stakeholders	1	--	13	14
2	Does the Department have a Formal Statement of Program Objectives?	--	14	--	14
3	There is a separate unit instituted to manage curriculum planning for departmental Programs.	--	14	--	14
4	There is a documented and clear statement of objectives at institutional (AAU) level from which program objectives of Business Education have been derived.	--	10	4	14
5	The establishment of the department, and hence its programs, was based on Government instruction	10	--	4	14
*6	Total	11	38	21	70

* Vertical summations are presented to indicate the degree of information disparity among subjects

4.3 Derivation and Formulation of Subject area contents

As regards the criteria for generation and formulation of courses and the relative contents, responses have varied significantly. Accordingly, out of the total responses, 10 (about 34.5%) indicate uncertainty (no clear information).

Others with the proportion of 16 (about 55%) out of the total responses indicate that (1) there is no factual evidence within the Department that indicate the selection and organization of courses and relative contents was made based on system-based and thorough analysis of occupations across the country, nor there is a similar evidence that indicates the involvement of stakeholders of the relevant sectors; and (2) the programs do not permit course electives to accommodate differences in interests and abilities of individual students. Accordingly, all of the respondents within the student group confirm the latter point – no elective courses are offered in the Department (Table 7).

Moreover, 1 (about 3.4%) out of the total responses are in agreement with the statement that asserts the selection and organization of courses was based on occupational survey study, and had involved the stakeholders; and 2 (about 6.9%) out of the total responses agree with the statement that indicated courses and relative contents were adopted from the experience of other countries.

One member of the staff working in the Department explains the historical situation during the commencement of the programs and relative course design "as such, the country had no people sufficient in number and expertise to deal with such a scheme and the resources to commit and organize an independent institute - having curriculum design and development as its primary objective in the time when the department was established."

*Table 4: Information related to Course Design and Determination of relative Contents of Subject Areas of the Department of Business Education:
By the Academic Staff*

Items of inquiry and Frequency of Responses of Participants from the academic staff					
Item	Questions/statements	Yes	No	Uncertain	Total
1	Courses and relative contents of programs were determined based on a formal occupational assessment with the involvement of appropriate stakeholders	1	2	2	5
2	Course and relative contents were adopted from other countries, based on the instruction of the contemporary governmental agency (Ministry of Education)	2	--	3	5
*3	Programs of the department allow a wide range of course options/electives for undergraduates within the Department understudy	--	14	--	14
4	Courses were designed on the principles of sequence, continuity (developmental), and horizontal integration (principle of complementarities)	--	--	5	5
** 5	Total	3	16	10	29

* (Row Number 3: based on questionnaire; others are based on survey interviews).

** Vertical summations are presented to indicate the degree of information disparity among subjects

In sum, 10 (about 35%) of the total responses indicate that information concerning the derivation and development of courses, the basis on which organization was depended, and related procedures is still far from clear. In contrast, 19 (about 65%) out of the total responses reflect that these participants have had information about the issues in the question items; while 3 of these responses confirm affirmatively, the remaining 16 indicate negatively.

Whatsoever the case may be, it is important to indicate at this point of the discussion that the selection and organization of courses or subject area contents has a strategic bearing with the potential mix and balance of competencies or skills required across the levels and branches of occupations in the relevant socioeconomic sectors. This is true particularly with the vocational programs. However, studies indicate that the link between the educational institutions, which offer such programs including tertiary levels and the relevant sectors in terms of formally coordinated needs and impact assessment and occupational analysis, has been nonexistent. According to Girma Zewdie (1994), "although vocational education in Ethiopia was introduced in the early 1940s...a thorough study on it and how much it contributed to the economic development of the country was not made."

4.4 Criteria for determining learning methods

According to information obtained through the survey questionnaires and other instruments mentioned earlier, the educational delivery method is, most often than not, limited to lecturing. The reason for this kind of method is, however, unclear. As Table 5 indicates, learning methods of instruction are largely left to the discretions of teachers; no institution-based policy that guides actions, with this regard, can be found.

*Table 5: Information related with Teaching / Learning methods/strategies:
supplied by the Academic Staff*

Frequency of responses with respect to teaching methods adopted by the Department of Business Education					
Item	Items of Inquiry	Yes	No	Uncertain	Total
1	Teaching methods in the Department are student-centered; flexible enough to accommodate academic and practical differences of abilities and interests among students.	1	12	1	14
2	Teaching methods are left to the discretions of instructors to decide, as they may feel appropriate.	13	1	--	14
3	The curriculum of the Department presets standards of teaching /learning methods that cannot be changed haphazardly by individual	--	11	3	14

Individual teachers determine the instructional delivery process depending on their perceptions; no standard of teaching learning methods based on formal research results could be established. According to the respondents, the teaching environment does not entertain questions related with individual differences among the learners. Tables 5 and 7 indicate that firstly, teaching methods are not student-centered, that 12 (about 85.7%) out of the total respondents confirm this is the reality; secondly, 13 (about 92.9%) out of total respondents (Academic Staff) and all of the respondents from the student cohort are in agreement with the statement that teachers have discretionary power to decide on methods of instruction/learning; thirdly, 11 (about 78.6%) of respondents (Academic Staff) assert that there is no institutional standard to guide the teaching - learning process.

Additionally, the intent for Strategic Planning (AAU, 2006), mentioned in the previous sections, confirms this situation as "Teaching – learning process which is not student-centered, student friendly, absence of innovative methods of teaching," and so on.

4.5 Curriculum evaluation in the Department of Business Education

According to the information collected from the sources (indicated earlier), Curriculum evaluation in the Department of Business Education, in its most part, is limited to student examination. Its results are, in a great extent, used either for promoting students to next higher levels of courses that lead to graduation or for dismissing the ones who do not workout their exam up to the minimum expectations.

Accordingly: (1) all of the respondents (Academic Staff) assert that no formal and systematic curriculum evaluation exists in the Department; (2) 12 (about 85.7%) within the group of the Academic Staff agree that no comprehensive program of evaluation that addresses all curriculum aspects exists; the rest are not clear about this issue; (3) 13 (about 92.9%) of the total respondents agree that curriculum evaluation in the Department is limited to student exam; the remaining are not clear with this item; (4) 12 (about 85.7%) from the Academic Staff group which was confirmed by all of the respondents from the Student-Group (Table 7), agree that, most often than not, exam items require students to reproduce what have been lectured in classroom sessions; about 7.14% of the Academic Staff do not agree with this statement; and the rest are uncertain.

In general, the questionnaire, documentary examination, and personal observations of the researcher indicate that no comprehensive curricular evaluation that might result in program review and development initiatives and /or actions has taken place since the inception of the Department. According to these data, evaluation based on clearly stated program objectives has not ever taken place. Table 6 shows the operational realities of curriculum planning with respect to: (1) the existing mode of evaluation program – that

no formal document specifying the purposes and methods of evaluation exists; (2) the utility of evaluation results - evaluation results are not used on regular basis for program review and developmental initiatives in the Department.

Accordingly, all of the respondents indicate that neither there exists a formal evaluation program nor there is a defined purpose with this regard. The ongoing reality, according to information Table 6, shows that the evaluation in practice is not broad in scope to serve broad and long implicit program objectives; essentially, evaluation practices are limited to the examination of students. Additionally, examinations require the reproduction of factual knowledge as delivered in relative class sessions by each instructor. All of the respondents from the student group have also confirmed this last situation (Table 7)

Table 6: Curriculum Evaluation of the Department of Business Education:

Item	Issues	Frequency of responses of the Academic Staff participants in favor of the answer			
		Yes	No	Uncertain	Total
1	An institution based/formal evaluation program exists in your Department; and has served as a base for regular program review and developmental/corrective actions.	--	14	--	14
2	The ongoing evaluation program in your Department is so comprehensive to include all aspects of curriculum.	--	12	2	14
3	In most of the cases, Evaluation is limited to the examination of students in your Department.	13	--	1	14
4	Exam items, most often, require the examinees to reproduce as much as what has been lectured in the classroom during relative class sessions	12	1	1	14

4.6 The Experience of Fourth Year Students

Another set of questionnaires were distributed to 36 purposively selected fourth year undergraduate students of the Department of Business Education seeking the information related with curriculum planning based on their experience since their entry into the programs they are in pursuit. According to the information obtained from this

group of respondents, most of them responded that they had no chances to know with respect to the how and why (1), program objectives were set; (2) the selection and organization the ongoing courses; (3) the teaching /learning methods were set the way they are operating; (4) setting the purposes and the methods of curriculum evaluation in the prevailing manner.

Table 7: Curriculum Planning related information from Fourth Year students of the Department of Business Education

Item	Questions/statements seeking response	Frequency of responses favoring the answers			
		Yes	No	Uncertain	Total
1	You are clear with program objectives of the Department:	5	9	14	28
2	You have had any chance to make comments on the derivation and formulation of program objectives:	-	28	-	28
3	You have been invited to comment on the design of courses offered in the Department:	-	28	-	28
4	You have ever been offered with elective courses:	-	28	-	28
5	Your teachers offer you the opportunity to suggest on the methods of teaching/learning process:	-	28	-	28
6	Methods of instruction have been predominated by lectures on facts and theories based on books:	26	-	2	28
7	Most often, than not, examinations require students to reproduce correctly in as much as what your instructors have had lectured and believed correct:	28	-	-	28
8	Do you believe your Grade Point Averages (GPAs) distinguish you from your mates in terms of understanding subject matter, applicable relative skills, and interpersonal and other aspects of personal development?	6	10	12	28

The majority of student respondents have no clear ideas about the scope and range of program objectives. Moreover, these participants responded that no program reviews involving students have been undertaken within the time frame they stayed in the department.

In this connection, 26 (about 92.9%) respondents from this cohort asserted that the ongoing teaching method is lecture based, while the remaining 2 were unclear with the issue. This item is, indeed, in consistence with Table number 5(row number '2'). Furthermore, all respondents indicate that exam questions have been formulated based on facts and /or theories delivered in relative class sessions; the reproduction of such facts and theories decide the grade scores of each student.

Regarding grades, only 6 (about 21.4%) student respondents believe that their grades identify their educational achievement; 10 (about 35.7%) do not believe that grades constitute their competence level, by and large 12 (about 42.9%) are not clear with this respect.

4.7 The Issue of curriculum Model

Regarding the curriculum model, most of the participants are not clear whether the department has had some model (s) to guide the practices of curriculum planning. Out of the 14 participants from the academic staff, 12 responded that they do not have any knowledge on the issue; the rest two responded that the department follows the syllabus/subject model of curriculum planning.

Table 8: Participants' reactions to the inquiry for the existence of some working curricular Model (s)

Statement or question	Number of responses favoring			
	Yes	No	Uncertain	Total
The department of Business Education follows an explicit Curriculum Planning Model (s)	2	-	12	14

But it is not clear whether these two respondents have factual evidence signifying that the department really follows a certain working model for its curricular activities. Whether these respondents have concrete evidence or not, however, this proportion (about 14.3% of the total responses) cannot be taken as significant.

In this connection, Feleke Desta (1990:Vii) believes that "To attain its end-result an educational program must be planned and developed systematically using a curricular development model of one kind." However, his efforts of investigation into the practices of the Ethiopian Educational Programs for schools since 1974 with respect to whether or not a certain curricular model has been considered to guide the general educational system in the country have shown that no model of any sort has been in use; "Results hardly suggest that there exists an agreed – upon curriculum development model which can direct the planning and development of the educational programs" in the country.

4.8 Institutional characteristics of curriculum planning

Based on information obtained via documentary review and examination; and interviews with some members of the academic staff of the Department, except curriculum committee, there is no separate unit (agency) entrusted with the responsibilities of curriculum planning with respect to higher education at Department, University, and National levels. Though the fact that there has been a Department concerned with "curriculum planning and development" within the Ministry of Education (MOE), its tasks are limited to the development of a syllabus and related educational materials for the

pre-school, elementary, and high school levels.

According to Article (20) of the revised SENATE LEGISLATION, (AAU, 2006), a Committee is formed at a university level to deal with curriculum affairs. Similarly, Academic Commissions and Departmental Academic Committees are formed to handle curricular issues at Faculty and Departmental levels, respectively, according to Article (123) of the forgoing Legislation. The reason for forming such committees and Academic Commissions to manage curricular matters is believed to be, according to information obtained from Faculty members, the expertise the members of committees possess about the area.

For example, the responsibilities of the Institutional level curricular Committee include the provision of "expert advice," the formulation of a guideline for "curricular revision," and related matters. Moreover the members of the institutional level Committee are from four Departments working under the University, namely, "The Office for Research and Graduate Programs", "Office for Continuing and Distance Education", "Curriculum, Instruction and Educational Planning experts and psychologists", and "ICT experts".

According to this same document, members of Academic Commissions are selected from the sub functions of faculties and Departments, respectively. However, the primary objectives of the Committee members are related to the missions of the Departments or offices for which they are primarily responsible. For example, the primary duty of a teaching staff is to facilitate and coordinate classroom lessons (learning experiences); research and other activities are undertaken if time and the availability of additional resources permit – conditional in nature. Moreover, Committees are different from an instituted agency with respect to tenure, i.e., While Committees are time bounded (have definite time span), a formally instituted agency is characterized by permanency, regularity, relative independency to decide about related matters, accountability, and so on. Above all, the formal agency, apart from a Committee, is defined by the foundational mission for which it stands to serve as its primary concern.

According to information obtained from a respondent working for a College of Education, "Departments with in the College are autonomous to the extent of reviewing and developing departmental programs however subject to scrutiny and approval of Faculty and institutional level Commissions and Committees, respectively." In the same token, another senior staff within the College believes that "the program development task is left to the initiative and commitment of the members of the teaching staff, either individually or in group." Nevertheless, educational programs of this level and kind are assumed to be packages that require an organized and synchronized multidisciplinary treatment as well as sustainable institutional commitment and/or support. Individual teachers can, of course, take the initiative and commit to make studies on particular disciplines appropriate to each, but developing or improving a certain subject area or discipline is a small part of curricular efforts.

In relation to this issue, one senior member of the academic staff from the Department of Business Education pointed out the situation as "throughout the history of the Department, issues related with curriculum reform have, mainly, been initiated by the Ministry of Education and transmitted for action in the form of instruction; though such instructions have been "imposed" before ascertaining that the Department has had sufficient resources and organization to carryout such instructions effectively and sustainably. Even the recent reform initiative in connection to the diversification of the programs into various specialty areas such as Secretarial Science and Office Management, Accounting Education, Marketing Education, Purchasing and Supplies Management Education, etc., one cannot see any documented and research based reform initiative undergone before having to deliver such instructions."

Another respondent has commented that "without having an independent agency to handle curricular research and developmental planning issues, the educational delivery process may continue to be limited to deal with routinized tradition based methods of

teaching activities." To the same respondent, "sustainable development and the delivery of high quality education require system based and regularly undertaken appropriate research resulting in the feeding of new knowledge and methods to the teaching process".

In a similar way, based on data obtained through interview and documentary analysis, draft Document for Strategic Planning, AAU (2006), there is no formal line that can indicate a link with the non- educational (relevant socioeconomic) sectors. Nor is it clear how the efforts at the Department and institutional levels are coordinated with the relevant institutions at a national level.

Nonetheless, it seems that this situation seems to have a bearing on the issues of vertical and horizontal organization of course contents. It means, it has an implicit relation with the number, mix, and balance, of skills or competencies across program levels and branches of knowledge when seen from a national manpower requirements perspective.

Chapter Five

V. Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 Summary

In essence, curriculum planning in higher education involves all about the planning for appropriate knowledge that effectively serves the underlying institutional assumptions or purposes. Converting this view to the Department under study, it is implicit that the undergoing vocational programs for which it stands relate to some aspects of the socioeconomic environment. Specifically, these programs have to do with creating competence in the areas of trade and industries.

Nevertheless, the fulfillment of competence requirements in the occupations of the relevant sectors requires close relations with these sectors and a rigorous analysis of the occupational clusters. Without doing so, efforts related with program design and deliveries may not serve the needs of the various stakeholders. Thus, integrating program efforts of this kind with the efforts and requirements of the ultimate stakeholders becomes a necessity for a sustainable attainment of implicit or explicit educational purposes.

Conversely, sustainability in program development and the achievement of program objectives presupposes the devotion of organized human and non human efforts, i.e., institutionalizing the curriculum planning functions seems to be a necessary requisite. This involves organized efforts in the form of structured functional unit(s) dedicated primarily for such a purpose. In such a case, the institutional mission is defined and shared clearly among all those involved, individual roles/mandates and responsibilities clearly defined, appropriate devotion of financial and expertise is made explicit as part of the foundational statements, and the assumptions of accountabilities for the subsequent results (educational outputs) and impacts made clear. Moreover, it requires the establishment of clear lines of inter and intra-institutional links with similar functions across levels of the educational hierarchy, as well as with the relevant socioeconomic

sectors.

One thing that deserves attention here is that the curriculum planning function is different from the actual educational delivery process, though it is a crucial component of the educational system. It is concerned with the generation and development of intents as to what the educational outputs should be and look like, the decision over how the educational environment should be organized so as to promote and facilitate the attainment of the desired intents; and the predetermination of the control system to check whether the preset objectives/intents were appropriate to the underlying educational aims; and whether the organizational arrangement in place is sound enough to enable the attainment of the aspirations. With this regard, curriculum planning can be taken as a system (or subsystem of the overall educational system) which requires due attention in terms of leadership, organization, expertise, and financial support, to say the least.

This research and its basic questions were, thus, formulated from the assumptions held by the researcher that there exists a blurred situation in the Addis Ababa University in general and the Department of Business Education in particular with respect to the foregoing basic issues of the curriculum planning function. In this connection, then, the perceived problems based on personal observation of this investigator have provoked the concern which led to the assessment of the overall educational process of the Addis Ababa University in general; with a particular emphasis given to the practices of curriculum planning in the Department of Business Education; in the light of the aforementioned curricular dimensions.

The problems as observed and perceived involved foundational, institutional, and practical or implementational in character. Particularly, it was believed that issues related with the establishment of the Department of Business Education, the ways it derived and formulated its program objectives, the methods and criteria it employed to

select and organize contents of subject areas, the methods of selecting and formulating the teaching and learning process, and the mechanisms it preset to check whether such programs have been serving the desired or intended purposes were far from clear that sought definite answers. This blurred situation was basically the reason for undertaking this research. To that end, raising the following basic questions became necessary:

- a. What values or forces caused the establishment of the Department of Business Education?
- b. What objectives were sought to achieve, and how were such objectives derived and stated?
- c. What contents of subject areas were selected and how were they organized so as to fit the desired purposes?
- d. What methods of instruction were selected?
- e. What control system was sought and organized to verify whether preset program objectives have been proper and attained or not?
- f. What institutional base was in place to support and facilitate curriculum planning for this level of the educational system in a sustainable manner, i.e., how was the curriculum function organized?

The researcher employed both quantitative and qualitative research methods to find out answers for these basic questions. An extended review and examination of related literature involving the different schools of thought and/or models, namely, the Syllabus, the behavioral, the process, and praxis models of curriculum planning was also a necessary part of the whole endeavor.

Based on the research method employed, as mentioned in chapter three, then, the following major findings are presented:

First, responses of subjects with respect to the foundational history and mission of the Department of Business Education are diverging. Accordingly, 13 (about 92.9%) of the total respondents from the Academic Staff had no clear information related to derivation

and formulation of program objectives prior to the commencement of Departmental programs. In this connection, no formal document showing the statement of program objectives of the Department could be found, either. In this regard, all the subjects and related institutional working papers that were examined by the researcher confirm this fact. A formal document with regard to curriculum planning can be taken as a one that is authoritative and holding clearly defined foundational missions and objectives of the Department. Likewise, such a document is not available at the institutional level; all of the participants from the academic staff and the documents mentioned earlier are also in conformity with this point.

In this regard, 10 (about 71%) of the respondents within the academic staff believe that the establishment of the Department was based on government instruction, mainly, through the Ministry of Education; and the rest had no information.

Second, responses among the subjects vary significantly with regard to the criteria for selection and organization of subject areas and relative contents. Accordingly, 10 (about 34.5%) out of the total responses indicate uncertainty (no clear information). Others with the proportion of 16 (about 55%) out of the total responses assert the absence of formal document indicating this issue in the Department. Additionally, programs do not permit course electives.

Third, the teaching methods in place are limited to lecturing; that methods are largely left to the discretions of teachers; institution-standards or formal directives to guide the actions of teaching and learning are not in place. In sum, information obtained from subjects and related documents indicate that the teaching-learning environment cannot be taken as student – centered or “student friendly”.

Fourth, with regard to curriculum evaluation, (1) all of the respondents (Academic Staff) assert that no formal and/or systematic curriculum evaluation program exists in the

Department; (2) majority of the responses indicate that no comprehensive program of evaluation that addresses all curriculum aspects exists - majority of responses are in agreement that curriculum evaluation in the Department is limited to student exam; its results are, in a great measure, used either for promoting students to next higher levels of courses that lead to graduation or vice versa, not as inputs for broad institutional reform or developmental purposes; (3) almost all respondents indicate that, most often than not, exam items require students to reproduce much as what have been lectured in classroom sessions. Generally, the evaluation in practice is not broad in scope to serve broad and long-term program objectives in a sustainable manner.

In this connection, most of the respondents from the student cohort had no chances to know with respect to the how and why (1), program objectives were set the way they are; (2) the selection and organization of courses; (3) the teaching /learning methods were set; (4) setting the purposes and the methods of curriculum evaluation. Moreover, these participants responded that no program reviews involving students have been undertaken within the time frame they stayed in the department.

Fifth, there is no evidence within the limits of this survey, which can indicate the existence of an explicit model of curriculum planning at Department, institutional, and national levels with respect to higher education.

Sixth, all the documentary and subjects - based information confirm the absence of a separate body entrusted formally to manage or plan higher educational curriculum for the programs of the Department under study. Likewise, such a body is not also in place at institutional and national levels.

Seventh, no formal line of relationships among faculties within the university (horizontal integration) and across the educational hierarchy (vertical integration), with respect to how the curriculum planning function should look like, exists. In this connection, the institutional characteristic of curriculum planning in Addis Ababa University in general seems to be Committee based. The reason for relying upon such Committees and

Academic Commissions for managing curricular issues seems to be the confidence in the expertise the members possess in the area of assignment.

Eighth, all sources of information that have been consulted for this purpose do not indicate the existence of any formal line of relationship with the non educational sectors, with respect to curriculum planning of the Department understudy. Nor is any evidence indicating any links with some national agencies involved in national manpower requirement planning.

5.2 Conclusions

In as much as the data obtained from the sources mentioned earlier and the means employed to collect them to undertake the survey research with respect to the practices of curriculum planning in the Department of Business Education of the Addis Ababa University (AAU) and the method employed to present and analyze these data are valid, it is safe and defensible to draw the following conclusions based upon the foregoing findings:

Theoretically, an institution is a social setting, which is established to achieve some common goals – implying that every effort of each component or subsystem that makes up the whole institute is directed toward the accomplishment of a commonly valued or an established purpose. It means that the commonly valued end or purpose has a unifying role in the overall institutional endeavors. Likewise, the educational system is a social institution organized to serve socially/institutionally valued educational ends. Nonetheless, such proposition presupposes that all the foundational missions and detailed objectives are made explicit and clear to all involved in the efforts to attain such institutional goals in the form of systematically organized records indicating the past, present, and future situations of the institution. In this regard, however, the responses of subjects from the academic staff of the Department of Business Education of the Addis Ababa University show that staff members have no common information with respect to

the foundational mission or objectives of the Department.

From this perspective, then, it can, at least, be asserted that, as there is no institutionalized common information base available and accessible to all staff members to know the historical and current directions of the Department for which they work, the educational process seems to be left to the discretions of individual members to plan and deliver knowledge based on one's specialization or discipline. This seems to be fragmentary by organization – where the unifying role of program level purpose is reduced to discipline (course) based purposes that seem to have no common point to serve the institutional goal.

It also be argued that, it looks, at least at an overt level, to exist an institutional fallacy-characterized by a lack of explicit and clear common purpose that governs the actions and that unifies the results of individual or group efforts – as there is no meaningful institutional system that is devoid of a unifying common purpose: the ultimate end of the combined efforts of the individual components.

Regarding developmental actions, it can be concluded that Government instruction overrides internal initiatives of the Department or the institution. The ongoing programs, old and new alike, must have been adopted by the Ministry of Education from elsewhere; and, it seems, the Department of Business Education was instituted and entrusted to undergo these "adopted" programs. Thus, though some respondents within the college of education claim that "every Department has the autonomy to develop relevant programs by its own," this claim cannot be taken in a proper sense. Because, if Departments are autonomous to develop programs; and if they really do it, it could have been possible to find some documented rationales underlying the development of such programs within the Department. Or else, the process of program development does not follow the proven criteria mentioned in the discussion made previously.

Based on the findings that teaching methods are predominantly lecture type, not student

– centered, students remain mere recipients, i.e., not active innovators or creators of knowledge. This could have a repercussion on the competence of the graduates with respect to meeting the requirements of their potential work environment, as problem solving and critical thinking capabilities should presuppose, in a large major, self-directed learning and inquisitive minds.

Regarding curriculum evaluation, it can be asserted that:

(1) evaluation method that is not system based can be extremely open to personal manipulation on the part of the teaching staff, i.e., that may leave students at the disposal of their respective teachers, since it is not based on preset standards against which it may be checked;

(2) An evaluation practice that is not system based can serve little or nothing to regular reviews and development of educational programs, because it is not meshed to some independent unit organized to expect and utilize evaluation results for broader and long-term developmental initiatives, just as a matter of duty;

(3) The ongoing partial evaluation practices cannot produce a full picture of the status of ongoing programs, thus, results of evaluations may not serve for the detection and correction of program anomalies nor may serve as basis for developmental planning, and consequently, no plan based development can be expected. With this regard – developmental activities, if occur, become chance based, or else, the educational process may be destined to stagnation, or, at best, it may depend on episodic instructions of government agencies, outside the Department or the University, to do so;

(4) As the evaluation practice at hand is found to be confined to the examination of students that fosters the rote method of learning, rather than facilitating critical thinking and independent problem solving capabilities, on the part of students. Thus, one cannot expect a sustainable and regular improvement and development of Departmental programs so long as the situation continues as it has been.

Though curriculum planning is supposed to be a perennial task, which requires a regular institutional and expertise devotion, one can conclude that this function has not yet received a due attention. Thus, based on such a situation, it is very difficult to expect a

predictable and controllable programmatic development in a sustainable manner.

With regard to program linkages to stakeholders, it is very difficult to determine what and to what degrees are departmental programs serving the sectors for which the Department was presumably established to serve. Moreover, given the vocational nature of the departmental programs in which relevant skills or competences are assumed to be developed in graduates so as to fill some occupational needs across the socioeconomic sectors, without having strong and clear links with such sectors, it is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to determine the actual and desirable mixes and balances of such competences.

This last point seems crucial nationally from the perspectives of the possible mismatches between occupational requirements for competences or skills and the number of graduates at each program levels and types.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, it seems appropriate to make the following recommendations are made:

a) Particularly, given the vocational nature of the Department under study, it is necessary to integrate educational efforts of this kind with the requirements and efforts of the sectors, which are assumed to be the ultimate seekers of program outputs.

Nonetheless, integrating these efforts may not be an easy task. This means that the undertaking of coordinating and integrating institutional efforts calls for certain commitment to change the existing institutional arrangements. Such changes involve intra and inter institutional reform across the board, because making some changes in some institutions may affect some other institutions else where, when looked at from the national perspective. Thus, the issue seems to be requiring some national level educational coordination and integration agency - which can bridge the gap between

educational and the non-educational sectors.

The necessity for national coordination and integration of programmatic efforts emanates from the needs to narrow the possibilities of resultant mismatches, which may emerge due to fragmentary efforts, between occupational demands for skills and/or competencies and the supply of such competencies when seen nationally.

It seems, therefore, very difficult to control such national level imbalances by setting a separate unit only at Department and institution levels, as the issue permeates across institutions.

Based on the forgoing premises, therefore, one can say that educational objectives, be it vocational or otherwise, involve hierarchical or multilevel – up from a narrow classroom topic to multi-programmatic national level objectives. Further assuming that no other unit can fit better than the one dealing with curriculum planning to undertake the issues related with the design and development of educational programs, the researcher proposes for the organization of curriculum planning function as follows:

- b) Department level Curriculum Planning unit to handle Departmental specific programs by undergoing regular research that is relevant to such programs;
- c) Faculty level Curriculum Unit that coordinates and integrates the multi departmental programs – avoid gaps and redundancies within the Faculty;
- d) University level Curriculum unit devoted to coordinate and integrate multi-faculty level educational programs, its objectives relate to existing emergent institutional programs; and,
- e) National level Curriculum unit for higher education which is supposed to undertake the tasks of coordination and integration of educational efforts of this level with the occupational and other sectors of the country. A unit of this level should have a strong line of link with agencies concerned with national manpower requirement and the multi-industry agencies supposed to be operating in the country. Moreover, objectives of this level involve broad and long-range.

The institutional arrangement proposed above assumes that the multilevel curricular units should operate interactively without violating any proven and accepted guidelines

related with intuitional autonomies and academic freedom. Rather they closely work collaboratively.

To put some additional clarification and justification for the forgoing proposition of institutional arrangement, occupational structures and requirements across industries and the other sectors with respect to the standing and changing needs for multilevel and multi branched knowledge should and can easily be assessed, determined, and coordinated at a national level. Because national level occupational categories and levels range beyond the scope of a single institutional or departmental control; this approach can avoid or minimize the occurrence of imbalances between the number of job seekers and the skill seekers across levels and branches of occupations and /or professions in the country. Moreover, it facilitates the interchange of new knowledge and skills. It also creates and promotes a ground for using scarce human and nonhuman resources commonly among the levels and /or within each level, without creating impediments over the operations of each. For example, knowledge of research and other sorts, physical facilities, and funds required to finance such institutions can be coordinated and shared across the board; idling and over usage of resources may be checked and balanced.

To sum up, interactive and iterative approach guarantees and ensures that all national educational efforts are integrated and the mismatch between the requirement for skills and knowledge and the supply of such requirements across the levels and branches of occupations may be kept at a minimum level. Thus, while educational waste in terms of the human and nonhuman efforts devoted to produce graduates with unemployable (unfitting) skills and/or knowledge, on the one hand, while jobs requiring appropriate skills and knowledge may remain unfilled, on the other.

f) Finally, it seems necessary to make available elective/optional courses so as to accommodate differences in ability and interests among students.

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Appendices

Questionnaires

Appendix A: draft Questionnaire (I) for pilot test addressed to the Academic and Administrative Staff

Pilot Test on quality and relevance of the questionnaire designed to collect data for undertaking a Masters' Thesis on 'Practices of Curriculum Planning in AAU: the case of Business Education Department'

Dear Respondents

This investigator is of the opinion that distributing the draft questionnaire for overview and comment by appropriate people will improve the quality and effectiveness of the study. For this end, Kindly make your best comments on the following items with respect to relevance and clarity. Comments are to be written on the back of each page. Your fast action and return of this paper, after having completed, is highly appreciated.

This questionnaire is designed to obtain information on the modes of practices of curriculum planning in the business education department of the AAU. With this respect, your information is taken as a crucial input for the efficacy of this study. The information is intended purely for academic research purpose and will be kept confidential. Writing your name is not required; any personal information will never be linked with your responses. Hence, your participation by giving genuine and truthful information is highly appreciated.

1. Your educational qualification:

- a. Bachelor's Degree;
- b. A Masters' Degree;
- c. A PHD Degree;
- d. Other: _____

2. Years of work experience as a Teacher in Higher educational institute:

- a. 1-5;
- b. 6-10;
- c. 11-15;
- d. 16 and over.

3. Years of work experience as a Teacher in the Business Education Department:

- a. 1-5;
- b. 6-10;
- c. 11-15;
- d. 16 and over.

4. The business education department was established based on thorough need assessment and the discovery of empirical evidences via a formal action research, which indicated its establishment and

definition matched with the contemporary pressing needs of the socioeconomic sectors in Ethiopia:

- a. Certainly yes,
- b. Certainly no,
- c. I am not sure

5. If your answer for item (4) is certainly yes, what forces /values, in your best knowledge and/or opinion, have been underlying the emergence and/or existence of the business education department of the Addis Ababa University?

- a. The concurrent trade and industrial needs for graduates of business education;
- b. The high demands of individual learners for the ongoing programs in the department;
- c. Speculative analysis and reasons on the part of the AAU;
- d. A decree /instruction by the government of Ethiopia;
- e. Imposition and/or transplanted of the experiences of some contemporary advanced countries;
- f. Other, please specify:

6. Have surveys ever been carried out to assess the kind of contemporary job/occupational requirements in the relevant socioeconomic sectors for which the programs have assumed to fill prior to formulating the objectives of the Business Education Department?

- a. Certainly yes;
- b. Certainly no;
- c. I am not sure about it.

7. What needs were valued most that caused the opening of the program?

- a. The contemporary societal needs;
- b. The pressing needs and demands of learners;
- c. The hidden potential of the educable learners;
- d. Conserving the accumulated vocational knowledge of the contemporary society via transmitting to the young generation;
- e. The belief the AAU had that such program was necessary to open;
- f. Adopting the experience of developed countries;
- g. Other, please specify:

8. On what criteria have values or needs been listed in order of priority? _____

9. Has any formal research ever been undertaken to justify the need base of setting the program(s), and, was there any policy framework to guide the research?

- a. Yes;
- b. No;
- c. Other, please specify:

10. Had the need assessment program involved stakeholders, and if so, which one of the following?
- a. Experts and leaders in the industries, the public and private sectors of the country;
 - b. Representatives of potential students and parents;
 - c. Academic staff and research persons from other faculties of the university;
 - d. Other, please specify:

11. What educational objectives have, then, been formulated to achieve so as to serve the underlying values _____ /needs?

12. Have research efforts to justify the relevance/appropriateness of the objectives ever been launched prior to setting them?

- a. Yes;
- b. No.
- c. Other, please specify:

13. What vocational courses/disciplines have been selected and organized/integrated to serve the intended _____ purposes/objectives?

14. Are courses of study in the major streams sequenced based on proven adult learning theories so that learning effects of prerequisite courses provide all required inputs for successive courses?

- a. Certainly yes;
- b. I am not certain;
- c. No such issues are raised and enacted so far;
- d. Vertical and horizontal integration of courses of studies in the department are assumed to exist but not yet verified.

15. What educational/philosophical criteria have ever been devised in selecting and organizing these professional disciplines, with respect to vertical and horizontal integration, social and individual interests, and _____ the _____ like?

16. Have stakeholders including the other faculties under AAU, commerce and industry, public and private sector agents around the country, and representatives of incoming students been involved in selecting the sub areas of study in the department?

- a. Yes;
- b. No;
- c. Other, please specify:

17. Does the curriculum/program provide sufficient options, with respect to offering elective disciplines/courses and freedom of choice in selecting sub areas of study within the program, for students?

- a. Yes;
- b. No;
- c. Other, please specify:

18. What strategies of teaching/learning have been designed and employed to realize the intended programs of study in order to serve the ultimate ends of the department?

- a. Teaching methods and /or strategies have been and are student –centered; flexible enough to accommodate academic and practical differences of abilities and interests among students;
- b. Teaching methods are left to the discretions of instructors to decide as they may feel appropriate;
- c. The curriculum of the department presets standards of teaching –learning methods that cannot be changed haphazardly;
- d. Other, please specify: _____

19. Do you have work experience other than teaching after you have graduated from higher institute (i.e., in the industrial and public sectors)?

- a. Yes;
- b. No.

20. If your answer for question number (19) is 'yes', for how many years?

- a. 1-5;
- b. 6-10;
- c. 11-15;
- d. 16 and over

21. What methods have been in place to determine whether program/ educational objectives of business education have been met or not?

22. Does the on going evaluating method so comprehensive and structured in so much as to include all aspects of curriculum evaluation such as appropriateness of objectives to changing/standing needs of society (stakeholders), appropriateness of selection and organization of contents in light of preset objectives, appropriateness of teaching/learning methods to program objectives, relevance of exam questions to general and specific objectives of the department, and the validities and reliabilities of the existing curriculum evaluating method itself, if any?

- a. Yes;

- b. No;
- c. Other, please specify the situation:

23. Have evaluation results been used as prime basis for re-planning and developing the existing curriculum in the department?

- a. Most often, yes;
- b. Sometimes, yes
- c. Not at all;
- d. Other, please specify the realities:

Is the evaluation program research based and regular enough to serve its purposes/objectives?

- a. Yes;
- b. It is undertaken on episodic and individual teachers' feelings, and hence, its usefulness is very low;
- c. The ongoing Evaluation program is limited mainly to exam performances of students;
- d. Other, please specify other means, if any:

Does the Business Education Department have a separate sub institution in charge of curricular research and development (relevant to programs of the department)?

- a. Yes;
- b. Not at all;
- c. Other, please specify:

26. If your answer to item (25) is yes, how is this unit linked to other similar agencies both within and outside the AAU (national and sectorial level institutes working on issues related with curriculum research and/or planning)?

27. What model of curriculum planning and evaluation is adopted to guide the practices of curriculum planning in the department of business education?

On what bases are undergraduate students evaluated?

- a. In the main, students are evaluated based on responses they provide for exam questions, which are based on explicit/factual knowledge as per the provision in the lectures and prescribed texts/handouts;
- b. Undergraduate students are mainly evaluated based on their capabilities to create new and different perspectives based on learned materials and experiences (critical thinking) as observed in projects and forums organized by each teacher in the department;
- c. Please specify for other means:

Appendix B: Questionnaire I, final, for academic and administrative staff

Addis Ababa University
College of Education
Department of Business Education

A Survey questionnaire designed to collect data for undertaking a Masters' Thesis on '**Practices of Curriculum Planning in AAU: the case of Business Education Department**'

Dear Respondents

This is a survey questionnaire designed to obtain information on the modes of practices of curriculum planning in the business education department of the AAU. With this respect, your information is taken as a crucial input for the efficacy of this study. The information is intended purely for academic research purpose and will be kept confidential. Writing your name is not required; any personal information will never be linked with your responses. Hence, your participation by giving genuine and truthful information is highly appreciated.

Direction:

For items having alternative answers, please encircle the letter(s), (note that it is possible to give more than one answer out of the list) with which you believe a correct answer is indicated; if you have an answer different from the available list, please write it against the caption "other";

1. Sex:

- a. Male;
- b. Female

2. Your educational qualification:

- a. Bachelor's Degree;
- b. A Masters' Degree;
- c. A PHD Degree;
- d. Other: _____

3. Your academic rank:

- a. Assistant lecturer;
- b. Independent Lecturer;
- c. Assistant Professor;
- d. Associate Professor;
- e. Professor;
- f. Other: _____

4. Years of work experience as a Teacher in Higher educational institute, including the Business Education Department:

- a. 1-5;
- b. 6-10;
- c. 11-15;
- d. 16-20;
- e. 21 and over.

f. Other: _____

5. Do you have work experience other than teaching after you have graduated from higher institute (i.e., in the industrial and public sectors)?

- a. Yes;
- b. No.

6. If your answer for question number (5) is 'yes', for how many years?

- a. 1-5;
- b. 6-10;
- c. 11-15;
- d. 16 and over
- e. other: _____

7. Does the Business Education Department have a formal document that specifies and clarifies the general and specific objectives for the programs it is undergoing?

- a. Yes;
- b. No;
- c. Other.

8. If your response to question "7" is yes, is it taken (deduced) from the statement of objectives of the AAU?

- a. Yes;
- b. No;
- c. Other:

9. If your answer for question number "8" is "yes", is the statement of educational objectives of the AAU, from which the department's document is adapted, clearly defined?

- a. Certainly, yes;
- b. Certainly, no;
- c. Other:

10. The business education department was established based on thorough need assessment (with respect, for example, to the contemporary job/occupational requirements in the relevant sectors):

- a. Certainly yes,
- b. Certainly no,
- c. I am not sure

11. If your answer for item (10) is certainly yes, what needs, in your best knowledge and/or opinion, have been underlying the establishment of the business education department of the Addis Ababa University?

- a. The concurrent acute shortage of qualified manpower in business areas; for which, the studies indicated that, demands for graduates of business education in the trade and industries in the country (Ethiopia) were at an increasing scale for graduates of business education (societal needs);
- b. The high demands of individual learners for the ensuing programs in the department (the needs of the learners);
- c. Speculative analysis and reasons on the part of the AAU (institutional needs);
- d. A decree /instruction by the government of Ethiopia to offer such programs;

- e. Adoption of the experiences of some contemporary advanced countries;
f. Other, please specify:
-
-

12. Had the need assessment program involved stakeholders, and if so, which one of the following?
a. Experts and leaders in the industries: the public and private sectors of the country;
b. Representatives of potential students and parents;
c. Academic staff and research persons from the department understudy and other faculties of the university;
d. Other, please specify:

13. What educational objectives have, then, been formulated to achieve so as to serve the underlying values /needs?

- a. The training of advanced business teachers for the contemporary and emergent universities/colleges in Ethiopia along with educators and researchers in the areas of business;
b. The training of middle level teachers who can fill the contemporary needs for such levels of training in the junior and senior secondary schools across the country;
c. The training of competent professionals in the various areas of business to fill the needs of the industries, the public and private sectors for business leaders and experts;
d. The training of lower level (semiskilled) office and business workers
e. Other: _____
-

14. Have research efforts to justify the relevance/appropriateness of the objectives ever been launched prior to setting them?

- a. Yes;
b. No.
c. Other, please specify:

15. Have stakeholders including the other faculties under AAU, commerce and industry, public and private sector agents around the country, and representatives of incoming students been involved in selecting the sub areas of study in the department?

- a. Yes;
b. No;
c. Other, please specify:

16. Does the curriculum/program provide sufficient options, with respect to offering elective disciplines/courses and freedom of choice in selecting sub areas of study within the program, for students?

- a. Yes;
b. No;
c. Other, please specify:

17. What criteria are employed when selecting and hiring the academic staff?

- a. Grade point average;
b. Teaching experience before joining the university;
c. Work experience in occupations other than teaching, yet relevant to business education;

- d. Inclination and experience in research and teaching;
 - e. Other, please specify:
-

18. What strategies of teaching/learning have been designed and employed to realize the intended programs of study in order to serve the ultimate ends of the department?

- a. Teaching methods and /or strategies have been and are student –centered; flexible enough to accommodate academic and practical differences of abilities and interests among students;
 - b. Teaching methods are left to the discretions of instructors to decide as they may feel appropriate;
 - c. The curriculum of the department presets standards of teaching –learning methods that cannot be changed haphazardly;
 - d. Other, please specify:
-

19. Has there ever been any defensibly comprehensive program of evaluation to determine the performance and/or effectiveness of the program?

- a. Certainly yes;
 - b. Certainly no;
 - c. No organized and institution based evaluation program has ever taken place;
 - d. Other, please specify:
-

20. Is the on going evaluation method so comprehensive and structured in so much as to include all aspects of curriculum evaluation such as appropriateness of objectives to changing/standing needs of the Ethiopian society & needs and interests of students, appropriateness of selection and organization of contents in light of preset objectives, appropriateness of teaching/learning methods to program objectives, relevance of exam questions to general and specific objectives of the department, and the validities and reliabilities of the existing curriculum evaluating method itself, if any?

- a. Yes;
 - b. No;
 - c. Other, please specify the situation:
-

21. Have evaluation results been used as prime basis for re-planning and developing the existing curriculum in the department?

- a. Most often, yes;
 - b. Sometimes, yes
 - c. Not at all;
 - d. Other, please specify the realities:
-

22. Is the evaluation program based on formal research and regular enough to serve its purposes/objectives?

- a. Yes;
- b. It is undertaken on episodic and individual teachers' feelings, and hence, its usefulness is very

low;

- c. The ongoing Evaluation program is limited mainly to exam performances of students;
 - d. Other, please specify other means, if any:
-
-

23. Does the Business Education Department have a separate unit concerned with curricular research and development as its primary task/purpose (relevant to programs of the department)?

- a. Yes;
- b. No;
- c. Other, please specify:

24. If your answer for item (23) is "yes", how is this unit linked to other similar agencies both within and outside the AAU (institution bound agencies and national agencies with relevant missions, working on issues related with curriculum research and/or planning)?

25. On what bases are undergraduate students evaluated?

- a. In the main, students are evaluated based on responses they provide for exam questions which are based on explicit/factual knowledge as per the provisions in the lectures and prescribed texts/handouts;
 - b. Undergraduate students are mainly evaluated based on their capabilities to create new and different perspectives based on learned materials and experiences (critical thinking) as observed in projects and forums organized by each teacher in the department;
 - c. Please specify for other means:
-
-

26. What model of curriculum planning and evaluation has been and /is adopted to guide the practices of curriculum planning in the department of business education?

- a. The scientific/systems model of curriculum planning;
- b. The process model;
- c. The praxis model;
- d. The subject/syllabus model;
- e. Other, please specify:

Appendix C:

Questionnaire II for selected Fourth Year Students

Items to be answered by fourth year students

Dear Respondents:

This questionnaire is designed to obtain information on the modes of practices of curriculum planning in the business education department of the AAU. With this respect, your information is taken as a crucial input for the efficacy of this study. The information is intended purely for academic research purpose and will be kept confidential. Writing your name is not required; any personal information will never be linked with your responses. Hence, your participation by giving genuine and truthful information is highly appreciated.

1. Your age:
 - a) 15-20;
 - b) 21-25;
 - c) 26-30;
 - d) 31-35;
 - e) 36 and over.

2. Why have you chosen this department, rather than other departments within the AAU?

3. Are you clear with the objectives of the program you are in pursuit?
 - a. Certainly yes;
 - b. Certainly no;
 - c. I had and have some aims in mind but not clear enough.

4. If your answer for question number (1) above is 'certainly yes', what purpose have/had you in mind to pursue the program? Please describe briefly the basic purpose (s) for which you are pursuing in the program of the department:

5. Have your teachers or the concerned department leadership staff requested you for your opinions and suggestions in connection with the program objectives and the way it is organized?
 - a) Yes
 - b) No

6. Have you been consulted about the design and provision of the courses; and been asked to offer some new ideas to be taken as inputs of reform initiatives, prior and after you have joined the business department ?
 - a. Yes, I was consulted and given options of other different relevant courses to choose from; the

selection and offer of these courses were based on my consent and will;
b. No, I had no option but to pursue for what the department had offered.

7. Are you satisfied with the ongoing courses of study?

- a) Yes, I am satisfied extremely;
- b) Yes, I am satisfied to some extent
- c) No, I am not satisfied
- d) No, I am extremely dissatisfied because the courses are far below my expectations both in terms of depth and scope, relative with courses offered in similar institutions elsewhere.

8. Have ever been given offered with elective courses since your entry into the department?

- a) Yes;
- b) No.

9. Have you been given the chances to suggest on what methods of instructions your class sessions should follow?

- a) Yes, students are asked by our teachers to negotiate on the methods of instruction proposed by the teachers/ the department and the free choices of students are taken;
- b) No such ideas are entertainable in the department as institution and as individual teachers.

10. Are you free to ask questions that are critical to the ideas of your teacher during your class sessions?

- a) Most often, yes;
- b) I have never been free to ask critical questions;
- c) Sometimes.

11. What methods of instructions are predominating in your department?

- a. Pure lectures based on facts and rules of the interplay of phenomena;
- b. Class discussions based on relationships of theories to real contexts and individual experiences predominate in sessions;
- c. Only some teachers give some chances for class discussions.

12. Your grade points are determined mainly by the abilities that you can reproduce in the exam papers in what has each teacher has lectured in the classes and the handouts he/she has distributed during the life of each course.

- a) Certainly yes;
- b) Predominately, yes;
- c) Please describe if different ways of measuring your success exist: _____

13. In all exam sessions you have come across during your stay in the department, you are expected to answer questions correctly in as much as what your instructors have lectured and believed to

be correct:

- a) Most often, than not, yes;
- b) Sometimes yes;
- c) Usually exam questions focus on what each of us as students have learned and have the abilities to apply classroom lectures and concepts in real life situations and different contexts.

14 Do you believe the grade points you have accumulated throughout your schooling in the department constitute, and indeed distinguish you from your classmates, your competence level in real terms?

- b. Certainly yes;
- c. Certainly no;
- d. Grades represent closely my real competence;
- e. I cannot say with confidence with this respect.

15. Opportunities are plenty in the University to choose areas of Study based on students' interest:

f. Yes

g. No, not at all

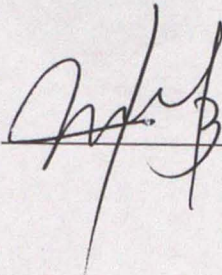
16. The organization of courses of study in the department follows the 'prerequisite' (vertical integration), and the complementarities principle of horizontal integration.

- d. Yes;
- e. No;
- f. I am not sure.

Declaration

I hereby declare that this Thesis is my original work, under the guidance of Dr Woube Kassaye, my advisor. I have dully acknowledged all sources of information and/or references that had relevance to the study.

Mekonnen Baweke:

 20/04/07

Woube Kassaye (PhD), Advisor



April 20, 2007