



Gadaa Education and Culture: A Review on Indigenous Education and Curriculum in Ethiopia and Kenya

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Abstract

This research review paper emphasises the importance of Gadaa education and culture, here highlight the Guji-Oromo indigenous Gadaa education and northern Kenyan, which needs the revision on cultural, geographical, historical, philosophical, political, and religion foundation of the society. It also indicates that the Guji-Oromo and Kenyans have developed indigenous education system through which they transferred indigenous knowledge to the next generation. In contrast, under the Gadaa system priority is given to the values and principles of God (Waaqa), and also Gadaa educational all laws and principles. In this Paper, Investigators discussed about the concept of Gadaa education, culture, role of the educators, curriculum and methods based on the qualitatively how to transmit the knowledge one generation to other.

Keywords: Gadaa, indigenous education, culture, Ethiopia, Kenya

Introduction

The indigenous democratic system of governance practiced by the people of Oromia, Ethiopia and northern Kenya, is known as 'Gadaa System' (Hinnant, 1977). The Gadaa education and culture are integral parts of the 'Gadaa System' and play a pivotal role in Ethiopia's Oromia region and northern Kenya. The *Konso* and *Gedeo* of southern Ethiopia also practice it. The system regulates the community's economic, political, religious, and social activities. In the first century AD, an ancient Indian sage *Panini* also introduced the 'Gadaa' concept (Dereje, 2021). There is no single meaning interpretation for the term 'Gadaa' (older spelling 'Gada'). It continues for a several more ideas that are connected. The subject of our research is, first and foremost, the concept that underpins the Gadaa education system, the entire way of an indigenous life. However, it more explicitly refers to any period of eight years in which a class remains in power (Dereje, 2012). This multiplicity of meanings can be associated to either bulging data on the Gadaa system's research or the comprehensive

character of Gadaa itself. By its very nature, the Gadaa comprises cultural, political, ritualistic, and theological dimensions that control the basic components of the Gadaa, such as age grade, age set, and generational class (Hinnant, 1977).

The importance of Gadaa education, culture and beyond the structural view of Gadaa, Gadaa can also view as important indigenous institution. In 2010, the Gadaa system so has been documented as intangible heritage by UNESCO (Desalegn, 2017). The Oromo people esteem Gadaa system as their common heritage. Whatever it is Gadaa education system encourages the modern education system by making use of traditional. In aspects, all subject disciplines are being encouraged for the national development through individual development. Thus, according to society needs, Gadaa education system consistently plans the curriculum development and implementation process through the teaching and learning process (Aweke, 2015). In this process educators, scholars, students, and related stakeholders are

supporting in all aspects in the Oromia region in Ethiopia and also Northern Kenya.

Gadaa Grades

The below Table 1 shows grades and particular grade characteristics followed by the Gadaa education system.

Table 1

Grades and Characteristics of Gadaa Education System

Grades	Age in Years	Characters
Daballe	0-8	No Responsibility
Junior Gaammee	9-16	Student
Foollee	17-24	Military Training
Kuusaa	25-32	Military
Raabaa Doorii	33-40	Warrior
Gadaa	41-48	Leader
Yuuba I	49-56	Adviser
Yuuba II	57-64	Repositories of Law
Yuuba III	65-72	Repositories of Law
Gadaamoojji	73-80	Conducts Rites
Jaarsa	Above 80	No Responsibility

The Gadaa, on the other hand, is not only about age (period) or the age of rule (politics), due to scholarly ramifications and the holistic character of Gadaa itself. Gadaa is a cultural system that governs the cultural, economic, political, and social lives of the Oromo people. What is practiced as one progresses through the grades is not just cultural, but also economic and political as well. Gadaa, like all other systems, is made up of a number of components that are all interconnected, interrelated, and interdependent (Markakis, 1987). Most scholars use a wholistic and systemic common definition of Gadaa. Therefore, when one listens to of phrase such as ‘Gadaa System’, what exactly is meant is not necessarily merely age grade or age set or generation class, rather how the particular components of Gadaa system work collectively to sustain wholistic nature of the particular system (Aweke, 2015).

The primary theme of this review is to highlight significance of the Gadaa education system of Oromo in Ethiopia in addition to northern Kenyan indigenous education system, which needs the detail revision on cultural, geographical, traditional, philosophical, political, and religious foundation of the particular society (Dereje, 2012). It likewise

indicates that the particular Guji-Oromos have got developed indigenous education and learning system through which often they transferred indigenous knowledge to the next generation. The significance of Gadaa education process is usually guided by well-structured traditional curriculum, which designed on the basis of indigenous calendar system that will is the resource of age-set or even grade process (Legesse, 1973).

Obviously, the Oromo have got developed all round indigenous knowledge in agriculture, medical, land ecological through many years of intimate exposure to their natural environments. It can be clear of which the Oromo indigenous knowledge originated like time-tested adaptations to be able to their unique environments, which conditioned by simply way of some sort of specific cultural contexts. Therefore, the Oromo have retained cumulative body of indigenous knowledge, know-how, practices, procedures, and representations maintained and developed by means of extended histories regarding interaction with the particular natural environment (Dereje & Haile 2021). These types of sets of understandings, interpretations, and symbolism are part in addition to parcel of a new cultural complex that will encompasses

language, naming and classification methods, resource use procedures, ritual, spirituality, in addition to worldview of the particular society. Thus, these kinds of indigenous cumulative know-how transferred from generation to generation by the practice involving indigenous education, which can be original in its characteristics, and improved through time to be able to use a channel to transmit customs, experience, rules, traditions, and values to the forthcoming generation.

The knowledge is, consequently, incredibly important that Oromo to improve, alter, along with develop in addition to conserve his environment with regards to all-round development of the society (Asafa, 1996). The particular Oromo have developed indigenous education system, which is useful to educate the child for mature adult life in which often they will end up being in a place to fulfil their responsibilities on the grown-up life. Accordingly, typically the education provision is a lifelong experience, which will contain the passage of human creatures from childhood, to be able to maturity, the task by which individuals switches into themselves steadily in numerous ways to their physical and spiritual environment as well (Aweke, 2015). Hence, it needs the appropriate direction to set a new process in motion and even change the alarming situation.

However, typically the introduction of standard (Church and Mosque) and modern education systems into typically the Guji-Oromo terrain had brought effects on indigenous training system, which seemed to be a vital means to tackle typically the yoke of poverty, and furnished with showcase sustainable development. This specific was continued before the incorporation of the Oromo into the Ethiopian government inside the late-early nineteenth century. After the conquest, the Oromo groups have recently been forced to get away from the Gadaa system of rule, and even obligated to take up the state political culture (Legesse, 1973). This and then super imposition associated with western scientific education culture at the expense of the

particular Oromo indigenous education (Dereje, 2012). However, in Ethiopia, most researchers possess given emphasis in order to the study from the contributions of the particular traditional education systems, but the significance associated with the Oromo indigenous education is in no way given due interest by the researchers.

Gadaa Education and Program

Here, the particular term curriculum might cause a type of debate because the scholars connect it with the particular modern education, and they define this with regards in order to guidance that assists human beings along the way of knowing via schooling. Foundations would be the forces that influence the minds of curriculum developers, which usually affect the content material and structure associated with the curriculum (Dereje, 2012). These kinds of forces are beliefs, philosophy and orientations while well as concepts of learners and even the needs regarding society. Accordingly, the Oromo indigenous education system is well guided by indigenous curriculum even though would not know no matter if it is a curriculum or certainly not. However, the course designed on such basis as typically the Oromo time reckoning system or calendar or a lunar year system of which were developed simply by astronomical expert known as *Ayyaantuu*. Such indigenous calendar is turn out to be the basis associated with which “[the Oromo] routine their lives, their own rituals, their events, their political, plus activities to the very high level” (Tadesse, 2004). It will be said to become distinctive human achievement that will found in Eastern Africa, which employed as important time framework to schedule social, political, religious, economic, and so forth activities. Intended for instance, they require to schedule the rank change to be able to respective age stage to perform ritual events, to estimate time, to schedule time intended for power handover ceremony, and so out. Furthermore, it is described as uses: “The [Oromo]... calendar is a great invention and it is the source of Gadaa process. They also schedule their lives, their rituals, their

ceremonies, their political and economic activities to a very high degree” (Tadesse, 2004). Unfortunately, after the conquest of the particular Oromo territory simply by Menelik II, within the last years in the 19th century, the Oromo indigenous lunar system was initially replaced by the Christian Gregorian calendar system.

Role of the Gadaa Educators

Under the rule of the Gadaa government, the Oromo indigenous education system was conducted by individuals, who currently have the required intellectual competence to teach at different academic levels. For case in point, at primary academic level, children have got been taught by their fathers and mothers in addition to elders. In the normal circumstance, the particular Guji higher education and learning educators also hired from the top age-grade or *yubaa* group to provide practicing the *kussaa* age-grade people at *fooqa* (a training center within the Gadaa system) (Dereje & Haile 2021). These educators have been purported to have been well experienced concerning the contents on the instruction or the lesson that include things like traditions, customs, norms, history and some others. Moreover, educators can also be responsible to design and style training on all of aspects, and that they also train civil servants such as judges, governors, treasures, and general administrators. Within the Gadaa system, you can find individuals referred to as *Abbaa Ragaa*, which often means father of oral history or even father of history. Like the Christen chronicles, *Abbaa Ragaa* have involved in social-political functions, experiences, and improvements of different *Gadaa* periods, and memorized them and teach children about the Oromo history, values, beliefs, politic, custom, tradition, resource preservation, utilization skills, in addition to so forth (Dereje, 2012).

Gadaa Education and Teaching Methods

Like several non-literate societies inside Africa, the Guji indigenous education is usually dominantly used oral approach to teach youngsters about all aspects of their life such as

history, culture, and political information circulate throughout generations without any interruption. Generally, proverbs are thought to possess also employed to be a medium involving transmission of socio-cultural information like customs, beliefs, norms, moral codes, and so forth from elders to the youth adults, among the people in all occasions (Tadesse, 2004). On this factor, elders have role to be able to transmit the traditional values to the young; and they happen to be responsible to train concerning the values of each and every aspect of values including truthfulness, purity, charity, respectfulness and so forth, and the importance of social laws by which the people are governed. Group discussion is additionally another teaching-learning method through which indigenous education has been implemented. It is a lot more applicable on diverse occasions similar in order to people’s day-to-day lifestyle, on festivals, assemblies, and various ceremonies in the society (Dereje & Haile 2021). Consequently, members regarding different stages had been expected to meet under Gadaa center and share knowledge; and successful accomplishment of age specific task or activity in any Gadaa age-set is considered to include taken as exclusive to transfer in the lower age group level to the next Gadaa age-set structure (Dereje, 2012). Therefore, typically the eye to include clear insight concerning the nature with the indigenous education system to have been unthinkable fact without the knowledge of the Gadaa system. Typically, the system is quite complex philosophical accomplishment, which discovered by the Oromo ancestors and forefathers.

It is the particular that this Guji indigenous education is hierarchically structured through which knowledge is developed step by stage in each particular age-set or age-grade system. Like, right after preliminary life skill training (0-8 age group of years) peer group teaching approach would be used to train the particular next age-set team members (Dereje & Haile 2021). Here, group interactive learning activities are mainly

offered to the group members, and requirements to take component in group activities and learn from the others and contribute their knowledge for their partners as well.

Moreover, understanding associated with the Oromo indigenous education system in general and the Guji in particular, requires purposeful identification and exploration regarding characteristics and the essence of the Gadaa system. Here, it is to include some understanding regarding the Oromo kinship system since that has been typically the basic social construction for identifying frequent interests in reference management and usage, and in the particular the establishing political and religious leadership and in creating leagues or confederations among the Oromo modern society (Dereje & Haile 2021).

Thus, the indigenous education system imposed by modern education impacts and thereby produces social elites who alienated from their indigenous education system (Dereje & Haile 2021). As an effect of this, the Guji indigenous education elements have been at the edge of fading, and researchers should have to take instantaneous measure to re-establish and register native values or facts with the aim to transmit them to the upcoming generation, and to safeguard the success of national and native development schemes, it is anticipated to build combination amongst the concept of indigenous knowledge and western scientific knowledge. Consequently, to cope up with socioeconomic disorders, the Guji indigenous knowledge helps, which is decisive means to uphold cultural values. Even so, the contribution of the Guji indigenous education system has not been evidently approved. Such historical resources of the society seem to be to have received little attention by scholars.

Conclusion

The Ethiopia and Kenyan in general and Guji-Oromo in Ethiopia particular, have foremostly transmitted their history of the knowledge and cultural knowledge from generation to another generation through the use of indigenous education system, which was

valuable to secure the quest for human and democratic rights. The system became approachable to all cultural, economic, political and social requirements of the society needs and was well-adjusted. Yet, students failed to goal the contributions of the Guji-Oromo local education system. Instead, the study of the history of the Ethiopian traditional education systems (the Coptic Church and Mosque) attracted historians, that provided people with psychic and spiritual conception as opposed to secular knowledge (Dereje & Haile 2021). In the 1890s, the developed education system obscured and replaced the values of indigenous education system, particularly after the conquest of the Guji by the emperor Menilik II. The Guji overlaid by the western education system irrespective of due account to the values of public cultural individualities.

The school curriculum needs to be framed by indigenous instructors, organizations, societies, families, and individuals. These all have a chance to participate in framing the curriculum policies, creating curriculum programs, and implementing these policies and programs to ensure the achievement of development goals. To lead an even more culturally appropriate formal education, members of the community would safeguard sensitivity towards sociable norms and traditional customs.

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