Embedding Cross-cutting/Emerging Issues into the Crowd Curricula
(*The Case of Primary Schools in Gambella National Regional State, Ethiopia*)

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Abstract:
Cross-cutting issues are those educational issues which do not relate to a specific subject but are of relevance to the whole education sector. Emerging issues are educational issues that have not been addressed so far in any educational system and curriculum. Precisely because they are cross-cutting and emerging, they are not the specific responsibility of a sub-sector, there is a risk that they are somewhat overlooked.

Accordingly, there are varied cross-cutting and emerging issues that had been included in the curriculum. There are also the probable forth-coming cross-cutting and emerging issues in education. These might be, for instance, environmental education, philosophy for children education, entrepreneurship education, peace-building education, vocational education, learning skills education, life skills education, indigenous education, early grade reading enhancement/improvement program, among others.

The purpose of the study was to discuss issues to be considered to embed those cross-cutting and emerging issues into curricula. To this end, the study has discussed what attributed and ascribed cause to the creation of cross-cutting/emergency issues in education. The study has also discussed the issues, opinions and concerns pertinent to the vitality level of the issues for learning, to what level they were so far included in the existing primary schools' curricula at Gambella National Regional State. Furthermore, the study has documented what issues and considerations need to be dealt with in order to embed the existing and forth coming cross-cutting and emerging issues into curricula.

Keywords: cross-cutting issues, emerging issues, curriculum, embedment

1. Background

Cross-cutting issues are those educational issues which do not relate to a specific subject but are of relevance to the whole education sector. Emerging issues are new educational issues that have not been addressed so far in any educational system and curriculum. Precisely because they are cross-cutting and emerging, they are not the specific responsibility of a sub-sector, there is a risk that they are somewhat overlooked.

Accordingly, there are varied cross-cutting and emerging issues that had been included in the curriculum. There are also the probable forth-coming cross-cutting and emerging issues in education. Environmental education, philosophy for children education, entrepreneurship education, peace-building education, vocational education, learning skills education, life skills education, indigenous education, early grade reading enhancement/improvement program, among others are some of the issues that can be considered as cross-cutting/emerging issues.

Gambella is one of the Ethiopian remotest and emerging regional states that had been marginalized for years. Gambella is one of the regions in which quality of education is made worse due to many socio-cultural and economic factors. Since the majority of the communities in the region have not yet begun to appreciate the value of education, the likelihood of parents to send their children to schools is low. The enrolment, participation and retention rates of the boys and girls are very low while the students' truancy, dropout and absenteeism rate is high. Despite many schools in intention to reach education for all children in the region, the learners are not psychologically, emotionally and physically robust. The level of the knowledge, skills and attitudes of the learners at each grade are not in a position as expected to be in the specific grade. It seems that the communities' acquisition of basic personal, interpersonal and social skills of which thinking skills, reasoning, and analytical abilities and problem solving skills are parts, which are necessary to life are very poor.

In connection to this, there are various subjects that are provided at primary schools in Gambella. Amharic language, Agnua language (mother tongue), English language, Mathematics, Social Science, Geography, History, Civics and Ethical Education are few among others. Furthermore, there are extracurricular activities and clubs at grade 5-8 schools. Namely: HIV AIDS, Scout, Civics and Ethics, Language, Science, Mini-media, sport, Red cross, Child right, Anti-corruption, Peace, are some among others. However, there are other issues considered cross-cutting and/or emerging that sounds to be included in school curricula in one way or another. Therefore,

it is necessary to study to what level it is necessary issues to be included and to what level the issues are so far addressed in the curricula of primary schools in Gambella National Regional State.

2. Objectives
The purpose of the study was to discuss issues to be considered to embed cross-cutting and emerging issues into curricula.
To this end, the specific objectives of the study are to:
- Evaluate to what level the so called cross cutting/ emerging issues were included in the curricula/school system;
- Evaluate to what level embedding cross cutting/emerging issues in curricula/educational system is vital;
- Investigate what approaches ought to be used in order to integrate cross-cutting and emerging issues into child curricula;
- Recommend what ought to be considered in order to embed cross-cutting/emerging issues in school curricula/educational system.

3. Methodology

3.1. Sources of Information and Data Gathering Tools
Since the nature of the problem needs wider description, the research has followed descriptive qualitative survey research method.
The study was conducted using interviews and document analysis methods as data gathering instruments. Interviews were used to gather information from teachers.
The policy documents such as the students' text books, specifically Civics and Ethical Education and their respective teachers' guides, internet, ESDP IV and other available references devoted to educational programs have been widely used as references and sources of information.

3.2. Population and Sampling Techniques
The main sources of information were primary schools (grade 1-8) in Gambella Town. The sample representatives are 3 primary schools in Gambella Town. The three primary schools are selected in purposive and convenience sampling method. A total 3 school principals/vice principals, 6 department heads and 6 club heads were interviewed.

3.3. Data Analysis Techniques
The information gathered through improved instruments was analyzed qualitatively. Qualitative data that were obtained through interview and document review were organized, analyzed and interpreted. The results, discussion and conclusion were written in narrative descriptions.

4. Results and Discussions
The research brings forth the different models of integrating cross-cutting/emerging issues in curriculum. It defines the so called cross-cutting/emerging issues like environmental and protection, life skills, learning skills, philosophy for children, vocational, entrepreneurship, peace-building and other educational issues. It also discusses why they are said to be cross-cutting/emerging, their importance to and how they should be embedded in curricula.

4.1. Models of Integrating 'Cross-Cutting and Emerging Issues/Components in Curriculum
There could be many approaches for incorporating "cross-cutting/emerging issues/ components into the curriculum, but the three specific models of can be adapted. The first model is known as "Inter-disciplinary or Diffusion Model", the second model is "Multi-disciplinary or Infusion Model" and the third one is the "Stand alone". The essential features of these three models are discussed below.

4.1.1. Diffusion Model
In this model the cross-cutting/emerging issues arising from different disciplines of education are diffused i.e., taken out from their respective areas of field of study and pooled into a common discipline or subject known as 'cross-cutting/emerging education'
Hence, implementation of this model in child teaching may lead to a subject or course on emerging issues education where generic concepts, skills and attitudes will be covered with specialization in specific fields.

4.1.2. Infusion Model
In this model, the generic concepts/skills/attitudes of cross-cutting/emerging issues are injected or embedded into the various conventional subjects without introducing new subjects or courses such as basic learning-and life skills Education or so.

4.1.3. Stand Alone Model
In this model, each cross-cutting issue, stand alone without combining with others. For instance, Entrepreneurship can stand alone as a single entity without integrating with other issues and is considered as one subject.

4.1.4. Cluster Model
In this model, some similar cross-cutting issues are merged and are formed as a single entity curriculum. For instance, Gender Education and HIV/AIDS can be merged and stand as one subject named Gender and HIV/AIDS related Education.
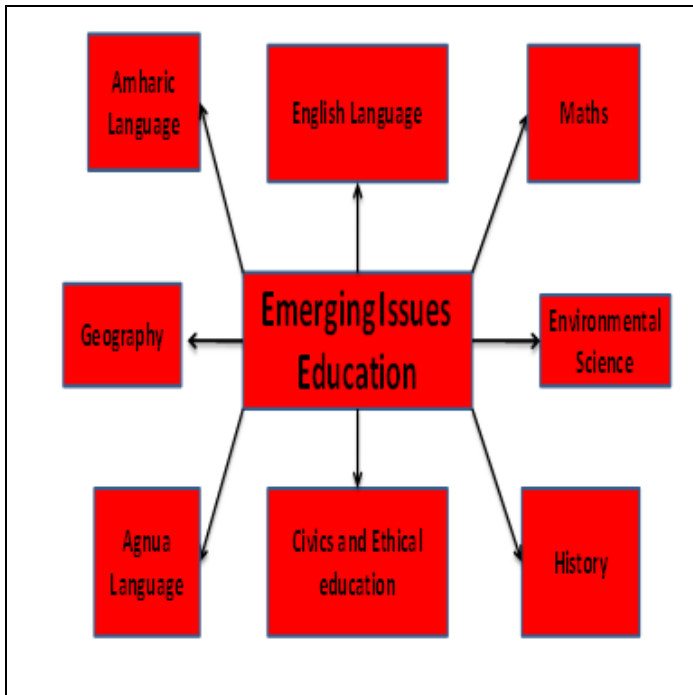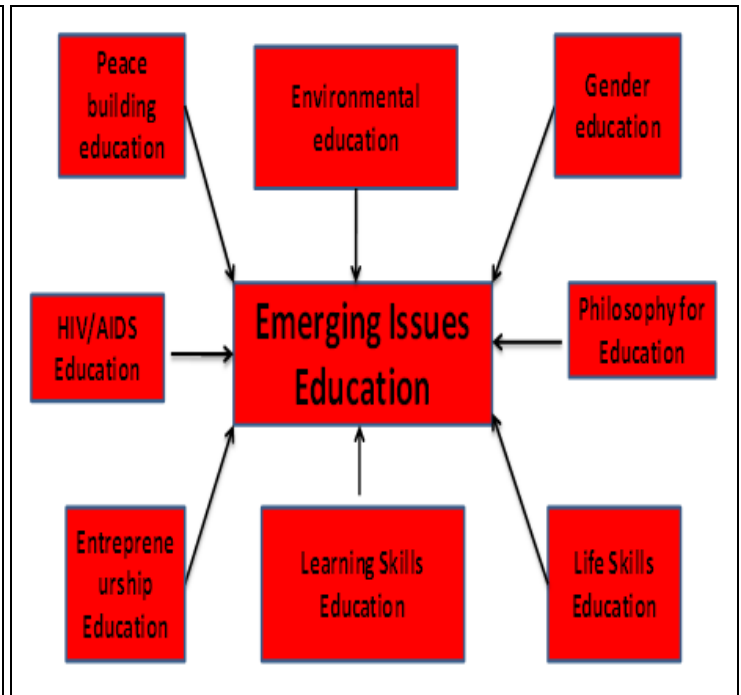
Figure 1: Infusion Model
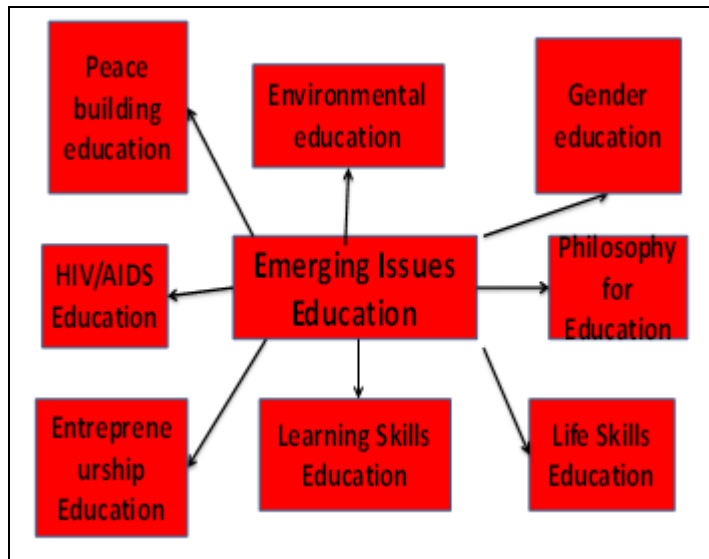
Figure 2: Diffusion Model
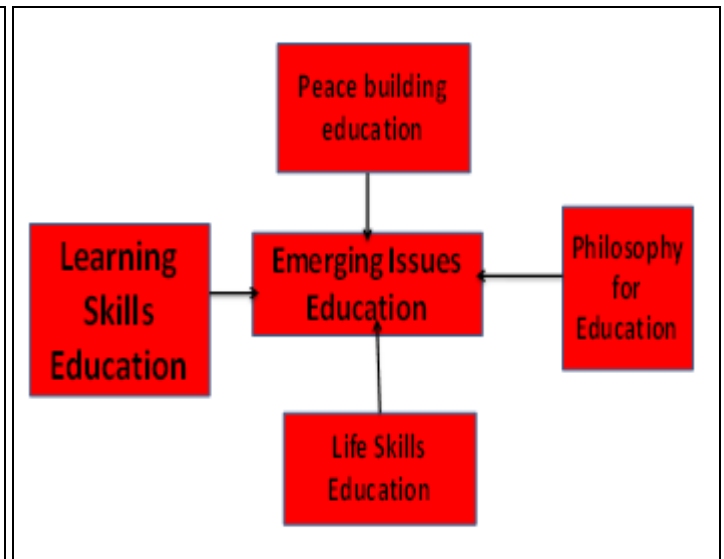
Figure 3: Infusion Model

Figure 4: Cluster Diffusion Model
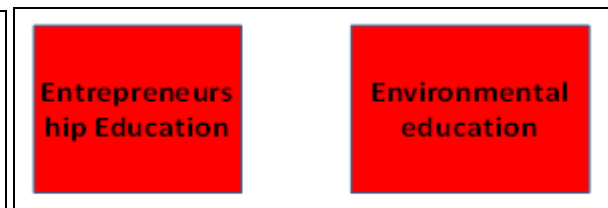
Figure 5: Cluster Diffusion Model

Figure 6: Stand Alone Model

In the case of utilizing infusion model, the units and their lessons can be arranged in subject categories (history, human rights, geography, civic education, language/literature, and art), and then each related content of the cross-cutting issues can be embedded in each subject. This has its own advantages and limitations. The advantage is that the issues can get to be addressed by all teachers and cross-cut in each subject. The limitation is that the subject may get less weight to be addressed fully and its probability to be scanty is high.

One of the things that need to be discussed is who is going to provide the lesson of the emerging issues. Regarding this, in the case of diffusion model, there should be one teacher who should take the responsibilities and if it is infused model, it is the subject teacher himself that should take the responsibilities. However, whenever the cross-cutting issues are emerged, it should be considered about who should teach and how those teachers are capacitated with the necessary skills and knowledge. Regarding this, the teachers' education colleges need to adjust itself flexible.

4.2. Embedding Cross-Cutting/Emerging Issues in School Curriculum

4.2.1. Environmental Education
Environmental education is "a learning process that increases people's knowledge and awareness about the environment and associated challenges, develops necessary skills and expertise to address challenges, and fosters attitudes, motivations, and commitments to make informed decisions for responsible action" (UNESCO, Tbilisi Declaration, 1978).
The Ministry of Education has given attention to the importance of the inclusion of environmental education and protection at all levels and identified the issue as specific cross-cutting program. In this regard, the ESDP IV has put the following strategies:
"To ensure that the education system pays sufficient attention to environmental issues, strategies will focus on two core areas: the curriculum and the awareness of administrative and teaching staff." (MoE, ESDP IV, 2010).
The gravity of this issue has become more pronounced in recent years and the need for the education system to pay more consistent and systematic attention to environmental concerns (MoE, ESDP IV, 2010). The following are expected program outcomes according to ESDP IV:
- Environmental education and protection will be included in the curriculum at all levels
- All administrators, teachers and students have been made aware of the importance of environmental education and protection
Despite environmental education is one of the issues that sound get attention recently, they are not integrated in school curricula as such. There are Environmental Clubs in some schools, but they are not functional.
As Environmental Education is cross-cutting as well as emerging by its nature, it can be embedded in curriculum using all types of models of integrating issues in curriculum. The inclusion of the issues is more suitable if it starts at earlier grade so that students are motivated on the subject matter and could promote and endeavor to ensure sustainable development agendas. Furthermore, environmental education can be more addressed in school clubs named 'Environmental Education Club' for those who are aspired to take it as a career.

4.2.2. Life Skills Education
Life skills are abilities for adaptive and positive behavior, which enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life. Described in this way, skills that can be said to be life skills are innumerable, and the nature and definition of life skills are likely to differ across cultures and settings. These skills are: decision making, problem solving, creative thinking, critical thinking, effective communication, interpersonal relationship skills, self-awareness, empathy, coping with emotions and coping with stress (http://www.educations/Scotland.gov.uk/).
The life skills are the very abandoned part from child curricula. As Gambella is one of the regions that had been marginalized, visibly there is a life skills deficiency among the youth in particular. Most learners have no advisors and supporters who tell them what to do in order to achieve at their academy and at their lives. The only person whom they depend at is their poor parents who have limited life skills.
Life skills are the skills which should be developed at earlier stage but highly neglected part of the skills for all citizens. One should not wait till join college/university or till he studies management course to acquire the skills such as problem solving and decision making. It should be included in school curricula at all levels. The trend that considers life skills education should only be provided while dealing and discussing with HIV/AIDS protection, should be changed and its vitally importance need to be understood. Life skills education can be embedded in school curricula by clustering it along with learning skills, philosophy for children, gender and HIV/education and form one subject, for its simplicity and manageability.

4.2.3. Learning Skills Education
Any skills that are essential for learning development are said to be learning skills. Learning skills may include the use of IT, numeracy, academic literacy, problem solving, critical thinking and working with others among others. Learning skills may include not only academic skills but also basic life skills such as personal, interpersonal and social skills which are very essential for one's personal development. It is through these skills that children can develop their self-confidence, become more creative, improve their time management skills and know how to cope with fast changing technology
(http://skillsforlearning.leedsmet.ac.uk/tour/index.shtml).
In the case of Gambella Regional state, where the study much focused at, the existing wisdom of teaching and learning at primary schools are found at poorest standing. Very little is pointed out in the child curriculum and in learning materials that urge about why to learn and how to learn and acquire the necessary knowledge and skills. The learners along with their teachers do little know about how to learn to know, how to learn to do, how to learn to be, how to learn to live together and how to learn to transform oneself and society, which are fundamental to ensure education for sustainable development. To this end, it may be for this reason among others that most learners whose parents or guardians are teachers or elites could simply join higher education than others in the region. This

may be partly because the teachers and elites' families might demonstrate their children the secret of success in education and the learning strategies and guide them in the endeavor to pursuit wisdom.

One of the reasons why dropout and retention rate increases in the region is the lessening of the learners' desire to learn because they do not even surely know why they do learn, how to study their lesson, where their final destiny would be. Children most often go to school because, as they think, it is because it is children's duty to go to school and attend class merely otherwise they are considered and regarded as delinquent.

Learning skills can be embedded in all subjects. It should not necessary stand alone by itself. Rather it can be promoted using school social work-as other countries' experience show. In Ethiopia, there is no school social work practice while it is common in other countries like America and Kenya (Yadessa Tolossa, 2013). To this end, there is no policy in which school social work should be promoted in schools in general and in primary schools in particular. Learning skills education can be embedded in school curricula as well as in teachers' training and education programs.

4.2.4. Philosophy for Children Education

Philosophy for Children, sometimes abbreviated to P4C, is a movement that aims to teach reasoning and argumentative skills to children (Laurence Splitter and Ann M. Sharp, 2008). Philosophy for children is the theory and practice of philosophy that contribute to enhance critical and analytical thinking and reasoning of children. Philosophy for children benefits education by inculcating children to them to become philosophers and critical thinkers in the future. It is one of the emerging issues that need to be included in children curriculum for all phases of schooling as well as informal educational contexts.

Although the noted developmental psychologist Jean Piaget was of the impression that children were not capable of critical thinking until age 11 or 12, the experience of many philosophers and teachers with young children gives reason to believe that children benefit from philosophical inquiry even in early primary school. Furthermore, there is empirical evidence that teaching children reasoning skills early in life greatly improves other cognitive and academic skills and greatly assists learning in general K.J. Topping and S. Trickey (2007).

The teaching methods traditionally used in the schools in Gambella Regional State are to make learners just arrest information in their mind and the learners' academic attainment assessment mechanisms set evaluates to what level learners could retain information in their mind than encouraging critical thinking and inquiry. Same is true, in the parents' and communities' sides. They appreciate those children who take information simply without inquiry and call 'wise'. It is observed that a number of learners think they are considered inferior if they ask what they could not understand and raise questions and problems in a classroom. Those learners who are participating in just giving answers for questions raised by teachers are labeled as clever learners.

P4C is the issue getting due attention in some countries like South Africa. It is vitally important if the innovators, scientist and highly competent decision maker-citizens are really required. P4C along with learning skills can be dealt with altogether. There can P4C clubs be established at schools, too. To realize this, the issues of the teachers' capability need to be taken into consideration.

4.2.5. Peace Education

Peace education is the process of acquiring the values, the knowledge and developing the attitudes, skills, and behaviors to live in harmony with oneself, with others, and with the natural environment. Peace education programs centered on conflict resolution typically focus on the social-behavioural symptoms of conflict, training individuals to resolve inter-personal disputes through techniques of negotiation and (peer) mediation. Learning to manage anger, "fight fair" and improve communication through skills such as listening, turn-taking, identifying needs, and separating facts from emotions, constitute the main elements of these programs. Participants are also encouraged to take responsibility for their actions and to brainstorm together on compromises Deutsch, M. (1993). In general, approaches of this type aim to alter beliefs, attitudes, and behaviours from negative to positive attitudes toward conflict as a basis for preventing violence (Van Slyck, Stern and Elbedour, 1999, emphasis added).

Today, it is common to observe conflict among citizen in the so called Developing Regional States (DRSs) like Gambella. There are many reasons for the conflict. Inequalities in service provision (intra-regional and inter-regional) which is, to some extent, linked to limited resources, different identities and lifestyles; weak capacity for effective education planning and management; frequent natural & man-made disasters; tensions among selected clans/tribes/ethnic groups caused by mobility and competition for scarce resources (water & grazing land); host communities & refugees; gender issues e.g. abduction of girls, early marriage are some among others.

To this end, there are some parts of peace education in Civic and Ethical Education in the school curriculum. However, it does not address very critical issues like conflict resolution and mutual understanding. The amount of the contents and the time allotted for the course to be delivered are very limited and are inconsistent hence less attention is given. Furthermore, the teachers are not aware of the contents as such to facilitate the teaching learning fruitfully.

Peace education has strong relation with life skills. For instance, Life skills based education for violence prevention and peace building promotes the development of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values needed to bring about behavioural change that will enable children, youth and adults to prevent conflict and violence, both overt and structural; resolve conflict peacefully; and create the conditions conducive to peace, whether at an intrapersonal, interpersonal, intergroup, national or international level. Therefore, the contents of peace education can be included in Civic and Ethical Education courses. The Peace education clubs should get more due attention in DRSs than in others. NGOs, CBOs, FBOs and CSOs need to work much on realizing the endeavors.

4.2.6. Entrepreneurship Education

Entrepreneurship can be defined as the process of using private initiative to transform a business concept into a new venture or to grow and diversify an existing venture or enterprise with high growth potential. Entrepreneurship education therefore can be viewed as a process of teaching people how to acquire skills through the study of school subjects and how to utilize these skills for self-sustenance and self-reliance.

Entrepreneurship is not merely about a course to be studied but a philosophy that needs to be embedded into our mindsets in every field of activities or studies. There isn't a better place and time to embed entrepreneurship principles than inspiring to young minds during the school days through the school curriculum and extra-curriculum activities. Teenagers out of schools ought to feel empowered enough to explore the career each one desires with the underlying principle of 'Entrepreneurship = Success' (Shanjoy Mairembam, 2012).

To instill 'Entrepreneurship' passion into young minds, we first need to create a thriving entrepreneurship culture in the schools. Right from providing motivated teaching staffs (with clear and exciting career in school education) to creating course-contents package (for kids entering schools to exit as empowered teenagers ready to face whatever comes in future instead of phobic youth towards the complex world out there in future), we have to review the current school education system in a more holistic and transparent approach of 'Cause-Impact' analysis. Since education is to empower our younger generation to lead humanity towards a better world, we have to teach our kids that 'Entrepreneurship equals Success' (Shanjoy Mairembam, 2012).

Regarding the importance of integrating entrepreneurship in education, Chris NNadi (2012) has mentioned the following benefits of entrepreneurship:

- Integration of entrepreneurship studies into the curricular at all levels of schooling, primary, secondary and tertiary, will prepare the youths to be responsible and enterprising individuals who will become entrepreneurs or entrepreneurial thinkers and contribute to economic development and sustainable communities.
- It empowers graduates, irrespective of their areas of specialization, with skills that will enable them engage in income-yielding ventures if they are unable to secure paid jobs.
- It is a reorientation from the take-a-job mentality to the make-a-job mentality.
- Through the teaching of entrepreneurship skills, students would assume more responsibilities in job creation and this will give them on their graduation a sharper focus on the field.

Today, entrepreneurship education has got emphasis by Ethiopian government. However, it is much limited to TVET and thus students need to wait for TVET or higher education to develop attitudes towards entrepreneurship as a career alternative.

It could be observed some issues related to entrepreneurship in Civic and Ethical Education. But it is so scanty and inadequate to enable learners to acquire sufficient knowledge. Despite some argue that entrepreneurship education should be given at earlier stage of learning, most yet agree that it would be better if it is provided at grade 9 & 10 levels along with vocational education.

4.3. The School Clubs and Their Status

There are extracurricular activities and clubs at schools in Gambella Regional State. Namely: HIV AIDS, Scout, Civics and Ethics, Language, Science, Mini-media, Sport, Red cross, Child right, Anti-corruption, Peace, are some among others. Nearly all the clubs and extracurricular activities are inactive and are not fully operational due to various reasons. Some teachers still do not know whether the clubs founded exist or not. Whatsoever, they are equivalent to non-existent for they are stagnant. It could be observed that some clubs have developed written schedule and plan which contains the activities, duties and responsibilities and time schedule. In spite of the fact that few schools implement according to the schedule, most were not implementing as the plan they had scheduled.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

Education has crucial linkages to a society's social, economic and political spheres. Education is central to identity formation, can promote cohesive societies and contribute to state-building. On the other hand, education can undermine all of these processes. Inequitable provision of services or biased curriculum and teaching methods can reinforce existing exclusion and stereotypes. This becomes more realistic if the curriculum does not adequately embrace cross-cutting and emerging issues that are vital for learners' holistic development.

Gambella is one of the Ethiopian less developed, remotest and emerging regional states named Developing Regional States (DRSs) in Ethiopia. The quality of education in the region is poor compared to other relatively developed regions. There are 11 similarly titled units in each grade "Civics and Ethical Education" Student Textbooks. Only 2, namely, "Self-reliance" and "the pursuit of wisdom" discuss about ethical issues related to skills for learning and basic life skills. The rest 9 units more deal with Civics education and related issues. Indeed, there are few points about ethical issues indicated under some units entitled 'Patriotism', 'Responsibility' and 'Rule of law'. But, most of them discuss about workplace behaviours/ethics, not about personal and interpersonal ethics that suit for children.

The curriculum and instruction methods used are so traditional that learners do not acquire the necessary skills and knowledge. Some curricula embrace contents related to environmental protection, life-skills, HIV/AIDS, Gender and other cross-cutting and emerging issues. But they are scanty and not fully covered. In other words, they do not address the critical aspects of the issues. There are school clubs in most schools but are not active as such. Nearly all the clubs and extracurricular activities are not fully operational due to various reasons. There is lack of appreciation of cross-cutting and emerging issues in educational system and lack of trained staff & training policies and proficiency in curriculum developers as well. There is no assigned responsible body for the cross-cutting and

emerging issues in the schools. The attachment and cooperation among government agencies, NGOs and other stakeholders is loose in regard to implementation of cross-cutting and emerging issues

The Life Skills Education which is vital to enhance abilities for adaptive and positive behavior that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life and empower teenagers ready to face whatever comes in future as well as the Peace Building Education which is decisive for peace making and peace keeping promotion and enhance the spirit of tolerance of and respect for different civilizations specifically in developing regions, are not explicitly or implicitly introduced in school systems of Gambella National Regional State.

Furthermore, entrepreneurship education which is vital for learners to enhance the interest of the learners to dream to be technicians, technologists and engineers and aspire to create their own jobs in the future, the P4C which makes children think critically, peace education which ensures mutual understanding, as well as environmental education which is vital to ensure sustainable development are not fully or partly addressed in school curricula in the region. Learners are deprived to know the objectives and the goals of every subject/course. Most secret of ways of learning and critical thinking are left with teachers.

In general, cross-cutting and emerging issues such as basic personal, interpersonal and social skills of which thinking skills, reasoning, and analytical abilities and problem solving skills in particular, which are necessary to life, are not included in the children curricula as sufficient as ought to be. To this end, the learning-skills that the marginalized and disadvantaged children and youth acquire from their families and environments are insufficient to enable them and manage their study properly.

The educational system in general and that of the Developing Regional States s in particular should promote peace, social justice, respect for human rights and the acceptance of responsibility. Children need to learn the skills of negotiation, problem solving, critical thinking and communications that will enable them to resolve conflicts without resorting to violence. The current school education systems have to be reviewed in a more holistic and transparent approach and what are missing need to be investigated. The Civic and Ethical Education curriculum should be revised fully so that it should include components like entrepreneurship, peace education, and life skills education, among others in deeply rooted manner.

What learning means the reason why each subject is taught, why they learn languages and social science courses for instance, should be embedded in child curricula in the amount learners' mind can recognize. The curriculum and the teaching materials designed ought to be developed in such a way as to make the children enquirers, which is basic to them to be researchers and philosophers.

It is necessary to integrate cross-cutting and emerging issues in child curricula. In so doing, it is imperative to carefully identify which issues are required to be integrated and in which subjects the issues should be embedded. Furthermore, it is necessary for the policy makers, curriculum planners, administrators and teachers to identify which models of integrating issues are suit for each cross-cutting/emerging issue so that the curriculum can impart the necessary knowledge and skills for children. Furthermore, it should be noted that the cross-cutting and emerging issues should be integrated into child curriculum without disturbing/ affecting the existing basic curricular structures. This can be more realized in diffusion model of integration. Because in diffusing system the course module can stand alone and it never disturbs the existing system. In order to realize this, the curriculum of cross-cutting/emerging education needs to be developed through involvement of all stakeholders and concerned bodies such as colleges/institutes, child and youth affair bureaus, NGOs and local communities as much as possible.

In so doing and while embedding issues into the curricula, it is necessary first, to build public awareness to all administrators, teachers and students about the importance of the issues and get political support for the introduction of the cross-cutting/emerging issues to be embedded into curricula/ educational system.

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