**University of Gondar**

**Collage of Education**

**Department of Adult Education and Community Development**

Course title: **Comparative and International Adult Education**

***(AECD 4124)***

**CHAPTER ONE**

**1.1. Comparative Education:**

**Definition**

What do you think is comparative education?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Don’t you think it is our natural tendency to understand our environment through comparison? As you might observe rightly, naturally, human beings are in the habit of making comparison of the things that are around us particularly when such things exist in different places. This may be done as a result of our desire to know the relationship existing between, or among the things being compared. We may also involve ourselves in this kind of a business when we want to choose between two things before us.

The idea of comparison is not peculiar to the people in the business of education alone. The children at home or anywhere do make comparison between their parents because one of them may be more loving than the other. The school pupils also make a comparison of their teachers particularly when the teachers are not with them. The parents themselves can make a comparison

of their children morally and academically. Comparison can take place wherever we have two or more things at the same time either for the purpose of having a better understanding of the relationship existing between them or for the purpose of having a better choice.

Like other concepts, comparative education is a concept that attracts varied interpretations or definitions. In other words, there are as many definitions as there are many Educational Comparativists. Mallinson (1975) defines the subject as: a systematic examination of other cultures and other systems of education deriving from those cultures in order to discover resemblances and differences, and why variant solutions have been attempted (and with what result) to problems that are often common to all.

In his own reaction to the concept of Comparative education, Awolola (1986) defines the subject as the study of aims and objectives of education, the curriculum methods of teaching, teacher - student relationships, school calendar, mode of discipline, design of school buildings and school administration among others which may be at the international or national levels.

Comparative education is the field of education that analysis the education system of a country by using data and systems from other countries, and designs policies to improve education. According to Good (1962, as cited in Lawal, 2004), it is a field of study dealing with the comparison of current educational theory and practice in different countries for purposes of broadening and deepening the understanding of educational problems beyond the boundaries of one’s own country. From the above definition, the study of comparative education allows the person involved to have a better understanding of the system of education outside his own country. In addition, Osokoya (1992) observed that comparative education could be the comparison of educational theory and practice within a society, state, region and nations.

Alabietal (1998) sees comparative education as a way of comparing and contrasting different education all system at national, intra-national as well as international levels. Moreover, Adeyinka (1994) gives the following definitions of the concept:

* A study of two or more education systems
* A study of how the philosophy, objectives and aims, policy, and practice of education in other countries influence the general development, policy, and practice of education in a particular country
* A study of how the development of education in the past, across the ages and continents, has influenced the development of education in particular countries
* A study of the school systems of two or more countries, and of the administrative machinery set up to implement or control the implementation of government policies at various levels of education systems.

Comparison can take place wherever we have two or more things at the same time either for the purpose of having a better understanding of the relationship existing between them or for the purpose of having a better choice.

As comparative education considers education from a global perspective and investigates best practices in education, it is important to learn about essential educational values and systems, approaching various problems from an international, comparative standpoint. Moreover, since the term comparative education denotes making judgments about two similar areas, topics, or factors, this requires an evaluative eye that reviews the material while reading critically.

The study of making comparisons is systematic; open-mindedness and an understanding of information in an unbiased manner are some crucial requirements

* + 1. **Comparative Adult Education**

Bereday (1964) stated that Comparative adult education started in the 19th century with the desire of educational administrators who planned to advance reforms in educational systems so as to contribute ideas and principles, which could be woven into the prevailing philosophy of national education. Hans (1967) viewed comparative adult education as a method of comparing the differences between the various systems of adult education. Hans pointed that the purpose of ‘comparison’ is that which leads to the discovery of the underlying principles governing the development of all national systems of education.

Mallison (1975) defined comparative adult education as the education, which classifies problems according to their importance and shows the relations of the proposed solutions to the problems identified in adult education. Ragins (1987) explained that comparative adult education could be in various kinds of spatial units such as comparing the adult educational system of one country to another or it could involve comparing any social related adult inquiry of one nation to another.

* 1. **Purposes of Comparative Adult Education**

One purpose of comparative education is to stimulate critical reflection about our educational system, its success and failures, strengths and weaknesses. This critical reflection facilitates self-evaluation of our work and is the basis for determining appropriate courses of action. Another purpose of comparative education is to expose us to educational innovations and systems that have positive outcomes. The exposure facilitates our adoption of best practices.

For example Noah (1985) and Kidd (1975) described purposes of comparative education as presented below to broaden your understanding of the purposes of comparative education. Noah, (1985) states that comparative education has four main purposes and these are:

* To describe educational systems, processes or outcomes
* To assist in development of educational institutions and practices
* To highlight the relationship between education and society
* To establish generalized statements about education that are valid in more than one country

Kidd (1975) also provides the following detailed list of purposes. According to Kidd the most common goals for engaging in comparative education are:

* To become better informed about the educational system of other countries;
* To become better informed about the ways in which people in other cultures have carried out certain social functions by means of education
* To become better informed about the historical roots of certain activities and use this to develop criteria for assessing contemporary development and testing possible outcomes;
* To better understand the educational forms and systems operating in one’s own country;
* To satisfy an interest in how other human beings live and learn;
* To better understand oneself; and
* To reveal how one’s own cultural biases and personal attributes affect one’s judgment about possible ways of carrying on learning transactions.

Furthermore, the purpose of comparative education can be different according to the different actors/groups in the community.

Among the categories of people who undertake comparative studies of education are the following:

**Parents** commonly compare schools and systems of education in search of the institutions which will serve their children’s needs most effectively.

**Practitioners**, including school principals and teachers, make comparisons in order to improve the operation of their institutions.

**Policy makers** in individual countries examine education systems elsewhere in order to identify ways to achieve social, political and other objectives in their own settings.

**International agencies** compare patterns in different countries in order to improve the advice that they give to national governments and others.

**Academics** undertake comparisons in order to improve understanding both of the forces which shape education systems and processes in different settings and of the impact of education systems and processes on social and other development.

Generally, Comparative studies in education are undertaken for a variety of reasons and by a variety of people and organizations. Some of the reasons for studying comparative education:

* To learn about our own education system and that of others
* To enhance our knowledge of education in general
* To improve educational institutions; their content, processes and methods
* To understand the relationship between education and society
* To promote international understanding
* To find possible solutions to educational issues
* To contribute not only to the educational development of the society but also to general development of the society.
* To serve as an academic discipline.
* To assist both the teachers and students of discipline in gathering reliable information concerning educational system.
* To educate the students and teachers on the procedure through which educational change occur.

1.3. **Goals of Comparative Education**

Comparative Education:

* deepens our knowledge of educational practices in our own country.
* enables educators to adapt relevant practices from other countries for use in their own country.
* encourages international applications of education theories.
* promotes international understanding in light of prevailing global crises.
* **Functions of Comparative Education:** Different comparatives have tried to describe the functions of Comparative Education. According to Wolfgang Hoerner, there are four major functions of Comparative Education (Wolfgang Hoerner, 1993: 6-10).They are:

1. **Idiographic function**: One has to consider the socio-economic, cultural, political and historical situations that have shaped the education systems of the nations;
2. **Melioristic function**: comparison helps learn from the educational practices of other countries in order to improve one’s own education system.
3. **Evolutionary function**: Comparison is useful to understand the international trends in education;
4. **Experimental function:** Comparative education helps countries/institutions to experiment innovative educational ideas, theories and practices

**1.4. Scope of Comparative Education:**

The following are areas of academic comparison in education provisions:

A. Social and political philosophies of different countries can be compared.

B. Social and historical experiences of different countries can be compared.

C. The educational philosophies and policies of different countries can be compared.

D. The different types of educational programs can be compared (basic education,

secondary education, higher education, adult and non-formal education, etc.).

E. Organizations of the education provisions can be compared. It helps the scholar to

understand problems of implementing educational policies

**1.5. Historical development of Comparative Adult Education**

As you might imagine comparative education as a term has a long history, though the use of comparison in education can be traced back many centuries. Comparative education began with observations about foreign peoples and their education and developed into descriptions of foreign school systems. Inherent in this work was the practical aims of borrowing from abroad useful education strategies or innovations for use at home.

The descriptive phase gradually expanded to include examination of social, political and historical context in which school systems developed. A further dimension was the description of relationships between education and social setting. A later development was the use of cross-national data to test propositions about the relationship of education to society. In this view, comparative education is thus part of the attempt to explain phenomena, first within educational systems and institutions and second, surrounding education and linking it with its social environment. Attempts to do the first lead to a concern with instruction, organization, supervision, administration and finance.

In so far as comparative education is concerned with education, the work has largely been done by teachers, administrators, and educational psychologists seeking to comprehend and possibly to improve the instructional work of schools and it is useful to term this branch of subject comparative pedagogy. But to the extent that comparative education has looked outside the confines of the classroom and the school system, its concerns and its data have overlapped with interest of social sciences, some of whom have recently undertaken systematic comparative study of education as a social phenomenon.

The works of Western Scholars such as Kandel, Bereday, Hans, king, Holmes and so on greatly influence the development of comparative adult education as a discipline. Specifically speaking comparative adult education has benefited from methods developed by comparative education ad has begun to generate its own concepts and scholarly as well as to define its own characters and interests within the overall field. The first international conference on the comparative study of Adult Education was held in 1966- at Exeter, USA. A small group of scholars, mainly from Europe and North America, met “to review and refine a conceptual framework for examining adult education activities, programs and institutions in various countries on a comparative basis and to examine and describe similarities and differences in such activities in line with this conceptual framework”. Although this conceptual framework has been reworked significantly, the Exeter group’s definition of the main subject matter for comparative study has proven helpful through the years. The main elements which they listed were:-

* + thoughts and ideas relevant to and about adult education
  + institutions and structures, including legislation about and funding for adult education
  + participants in adult education activities-learners and teachers, facilitators
  + learning/teaching processes and methods
  + achievements and problems in various programs institutions and policies

**CHAPTER TWO**

**Approaches To, Methods and Dimensions of Comparative Education**

**2.1. Approaches to Comparative Education**

There are various approaches that are used in the study of comparative adult education. Some of these are: The Historical approach; The Scientific approach; The Sociological approach; The Methodological approach; and the Philosophical approach.

**2.1.1 The Historical Approach**

Historical approach to comparative adult education was developed by university scholars like (Butler, Kandel, Deighton, and Mallison during the first part of the twentieth century.

That history may be based on the formation of hypothesis to find out about the present. Such investigation may be done by applying method of social sciences such as the questionnaire, the interview, participants’ observation or the survey. Those experiences in the past may be utilized to further hypothesis formulated in the present; and that the knowledge of the past may help an observer who is engaged in obtaining first-hand observation of the present. From the historical approach, the investigator may decide to look at the review of literature so as to compare adult educational system of a nation with that of another nation.

Since every society is a product of its own history, the nature and growth of every society is largely based on what history makes it. As far as comparative adult education is concerned, the historical approach ought to be a process of investigating on concerned issues (e.g. political, sociocultural, economic or scientific educational issues) of a particular nation with another to detect the similarities and differences between the two systems. For example, comparing the socioeconomic backgrounds of Ethiopia and Ghana respectively, it could be discovered that in spite of the poor economic conditions and of the two countries debt burdens to the industrialized nations, that one of them is still allocating enough resources to her educational system than the other.

**2.1.2 The Scientific Approach**

Scientific approach in the study of comparative education is based on comparison. Making comparisons among adult education issues (political, social, and economic) is one of the crucial aspects of scientific analysis. In making a comparison of one issue with another, one has to be able to think logically and reasonably. According to Swanson (1971) “thinking without comparison is unthinkable”.

According to Smelser, the sociologist, (1976) all scientific methods in all areas of education are comparative. The anthropologist, Geetz (1983) has also observed that, ‘it is through comparison that whatever heart we can get to, can actually be reached’. While many social scientists and other educators would agree that nearly all scientific methods are comparative in the broad sense of the word, the term ‘comparative method’ is usually reserved for a more specific category of research project.

**2.1.3 Sociological Approach**

Generally speaking, comparative method in social science research is a method of analysis that focuses on several objects of study in order to identify similarities and differences. Also, comparison in sociological studies (e.g. comparative adult education research) could be in various kinds of spatial units such as comparing the educational systems of one country to another, or it could involve comparing specific social phenomenon of one nation with another.

A sociological approach is a method in which an educator compares the behaviors of attitudes of teachers in one or more countries towards the educational system of their country in relation to other country or countries. In the sociological approach, Hans (1967) explained that the individual child is more important than any consistency in educational method or curriculum, than any ulterior motive of the teacher or the state. That schools and society generally should aim at allowing maximum freedom to an individual, including the freedom to learn from his/her mistakes.

**2.1.4 Philosophical Approach**

Philosophical approach is delimited to philosophical issues particularly the **epistemological** aspects of education. Two outstanding thinkers in this field are the Americans, Stanley Hall and John Dewey. What they did in their different ways was to note that human beings live much longer period in infancy when they depended on protection from their elders than any other members of the animal kingdom; And also, they noted this longer period is vital in the full developmental process of human beings

Precisely, Stanley Hall the biologist claims that throughout infancy, the child recapitulates in his own play and activities including the past states in the evolutionary growth and development of man. John Dewey on the other hand, believes that the task of philosophy is not to find out how we know the world but rather how we can control and improve it. He influenced to a greater extent, the whole of the theory and practice of education when he stated that: Life is a self-reviewing process through action upon environment; that nothing is fixed and nothing is permanent, and that the universe itself is in state of flux, and therefore, if man is to survive, he must struggle, in his creative intelligence.

Generally speaking, as the philosophy approach to comparative education (e.g. comparative adult education issues), educators examine philosophy issues and look at them as being educational practices.

**2.2 Methods of Comparative Education**

Like the approaches to comparative education, there are different methods of comparative education forwarded by different scholars.

**2.2.1 George Bereday’s Comparative Method in Education**

George Bereday is considered to be one of the pioneers of comparative methods in education. According to Kidd (1975) Bereday’s method is one of the best-known systematized approaches to comparative education, in which an educational system is viewed as a component within a larger cultural context. Bereday perceived comparative education as a political geography of educational systems whose task was to search for lessons that can be deduced from the variations in educational practices in different societies. Bereday advised comparative educators to familiarize themselves with the culture of the societies they were going to study as well as guard against their own cultural or personal biases. In order to compare school systems Bereday proposed a four-stage method.

**Stages in Bereday’s Comparative Method in Education**

1. **Description and data collection:** In this stage pedagogical data from various countries selected for the study is collected and presented using tables and graphs. The data should be presented in descriptive form to facilitated further analysis at later stages.
2. **Interpretation**: This stage involves an analysis of the facts using methods of different social sciences. For example the researcher could use perspectives from sociology to explain the varying attitudes of pupils towards social science studies. Factors in the contextual background such as historical, geographical, socioeconomic and political factors can be used to explain the issues that have shaped the educational system.
3. **Juxtaposition**: In this stage preliminary comparisons of facts and findings, concepts and principles are used to classify data and process the data. The criteria for comparability are also set out during this stage.
4. **Comparison**: This is the final stage of Bereday’s comparative method and it involves a final fusion of data from other countries for the purpose of comparison and to derive plans for action.

**2.2.2 Brian Holmes’ Problem Approach in Comparative Education**

Holmes (1969) sets out his argument by stating that early comparative educators sought to apply learning from other systems for reform purposes. He proposed the problem serving approach as one that could serve this function, and even go further to meet the needs of those educators who are interested in theoretical understanding of educational phenomena. Holmes argues that pioneers of comparative education were administrators who wished to reform their own systems of education. Well aware of the dangers of cultural borrowing the administrators wished to develop methods of comparison to ensure that whatever they chose to incorporate from foreign theory or practice would benefit their own systems. They needed a predictive instrument enabling them to foresee as far as possible the consequences of any innovation. Holmes argues that the problem approach is the right instrument for addressing educational problems. He points out that the problem approach presupposes a problem or a limitation in the area inquired into, and guards against accepting superficial similarities, and assures precise comparison of actual predicted outcomes. Using this approach Holmes suggested the following stages:

**Stages in Brian Holmes’ Problem Approach in Comparative Education**

1. **Problem Formulation:** In this stage the researcher or investigator formulates a vaguely perceived problem as precisely as possible in order to break it down for further study and see to what extent it is universally applicable. This stage is also referred to as problem analysis

2. **Policy Formulation or Hypotheses Development:** The process of problem analysis generates a number of possible solutions. At this point the researcher or investigator examines several hypotheses or policy options that could address the formulated problem. These hypotheses could arise from the current educational discussions. The researcher should note that the hypotheses or identified policy options are based on values and these values need to be evaluated as scientifically as possible

3. **Prediction of Policy Outcomes:** Holmes argues that an evaluation of a hypothesis implies that the consequences flowing from it in any situation should be predicted and then compared with the actual results.

4. **Analyze the Physical and Socioeconomic Context**: This step involves describing all circumstances with a potential of influencing the outcome of a selected policy. In order to do this the researcher must analyze three categories of factors. First, factors related to the normative system, second, factors related to the institutional pattern, and finally, factors related to the physical features of a given context such as the terrain, the climate and mineral resources.

5. **Predicting Policy Consequences:** This step involves all possible policy consequences when applied to various contexts. Holmes concludes that the problem approach is forward looking and represents an attempt to make the study of education scientific and maintains that this is possible through careful analysis of problems and social contexts.

**2.2.3 Noah and Eckstein’s Scientific Method**

Noah and Eckstein (1969) conclude that comparative education has one foot firmly planted in education and the other in the wider area of the social sciences.

**Stages in Noah and Eckstein’s Scientific Method**

1. **Identification of the problem:** This involves the selection of a particular topic or issue that can be studied comparatively. The selected problem should have a relationship between education and social development.

2. **Development of a Hypothesis:** Development of a hypothesis is based on a review of literature. The hypothesis should be clear and focus on collection of specific data.

3. **Definition of Concepts and Indicators:** This involves the explanation and clarification of concepts, indicators, and variables. The concepts and indicators must be measurable and quantifiable.

4. **Selection of Cases for Study:** This involves of careful selection of countries or regions that have basis for comparability and are relevant to the formulated hypothesis. The selected countries or regions should be research able and the number of cases small so that you can manage the study.

5. Collection of Data: This involves collection of data and should take into consideration accessibility of data, relevance and reliability of data, challenges in terms of cooperation with sources of data, and the issue of communication both in terms of travel and language.

6. **Manipulation of the Data**: This involves actual comparison between systematically arranged and quantifiable data from different countries.

7. **Interpretation of Results**: This involves assessment of the findings of the study in relation to the hypotheses and the findings’ relevance and then drawing conclusions.

**2.3 Dimensions of Comparative Education**

Historically, the field of comparative and international education has comprehended three principal dimensions or thrusts, which Robert F. Arnove calls the scientific, pragmatic, and international/global understanding. These dimensions are closely related and, are converging to an even greater extent.

**2.3.1 The Scientific Dimension**

One major goal of comparative education has been to contribute to theory building: to the formulation of generalizable propositions about the workings of education systems and their interactions with their surrounding economies, polities, cultures, and social orders. The goal of science is not only to establish that relationships between variables exist but also to determine the range over which they exist. Comparison enables researchers to look at the entire world as a natural laboratory to view the multiple ways in which societal factors, educational policies, and practices may vary and interact in otherwise unpredictable and unimaginable ways

**2.3.2 The Pragmatic Dimension**

Another reason for studying other societies’ education systems is to discover what can be learned that will contribute to improved policy and practice at home. Altbach has referred to the processes involved in the study and transfer of educational practices among countries as ‘‘lending’’ and ‘‘borrowing.’’ Countries may alternately or simultaneously be involved in both processes, as evidenced by the cases of Japan and the United States.

The role of the systematic accumulation of knowledge or guiding principles and theories (i.e., the scientific dimension) of comparative education is central to the pragmatic and ameliorative thrust of the discipline: to improve educational policy and practice. However, there has often been a separation or tension between these two components. Reviews of pioneering work in the field commonly trace two different approaches to the field—one more scientific and one more historical.

**2.3.3 The Global Dimension/International Education**

A third and significant dimension of the discipline is that of contributing to international understanding and peace. This dimension will become a more important feature of comparative education as processes of globalization increasingly require people to recognize how forces from areas of the world previously considered distant and remote impinge on their daily lives

The study of cross-national currents and interactions is closely linked to notions of global education and, in many ways, to world systems analysis. Studies of the ecology of educational institutions and processes often failed to take into account an international context of transactions.

Briefly, values education teaches that people around the world have different ways of viewing the world, ways that are equally valid and reflective of their life circumstances, which they call ‘‘consciousness perspective’’. It also recommends seeking out and buildings upon what interest’s people have in common. In pointing out the importance of actors and transactions, Alger and Harf call attention to the multiplicity of actors (at all levels from the international to the local, governmental as well as nongovernmental) involved in diverse interactions across national boundaries in areas ranging from telecommunications, meteorology, emergency relief, health, and education. The study of the mechanisms and procedures provides insights into what, for example, an international agency like the International Monetary Fund, an important transnational actor, does when it enters a country experiencing debt and currency crises and attempts to stabilize the economic situation. Issues are those that face all of humanity environmental destruction, the spread of disease, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, as well as the increasing impoverishment of populations and the growing disparity of wealth among regions and within nations.

**CHAPTER THREE**

**Globalization and Comparative Education**

**3.1. Definitions**

Globalization is indeed a complex and highly contested term-and one that is widely but opens to multiple interpretations. According to Held et al. suggestion (1999:2), globalization may be thought of as «the widening, deepening and speeding up of worldwide interconnectedness in all aspects of contemporary social life». The range of dimensions, Held et al. observed, stretch «from the cultural to the criminal, the financial to the spiritual». Elsewhere, Held & McGrew have noted that globalization:

*has been variously conceived as action at a distance (whereby the actions of social agents in one locale can come to have significant consequences for “distant others”); time-space compression (referring to the way in which instantaneous electronic communication erodes the constraints of distance and time on social organization and interaction); accelerating interdependence (understood as the intensification of enmeshment among national economies and societies such that events in one country impact directly on others); a shrinking world (the erosion of borders and geographical barriers to socio-economic activity); and, among other concepts, global integration, the reordering of inter-regional power relations, consciousness of the global condition and the intensification of inter-regional interconnectedness». (2000:3)*

Globalization can also be defined as the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa.

Various adjectives may be used to describe the different dimensions of this process. Certainly economic and cultural globalizations are foremost among the descriptors used for the processes by which societies are increasingly linked in real and virtual time. Economic globalization, the result of major transformations in the processes of producing and distributing goods and services, is integrally related to changes in the international division of labor. One of the central characteristics of this highly globalized capitalism is that the factors of production are not located in close geographic proximity. However, while globalization has typically been portrayed as an economic and technological phenomenon, there is also much within the literature that demonstrates how it has fundamental political and cultural dimensions and implications. This can be seen in the following framework of Ideal-typical Patterns of Globalization.

**Ideal-typical Patterns of Globalization**

**Economic Globalization**

* Freedom of exchange between localities with indeterminate flows of services and symbolic commodities
* The balance of production activity in a locality determined by its physical and geographic advances
* Minimal foreign direct investment
* Flexible responsiveness of organization to global market
* Decentralized, instantaneous and stateless financial market
* Free movement of labor

**Political Globalization**

* An absence of state sovereignty and multiple centers of power at global, local and intermediate levels
* Local issues discussed and situated in relation to global community
* Powerful international organizations predominant over national organizations
* Fluid and multicenteric international relations
* A weakening of value attached to nation-state and strengthening of common and global politics

**Cultural Globalization**

* A deterritorialized religious mosaic
* A deterritorialized cosmopolitanism and diversity
* Widespread consumption of simulations and representation
* Global distribution of images and information