



## Review article

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### SWOT analysis of Bachelor of Health Information Management (B.HIM) Curriculum: an analytical review

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#### ABSTRACT

**Background/Objectives:** The newly approved Bachelor of Health Information Management (B.HIM) is tailored toward designing a befitting academic programme for HIM profession. The HIM profession works to facilitate accurate, reliable, complete and timely information needed for excellent health service delivery in Nigeria. This paper looks at the overview, philosophy, objectives, unique features of the new curriculum. **Design/Methods:** An analytical review of the curriculum focusing on the in-built strengths, perceived weakness, seemingly abundant opportunities and likely threats accompanying the applicability of the new document in the country. **Results:** The new curriculum is embedded with all necessary ingredients essential for high level training for appropriate decision-making in healthcare delivery system. It also offers some fundamental skills, knowledge and experiences that must be covered in order for a degree to be successfully accredited by the Health Records Officers' Registration Board of Nigeria as well as necessary ingredients to equip the graduates as credible employees in the eyes of potential employers. **Conclusion:** The paper recommends measures to explore identified strengths and opportunities in the curriculum to maximize their merits, while mechanisms to address the identified weakness and potential threats should be put in place.

**Keywords:** Core curriculum; Health information management; National universities commission; Undergraduate; Nigeria

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## INTRODUCTION

Bachelor of Health Information Management (B.HIM) on pages 257-291 of the newly released National Universities Commission's Core Curriculum and Minimum Academic Standards (CCMAS) for Nigerian Universities was released in December 2022. The new B.HIM curriculum is hosted in the Faculty of Allied Health Sciences. The health sector in Nigeria is a fast-growing sub-sector of the social services. Healthcare providers need accurate, reliable, complete and timely information for

planning, budgeting and healthcare decision-making. The new programme B.HIM is tailored to achieve the aforementioned needs and equally offers some fundamental skills, knowledge and experiences that must be covered in order for a degree to be successfully accredited by the profession and for graduates to be credible employees in the eyes of potential employers.

The philosophy of the B.HIM is to provide sound academic and professional training for prospective HIM Officers, who are potential employees in public, private and non-

governmental health and medical establishments. The programme was borne out of the realization of the need to expand HIM Programme to cover the training of high-level manpower needed in health sector at national, regional and international markets.

**Objectives:**

- i. To provide prospective HIM Officers with the intellectual and professional background adequate for their assignments and to make them adaptable to any changing situations within the healthcare industry;
- ii. To provide highly skilled manpower for leadership positions in Nigerian health industry;
- iii. To produce highly qualified and motivated personnel for the health information management industry.

**METHODS**

Analytical review of the new curriculum with a focus on its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

**RESULTS**

One of the features of this curriculum that makes it unique is that it will enable graduates to effectively deal with the organization and management of patients’ health data stored manually and electronically. The B.HIM as a degree course is new in Nigeria and highly relevant to the workforce demands in the 36 states of the federation. The numerous trained personnel in HIM at Diploma level can have the opportunity of attaining a higher qualification that is required for their promotion in the private and public service in Nigeria. This will surely enhance their employability skills.

**Table 1: 100 Level Course Content**

100 Level					
Course Code	Course Title	Unit(s)	Status	LH	PH
GST 111	Communication in English	2	C	15	45
GST 112	Nigerian Peoples & Culture	2	C	30	-
BIO 101	General Biology 1	2	C	30	-
BIO 121	General Biology II	2	C	30	-
BIO 111	General Biology Practical I	1	C	-	45
BIO 122	General Biology Practical II	1	C	-	45
CHM 101	General Chemistry I	2	C	30	-
CHM 121	General Chemistry II	2	C	30	-
CHM 111	Practical Chemistry I	1	C	-	45
CHM 122	Practical Chemistry II	1	C	-	45
PHY 101	General Physics I	2	C	30	-
PHY 121	General physics II	2	C	30	-
PHY 111	General Practical Physics I	1	C	-	45
PHY 122	General Practical Physics II	1	C	-	45
STA 111	Basic Statistics	2	C	30	-
<b>Total Units</b>		<b>24</b>			

**Table 2: 200 Level Course Content**

200 Level					
Course Code	Course Title	Unit(s)	Status	LH	PH
GST 212	Philosophy, Logic and HumanExistence	2	C	30	-
ENT 211	Entrepreneurship and Innovation	2	C	30	-
HIM 211	Introduction To Health Information Science	2	C	30	-
HIM 212	Health Records Management I	2	C	30	-
CHS 212	Introduction to Public Health & Primary health Care	2	C	30	-
ANA 201	Anatomy of Upper and Lower Limbs	2	C	15	45
HIM 221	Introduction to Information Technology and Organisational Information Security	2	C	30	-
HIM 222	Knowledge Management In Health Information System	2	C	30	-
HIM 223	Statistical Methods In Health Information Management I	2	C	30	-
HIM 224	Disease Classification, Clinical Coding, Indexing and Abstracting.	2	C	15	45
CHS 221	Principles of Epidemiology and Disease Surveillance	2	C	30	-
<b>Total Units</b>		<b>23</b>			

**Admission and Graduation Requirements:**

This is a five-year Degree Programme, which requires credit passes in the Senior Secondary Certificate (SSC) or its equivalent in five subjects (Mathematics, English, Biology, Physics and Chemistry) at not more than two sittings. This will be in addition to acceptable pass in the Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination (UTME). For Direct Entry (3- & 4-year degree programme) at least two A ‘Level papers in relevant subjects. There is also provision for three Year Direct Entry for candidates with HND in HIM and compulsory one-year NYSC discharged certificate. Four-Year Direct Entry is for Candidates with Professional Diploma (PD) or National Diploma (ND) in HIM.

**Table 3: 300 Level Course Content**

300 Level						
Course Code	Course Title	Unit(s)	Status	LH	PH	
GST 312	Peace and Conflict Resolution	2	C	30	-	
ENT 312	Venture Creation	2	C	15	45	
HIM 311	Hospital Official Statistics	2	C	30	-	
HIM 312	Policy, Legal and ethics aspect of HIM	2	C	30	-	
HIM 313	Database Construction And Management in Health Information System	2	C	15	45	
HIM 314	Statistical Methods in Health Information Management II	2	C	30	-	
HIM 315	Health Records Management II	2	C	30	-	
PHA 311	Introduction to Pharmacology I	2	C	30	-	
HIM 321	Health Care Financing Insurance Principles And Programmes	2	C	30	-	
HIM 322	Fundamental of Medical Practice	2	C	30	-	
HIM 323	Software Application to Health Information Management	2	C	15	45	
COM 315	Biostatistics	2	C	30	-	
<b>Total Units</b>		<b>24</b>				

**Table 4: 400 Level Course Content**

400 Level						
Course Code	Course Title	Unit(s)	Status	LH	PH	
HIM 411	Computer Application In Health Information System	2	C	30	-	
HIM 412	Principles Of Information Retrieval System	2	C	30	-	
HIM 413	Principles Of Management In Health Care System II	2	C	30	-	
HIM 414	Research Methods and Proposal writing in Health Information Management	2	C	30	-	
CHS 422	Demography and Social Statistics in Public Health	2	C	30	-	
HIM 460	Industrial Training in Medical and Health institutions	4	C	-	180	
<b>Total Units</b>		<b>14</b>				

**Table 5: 500 Level Course Content**

500 Level						
Course Code	Course Title	Unit(s)	Status	LH	PH	
HIM 511	Data Communications And telecommunications Networking and Structures	2	C	30	-	
HIM 512	Health Information System Analysis and Design	2	C	30	-	
HIM 513	Public Relations In Health Information System	2	C	30	-	
HIM 514	Health Records Management III	2	C	30	-	
CHS 512	Psychology of Development, Health Behaviour & Change Process	2	C	30	-	
HIM 521	Economics And Marketing of Health Information	2	C	30	-	
HIM 522	Preservation, Conservation and Disaster Management in Health Records	2	C	30	-	
HIM 523	Hospital Management, Interdepartmental Structure and Organogram	2	C	30	-	
HIM 524	Research Project	4	C	-	180	
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>20</b>				

- Four-Year Direct Entry: OND
- iii. Sixteen (16) total units course for computer with 90 hours of hands-on practical.
- iv. Twelve (12) total units course for Statistics.
- v. Eight (8) total units course for HIM.
- vi. Eight (8) total unit of course for managerial courses.
- vii. Introduction to Pharmacology I
- viii. Minimum of 6 months practical attachment at 400L second semester
- ix. It is 70% of CCMAS (core curriculum minimum academic standard).

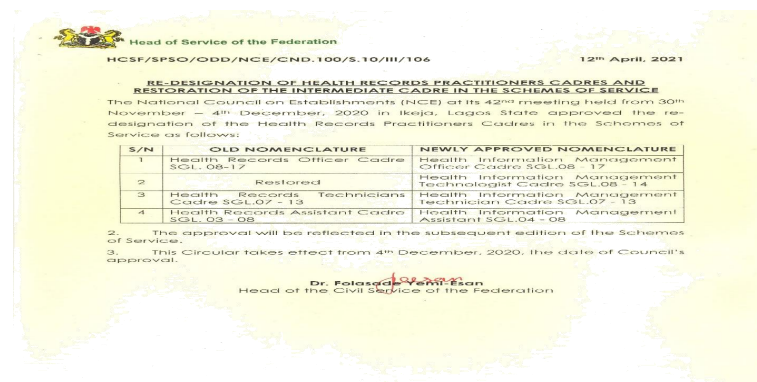
**Weakness of BHIM**

- i. There is provision for only ANA 201 Anatomy of Upper and Lower Limbs.
- ii. HIM 224 Disease Classification, Clinical Coding, Indexing and Abstracting is crowded rather than being in separate units.
- iii. HIM 322 Fundamental of Medical Practice contents is not elaborate enough to address professional current demands.
- iv. Monitoring and Evaluation as course is apparently missing. This is not encouraging at all.

**DISCUSSION**

**Strengths of B.HIM**

- i. Five-Year Degree Programme: This will expand the duration of the training and may essentially contribute to quality of prospective professionals.
- ii. Multi-Entry points:
  - Direct Entry A level
  - Three Year Direct Entry: HND



**Fig 1: NCE’s Re-designation of HIM Cadres**

**Opportunities of B.HIM**

- i. Ability of professionals to reach the highest level of their career.
- ii. Foundation for further review in future.
- iii. All Five-Year Degree Programme in health care industries has CONHESS 09/GL 10 as entry point in the scheme of service.

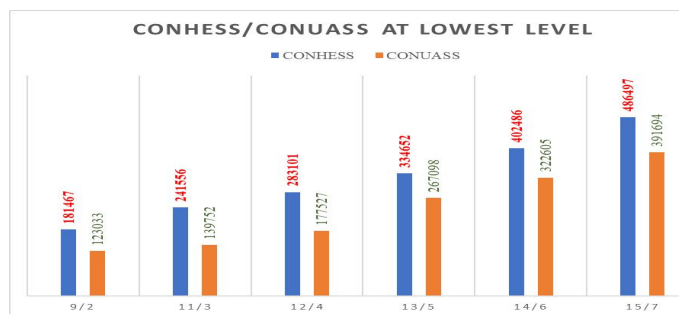
- iv. It promises to increase the productivity of HIM professionals thereby enhance their honors.
- v. Some Nigerian Universities, both public and private, have signified interest in running the programme, some have recruited staff and admitted students for the programme.
- vi. Postgraduate studies in HIM is now more feasible.
- vii. There is high possibility of having HIM professionals at highest academic positions in the nearest future.
- viii. Highly skilled manpower for leadership positions in the Nigerian health sector.
- ix. Highly creative and innovative HIM personnel for self-employment in Nigeria and elsewhere.

- ✓ Five of the above belong to service areas.

- iv. Wide disparity between health workers and lecturers monthly take home.

**CONCLUSION**

The B.HIM curriculum has been approved in Nigeria in the newly released NUC’s CCMAS pages 257-291 and designed to domicile in the Faculties of Allied Health Sciences in Nigeria universities. The new programme is designed to achieve excellence in essential HIM skills, and to enhance professional knowledge and experiences of HIM professionals in Nigeria and develop capacity for HIM in the subSaharan Africa. The curriculum has some strengths in term of contents, weaknesses in terms of contexts, opportunities at application and discernible threats.



**Fig 1: NCE’s Re-designation of HIM Cadres**

**Threats to B.HIM**

- i. Introduction of B.Sc. Information Technology and Health Informatics (page 292 of the curriculum).
- ii. Interdepartmental transfer of students at 200 level.
- iii. Shortage of HIM Scholars to takeup lecturing assignments in the Universities:
  - ✓ Only 18 PhD holders in HIM;
  - ✓ Eight of these are on contract in various universities;
  - ✓ Two are professorial post;
  - ✓ Three on permanent appointment;
  - ✓ Five are in Colleges of Health Tech and SHIMs;

**Recommendations**

- i. Exploration of 30% for coverage of more relevant courses;
- ii. Scholarship for identified brilliant but indigent students;
- iii. Improvement of take home of HIM officers;
- iv. Advocacy visit by the stakeholders to ministries, agencies, university and other would-be employers of HIM products;
- v. Monitoring of universities for compliance;
- vi. Further effort to harmonize the duplicity of programs in the new curriculum.

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### **Authors Contribution:**

MB conceived of the study, initiated the design, participated in content review and study coordination. TTA, MBA and RAA participated in the design, content analysis technical process and reviewed the final manuscript.