



A REVIEW OF CURRICULUM CHANGE AND INNOVATION FOR HIGHER EDUCATION IN SOMALIA

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Abstract:

A solid curriculum is one of the most important components of education. Knowledge is advancing and society is changing as a result of science and technological growth. The purpose of this study was to review the curriculum change and innovation for higher education in Somalia. Curriculum change is both deliberate and unplanned changes in concepts, including invention, development, and adoption. Innovation is a planned part of the curriculum change. The study was guided by complexity theory since social systems sometimes require curriculum changes. Most of Somalia's higher education institutions lack formal curriculum plans due to the absence of a federal agency that could help regulate higher education or develop standards that could be shared. In Somalia, higher education is facing challenges, including a lack of effective curricula guidelines, quality standards, and other significant sources of support in the education sector. The study recommended among others the establishment of a National Commission for higher education with clear policy and independency to overview the curriculum in higher education institutions.

Keywords: curriculum change, education, higher education, innovation, institution

1. Introduction

The basis for a nation's development is its educational system. It is also described as a device that makes it easier for educated people to live in better conditions. The curriculum is the heart of education since it is about what should be thought. A solid curriculum is one of the most important components of education, along with leadership, infrastructure, technology, and rules and regulations. Life in general can change. Knowledge is advancing and society is changing as a result of science and technological growth. Many changes in people's lives and means of subsistence are coming as a result

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of that transition. And to keep up with it, the curriculum is also changing. That is to say, the fact that the curriculum is changeable is a key component (Das, 2021).

The transformation that is profoundly influencing our world in the fields of science, technology, economics, and culture is at the heart of education, which serves as the cornerstone and prime motivating factor of economic, societal, and personal development. It is the driving force behind social change and scientific advancement, and in return, it is vulnerable to the outcomes of the advancement that it has created, both in terms of content and defined goals as well as methods and techniques.

The Latin root of the word "innovation" indicates "renewal, freshness, or change." Innovation in education refers to any effort that is made to consciously and purposefully try to change the educational system in order to make it better. Curriculum innovation is the ability of the teachers to use a new program in accordance with the adjustments needed at various developmental stages (Gonta & Tripon, 2020). In this study, Curriculum change is both deliberate and unplanned changes in concepts, including invention, development, and adoption. Innovation is planned part of the curriculum change.

2. Complexity theory and curriculum change and innovation

This study will be guided by complexity theory. According to complexity theory, survival is achieved by a combination of competition and evolution, adaptation, and change. The theory assumes that an organism and its environment have a clear link in which changes to either can have a positive or negative impact on the other. As a result, people cannot think about the environment without being concerned about one another. When making important decisions, a system must be viewed as a whole with numerous components. The system is dynamic and multidimensional, creating new realities, collectivities, and relationships as a result.

The theory is relevant to this study because political, economic, and social systems sometimes require curriculum changes. Individuals thus adapt to current organizational needs, resulting in greater productivity and efficiency. Education explores the external surroundings and resolves the essential internal changes and modifications to survive in the shifting holistic frameworks, similar to other complex systems. The process of change can be self-organized, with participants investigating potential changes in the external environment and putting into action modifications that will promote the long-term growth and development of the parties involved. For example, the growing use of education-related technology has defined the twenty-first century. As a result, educational leaders must develop a curriculum that satisfies the century's learning requirements. The employment market has also altered dramatically as a result of technology; therefore, students must be well-prepared for both current and future market demands.

3. Statement of the problem

According to Issa-Salwe & Maah (2022) the system of education in the Somali regions has seen a considerable rebirth since the early 1990s when the Somali state collapsed. In higher education generally and the undergraduate curriculum specifically, change has taken place. These adjustments have been prompted by several developments. Even though higher education in Somalia has undergone some notable developments, most of the country's higher education institutions lack formal curriculum plans due to the absence of a federal agency that could help regulate higher education or develop standards that could be shared. Furthermore, some people may not even recognize the significance of a curriculum for their institutions, much less the need for educational institutions to have clearly stated objectives or aims for educating society.

Somalia has taken into account issues with policymaking and reforming the quality of education. Therefore, it is evident that changes, including adjustment and innovation in the management and governance methods, are necessary for the education sector, particularly the curriculum in the nation. Therefore, this paper reviews curriculum changes and innovation for higher education in Somalia.

3.1 Objectives of the study

- 1) To analyze a review of Curriculum Change and Innovation for Higher Education in Somalia.
- 2) To examine the main challenges facing curriculum change in Somalia higher education.

4. Concept of curriculum change and innovation

Das (2021) have argued that for educators and their institutions, curriculum change is a learning process. For the new curriculum to be more effectively put into practice, it is imperative that everyone has a clear grasp of change and the curriculum. Research on curricular change in higher education focuses primarily on broader changes outside our scale. However, Law (2022) mentioned that the definition of curriculum change is the introduction of new teaching and learning principles that make it clear that all parties involved must create sound rules and procedures for handling any issues that arise. Many stakeholders are involved in the change process because they want to make sure that the outcomes will favorably foster both social and individual development.

Innovation and change vary in that innovation is always planned, whereas change can happen as a result of an outside occurrence. Innovation is a planned process that is intended to produce the desired outcome and change. The term "curriculum innovation" refers to concepts and methods that are fresh and distinct from those found in the official curriculum. Curriculum innovation must be coordinated and planned to be worthy and successful. Although not planned, other types of changes may occur. At the national level, conscious political decisions lead to curricular change and innovation. In most

African countries, education reforms are not implemented unless the entire government decides.

Therefore, Curriculum innovation in higher education seeks to transform one or more curriculum elements by adjusting what is taught, how it is taught, how students and teachers interact, and how activities are planned. Re-conceptualizing, updating, and enhancing the university curriculum are all aspects of curricular innovation. The institutional, methodological, and content aspects of the educational process are being discussed here.

Based on a perception of a lack of rivalry with the Soviet Union at the time, which successfully launched the first artificial satellite in 1957, the United States' enormous curriculum reform campaigns in the 1950s and 1960s were motivated by this perception. In order to ensure that American secondary school students were prepared to compete with the Soviets in the field of science and technology, this led to a wave of educational reforms, especially in the field of science (Abdalla & Adamu, 1957).

More recently, the terrorist assaults of September 11th prompted changes in educational policies throughout the Muslim world. In the curricula of Arab and Muslim nations, these revisions were meant to foster "*pluralism, discourse, citizenship, and coexistence as tools to counter extremism*". Additionally, these changes were driven by the conviction that "*education is one of the most successful ways of reinforcing ideals of peace, tolerance, pluralism, discourse, and human rights, all of which nurture coexistence*" and that it may be used to build peace and combat extremism (Abdullahi A. Hussein, 2021). For example, in 2005, Saudi Arabia began working on the \$2.4 billion Tatweer education reform initiative. Tatweer's education reform was based on neoliberal ideology and reportedly created a new environment for providing education in Saudi Arabia.

In the last few years, Rwanda has made the most significant change to curriculum in a post-conflict age. Following the 1994 genocide, the Rwandan Patriotic Front took power, and for up to ten years the government stopped teaching history to young Rwandans. The overarching government strategy of national recovery, reconciliation, and unity has been firmly established inside the educational system in post-conflict Rwanda (Hussein, 2015).

Kenya started the transition to a competency-based curriculum in 2015 after 32 years of the content-oriented curriculum, which was plagued by complaints of content overload. This can be considered a major curriculum reform initiation shift in Kenya (David Simon, 2022).

5. Importance of curriculum changes and innovation

The first reason of curriculum change is the advancement of knowledge. The level of knowledge is constantly evolving. The level of knowledge is constantly evolving. Many previously unrecognized theories are now being discovered. Students should be familiar with this new material. Therefore, the syllabus should be updated as a result of this advance in knowledge.

The second reason is the technology improvement. As knowledge advances, technology advances. In the field of education, the way teaching and learning processes are changing. One example is the use of ICT. Curriculum should be adjusted accordingly. The third reason is the changing of the needs and the interests of the learners. The needs of students in the twenty-first century now are very different from those of students in the past. Their skills and interests have also evolved. Currently, having computer skills is required. Therefore, including information about computers in the curriculum has become crucial. It was previously not as significant.

The fourth reason for curriculum change is the change of teaching methodology from teacher-centered to student-centered approach. The current teaching approach is child-centered. The child is given the highest priority when it comes to education. A range of novel teaching techniques is currently in use, including cross-over learning, self-learning, spaced learning, and collaborative learning. The curriculum is modified in accordance with these teaching techniques. That also serves as one of the factors for the adjustment in the curriculum.

The fifth reason of curriculum innovation and change is globalization. The world is now considered as one village due to the interaction and integration among people. There is a chance to observe the exact methods of curriculum instruction in other nations. We can then compare them based on our interests. We can utilize them if these comparisons show that they are more beneficial. The curriculum can be modified in this way.

6. History of higher education in Somalia

Like most institutions in Africa, the history of higher education in Somalia dates back to 1954 and was established by the UN trusteeship during the colonial period. At that time, there was only one institution of higher learning, and it was a modest university with only two faculties. At independence some of the administrative and political leaders of the country were the graduates of this higher education institution. The university institute, created in 1954, is the only institution of higher education in the nation, according to Annual Report 1966 of the Ministry of Education (Eno et al., 2015).

As Eno et al. (2015) mentioned, the civilian government that came to power after independence was firmly rooted in ethnic political rivalries and the rise of individuals to high status. The creation of a strong university did not receive the prompt attention it needed. The possibility for higher education in Somalia underwent a notable change following the Siad Barre-led military revolution of October 21, 1969. The military regime decided to finish a campus that was created specifically for this purpose outside of Mogadishu, around six or seven kilometers to the west of the old campus, which was near the Hotel Shabelle in the center of the city of Mogadishu.

Furthermore, Abdi (1998) mentioned that Somalia National University (SNU) established itself as a full-fledged school of higher learning with 11 faculties, including law, economics, agriculture, education, veterinary medicine, medicine, industrial chemistry, geology, languages, journalism, and engineering, with pre-state collapse

student numbers of 4650. The Somali National University was reduced to abandoned buildings after the dissolution of the Somali state. Its entire equipment and documentation were stolen or destroyed. However, the previous faculty members of the Lafole College of Education were able to preserve the buildings as well as some of the library's books and lab equipment.

6.1 The development of private universities and the present situation in Somalia's higher education

In response to the rising number of secondary graduates seeking higher education, civil society groups, international organizations, and regional educators started a number of higher education programs in 1996. Amoud University in Borama Zone and Mogadishu University were the first projects (Cassanelli, Lee & Abdikadir, 2015). Later, numerous more universities have begun operating around the nation, including SIMAD (1999), Puntland State University, which was founded in 1999, the University of Southern Somalia (founded in 2007), Banadir University (founded in 2002), and many more.

According to Heritage (2013) there are approximately 50 higher education institutions nationwide, enrolling more than 50,000 students. These institutions vary in size and capacity. The conventional wisdom that social and economic progress will stop without a central government is being challenged by the burgeoning higher education sector, especially given prolonged periods of instability in some parts of the country. Privatization of Somalia's higher education sector has been enabled and facilitated by the lack of a strong central government and strong local administration. There are currently more than 60 institutions of higher learning in Somalia, and more than 70,000 students attend them.

Another crucial matter is curriculum reform, which in Somalia receives little attention from decision-makers. There is a change in the curriculum. To remain relevant and take into account the requirements of society, it must be continuously revised. According to academic studies, one of the first actions a government takes when a nation has emerged from a battle is to modify the curriculum by establishing a new course of study.

The lack of a regulatory system across the country makes it difficult to control the standard of the expanding number of universities. The standard of higher education throughout Somalia is directly impacted by this. As a result, many graduates lack the foundational knowledge and training required to enter the workforce.

Hussein (2021) argued that nothing we've seen until now suggests that Somalia's successive governments have given substantial curriculum reform ideas the consideration they deserve. The shaky security environment, on which most policymakers have primarily focused, can help to explain this in part. Despite the fact that Somalia's civil war is over, the country is still far from tranquil, and Al-Shabaab still holds sway over a sizable portion of it. Services for education are mainly supplied by the commercial and nonprofit sectors in the areas under the jurisdiction of the Somali government. This indicates that curriculum change and innovation in Somalia higher

education is hindered by unregulated private education and the national commission for higher education is not effective.

This commission is supposed to initiate the standardization of the higher education curriculum for effective curriculum change and innovation. It was also supposed to be independent when exercising their accreditation and standardization process.

7. Challenges facing Somalia's higher education

The challenges in Somalia's higher education system have been identified in the MOECHE's Education Sector Strategic Plan (ESSP) 2018–2020.

- The federal government and member states failed to reach an agreement on any comprehensive national higher education laws.
- Despite the ministry of education nominating five individuals for the National Commission for Higher Education in 2019, the commission lacks a clear policy and approach.
- There are no effective guidelines for curricula, standards of quality, or other significant sources of support in the education sector.
- The university's curriculum management system has shortcomings and inadequacies, such as unclear rules controlling these procedures.
- Private institutions may charge huge fees that prevent many qualified Somali students from enrolling in higher education.

8. Conclusions

The purpose of the paper was to review the curriculum change and innovation for Somalia higher education. The curriculum changes and innovation reviewed in this was found to be effective and dynamic because it is based on the societal needs. The curriculum is constantly changing. Modern education is becoming more sophisticated and appropriate thanks to improvements in the curriculum. This necessitates a deeper comprehension of curriculum change. Curriculum innovation in higher education seeks to transform one or more curriculum elements by adjusting what is taught, how it is taught, how students and teachers interact, and how activities are planned. The National Commission for Higher Education nominated by ministry of education in 2019 lacks a clear policy and standards. This is one of the main challenges facing Somalia higher education and curriculum change and innovation as well.

8.1 Recommendations

Based on the challenges facing higher education in Somalia, the paper recommended the following:

- Transparent planning procedures for allocating resources across federal states and regions according to their demands in terms of curriculum change and innovation.

- In order to maintain the decentralized approach to curriculum change and innovation in higher education, the Federal government and member states should strengthen their partnerships.
- There is a need to create and implement quality assurance systems for higher education institutions.
- It is necessary to build capacity development techniques for enhancing governmental systems in order to better equip educators.
- National commission for higher education with clear policy and independency should be established to overview the curriculum in higher education institutions.

Conflict of interest statement

The author declares that he has no conflict of interest in this article.

About the Author

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