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Our heartfelt appreciation goes to the Dean Faculty of Education, for his tireless support in ensuring that the vision of this journal comes to reality. We also extend gratitude to the University management for their encouragement and assistance in disseminating information about this maiden edition through institutional platforms.

Special thanks are due to the Editorial Board for their dedication and commitment in bringing this first volume to fruition. The contributions of our authors are commendable for conducting research and seeing it published is no small feat. Likewise, the efforts of our reviewers and consultants in refining these works are deeply appreciated.

As this is our maiden edition, we warmly welcome readers' comments, advice, and suggestions to help us improve the quality and relevance in future volumes.

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CURRICULUM INNOVATION IN LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE EDUCATION: A CONCEPTUAL PERSPECTIVE ON ESTABLISHING FACULTIES OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCES AND NEW ACADEMIC PROGRAMMES IN NIGERIAN UNIVERSITIES

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Abstract

Library and Information Science (LIS) education in Nigeria has, for over six decades, remained largely embedded within departmental structures situated in faculties of Education, Arts, Communication and Information Technology, or Social Sciences. This arrangement, inherited from the founding of the Institute of Librarianship at University College, Ibadan in 1959, increasingly constrains the discipline's capacity to respond to the convergence of librarianship, data science, artificial intelligence, records management and knowledge management that now characterises the global information profession. This paper adopts a conceptual and reflective approach, drawing on documented literature and policy instruments, to interrogate the case for establishing autonomous Faculties of Library and Information Sciences in Nigerian universities and for introducing new, technology-oriented academic programmes within them. Anchored on Rogers' Diffusion of Innovation

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theory and situated within the global "iSchool" movement, the paper reviews curriculum reform trends across North America, Europe, Asia and Africa; examines the structural, funding and manpower constraints that curtail curriculum innovation in Nigerian LIS education; and proposes a faculty-based model comprising departments of Library Science, Information Science and Data Management, Records and Archives Management and Knowledge and Innovation Management. A portfolio of technology-oriented Bachelor of Technology programmes is proposed, together with an original Input–Process–Outcome conceptual framework linking technological, labour-market and policy drivers to curriculum innovation, institutional transformation and national development outcomes. The paper concludes that curriculum innovation in Nigerian LIS education is inseparable from structural reform and offers recommendations for universities, the National Universities Commission, the Librarians' Registration Council of Nigeria, the Nigerian Library Association and future researchers.

Keywords: *Library and Information Science education; curriculum innovation; Faculty of Library and Information Sciences; Nigerian universities*

1. Introduction

Library and Information Science (LIS) education is being reshaped globally by a cluster of technological drivers artificial intelligence, big data and analytics, cloud computing, digital preservation and open science that have redefined what it means to be information-literate and professionally competent in the twenty-first century (Okunlaya et al., 2022). University libraries and information services are no longer passive repositories but active sites of digital transformation, data curation and knowledge mediation and the graduates who staff them are

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expected to combine traditional bibliographic competence with data, technology and entrepreneurial skills (Fagbola et al., 2024).

In Nigeria, formal university-based LIS education dates to 1959, when the Institute of Librarianship was established at University College, Ibadan (Lawal, 2000, 2009). Six decades on, LIS programmes remain domiciled as departments within larger, often unrelated faculties Education, Arts, Management Sciences, Communication and Information Technology, or Social Science san arrangement that constrains budgetary autonomy, curriculum flexibility and disciplinary visibility. Recent empirical work reinforces the concern that curricula have not kept pace with the competencies now demanded of LIS professionals: a 2026 study of library schools across Nigerian universities found that curricula do not fully align with the digital revolution, expanding data-intensive practice and the integration of emerging technologies into information services, leaving students less than fully prepared for contemporary information practice (Ogunjimi et al., 2026).

A widening gap has therefore opened between what Nigerian LIS curricula teach and what the labour market encompassing corporate knowledge units, data governance offices, digital archives, health informatics units and conventional libraries alike now demands. This paper's aim is to examine, conceptually, how curriculum innovation and structural reorganisation into autonomous faculties can jointly close this gap. Its contribution lies in synthesising global and Nigerian literature into an original Input–Process–Outcome conceptual framework that links technological and labour-market drivers to curriculum innovation, institutional transformation and national development outcomes and in translating that framework into a

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concrete portfolio of proposed academic programmes for Nigerian universities.

2. Global Trends in Library and Information Science Education

That the structure and content of professional education must periodically be renewed in response to disciplinary and societal change is not a new observation. Karisiddappa (2004) argued, in the specific context of developing countries, that LIS curricula required continual redesign to remain relevant to shifting information environments, a concern echoed by Rao (2012) in a review of curricular innovations achievable even within resource-constrained library schools. More recently, Tonta (2016) asked whether the growing centrality of data to information work would trigger the next major wave of LIS curriculum change and Opele (2023) traced how a cluster of emerging technologies is reshaping library education on a global scale. These restructuring pressures are, moreover, not unique to LIS: comparable dynamics have been documented across higher-education systems responding to globalisation and shifting national policy more broadly (Daun, 2001).

LIS education has undergone its most decisive restructuring in North America, where the "iSchool" movement traces its origins to Drexel University's 1963 Master of Science in Information Science and the University of Pittsburgh's 1964 renaming of its Graduate Library School to the Graduate School of Library and Information Sciences (Bonnici et al., 2009). Syracuse University's 1974 renaming of its School of Library Science to the School of Information Studies is regarded as the first true iSchool and the movement gained formal organisational identity in 2003 when deans of seven leading library and information technology schools convened at the University of North

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Carolina to establish what became the iSchools Movement and, subsequently, the iCaucusa consortium that today spans universities on every populated continent. Schools at Michigan, Washington, Texas at Austin and Arizona have since reconstituted themselves as autonomous schools or colleges of information, broadening curricula to encompass data science, human-computer interaction, informatics and information policy while retaining librarianship and archival science as a historical core.

In Europe and Asia, curriculum reform has emphasised competency-based education and closer alignment with industry, including the incorporation of massive open online courses (MOOCs) as both a teaching resource and a subject of pedagogical research; a recent Nigerian study of LIS educators' knowledge and use of MOOCs found growing but uneven adoption, pointing to opportunities for blended and flexible delivery models that many Asian and European library schools have already normalised (Olatokun et al., 2025). South and Southeast Asian LIS systems illustrate parallel dynamics: in Pakistan, a persistent misalignment between LIS curricula and a shifting employment landscape continues to constrain graduate outcomes (Malik & Ameen, 2020); Vietnamese LIS educators have identified specific competency-development needs as programmes attempt to keep pace with practice (Ninh & Nguyen, 2025); and a Sri Lankan Delphi study proposed a structured, expert-validated information-literacy curriculum framework for national universities (Ranaweera & Weerasinghe, 2022). In China and other parts of Asia, the "iField" reconceptualisation has pushed library schools toward human-centred data-science curricula in explicit dialogue with the North American iSchool model.

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Within Africa, curriculum reform has been more incremental but is gathering pace. Comparative analysis of data-related content in LIS curricula across selected African universities found that data literacy, data management and data science content remain unevenly integrated, with substantial room for curriculum strengthening across the continent (Ssekitto & Mukiibi, 2023). A continental review of knowledge-sharing and information-literacy practice in African higher education institutions similarly identified curriculum modernisation, cross-institutional collaboration and stronger digital infrastructure as priorities for advancing LIS education across the region (Odularu & Bokwe, 2025). Elsewhere on the continent, Zimbabwean library schools face comparable difficulty integrating ICTs into their curricula (Mugwisi, 2024), while South African LIS schools have begun incorporating digital scholarship content into their programmes, offering a regional model that Nigerian institutions might usefully draw upon (Sibiya, 2024). Nigerian-specific evidence points in the same direction: a study of digital-education implementation in Nigerian LIS schools found that digital tools and platforms remain inconsistently embedded in teaching and learning, constraining students' preparation for effective participation in a globally networked information profession (Onyebuchi et al., 2024).

Across all four regions, four consistent reform themes emerge: competency-based curriculum design; deeper technology and data-science integration; stronger industry and employer partnerships; and increasingly interdisciplinary programme architecture that blurs the boundary between librarianship, computing and information management. Nigerian LIS education has engaged with each of these themes to some degree, butas the following sections argue has done so largely without

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technology-intensive curriculum with the administrative logic of host faculties whose core mandates lie elsewhere. The theory further implies that visible, well-resourced pilot faculties"early adopters," in Rogers' terminology could accelerate diffusion of the faculty model by demonstrating relative advantage and reducing perceived uncertainty for later-adopting institutions. Elements of competency-based education theory and human capital theory are drawn upon secondarily, particularly in the discussion of proposed curriculum content and graduate outcomes.

4. Challenges of Current LIS Education in Nigerian Universities

Several interlocking challenges constrain the current state of LIS education in Nigeria. The first is curriculum obsolescence and uneven technology integration. Edegbo's (2011) examination of curricula at three Nigerian universities against National Universities Commission minimum standards found that while ICT-related courses had been introduced, coverage was uneven and the personnel required to deliver such courses competently were often unavailable. More recent evidence confirms the pattern has persisted: Ogunjimi et al. (2026) found that Nigerian LIS curricula do not yet fully mirror the competencies demanded by data-intensive, technology-mediated professional practice and Onyebuchi et al. (2024) similarly found inconsistent embedding of digital tools in teaching and learning across Nigerian LIS schools.

Second, inadequate practical training and weak industry collaboration limit graduate readiness. Empirical work on academic performance and training of LIS undergraduates in Nigeria has highlighted gaps between classroom instruction and the practical, work-integrated competencies employers expect

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(Adeagbo & Mabawonku, 2022), while research on entrepreneurial competencies among Nigerian LIS undergraduates found that curricula have historically underprepared graduates for self-employment and information entrepreneurship, despite a large informal and small-business economy that could absorb such skills (Fagbola et al., 2024).

Third, fragmented programme structures compound these problems. Because LIS departments are dispersed across differently configured host faculties from one university to another, there is limited uniformity in curriculum content, course nomenclature and credit-hour allocation nationally, which in turn complicates national benchmarking, staff mobility and graduate labour-market signalling. This constraining influence of parent institutions on innovation is not confined to universities: a conceptual review of school libraries in Nigeria similarly found that innovation in library management is substantially shaped and often limited, by the priorities of the parent institution (Nse, 2024)a dynamic that mirrors, at a smaller scale, the constraints LIS departments face within host faculties at the university level.

Fourth, funding and infrastructure constraints remain severe. Digital-education implementation research has linked infrastructural limitations directly to the inconsistent embedding of digital learning tools in Nigerian LIS classrooms (Onyebuchi et al., 2024) and information-literacy skills assessments of undergraduate LIS students in Nigerian universities have found only moderate to low proficiency in key digital competencies, a gap attributable in part to limited access to functional ICT laboratories and reliable connectivity (Alex-Nmecha&Ejitagha, 2023).

Fifth, weak research and teaching-effectiveness ecosystems

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limit the sector's capacity for self-renewal. A study of knowledge creation and teaching effectiveness among lecturers in library schools in southwest Nigeria found patterns of research output and pedagogical innovation that remain below the level required to sustain continuous curriculum renewal without deliberate institutional support (Osisanwo et al., 2025). This finding is consistent with a broader content analysis of research trends in Nigerian and South African LIS scholarship, which similarly points to constrained thematic and methodological diversity in the field's research output (Ukwoma & Ngulube, 2023).

Sixth, the profession faces genuine disruption-era uncertainty. A national assessment of Nigerian LIS professionals' preparedness for a "disruptive era" characterised by artificial intelligence, automation and platform-based information services found that the sector is positioned at a threshold where these forces could be experienced either as an existential threat to conventional roles or as an opportunity for professional reinvention, depending substantially on how curricula and institutions respond (Ajani et al., 2025). A complementary skills-assessment study similarly found that Nigerian LIS students preparing for academic librarianship careers currently possess uneven readiness for the skills and knowledge that a disruption-era profession will demand (Oladokun et al., 2025). A related sectoral analysis argued that re-engineering LIS education and practice is necessary to meet the challenges of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, calling for curriculum and structural responses broadly consistent with those proposed in this paper (Ayandokun & Nworu, 2022).

Comparing these Nigerian challenges with the international practices reviewed in Section 2, a consistent pattern emerges: where reform elsewhere has been structural as well as curricular

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new faculties, new degree titles, new interdisciplinary hires Nigerian reform has to date been almost entirely curricular, attempted from within administratively constrained departments. This is the structural deficit the remainder of this paper addresses.

5. Curriculum Innovation for Future-Ready LIS Education

Addressing the challenges above requires a shift from incremental course-addition toward a more deliberately future-ready curriculum architecture, built on several interlocking elements.

Competency-based and outcome-based education. Curricula should be organised around explicitly defined graduate competencies information organisation, data literacy, digital preservation, research support and professional ethics rather than around a fixed list of courses, consistent with the outcome-based orientation the National Universities Commission has progressively adopted through its Benchmark and Core Curriculum Minimum Academic Standards (National Universities Commission, 2022).

AI and data literacy. Given evidence that artificial intelligence is already reshaping information retrieval, cataloguing and reference services (Okunlaya et al., 2022), curricula must build foundational AI and data literacy across all LIS specialisms, not only within a single elective. International benchmark frameworks including the AI competencies for academic library workers published by the Association of College and Research Libraries (2024) and UNESCO's (2024) AI competency framework for students offer readily adaptable reference points for defining specific, assessable AI-literacy learning outcomes within Nigerian LIS curricula.

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Digital scholarship and MOOCs-based flexible delivery. Blended and open online delivery models, still unevenly adopted among Nigerian LIS educators (Olatokun et al., 2025), can extend the reach of scarce specialist expertise (for example, in data science or digital curation) across multiple institutions and support continuing professional development for practising librarians.

Entrepreneurship and work-integrated learning. Curricula should deliberately build entrepreneurial competencies, addressing the gap identified by Fagbola et al. (2024), through structured internships, practicum placements in data-intensive and corporate information environments and capstone projects co-supervised with industry partners.

Micro-credentials. Stackable, competency-specific micro-credentials in areas such as data curation, records digitisation, or AI-assisted reference services can allow both students and practising professionals to update their skills incrementally, without waiting for full curriculum review cycles.

Continuous curriculum review. Finally, curriculum innovation must be treated as an ongoing institutional process rather than a periodic event, with formal review cycles aligned to National Universities Commission accreditation time lines and involving practising professionals, employers and professional bodies alongside academic staff. Together, these elements build the logical case that curriculum change of the depth required can be sustained only within an institutional structure a faculty with the autonomy and resourcing to enact it.

6. Establishing Faculties of Library and Information Sciences

Several interlocking arguments support the establishment of dedicated Faculties of Library and Information Sciences in

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Nigerian universities. The case is also a regulatory one: the National Universities Commission's statutory mandate to approve and regulate university academic programmes and structures, including the creation of new faculties, derives from the National Universities Commission Act (2004), while the Librarians' Registration Council of Nigeria's own accreditation records indicate that the overwhelming majority of accredited LIS programmes nationally remain departmentally, rather than faculty-, based (Librarians' Registration Council of Nigeria, 2014)underscoring the scale of the structural reform proposed here.

First, academic autonomy. Faculty status would grant the discipline its own line in the university budget, its own admissions quota and direct representation at Senate through a substantive Dean, reducing competition for resources and curriculum time that currently characterises departments embedded within larger, unrelated faculties.

Second,. programme diversification and interdisciplinary collaboration. A faculty structure would permit the grouping of cognate but currently dispersed programmes library science, information systems, data and knowledge management and archives and records management under a single academic roof, enabling shared infrastructure (laboratories, digital repositories, data centres) and cross-programme electives that a single department embedded elsewhere cannot easily offer.

Third, enhanced research capacity and stronger governance. Autonomous faculties typically attract dedicated research funding lines, postgraduate supervision capacity and specialised research centres, addressing the teaching-and-research capacity gaps documented among Nigerian library-school lecturers (Osisanwo et al., 2025).

Fourth, improved accreditation and quality assurance. The

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National Universities Commission has, since 1989, progressively refined its curriculum regulation instrumentsfrom the original Minimum Academic Standards through the Benchmark Minimum Academic Standards to the current Core Curriculum and Minimum Academic Standards, each iteration emphasising outcome-based learning, competencies and institutional flexibility consistent with global best practice (National Universities Commission, 2022). A faculty structure would give LIS education a clearer locus for engaging this regulatory architecture and for pursuing accreditation independently rather than as an appendage of an unrelated discipline's accreditation cycle.

Fifth, international competitiveness. Nigerian universities seeking international academic partnerships, joint programmes and indexed research output in LIS increasingly interact with counterpart institutions organised as autonomous information schools or faculties abroad; a comparable structure at home would facilitate institutional-level partnerships, staff and student exchange and joint curriculum benchmarking.

7. Proposed Academic Programmes

Consistent with the technology-oriented reform themes identified in Sections 2 and 5, this paper proposes a coherent portfolio of Bachelor of Technology (B.Tech.) programmes for the proposed Faculty of Library and Information Sciences, reflecting the growing convergence between LIS and applied technology disciplines already visible in Nigerian universities of technology. The proposed portfolio, together with the primary graduate competencies each programme targets, is as follows:

1. **B.Tech. Library and Information Science:** the discipline's traditional core, updated to embed automated and cloud-based library systems, information organisation and reference and information-literacy instruction.

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2. **B.Tech. Data Science:** statistical reasoning, database design and applied data analytics for information environments, addressing the data-literacy gap identified by Ssekitto and Mukiibi (2023).

3. **B.Tech. Information Systems:** systems analysis and design, information architecture and enterprise information management for corporate and public-sector settings.

4. **B.Tech. Knowledge Management:** organisational knowledge capture, competitive intelligence and information-sharing systems, responding to continental calls for stronger knowledge-sharing infrastructure in African higher education (Odularu & Bokwe, 2025).

5. **B.Tech. Digital Curation:** digital preservation, metadata standards and repository management for born-digital and digitised heritage and research collections.

6. **B.Tech. Health Informatics:** health information systems, clinical data management and health records governance for Nigeria's expanding health-information infrastructure.

7. **B.Tech. Records and Archival Management Technology:** records life-cycle management, archival theory and digital records governance for government, corporate and cultural-heritage institutions.

8. **B.Tech. Publishing and Printing Technology:** scholarly and commercial publishing workflows, digital publishing platforms and print production technology.

9. **B.Tech. Museum and Monuments Information Management:** documentation, digitisation and information management for museum, heritage and monuments collections.

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10. **B.Tech. Artificial Intelligence and Information Analytics:** applied machine learning, natural-language processing and analytics for information retrieval and library-service innovation, directly building on the AI-library-services framework proposed by Okunlaya et al. (2022).

11. **B.Tech. Information Security:** information governance, cyber security fundamentals and data-protection compliance for information-intensive organisations.

12. **B.Tech. Digital Humanities** computational methods applied to humanities and cultural-heritage data, bridging LIS with allied humanities disciplines.

Each programme would share a common first-year foundation (information environments, communication skills, introductory computing and data handling) before progressive specialisation, with mandatory practicum placements, a final-year research or capstone project and elective clusters permitting students to build cross-programme competency profiles directly addressing the work-integrated learning and entrepreneurship gaps identified in Sections 4 and 5.

8. Proposed Conceptual Framework

The central conceptual contribution of this paper is an Input–Process–Outcome framework linking the external drivers of change to curriculum innovation, institutional transformation and ultimate development outcomes. The framework, summarised in Figure 1, is organised in four linked stages.

Inputs comprise the external forces that create pressure for change: technological advancements (artificial intelligence, data science, digital preservation), labour-market demands for converged information competencies, national education policy instruments (principally the National Universities Commission's

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Core Curriculum and Minimum Academic Standards) and global LIS standards and benchmarks, including the iSchool model reviewed in Section 2.

Curriculum Innovation is the first-order institutional response to these inputs, comprising programme diversification (the B.Tech. portfolio proposed in Section 7), technology integration (Section 5), competency-based learning design and structured industry collaboration.

Institutional Transformation is the second-order, structural response that this paper argues is necessary to sustain curriculum innovation: faculty establishment, the creation of new departments organised around cognate specialisms, dedicated research centres and formalised professional partnerships with bodies such as the Librarians' Registration Council of Nigeria and the Nigerian Library Association.

Outcomes are the intended downstream effects of sustained curriculum innovation and institutional transformation operating together: future-ready graduates, enhanced graduate employability, stronger research output, a more vibrant information-innovation ecosystem and, cumulatively, sustainable national development.

The framework's contribution to existing scholarship lies in making explicit and testablea claim that much of the prior literature treats implicitly: that curriculum innovation (the first-order response) is necessary but not sufficient and that institutional transformation (the second-order, structural response) is the condition under which curriculum innovation becomes self-sustaining rather than episodic. This distinguishes the framework from prior Nigerian LIS curriculum studies, which have generally evaluated curriculum content in isolation from the institutional structures that house it (see, for example, Edegbo, 2011; Ogunjimi et al., 2026).

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Figure 1. Proposed Input–Process–Outcome Conceptual Framework for Curriculum Innovation and Institutional Transformation in Nigerian Library and Information Science Education

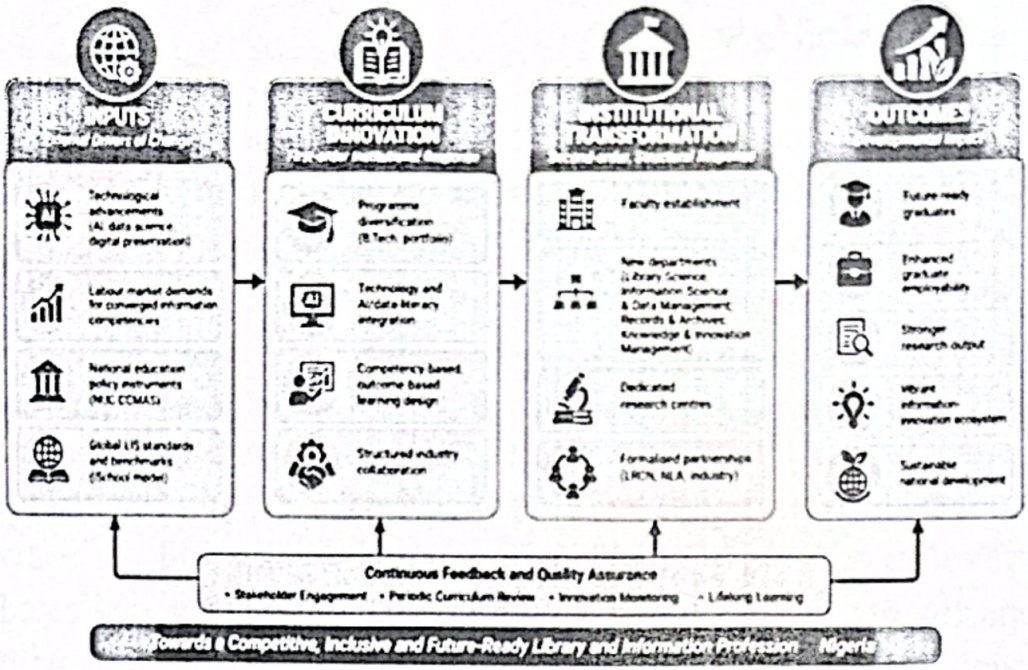


Figure 1. Proposed Input–Process–Outcome conceptual framework linking technological, labour-market and policy drivers to curriculum innovation, institutional transformation and national development

9. Implications

For universities, the analysis suggests that elevating LIS units to faculty status, even where phased and beginning with a small number of pilot institutions, is a structural investment likely to yield returns in graduate employability, research visibility and institutional partnershipsincluding an expanded institutional capacity to support functions such as distance learning, where well-resourced academic libraries have already been shown to make a meaningful difference (Opara et al., 2025). For policymakers and the National Universities Commission, the implication is a need to develop distinct Core Curriculum and Minimum Academic Standards documentation for an autonomous Faculty of Library and Information Sciences, reflecting the departmental and programme architecture proposed in Sections 6 and 7. For the Librarians' Registration Council of Nigeria and the Nigerian Library Association, the

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implication is an expanded role in co-designing curricula for the new technology-oriented programmes, ensuring professional licensure requirements evolve alongside academic curricula. For employers, the framework signals a widening pipeline of graduates equipped for data, records and knowledge-management roles beyond conventional librarianship, which should inform recruitment and internship partnerships. For researchers, the paper's conceptual framework offers a structure input, curriculum innovation, institutional transformation, outcomes against which future empirical studies of Nigerian LIS reform can be designed and compared.

10. Future Research Directions

This paper's proposals are conceptual and require empirical validation. Priority directions for future research include: empirical testing of the proposed Input–Process–Outcome framework, for example through structural modelling of the relationships between institutional structure, curriculum characteristics and graduate employability outcomes; comparative case studies across Nigerian universities that have and have not pursued faculty-level reorganisation of LIS education; longitudinal evaluation of curriculum reforms already underway, such as the sustainability-oriented redesign documented at Lead City University (Bakare & Bakare, 2024), to assess durability of effect beyond initial implementation; and international benchmarking studies comparing Nigerian LIS programme outcomes with those of iSchool-model institutions in North America, Europe and Asia.

11. Conclusion

Curriculum innovation in Nigerian LIS education has, for decades, been pursued largely as an incremental exercise of adding technology-related courses to curricula housed within departments embedded in unrelated faculties. This paper has

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argued, drawing on global curriculum-reform trends, the international precedent of the iSchool movement, recent Nigerian empirical evidence and Rogers' Diffusion of Innovation theory, that such incremental reform has reached the limits of what it can achieve absent structural change. Establishing autonomous Faculties of Library and Information Sciences organised around library science, information and data management, records and archives management and knowledge and innovation management and offering a diversified portfolio of technology-oriented academic programmes would provide the administrative autonomy, resource visibility and disciplinary coherence needed to sustain continuous curriculum innovation. The Input–Process–Outcome framework proposed in Section 8 makes explicit the logical connection between structural reform and the future-ready, employable, research-active graduates that Nigerian LIS education aims to produce. The value of the framework and of the broader argument advanced in this paper, lies in its contribution to LIS education not only in Nigeria but in comparable developing-country contexts confronting the same convergence of librarianship, data science and knowledge management; the proposals are intended to stimulate further empirical inquiry, institutional pilot initiatives and policy dialogue among universities, the National Universities Commission, the Librarians' Registration Council of Nigeria and the wider LIS professional community.

12. Declarations

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Data availability. This is a conceptual paper based on published literature and publicly available policy documents; no new empirical data set was generated or analysed.

Ethical approval. Not applicable. This study did not involve human or animal participants.

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