

## LEADING ARTICLE

### Curriculum Framework

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Curriculum framework is an organized plan or set of standards or learning outcomes that defines the content to be learned in terms of clear, definable standards of what the student should know and be able to do. It is part of an outcome-based education reform design. The framework is the second step, defining clear, high standards which will be achieved by all students. The curriculum is then aligned to the standards and students are assessed against the standards.

The Curriculum Framework is also referred to a sort of plan (set up by the Ministry of Education), it is imposed on teachers to be taught in order to achieve a good learning outcome, and at the end of the learning time, the student must be able to prove an evaluation of his/her knowledge acquired during the stay at school [1,2].

- **The main goals of curriculum framework**

Generally the curriculum framework in all countries around the world consists of eight goals. All the goals are meant to have the same outcomes; that is, to make the students achieve their best [1].

1. To promote an all-round development of the individual (physical, intellectual, social and emotional ) leading to a balanced, active, healthy and productive lifestyle.
2. To foster understanding and appreciation of the biological, physical and technological world to enable the learner to arrive at informed decisions about the environment and the changing needs of individuals and societies.
3. To develop in the learner knowledge and skills to empower him to participate meaningfully in an information-driven economy.
4. To develop creative thinking skills and learning skills required for the future.
5. To promote equity and social justice by providing opportunities for every learner according to his/her need, interests and potentials.
6. To foster national unity by promoting in the individual understanding of and respect for our multicultural heritage.
7. To promote in the learner an appreciation of his/her place in an interdependent global context.
8. To promote a culture of lifelong learning for greater access to an ever-changing job market [2].

- **Iraqi curriculum framework**

Education in Iraq is highly centralized and state controlled in which the state fully finances all aspects of public education such as supplying books, teaching aids and free students residences. There are three authorities control the process of decision-making and supervision of the Iraqi Education System, which represented by: Local Government Education Authorities, which are in charge of kindergarten and primary education; Ministry of Education which is in charge of secondary and vocational education; and the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, which is in charge of the administration of universities and the foundation of technical institutes [3].

Due to the fact that curriculum framework is considered an important document, the Iraqi Ministry of Education has prepared in collaboration with UNESCO, with the aim to develop its educational system and achieve its goal of which the most important is to prepare a citizen who possesses knowledge, skills and attitudes, faithful, productive, self-confident, tolerant, committed to democracy and social justice, respectful of himself and others, and proud of his homeland, culture and heritage [2,4]

- **Why we need in Iraq a new curriculum?**

The world is changing at a pace never experienced before, which obliges us to cope with it in the education sector, and accordingly, in curricula. The main changes include the following, as listed in [4]:

1. The research methodologies which are rapidly expanded the depth of our knowledge.
2. The using of technologies such as computers and mobile devices which are allowing us faster and easier access to information.
3. Developing communication technologies to exchange information in ways not envisaged before.
4. Increasing the importance of environmental protection and sustainability.
5. Increasing the need to learn to live together.

For the above reasons all the educational system around the world are evaluating their curricula continuously. In Iraq Ministry of Education found that the Iraqi students need new curricula, which aimed to make our students able to [4]:

1. Acquire up to date knowledge.
2. Accept modern skills to prepare them for life and work “learning to live together”.
3. Develop values that are important for our country.
4. Prepare our students for the future as responsible and competent community members and citizen.

- **The vision of Iraqi curriculum**

The Iraqi curriculum framework was developed in line with the requirement of Iraqi educational philosophy and the Iraqi national education strategy and is consistent with the policy and future orientations of the education system in Iraq. It will contribute to the standardization of quality learning requirements based on identifying challenges, as well as new trends, opportunities and priorities for further change and improvement [4].

The main orientations of Iraqi curriculum vision include [4]:

1. Providing high quality education for all Iraqi people, as a human right.
2. Developing integrated, flexible, balanced and advanced curricula to deepen the skills of learners.
3. Addressing both the learner needs (present and future needs of labor market) and the requirements of national development plans.
4. Addressing changes/new developments at the local and international levels through up to date and culturally appropriate curricula.
5. Forging enlightened citizenship based on the principles and practices of democracy and social justice.
6. Developing creative and critical thinking, problem solving skills, proactive attitudes and learning to learn skill from a life-long learning perspective.

- **Main aims for education and learning of Iraqi curricula**

All countries around the world are revising their national curricula to ensure that they prepare young people for the challenges and opportunities of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, which is the time of rapid development and social change.

- **The main aims**

Curriculum need to have clear aims that set out in overall terms what students need to have learned in order to operate successfully in 21<sup>st</sup> century. The main education and learning aims of Iraqi curriculum include [4]:

1. Life-long learning: people need to develop their love for learning that enables them to embrace change and learn new things throughout their life.
2. Confident and productive individuals: people of Iraq should become successful life-long learners.
3. Proud and responsible citizens of Iraq and the wider world: people of Iraq should become proud and responsible citizens.

- **The values**

Education in Iraq should be based on the following [4]:

1. The Iraqi identity.
2. Tolerance and respect all.
3. Social justice (respect human rights, gender, and social cohesion).
4. Democracy.
5. Sustainable development.

- **Students key competencies**

The sets of competencies suggested for Iraqi new curricula include (4):

1. **Thinking and learning competencies:** People should develop skill in: critical and independent thinking, creative thinking and problem solving, evaluation and decision making, communication, and management of own learning.
2. **Personal and social competencies:** People should learn to: develop self-confidence and be able to accept challenges, manages their emotions and be

sensitive to emotions of other, work independently and as part of a team, develop physical competence and adopt healthy lifestyles, and develop self-respect, develop capacity to use time efficiently, and respect for others.

3. **Citizenship and work competencies:** People should learn to: Understand and appreciate their own country and culture, be aware of and enjoy their rich cultural heritage, play positive and proactive role in society, knowledge production, culture, and economy, and respect the physical environment and understand the need for sustainable development.

## **References**

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