

Chapter 6

Using an Eclectic Approach to Design Curriculum Instruction in an Online Environment

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ABSTRACT

In this chapter, an eclectic approach to designing curriculum instruction is undertaken. The chapter acknowledges that there is no Archimedean principle in online instructional curriculum design. A survey of instructional design based on behaviorism and Tyler rationale is offered. This is followed by an analysis of various instructional design frameworks that were imbued by the objectives models, such as Benjamin Bloom Taxonomy of learning objectives, Robert Mager principles of instructional design, Biggs model of constructive alignment, Robert Gagne theory of learning prior to instruction, analysis, design, development implementation and evaluation (ADDIE) model of instructional design among many others. The chapter avers that it is important for educators to become acquainted with various theoretical models and framework of instructional design in order for them to practice reflective eclecticism when designing instructions in an online environment.

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the etymology of instructional design is discussed. The chapter also explored the various models that have their roots in the objectives movement and which have exercised hegemonic power over instructional design. The chapter argues that in spite of its strength in instructional design the objectives approach to curriculum design has its own defects. It is for that reason that educators need to be exposed to a variety of theories and framework that can help them make informed decisions in online instructional design. The chapter advocates the use of the objectives models extracting those component that are advantageous, the use of the process model, utilizing principles from constructivism and also

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Eclectic Approach to Design Curriculum Instruction in Online Environment

the use of the Flipped Classroom (FC) in order to design instructions online in a way that can benefit students in their diversity.

BACKGROUND

Pribadi and Chung (2022) explicated the use of online instructional learning has become extremely important for many institutions in higher education. It is also noted that educators must adopt new ways of teaching which can help their students to learn. Learning through technology makes the schools to become interactive and changing the traditional nature of learning. Designing online instructions means that educators have the potential to deliver lessons in a multimedia format. The explosion in the use of technology means that the instructional design must be responsive to the needs of the students.

Existing literature on instructional design highlights the pre-eminence of learning objectives as a starting point (Konstantinidou & Nisiforou, 2022; Richardson et al., 2015; McGahan, 2018). Mohdavinab and Sadipour (2019) explicated that instructional design is very important and it has to be done in line with instructional objectives. The same authors adds that instructional design refers to “ thinking, or setting of mental theory, drawing, designing a draft of a map, preparing a work plan for obtaining what has been arranged” (Mohdavinab & Sadipour, 2019, p. 11). The comment shows that instructional design using objectives model is seen providing a model for planning instruction that is fixed.

The use of instructional objectives has a long history that can be traced to the 1918 in the work of Bobbit. Ornstein and Hunkins (2018) averred that Franklin Bobbitt (1876-1956) influenced by concepts of efficiencies in industry introduced the learning objectives for the purpose of improving efficiency in learning. Bobbit compiled a book that was titled the *Curriculum as a Science* which was followed by another book titled *Curriculum Construction* which had a wide range of objectives covering numerous spheres of life. This evolving area of curriculum was also associated with behavioral sciences and curriculum design as a technical and neutral process (Posner, 2004).

Ralph Tyler (1902) developed ideas on curriculum building on the concepts of objectives and he wrote a book in 1949 titled *Basic Principles of Curriculum Instruction*. In his approach to curriculum instruction Tyler posed a number of questions such as:

1. What educational goals should the school seek to realise?
2. What educational experiences do we structure to realise those goals?
3. How can the learning experiences be efficaciously organised?
4. How can we tell if the learning goals of the schools are being realised? (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2018, p. 101).

The presupposition based on these questions determine the nature of the curriculum that is designed (Kelly, 2004). The major impact of Ralph Tyler conception of the curriculum is the orientation that a curriculum is content has remained dominant at all levels of learning including higher education and online learning platforms. In higher education when designing online learning the focus has been on designing learning content based on course outline as opposed to creating learning opportunities for students. This practice is encapsulated by the uploading of pdf documents some of which are unwieldy, so that students can read, memorise and pass the assessments skewed in favour content as opposed to higher order critical thinking skills.

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