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Review of Curriculum Development in Library and Information Science Education in Nigerian Universities: Issues and Prospects

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Abstract

The study includes a review of curriculum development in Library and Information Science Education (LISE) in Nigerian Universities: Issues and Prospects. Analysis on curriculum development were given (history of curriculum development, types of curricula and usefulness of curriculum development for educators and challenges of curriculum development). Curriculum development is core issue in the feasibility and growth of any discipline, library and information science education inclusive. Modern day librarianship, that is 21st century library and information science education (LISE) should integrate full information and communication technology programmes and not just computer application for professional efficiency and global acceptability. Therefore, curriculum of LIS in Nigerian Universities should be reviewed both at undergraduate and postgraduate level.

Introduction

In education, a curriculum is broadly defined as the totality of student experiences that occur in the educational process. The term often refers specifically to a planned sequence of instruction, or to a view of the student's experiences in terms of the educator's or school's instructional goals. A curriculum may incorporate the planned interaction of pupils with instructional content, materials, resources, and processes for evaluating the attainment of educational objectives. Curricula are split into several categories: the explicit, the implicit (including the hidden), the excluded, and the extracurricular. Curricula may be tightly standardized or may include a high level of instructor or learner autonomy.

History of Curriculum development

The word "curriculum" began as a Latin word which means "a race" or "the course of a race" (which in turn derives from the verb *currere* meaning "to run/to proceed"). The word is "from a Modern Latin transferred use of classical Latin curriculum "a running, course, career" (also "a fast chariot, racing car"), from *currere* "to run". The first known use in an educational context is in the *Professio Regia*, a work by University of Paris professor Petrus Ramus published posthumously in 1576. The term subsequently appears in University of Leiden records in 1582. The word's origins appear closely linked to the Calvinist desire to bring greater order to education.

By the seventeenth century, the University of Glasgow also referred to its "course" of study as a "curriculum", producing the first known use of the term in English in 1633. By the nineteenth century, European universities routinely referred to their curriculum to describe both the complete course of study (as for a degree in surgery) and particular courses and their content. By

1824, the word was defined as "a course, especially a fixed course of study at a college, university, or school." There is no generally agreed upon definition of curriculum. Some influential definitions combine various elements to describe curriculum as follows:

Types of Curricula

Through the readings, four types of curricula could be defined as affirmed by Kelly (2009) in Wikipedia (2021). They are as following:

- o Explicit curriculum: subjects that will be taught, the identified "mission" of the school, and the knowledge and skills that the school expects successful students to acquire.

- o Implicit curriculum: lessons that arise from the culture of the school and the behaviors, attitudes, and expectations that characterize that culture, the unintended curriculum.

- o Hidden curriculum: Jackson, (1986) in Wikipedia, (2021) explained that they are things which students learn, 'because of the way in which the work of the school is planned and organized but which are not in themselves overtly included in the planning or even in the consciousness of those responsible for the school arrangements. The term itself is attributed to Philip W. Jackson and is not always meant to be a negative. Hidden curriculum, if its potential is realized, could benefit students and learners in all educational systems. Also, it does not just include the physical environment of the school, but the relationships formed or not formed between students and other students or even students and teachers.

- o Excluded curriculum: Hancock, Dyk, and Jones, (2012) in Wikipedia (2021) asserted that excluded curriculum topics or perspectives that are specifically excluded from the curriculum. It may also come in the form of extracurricular activities. This may include

school-sponsored programs, which are intended to supplement the academic aspect of the school experience or community-based programs and activities. Examples of school-sponsored extracurricular programs include sports, academic clubs, and performing arts. Community-based programs and activities may take place at a school after hours but are not linked directly to the school. Community-based programs frequently expand on the curriculum that was introduced in the classroom. For instance, students may be introduced to environmental conservation in the classroom. This knowledge is further developed through a community-based program. Participants then act on what they know with a conservation project. Community-based extracurricular activities may include "environmental clubs, boy/girl scouts, and religious groups."

According to Smith (1996,2000) in Wikipedia (2021), a curriculum can be ordered into a procedure:

Step 1: Diagnosis of needs.

Step 2: Formulation of objectives.

Step 3: Selection of content.

Step 4: Organization of content.

Step 5: Selection of learning experiences.

Step 6: Organization of learning experiences.

Step 7: Determination of what to evaluate and of the ways and means of doing it.

Under some definitions, curriculum is prescriptive, and is based on a more general syllabus which merely specifies what topics must be understood and to what level to achieve a particular grade or standard.

A curriculum may also refer to a defined and prescribed course of studies, which students must fulfill in order to pass a certain level of education. For example, an elementary school might discuss how its curricula is designed to improve national testing scores or help students learn fundamental skills. An individual teacher might also refer to his or her curriculum, meaning all the subjects that will be taught during a school year. The courses are arranged in a sequence to make learning a subject easier. In schools, a curriculum spans several grades.

On the other hand, a high school might refer to their curricula as the courses required in order to receive one's diploma. They might also refer to it in exactly the same way as an elementary school and use it to mean both individual courses needed to pass as well as the overall offering of courses, which help prepare a student for life after high school. A curriculum can be seen from different perspectives. What societies envisage as important teaching and learning constitutes the "intended" curriculum. Since it is usually presented in official documents, it may be also called the "written" or "official" curriculum. However, at a classroom level this intended curriculum may be altered through a range of complex classroom interactions, and what is actually delivered can be considered the "implemented" curriculum. What learners really learn (i.e. what can be assessed and can be demonstrated as learning outcomes or competencies) constitutes the "achieved" or "learned" curriculum. In addition, curriculum theory points to a "hidden" curriculum (i.e. the unintended development of personal values and beliefs of learners, teachers, and communities; the unexpected impact of a curriculum; or the unforeseen aspects of a learning process). Those who develop the intended curriculum should

have all these different dimensions of the curriculum in view. While the "written" curriculum does not exhaust the meaning of curriculum, it is important because it represents the vision of the society. The "written" curriculum is usually expressed in comprehensive and user-friendly documents, such as curriculum frameworks or subject curricula/syllabi, and in relevant and helpful learning materials, such as textbooks, teacher guides, and assessment guides.

In some cases, people see the curriculum entirely in terms of the subjects that are taught, and as set out within the set of textbooks, and forget the wider goals of competencies and personal development. This is why a curriculum framework is important. It sets the subjects within this wider context, and shows how learning experiences within the subjects need to contribute to the attainment of the wider goals.

Curriculum is almost always defined with relation to schooling. According to some, it is the major division between formal and informal education. However, under some circumstances it may also be applied to informal education or free-choice learning settings. For instance, a science museum may have a "curriculum" of what topics or exhibits it wishes to cover. Many after-school programs in the US have tried to apply the concept; this typically has more success when not rigidly clinging to the definition of curriculum as a product or as a body of knowledge to be transferred. Rather, informal education and free-choice learning settings are more suited to the model of curriculum as practice or praxis.

In recent years the field of education and curriculum has expanded outside the walls of the classroom and into other settings, such as museums and library and information science education. Within these settings curriculum is an even broader topic, including various teachers, librarians, inanimate objects such as audio tour devices, and even the learners themselves. As with the traditional idea of curriculum, curriculum in a free choice learning environment can

consist of the explicit stated curriculum and the hidden curriculum; both of which contribute to the learner's experience and lessons from the experience. These elements are further compounded by the setting, cultural influences, and the state of mind of the learner. Libraries and other similar settings are most commonly leveraged within traditional classroom settings as enhancements to the curriculum when educators develop curricula that encompass visits to museums, zoos, and aquariums.

Many educational institutions are currently trying to balance two opposing forces. On the one hand, some believe students should have a common knowledge foundation, often in the form of a core curriculum whereas others want students to be able to pursue their own educational interests, often through early specialty in a major or through the free choice of courses. This tension has received a large amount of coverage due to Harvard University's reorganization of its core requirements.

An essential feature of curriculum design, seen in every college catalog and at every other level of schooling, is the identification of prerequisites for each course. These prerequisites can be satisfied by taking particular courses, and in some cases by examination, or by other means, such as work experience. In general, more advanced courses in any subject require some foundation in basic courses, but some coursework requires study in other departments, as in the sequence of math classes required for a physics major, or the language requirements for students preparing in literature, music, or scientific research. A more detailed curriculum design must deal with prerequisites within a course for each topic taken up. This in turn leads to the problems of course organization and scheduling once the dependencies between topics are known.

Curriculum Development: An Overview

Stutt (2021) described curriculum development as the step-by-step process used to create positive improvements in courses offered by a school, college or university. As the world continues to evolve, new discoveries have to be roped into the education curricula. Innovative teaching techniques and strategies (such as active learning or blended learning) are also constantly being devised in order to improve the student learning experience. As a result, an institution must have a plan in place for acknowledging these shifts—and then be able to implement them in the college curriculum. Curriculum development is synonymous with course planning or course development. It's important to recognize that differences in course design exist: a math course taken at one university may cover the same material, but the educator may teach it in a different way. However, the core fundamentals of curriculum development remain the same.

What are the different categories of curriculum development?

Current curriculum can be broken down into two broad categories: the product category and the process category. The product category is results-oriented. Grades are the prime objective, with the focus lying more on the finished product rather than on the learning process. The process category, however, is more open-ended, and focuses on how learning develops over a period of time. These two categories need to be taken into account when developing curriculum. Wikipedia (2021) explained that Curriculum development is a process of improving the curriculum. Various approaches have been used in developing curricula. Commonly used approaches consist of analysis (i.e. need analysis, task analysis), design (i.e. objective design), selecting (i.e. choosing appropriate learning/teaching methods and appropriate assessment methods) formation (i.e. formation of the curriculum implementation committee / curriculum evaluation committee) and review (i.e. curriculum review committee).

1. Analysis

2. Design

3. Selecting

4. Formation

5. Review

Furthermore, SkyePack (2020) expressed that Curriculum development is the organized preparation of whatever is going to be taught in schools at a given. Whether you're a first-year teacher at a high school or a veteran university professor, you know that developing an effective curriculum is a core component of providing a successful education. As any educator knows, the literature and philosophy surrounding the concept of curriculum have evolved over the years. Today the term can be broadly used to encompass the entire plan for a course, including the learning objectives, teaching strategies, materials, and assessments.

Generally, curriculum development is the process by which an instructor or institution creates or adopts that plan for a course. Because this subject is so broad, it can be difficult to wade through the noise to find up-to-date best practices. There are also many schools of thought for how best to approach the curriculum development process. With an overwhelming amount of advice available, how do you know who to listen to so that you can develop a curriculum that makes sense for you and your course? Curriculum development help professors and teachers provide the best learning experience possible for their students. It equip instructors with customized course materials built to align with curricula, so it helps to understand the importance of a thoughtful development process.

What is curriculum development?

Curriculum development is the multi-step process of creating and improving a course taught at a school or university. While the exact process will vary from institution to institution, the broad framework includes stages of analysis, building, implementation, and evaluation. In college, curricula are often developed at a local or state level to result in standardized learning outcomes across different schools. At the college level, instructors may get more individual flexibility to develop their own curricula. Either way, the individual or group is responsible for planning a course (and choosing strong corresponding course materials) that effectively accomplishes educational goals and meets student needs.

Ideally, the curriculum development process should be one of continuous improvement rather than a linear or stagnant approach**.** Plans for instruction should be frequently reviewed, revised, and updated as new and different needs arise. Change may be required due to subject-area discoveries, innovations in instructional best practices, or shifts in course delivery such as the pivot to remote teaching.

Why is curriculum development useful for educators?

In many ways, the need for curriculum development is self-evident. Just imagine trying to teach each day in a lecture hall or K-12 classroom without a plan in place! A thoughtfully developed curriculum provides educators with a useful framework to build upon during day-to-day instruction. Curriculum development takes care of the big-picture strategy required to successfully teach a course. Because decisions like course objectives, content sequencing, and delivery methods are made upfront, instructors can focus on smaller details like planning for a specific lecture or writing effective assessments.

Additionally, an iterative curriculum development process gives educators a structure to make improvements to the course after evaluating student performance and receiving end-of-semester-feedback.

Why is a concrete curriculum development strategy valuable for learners?

In addition to providing benefits for teachers, curriculum development is a useful structure for learners. Curriculum development allows teachers to take a thoughtful and methodical approach to determine what students will be required to learn. The early phases of the process involve deep research and analysis to ensure that students get the best education possible.

Additionally, one of the most effective approaches for course development specifically addresses the needs of learners. We'll cover learner-centered design later in this article.

Are there different curriculum development processes or models?

First, there are generally two types of curriculum models: the product model and the process model. The model you choose to follow will influence the steps you'll take to develop the course. Entire textbooks have been written on these long-standing models, but here's a brief explanation of each to make sure everyone is on the same page:

- **Product model.** Also known as the objectives model, this model focuses on evaluations, outcomes, and results. It determines *what* learning has occurred. If you need to develop a curriculum that prioritizes standardized test scores, you'll need to adhere to the product model. Generally, this model is thought to be more rigid and more difficult to adapt to your students' unique needs, but it does provide quantitative learning assessments.

- **Process model.** This model focuses on how learning develops over time. There's an emphasis on *how* the students are learning, and what thoughts they have throughout the process. This approach is more open-ended and considers the overall growth and development of a student rather than their performance on an exam.

Consider the characteristics of each model as well as any institutional requirements you need to adhere to. You may already have a strong preference for one of the two! It is also possible to develop a curriculum that values both product and process.

 Challenges of Curriculum development

With so many steps to follow, curriculum development is not a simple or easy process. Instructors across all education levels may also face additional obstacles that make the process more difficult or time-consuming.

Some of these challenges include:

- **Institutional requirements.** You may need to conform to standards set by your state's board of education or by institutional administration. This may mean covering material that will be assessed by standardized tests, requiring you to incorporate product-focused curricular elements. Or it may mean including certain types of course objectives.

- **Long waits for development experts.** Your institution may have trained curriculum experts on staff to help professors with course development. Unfortunately, there is usually a much higher demand than these small teams have the capacity for, leading to long wait times.

- **Gathering relevant required materials.** Once the curriculum is mostly outlined, instructors will need to search for the right required materials to align with course

objectives. Often, it's difficult (and sometimes impossible) to find an option that is affordable for students and works well for your course. This is too often the case with both textbooks and e-textbooks from traditional publishers, but new options like custom digital course materials can alleviate these concerns.

Between the many challenges and the complex steps involved, many instructors may feel they aren't up to the task of developing an effective curriculum on their own. In this case, an expert course content creator could help simplify and streamline the process. IGI Global (n.d) opined the initial stage of curriculum processes whereby curriculum specialists sit down to propose innovative and creative suggestions for various educational experiences and programs.

Review of Library and Information Science (LIS) Curriculum in Nigerian Universities (Inclusion of ICT)

Oparah (2006) in Edegbo (2011) observed that until 1999; there was no uniform or harmonized curriculum for Nigerian University Library and information science schools. According to him, the newer LIS schools appear to operate modified curricula of the older schools. A review of the curricula of these schools shows that while some emphasize more library science courses, other strife to strike a balance between library science and information science. In the later case, ICT application to library and information services appears to be accorded appreciable emphasis. The library and information science schools of Abia and Delta States are good examples. Learning experience at any level of formal education is primarily determined by the contents of relevant curriculum. At the Abia State University Library and Information Science School, the following ICT courses are offered at the 100 level: LIS 104 - Basic Computer Operations I LIS 106 - Basic Computer Operations II.

These two courses are designed to acquaint the students with the parts, functions and operation of the computer and introduction to computer software. At the 200 level, the following courses are available; LIS 270 - Information Structure and System I LIS 271 - Information Structure and System II. These two cover electronic networks databases internet access, information systems, programming language, etc. At the 300 level, the following ICT based courses were available: LIS 381 - Information System and Networks LIS 351 - Database Management. At the 400 level, the following was available: LIS 411 - Automation of Library and Information Centres. However, he noted that the content of the two general reference service courses LIS 231 and 232 do not include the application of ICT. Same for the following subject reference sources and services: LIS 331 - Literature and Reference Sources for social sciences LIS 332 - Literature and Reference Sources in the Humanities.

The strong emphasis on ICT courses at the undergraduate level is absent at the (MLS) level. Perhaps, the designers of the master's programme forgot that some of the entrants who are not graduates of the library schools may not have acquired ICT knowledge and skills. The implication is that such students may graduate without the requisite of ICT knowledge and skill for the job performance. At the Delta State University LIS School, the following ICT courses are offered at the 100, 200 and 400 levels of the undergraduate programme. LIS 105 - Introduction to Computer I LIS 115 - Introduction to Computer II LIS 202 - Computer Application to Library Process I LIS 205 - Introduction to Computer Programming I LIS 212 - Computer Application to Library Processes II LIS 218 - Introduction to Database Management System LIS 401 - Information Science and Modern Technology I LIS 411 - Information Science and Modern Technology II. At the premier library school in Nigeria - the University of Ibadan – the following ICT courses are in its curriculum. LSE 122 - Information and Development with

(Introduction to information technology) LSE 227 - Information Technology LSE 415 - Computer in Libraries. Again Oparah (2006) noted that a course likes LSE 113 - Reference Sources and Services do not provide for the application of ICT to reference services, except at the masters level. Also at master's level, there is LSE 707 - Automation in Libraries, Archives and Information centres.

The National University Commission (NUC) issued in 1999 the Approved Minimum Standard in Library and Information Science Education. The curriculum according to Oparah (2006) in Edegbo (2011) is for the undergraduate programme. It provides for the following ICT courses: LIS 210 - Computer and Data Processing. This course among other objective is designed to enable students conduct searches and databases- LIS 305 - Introduction to Information Science. The contents of this course include the role of the computer in information storage and retrieval.

LIS 301 - Information Technologies. This course covers contemporary information technologies in library and information centres, multimedia information system, non-book communication technology, network and networking, internet etc. The NUC curriculum though provide general library courses and subjects, again the contents of these courses do not include the application of ICT to them e.g. Reference Services. It is thus left for wisdom of the individual of course lecturers to include ICT or not.

In the university system, Master degree program is specifically designed to qualify a library and information practitioner a professional. Any qualification below that level makes a practitioner a para-professional staff in any university library in Nigeria. According to Olubiyo and Jato (2017) the table below shows the curriculum of Library and Information Science Education at Master degree level in University of Nigeria, Nsukka

FIRST SEMESTER

Codes	Titles	Units
LIS 501	Library and Information Professionals in Contemporary Society	2
LIS 511	Theory of Knowledge and Classification	2
LIS 531	Computer Technology and Library Services	2
LIS 533	Digital Reference and Information Services	2
LIS 525	Humanities Literatures	2
LIS 527	Africana Information Sources	2
	Select one of the following:	
LIS 521	Science and Technology Literature	2
LIS 523	Social Science Literature	2
	Select two options from the following units:	
LIS 503	Information Literacy and User Education	
LIS 513	Book Production and Publishing	
LIS 551	Audio Visual Media Librarianship	
LIS 553	Indigenous Knowledge and Oral Information	4
LIS 555	Community Information Services	
LIS 557	Library Services for Children and Youth	
LIS 559	Business Information Services	

SECOND SEMESTER

LIS 513	Advanced Cataloguing and Classification	2
LIS 514	Indexing and Abstracting	2
LIS 570	Research Methods in Library and Information Science	3
	Select at least one of the following options	
LIS 540	Administration of National and Public Libraries	
LIS 542	Administration of Academic Libraries	2
LIS 544	Administration of Special Libraries & Information Centres	
LIS 546	Administration of School Libraries & Media Centres	
LIS 548	Archive and Record Management	

	Select three courses (6 Units) from the following options	
LIS 502	Information Tools, Ethics and Policy	
LIS 504	Library Marketing and Public Relations	
LIS 506	Information Entrepreneurship	
LIS 516	Knowledge Management	
LIS 518	System Analysis and Evaluation	6
LIS 520	Children's Literature	
LIS 522	Law Librarianship	
LIS 524	Medical Librarianship	
LIS 526	Agricultural Librarianship	
LIS 532	Telecommunication and Networking	
LIS 534	Information Architecture for the Web	
LIS 552	Library Services for Special Groups	
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Conclusion

Curriculum development is core issue in the feasibility and growth of any discipline, library and information science education inclusive. Modern day librarianship, that is 21st century library and information science education (LISE) should integrate full information and communication technology programmes and not just computer application for professional efficiency and global acceptability. Therefore, curriculum of LIS in Nigerian Universities should be reviewed both at undergraduate and postgraduate level.

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