

## CURRICULAR MODELS APPLIED IN THE SCHOOLS FROM THE REGION OF WESTERN ROMANIA

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**Abstract:** *The paper „Curricular models applied in the schools from the region of Western Romania” has in view an actual problem, the onset of the educational curriculum, analysed in the terms of present educational practices. Using a fundamental methodology on the seven curricular models applied in the field of international curriculum, the paper proposes to present a whole image of the way in which schools and professors from the Western Region of Romania orient themselves in implementing and developing the curricular offer. In order to highlight the methodological pluralism, comparisons between counties, types of high- schools and areas of residence are presented.*

**Keywords:** *educational curriculum, curricular model, praxiology, curricular offer.*

### 1. Curricular Models

The educational curriculum, with terminology, theory and adherent praxiology, represents one of the most actual points of the pedagogic problem. Being an object of study and research, theoretically and pragmatically, the curriculum appears to have become, in the present, the most important pedagogic subject.

Numerous pedagogs in the 20th and 21st centuries were preoccupied with defining the theoretical bases of the curriculum, the planning, developing and evaluating the curricular content. According to their conceptions, the educational practice is not an art, but more a science or a scientific approach; the purpose, content and educational experiences must be planned. In this sense, there were drafted models for identifying objectives, selecting and organising learning activities, identifying empiric methods for evaluating school results.

The success of a curricular model, however, is determined by its impact on the educational practice. For example, countries such as China, Japan, Finland, the Netherlands, Norway and the post- socialist countries declare the usefulness of the curricular models based on design and curricular development (Pinar, 2003, p. 14). The practitioners need guidance, principles and scientific models. In this sense, R. W. Tyler’s rational curriculum (1949) represents a model in action. On the other hand there are the curricular models, which, for various causes, cannot be applied in the educational practice.

These points have determined us to analyse, within this paper the curricular models, according to which, the schools and teachers from the Western Region of Romania, orient themselves towards implementing and developing the curricular offer. A first step in realising this undertaking is presenting the curricular models proposed for analysis, models that have influenced the educational practice.

#### ***Franklin Bobbitt’s Model (1918, 1824)***

The author of the first book of the scientific curriculum- F. Bobbitt (1918) proposed a curriculum with a social model "of adult education for professional roles." Contribution teacher stated in four areas:

a) Identification of objectives as a basis for curriculum implementation. F. Bobbitt demonstrated the importance of goals, not just for the content of the curriculum, but especially

for the requirements of social roles.

b) The scientific approach to the curriculum. The teacher proposed the scientific procedures of design and curriculum development, in order to optimize its relation to social requirements.

c) Reform the curriculum. Curricular plans proposed by F. Bobbitt include vocational and academic programs.

d) The definition of curriculum. F. Bobbitt is the first educator defining curriculum designed based on social objectives.

In the book „How to make a curriculum” (1924) the American pedagog presents almost 800 such objectives, which he later correlates to activities that are based on the pupils needs.

Conclusions are translated into principles that can be applied today : eliminate targets that are impractical or cannot be achieved through a normal life, emphasizing the objectives that are important for success in school and success in adult life, eliminating opposing objectives community involvement in the selection of targets, the distinction between the common goals of all learners and educators in a particular group, coordination objectives so as to establish a uniform criterion for completion.

Based on these principles, F. Bobbitt proposes a model for curriculum development in five steps - curriculum -by- objectives: analysis of the human experience, analysis of specific activities, provenance objectives, target selection, planning in detail the training activity.

***Werret W. Charters Curricular Model (1923)***

W. Charters effort, most faithful disciple of Bobbitt, has been to shift the focus of concern for curriculum content for the determination methods. The method is priority over the content. In his analysis of the work is the method of determining the curriculum.

Using the concept of task analysis (job analysis), W. Charters has developed a model curriculum based on building specific and concrete activities, structured as follows:

- a. determining the principles for building a curriculum
- b. use of behavioural objectives, (Behavioural Objectives)
- c. derive learning objectives necessities and checked by analysis and assessment of Needs (Needs Assessment)
- d. Actual construction of the curriculum. Understood as a discipline and a process in Which study subjects are intertwined and interrelated.

Follower of scientific approach, Charters defines curriculum as a series of objectives that students achieve learning experiences. The teacher proposes such a curriculum derived from specific objectives (measurable and observable) and activities using a process called "job analysis".

***Tyler's Rational Model (1949)***

In the book „Basic Principles of Curriculum and Instruction” (1949), R. W. Tyler prescribes and describes in detail the steps involved in planning a curriculum. Promoting productive technical perspective based on educational research on educational goals and behavioural objectives, pedagogy has proposed four fundamental principles necessary for developing a curriculum project:

- a. definition of learning objectives appropriate,
- b. choice of useful learning experiences,
- c. organizing learning experiences,
- d. evaluation and feedback.

According to these principles, teachers and curriculum experts become scientific observers obligation having to apply and modify curriculum plans in order to achieve proper results.

Principles advanced by the teacher contributes to the argument that the science curriculum.

- Curriculum implies a rational process. Such a process is comprehensive and practical, because it is a way of ordering the educational situation.

- Use objectives to select and organize learning experiences. Human complexity must be linked to practical use. Relationship goals - learning experiences is based on the principle of utility: the production of changes in student behaviour.

- Using assessment results to determine (whether objectives have been met). It emphasizes the need for formative assessment in terms of feedback to achieve all objectives.

- Correspondence between verticality and horizontality curriculum at both the system and the level of educational process.

#### ***Hilda Taba's Interactionist Model (1962)***

Taking over the ordered procedure, similar to Tyler's technical productive thinking, the researcher Hilda Taba (1962) proposed a model curriculum building in 7 steps: diagnosis of need, formulation of objectives, selection of content, organizing content, selecting learning experiences, organizing learning experiences, determining the content and the method of evaluation. This model improves "Tyler rationale" because of the flexibility and interaction of the elements that are part of the curriculum.

Brady (1989, 1995) studied how teachers who have complied with the principles established by Hilda Taba use key concepts such as "targets", "content", "method" "evaluation". He found that over 86 % of teachers considered as an optimal curriculum must match the sequence rigorous curriculum components: content > object > methods > assessment, over 51 % of teachers considered infallible succession: content > methods > objectives > assessment, only 13 % of teachers considered that the optimal sequence: objectives > content > methods > evaluation.

#### ***McGee's Dynamic Model (1997)***

Fierce critic of "traditional theories", Clive McGee model proposed in 1997 a more integrated and interdependent than those described above, with the "head-to-head" five categories of theories and techniques: situational analysis, theory technological objectives content selection techniques, theory of learning experiences, assessment and appraisal of the theory of learning. The principle used by the teacher integrator is based on decision theory. McGee believes that support any development curriculum must be "dynamics of any process of change that occurs in complex contexts" (McGee quoted in Negreț – Dobridor, 2008, p. 170-171).

#### ***Walker's Naturalist Model (1972)***

Some researchers have tried to solve the problem of reformulating it and reversing entries. D. Walker proposed a "natural model curriculum" based on a more flexible and varied. The model does not show how to build a curriculum- prescriptive approach, but as an actually built a curriculum- descriptive approach. The teacher claims that optimal planning the curriculum must take place in three phases: the platform, deliberation and design. Platform curricular approach consists of concepts (beliefs about what exists and what is possible) theories (beliefs about relationships between different entities) and goals (beliefs and beliefs about what is desirable). Ruling leaves and gets immediate preferences when designing the solutions of all possible alternatives. It is a decision process that underlies the design. The design involves thinking and solution structure determined by consensus in previous phase in a rational manner that requires organization and time assessment of the training activities themselves (Walker – quoted in Negreț – Dobridor, 2008, pp. 170- 171)

## **2. Curricular models of the teachers from the Western Region of Romania- research**

Based on the above presentation, we proposed, in a research conducted in the 2012-2013 school year, after which curricular models to identify schools in Western Region of Romania is focused on developing and implementing curricular offer. This study surveyed a total of 579

teachers from 29 schools in Caras-Severin, Hunedoara and Timis.

Table 1- Specimens of research

County	Teachers questioned	Teachers from the urban area	Teachers from the rural area
<i>Caras-Severin</i>	130	109	21
<i>Hunedoara</i>	154	99	55
<i>Timiș</i>	295	215	80
Total	579	423	156

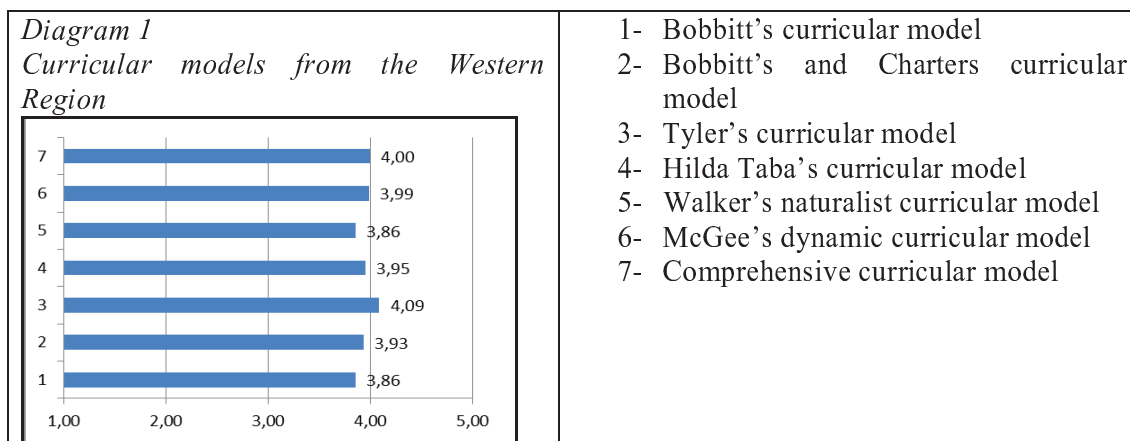
The instrument used is a questionnaire with 28 items. Teachers interviewed expressed their views on the characteristics of the school curriculum offer which includes using a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 = very little / not at all and 5 = to a great extent. Each of the seven patterns in each set curriculum is characterized by a set of four items:

- a. **Bobbitt's curricular model:** "Setting goals according to the needs of adult working life, and in line with community goals to integrate learners in adult life.", "Setting goals that can be achieved in specific learning situations disciplines offered at both overall, and for each group and the individual to be involved in the educational activities that education", " establishment of plans and programs to achieve the objectives, specifying deadlines", " Attracting the community in setting and achieving goals".
- b. **Bobbitt's and Charters curricular model:** "Identification and formulation of behavioural objectives , easily observed and measured ,", " a set of principles for curriculum design with reference to the following aspects : the purpose curricular offer , program objectives, the needs of individual learning experiences and appropriate training activities", "the actual construction of curricular offer , both as a subject and as a educational process with a thematic structure and system procedure", "Derivation of the objectives pursued learning the needs of learners and their verification through analysis and assessment of needs".
- c. **Tyler's curricular rational model:** "Identification of specific educational activities that goals will be achieved by offering curriculum," "Identifying and defining goals which the school will achieve the proposed curricular offer", "building plans and projects that offer educational activities that support the curriculum will be implemented", "the formulation of specific evaluation strategies".
- d. **Hilda Taba's Interactionist curricular model:** "Rethinking curricular objectives in terms of needs offering training and taking into account: attitudes, values , concepts and theoretical knowledge in the field of environmental learners", "content selection according to the criteria: social, epistemic aspects of learning , scientific staff development peculiarities of human subjects and content elements", "Diagnosis of needs of learners training", "Development of curricular offer based on interaction goals, content, methods and evaluation".
- e. **Walker's naturalist curricular model:** "Designing curricular offer the organization, structure and timing of solutions made by consensus in the previous step and evaluate the effectiveness of curricular offer", "Deliberations on curricular offer viable solutions that provide frameworks outlining concerns identified", "offer curriculum is based the concepts, theories in the field, but also for desirable", "construction account for the dynamics of change curricular educational context of curricular offer in the context of the local community".
- f. **McGee's dynamic curricular model:** "Identification of decisions on learning and instructional activities and their evaluation", "Fixing decisions on the content to be studied", "Recovery of decisions resulting from situational analysis", "Decision making on intentions , goals, objectives curricular offer".
- g. **The curricular comprehensive model:** "Demand construction of multidimensional

curriculum, enabling real development of student potential in almost all sides of his personality even if not all ", "curriculum development process is based on the interaction between projection, implementation and evaluation study", "Development offer curriculum involves developing core curriculum products (curricula, programs) and auxiliary (methodological guide, practical notebooks, educational software)", "offer the curricular goals pursued ( reference framework objectives ), learning content (themes and sub-themes or they mandatory or optional) , training time (time spent), instructional strategies (examples o ) and assessment strategies (examples of assessment procedures)".

**Results of the analysis**

Curricular models by which teachers in the Western Region of Romania work are focused on developing curricular offer provides a diversity methodological activities aimed at designing, implementing and evaluating curriculum.



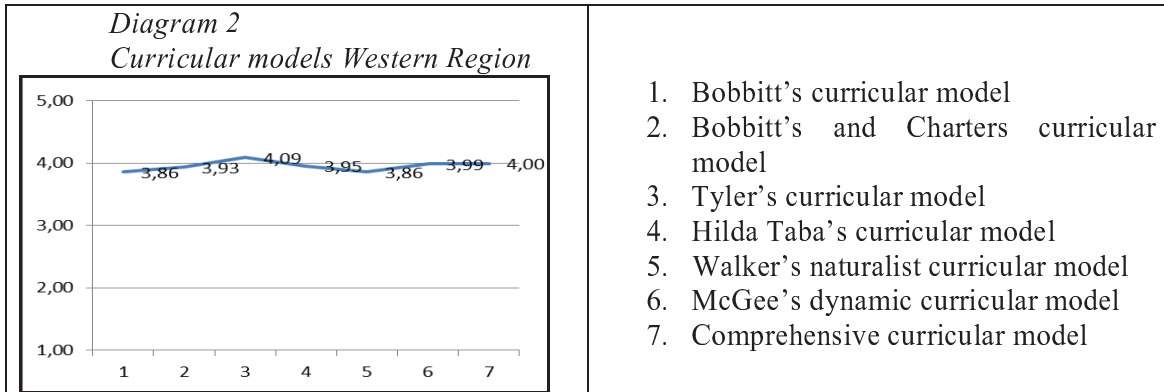
If we draw a parallel with the diversity of curricular concepts found in the literature, we see the same trend of openness to methodological pluralism.

The percentage of 4.09 obtained for rational curricular model Tyler shows predilection teachers to order the methodological rigor and targeting a specific need, translated into clear, diversified content, methods, techniques and methods of teaching, learning and effective assessment strategies. Applying the tylerian model in current educational practice can be justified by the history of education and teaching Romanian. Many of the teachers who work at the university today are the result of traditional education; the top goal - training for the job - requires careful planning of the route instruction.

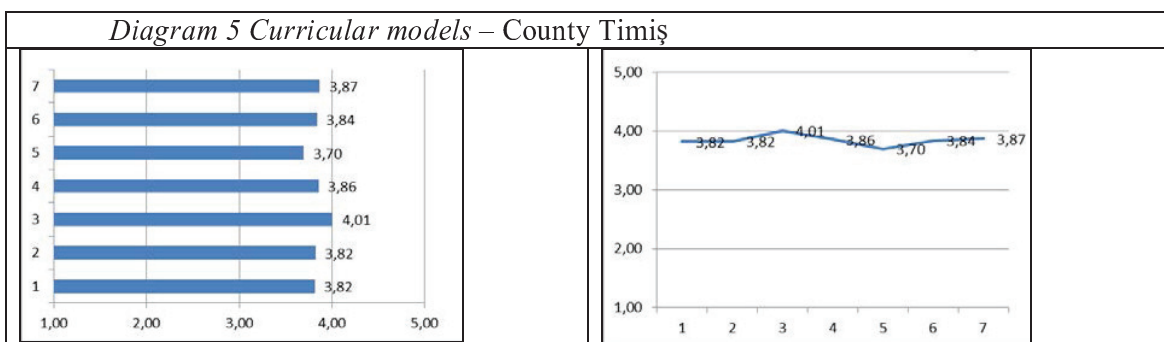
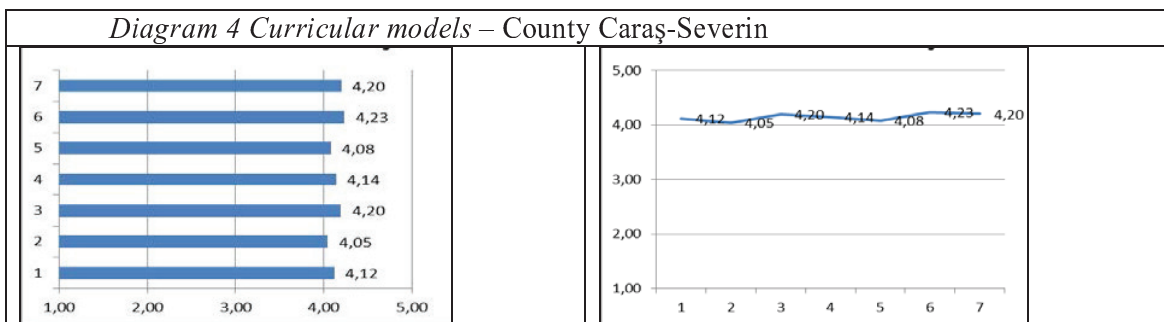
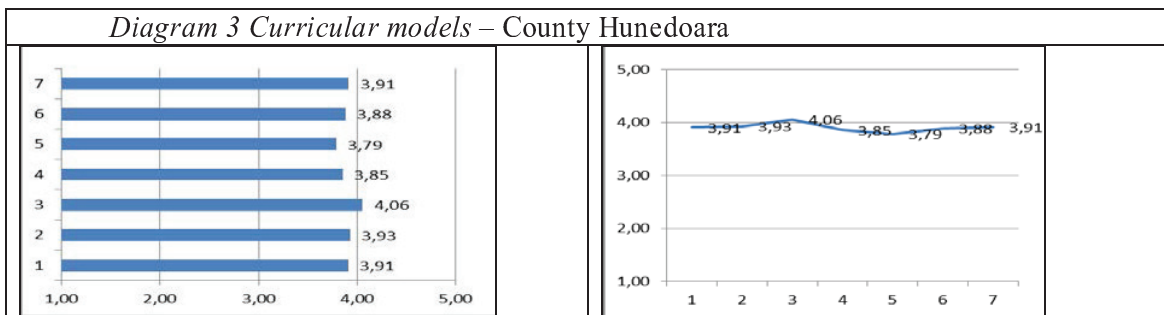
A significant percentage of 3.99 for the dynamic model of McGee express the need to link education with social change, visible in Romanian society. Percentage of 3.86 obtained for Walker's naturalistic model curriculum emphasizes a specific opening that subjectivity and human.

Relatively close percentages for all 7 models curricular analyzed and 4 percent for comprehensive approach to curriculum and education shows a holistic practice, based on the development and understanding of the development, key issues in a mature and effective educational vision.

Power belief expressed is characterized by a curve "running", with a percentage of approximately 3.95. On a scale of 1-5 is a relatively large fraction which can show high efficiency awareness and methodology.



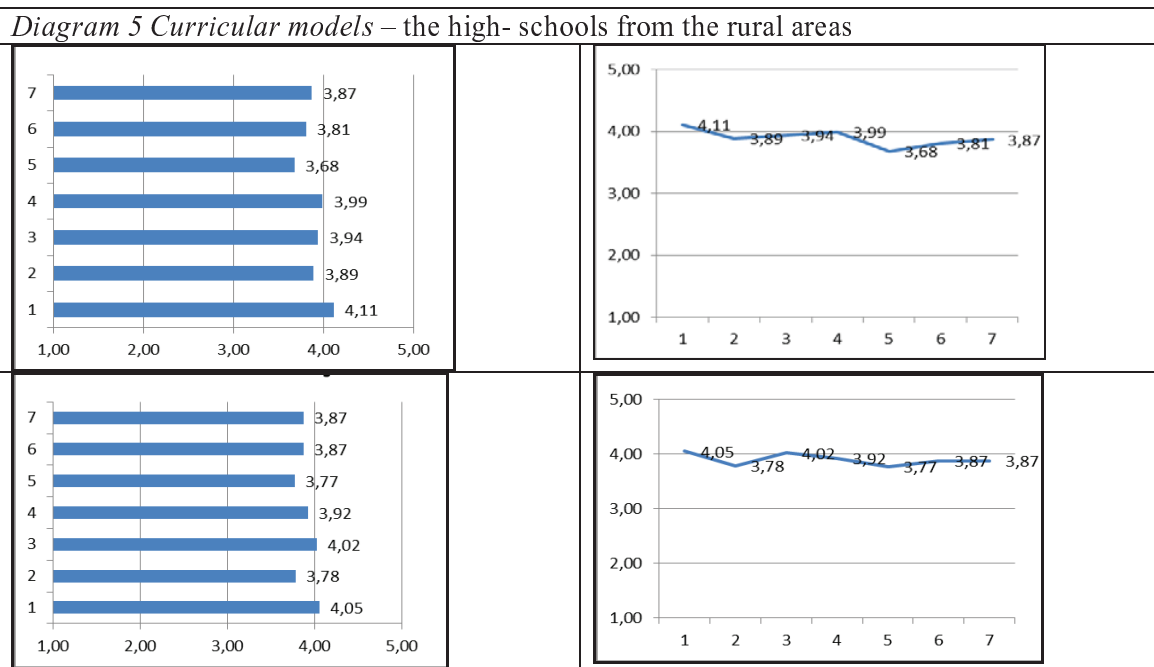
At county level, the results presented can be influenced by the county education policy, professional development opportunities offered to teachers, school specializations and profiles they teach, etc.



Thus, in educational practice in schools in the Western Region, a model curriculum and meets the following means:

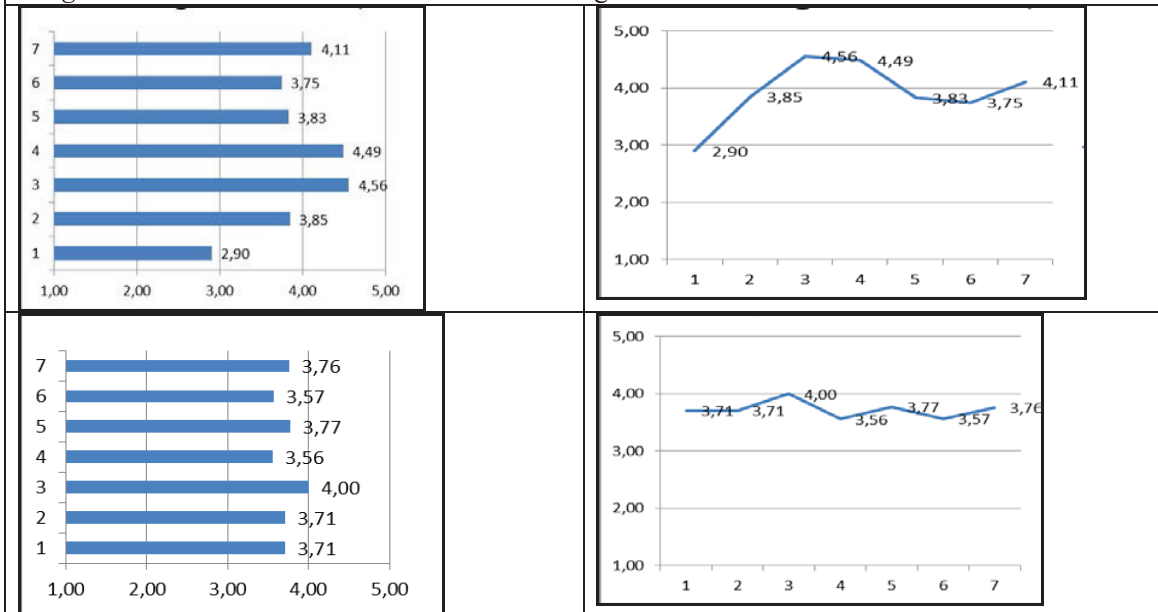
- Vision multidimensional complex realizing the educational impossible characterized by a single design.
- targeted goals a reality, translated into scientific content, shaped by modern methods and techniques and evaluated through effective strategies, experiential learning, coupled with the demands of society, real learning experiences,
- actions, statements of teaching, learning , assessment , in close interaction and interdependence , forms and continuous reformulation , process open to change, a technical process in which the main scientific result is professional preparation for adult roles,
- A deliberative process with respect to subjectivity and human specific.

Graphical representation of curricular models in rural schools show an increase in F. Bobbitt’s model, the purpose of education and instruction is to prepare students for professions, trades. Patterns close scores awarded to R. Tyler and Hilda Taba in the detriment of postmodern models - Walker and McGee - demonstrates feature traditional - modern Romanian schools.



The choices for models of R. Tyler and H. Taba in technical secondary schools practice emphasize instruction purposes. But our attention focuses on the representation of bimodal peaks, which may indicate indecision and suggests the need for philosophical clarification. The presence of peaks showing the power of expression of opinions, preferences and beliefs, but also a limitation, incapacity or impossibility of objective justification is important. This may be due to the current context in which the technical high schools. Blamed the poor results on high school, these schools no longer found a clear purpose in the current socio-economic conditions.

*Diagram 6 Curricular models – the technical high- schools*



The diagram of theoretical high scores recorded close to all curricular models analyzed, due to the scientific diversity promotes. This really is beneficial in terms of compliance with the conceptual and methodological pluralism.

*Diagram 7 Curricular models – the theoretic high-schools*

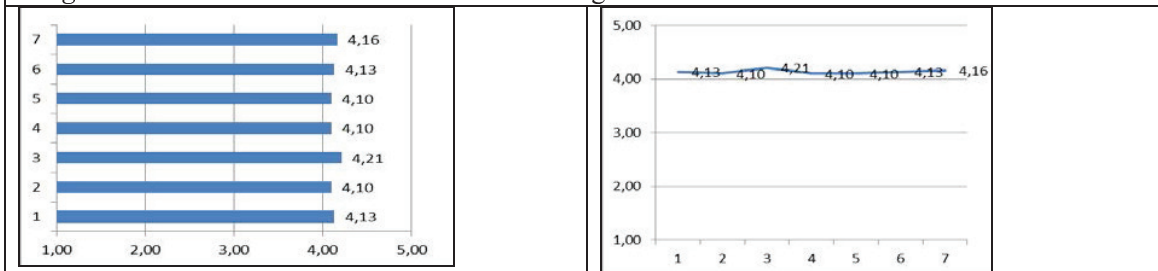
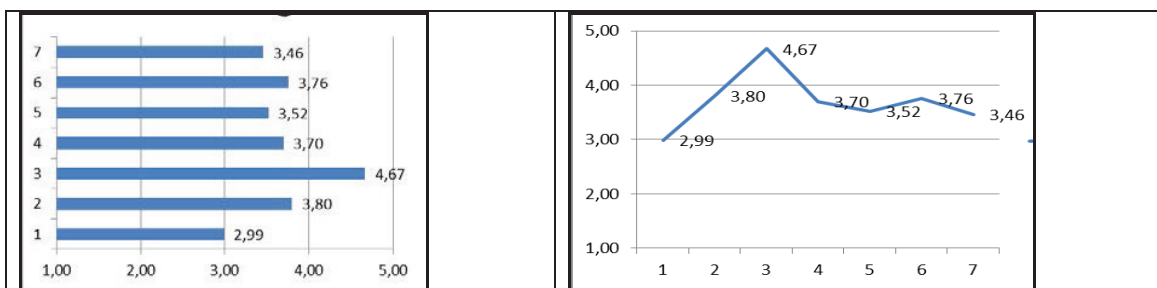


Diagram of a vocational high school, presented as a bimodal distribution with large opening in terms of curricular model Tyler may indicate strong beliefs, opinions and ideas supporting their educational and divergent perceptions of the educational system. Choosing the Tyler Rational is justified by the essential purposes of a vocational profile - prepare for a profession and personality development.

*Diagram 8 Curricular models – the vocational high- schools*





### 3. Conclusion

*The practical usefulness is the essence of developing the curriculum.* The influences on the public policies generated by the discussions and disputes regarding the efficiency of the curricular actions have had a direct involvement on an often neglected aspect: the utility of research. The specialty literature proposes a multitude of beautiful theories, idealistic ones, however, important remains the practical utility. There is obvious a discrepancy between the reality of the educational practice and the theoretical ideal stated in the works from the field of curriculum. C. Cucuș considers that „the pedagogic ideology and the explicit philosophy of the National Curriculum are inscribed in a post- modern line, of building the unique ideal, all encompassing and summarising” (Cucuș, 2006, p. 264), however, the presented results show that in the educational practice they are mostly applied modern designs (R. Tyler, H. Taba).

The curricular model of application and development, confirmed at the scale of the practical community is founded on rational principles, open towards flexibility, dynamism, sensibility for the great human values. R. W. Tyler’s conception, based on progressiveness (highlighting the needs of the educated, using scientific procedures, the principles are applied in various situations) and behaviourism (the importance of behaviour objectives), is presently a marker for the educational practice in Romania. This influence may be due to the fact that Tyler’s rational model embraces a real spirit of the practical side.

The success of a curricular theory is determined by its impact on the educational practice. However, the attempt to impose a general theory does not confer efficiency, for the dynamic of the field does not offer the fundament to the endurance of decisions. It is important to discover the essence, the axis from which we can develop a curriculum, in concordance with the national specific and the international evolutions. The curriculum must become essential!

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