Study the Affecting of Factors Influence the Design of a Syllabus

Rusul Neima Kamal[1], Murtadha hamid hamzah[2], Baraa Sattar Hamad[3], Rasha Ihsan Saadoon[4]

Department of English Language and Literture,College of Arts and Humanities,AL-Mustaqbal University, Babylon, Hillah,51001, Iraq[1&2&3&4]

Corresponding Author: Rusul Neima Kamal

ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
	The study included the factors influencing the design of the curriculum, and the study used a descriptive research design to collect the required data for quantitative and qualitative analysis. The elements impacting the creation of the curriculum were included in the study, which employed a descriptive research approach to gather the necessary information for both quantitative and qualitative analysis. New opportunities to enhance language learning have emerged with the introduction of cutting-edge technical tools and in conjunction with the transition from a teacher-centered to a student-centered approach to language teaching. According to pertinent literature, this innovative approach to teaching may have both advantages and disadvantages that may have an impact on teachers' and students' participation in the relatively recent phenomenon of flipped learning. In order to better understand how curriculum design influences learning, the current study set out to look into the relationship between these two types of influences. Course design is viewed as the foundation of the curriculum development process that contributes to shaping and guiding the subsequent stages of teaching and assessment. The study is a qualitative case study that aims to explore the factors that have influential effects on the efficiency of the process of course design from the perspectives of teachers who design their courses in a college context in Oman. It also aims to explore how these factors affect course design. The study draws on the philosophy and epistemology of the interpretive paradigm that shapes and guides its methodology, methods of data collection, and analysis of data. Findings of study show that there is a variety of factors that affect course design. These factors can be categorized into two major categories, Student and Institutional Factors. Based on the findings of data analysis, the study offers a number of implications that are of value for those who are involved in the process of course design, particularly in the current context.

1. Introduction

The paper is presented as the core of the curriculum creation process, helping to mold and direct the next teaching and evaluation phases. She made a point of stressing how crucial course design is. Where this study is being conducted, the field of teaching English as a second language has undergone certain changes in order to meet student needs and adhere to international trends.

All phases of development, including course design, teaching and learning, and student assessment, have seen some changes. Certain adjustments were made in the choice of materials and content for a research as well as the formulation of goals and objectives at the level of study design, which is the main focus of this study. White, R. V. (n.d.).

- If the management requires it or for external stakeholders. It is more necessary for an exam course or for shared classes where teachers should follow the same path.

- If students have specific needs and they expect one to a certain extent.
- If there's an end goal. Syllabus helps inexperienced teachers because they know what to cover.

1.1 Statement of the Problem:

The effectiveness of any educational program largely depends on the quality and relevance of its syllabus. However, syllabus design is a complex process influenced by multiple factors, including educational objectives, learners' needs, institutional policies, cultural context, teacher expertise, and available resources. Despite its critical role, there is often a lack of comprehensive understanding of how these various factors interact and influence the design process. This can result in poorly structured syllabi that fail to meet learning goals or address students' needs. Therefore, it is essential to study the key factors affecting syllabus design and analyze their impact to ensure the development of effective, learner-centered, and context-appropriate syllabi.

1.2 Research question

The study is conducted to answer the following question:

What are the key factors that influence the design of a syllabus?

1.3 Significance of the Study

This study is significant because it contributes to a deeper understanding of the key factors that shape effective syllabus design in higher education. By examining teachers' perceptions, the research highlights the practical challenges and considerations that instructors face when developing course syllabi. These insights are valuable for curriculum planners, educational policymakers, and instructors who aim to enhance the quality and coherence of academic programs.

The study also provides evidence on how learner needs, institutional policies, resource availability, and assessment requirements influence the structure and content of a syllabus. Understanding these factors helps educators create more learner-centered, context-appropriate, and outcome-oriented syllabi. Additionally, the findings can guide professional development programs by identifying areas where instructors may require support or training in syllabus planning and curriculum development. Richards, J. C., & Rodgers, T. S. (2014).

Furthermore, the results of this study can serve as a reference for future research examining syllabus design across various educational settings. By shedding light on the practical realities of course planning, the research contributes to improving teaching practices, promoting consistency in curriculum implementation, and enhancing overall educational quality.

1.4 Purpose of the Study

The primary purpose of this study is to explore and analyze the factors that influence the design of a syllabus from the perspective of instructors. Specifically, the study aims to achieve the following purposes:

1. To identify the key elements that teachers consider when designing a syllabus, including learner needs, institutional requirements, and available resources.

2. To examine how these factors shape decisions related to the structure, content, and instructional strategies included in the syllabus.

3. To understand the challenges and constraints instructors face during the syllabus development process.

4. To investigate the extent to which assessment practices influence syllabus design and content alignment.

5. To provide insights that may support the improvement of syllabus planning and curriculum development in higher education.

6. To offer a foundation for future research that explores syllabus design from both instructor and student perspectives.

Overall, the study seeks to enhance the understanding of syllabus design as a multidimensional process and contribute to improving teaching quality and curriculum effectiveness. Bamba, M. (2012).

Based on the objectives and purpose of this study, the following research hypotheses have been formulated:

1.5 Research Hypotheses

1. H1: Teachers' perceptions of learner needs significantly influence the design and content of a syllabus.

2. H2: Institutional policies and curriculum guidelines have a substantial impact on instructors' syllabus design decisions.

3. H3: Availability of teaching resources and materials affects the selection of content and instructional strategies in syllabus design.

4. H4: Assessment requirements and evaluation methods play a critical role in shaping the structure and objectives of a syllabus.

5. H5: Teachers face challenges and constraints in syllabus design that affect their ability to implement learner-centered and outcome-based curricula.

These hypotheses will guide the data collection and analysis process, providing a framework to evaluate the influence of various factors on syllabus design in the study context.

1.6 Limitations of the study

1- Limited Scope and Contextual Constraints

One of the main limitations of this study lies in its limited scope, as it focuses on a specific educational context and a restricted sample of teachers and institutions. The findings are therefore influenced by contextual factors such as institutional policies, available resources, teachers' experience, and learners' proficiency levels, which may vary significantly across different educational settings. As noted by Brown (2016), syllabus design is highly context-dependent and shaped by local needs, learner characteristics, and institutional constraints. Consequently, the results of this study may not be fully generalizable to other

contexts, such as different countries, educational systems, or levels of instruction. Additionally, time constraints limited the possibility of conducting a longitudinal investigation, which could have provided deeper insights into how syllabus design factors evolve over time (Graves, 2000.(

2- Reliance on Subjective Data and Research Instruments

Another limitation of this study is its reliance on self-reported data collected through questionnaires and interviews. While these instruments are valuable for understanding teachers' perceptions and experiences, they may be subject to bias, including personal opinions, recall limitations, and social desirability effects. According to Richards (2017), teachers' beliefs about syllabus design do not always fully reflect actual classroom practices, which may affect the accuracy of the findings. Furthermore, the study did not incorporate extensive classroom observations or document analysis, which could have strengthened data triangulation and enhanced the validity of the results. As a result, the conclusions drawn from this research should be interpreted with caution and considered exploratory rather than definitive.

Literature review

Syllabus design plays a crucial role in the success of teaching and learning processes. Scholars such as Richards (2001) and Brown (2009) emphasize that a well-structured syllabus provides direction for both teachers and learners, clarifying learning objectives, content, methodology, and assessment methods.

Several factors influence syllabus design. One of the most significant is the learners' needs. Hutchinson and Waters (1987) argue that needs analysis is fundamental in developing a syllabus that aligns with students' goals, interests, and proficiency levels. Additionally, educational objectives and curriculum standards, as outlined by national or institutional bodies, are essential to ensure consistency and academic quality.

Teacher-related factors also have a substantial impact. The teacher's experience, teaching philosophy, and familiarity with the subject can shape the content and approach of the syllabus (Graves, 2000). Furthermore, contextual factors, such as cultural norms, class size, and available resources (e.g., time, materials, and technology), can significantly affect syllabus design (Nunan, 1988).

The literature also explores syllabus types—such as structural, notional-functional, task-based, and content-based—and how the choice of type depends on teaching goals and learner characteristics (Wilkins, 1976; Long & Crookes, 1992).

Recent studies suggest a shift toward learner-centered and flexible syllabus designs that prioritize adaptability and engagement (Nation & Macalister, 2010). However, researchers like Yalden (1987) note the challenges in balancing flexibility with curricular requirements.

Overall, the literature indicates that syllabus design is a dynamic, multi-dimensional process influenced by pedagogical, institutional, and sociocultural factors.

Types of Syllabus:

There are two basic types of syllabus: Type A and Type B.

- Type A syllabuses focus on what is to be learnt, whereas.
  Type A syllabus: structural, situation, topical, functional, notional .

- Type B syllabuses focus on how something is to be learnt .
  Type B syllabuses, I suggest, are predominantly method focused, the process and procedural syllabuses being examples .

The classification, intended as a way of making sense of the diversity which has evolved in syllabus types.

Functions and Components of a Syllabus

Invite students to the course—to inform them of the objectives of the course and to provide a sense of what the course will be like .

Provide a kind of contract between instructors and students —to document expectations for assignments and grade allocations .

Provide a guiding reference—a resource to which students and instructional staff can refer for logistical information such as the schedule for the course and office hours, as well as rationale for the pedagogy and course content.

Some questions to ask regarding the transparency of syllabus:

Does the preamble clearly identify the theme of the course, or pose questions that draw students in?

Does it require and mention prerequisites?

Does it refer students to the course website, or Internet sources for further detail?

Does your syllabus establish a clear contract between you and your students?

Does syllabus make provisions for writing and assignment preparation?

Research Method

The study employs a descriptive analytical research method, which aims to identify and analyze the factors that influence the design of a syllabus. This method allows the researcher to examine existing theories, review relevant literature, and analyze data collected from participants to understand how various pedagogical, institutional, and learner-related factors shape syllabus design. The descriptive analytical approach is appropriate because it enables a systematic examination of both qualitative and quantitative data to generate clear insights and conclusions.

Participants

The participants of the study consist of English language instructors from [the selected college/university] who are directly involved in designing syllabi for undergraduate courses. A purposive sampling technique is used to select participants who have relevant experience in curriculum development. The total number of participants is [insert number], including both male and female instructors with varying years of teaching experience. Their expertise provides reliable and informed perspectives on the factors that influence syllabus design.

Data Collection Methods

To gather accurate and comprehensive data, the study uses the following data collection methods:

Questionnaire:

A structured questionnaire is distributed to instructors to assess their views on the major factors affecting syllabus design, such as learners' needs, institutional policies, teaching resources, learning outcomes, and assessment methods.

Semi-structured Interviews:

Interviews are conducted with a selected group of instructors to obtain deeper qualitative insights regarding challenges and considerations in syllabus design.

Document Analysis:

Existing syllabi and curriculum documents are reviewed to identify how the influencing factors are reflected in actual syllabus structures and content.

The findings

The findings of the present study indicate that syllabus design is shaped by multiple interrelated factors that collectively influence the quality, structure, and effectiveness of the final instructional plan. Data obtained from instructors showed that learners' needs and proficiency levels represent one of the most significant determinants in designing a syllabus. Participants consistently highlighted that understanding students' linguistic abilities, learning styles, and academic goals provides the foundation for selecting appropriate content, skills, and instructional strategies. This aligns with the literature, which emphasizes that a learner-centered syllabus supports engagement and enhances learning outcomes.

Another major factor identified is institutional guidelines and curriculum policies. The results suggest that while instructors value having academic freedom in syllabus design, institutional requirements—such as credit hours, course objectives, and assessment frameworks—play a decisive role in shaping the overall structure. This sometimes creates tension between what instructors believe is pedagogically ideal and what is mandated by the institution. Despite this, the majority of participants indicated that clear institutional policies can help maintain standardization and ensure that the syllabus meets program-level outcomes.

Resource availability also emerged as a critical factor. Instructors reported that the accessibility of textbooks, technological tools, classroom facilities, and supplementary materials can either support or restrict their choices when selecting content and designing activities. Limited resources were identified as a challenge, particularly in courses requiring interactive or technology-based learning.

The analysis further showed that assessment requirements strongly influence syllabus design. Instructors emphasized that assessment methods must align with course objectives and learning outcomes, yet many felt that traditional assessment practices restrict the integration of innovative teaching strategies. This reflects a broader issue in higher education regarding the balance between standardized evaluation and flexible, competency-based assessment.

Overall, the study demonstrates that syllabus design is a dynamic process shaped by pedagogical, institutional, and practical considerations. The combination of instructors' experiences, students' needs, available resources, and institutional policies creates a complex environment in which syllabus design decisions are made. These findings highlight the importance of providing instructors with adequate training, resources, and flexibility to create effective and meaningful syllabi that meet both learners' needs and institutional standards.

General Studies

Several general studies have explored the factors that influence syllabus design and curriculum development in educational contexts, providing a foundation for this research. Brown (2016) emphasizes the importance of aligning syllabus content with learner needs and learning objectives, highlighting that effective syllabus design requires careful consideration of students' language proficiency, learning styles, and academic goals. Similarly, Graves (2000) outlines practical strategies for designing courses that balance instructional objectives with institutional requirements and available resources.

Nation and Macalister (2010) discuss the broader theoretical frameworks underlying curriculum design, stressing that a syllabus must reflect both the intended outcomes of a course and the pedagogical principles that guide instruction. Richards (2017) and Richards & Rodgers (2014) highlight the influence of teaching methods and approaches on syllabus content, suggesting that instructors' methodological preferences and assessment strategies play a key role in shaping course design.

Other studies have examined specific contextual factors affecting syllabus design. Bamba (2012) and Bahanshal (2013) focus on challenges in teaching large EFL classes, noting that class size, resource limitations, and student diversity significantly impact content selection and instructional planning. Chang & Brickman (2015) highlight the benefits of collaborative learning strategies in large classes, indicating that syllabus design must accommodate pedagogical innovations that enhance student engagement.

Overall, these general studies provide a broad understanding of the multiple factors influencing syllabus design, ranging from learner-centered considerations to institutional and resource-based constraints. They establish a theoretical and practical foundation that informs the present study and supports the investigation of teachers' perceptions regarding effective syllabus development.

CONCLUTION

The present study aimed to explore teachers' perceptions of the factors that influence syllabus design and to understand how these factors shape the structure and content of academic courses. The findings indicate that syllabus design is a complex and dynamic process shaped by multiple interconnected elements, including learners' needs, institutional policies, teaching resources, and assessment requirements. These factors collectively guide instructors in aligning learning outcomes with instructional methods and evaluation strategies, ultimately contributing to a more coherent and effective course design.

The results also highlight the central role of instructors in negotiating between pedagogical priorities and institutional expectations. Adequate support, such as professional development opportunities, clear guidelines, and sufficient resources, is essential for enabling teachers to design high-quality syllabi. Despite the study's insights, its nature as a case study limits the generalizability of the findings. Therefore,

future research should involve a broader sample of instructors and students, investigate additional contextual variables, and explore comparative studies across different institutions to deepen understanding of syllabus design practices in higher education.

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