

Assessment of Curriculum for a Sustainable Interior Architecture and Design Education in Nigeria

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Interior architecture and design as a profession has played a significant role in people's daily lives since ancient times, and interest in education within the profession has increased considerably over the years. The teaching of interior architecture is focused on designing and shaping internal spaces that are functional, safe, sustainable, and aesthetically pleasing within the built environment. However, in Nigeria, although architecture education and curriculum have attracted considerable academic attention, the gap has shown that interior architecture remains underexplored, particularly in terms of sustainable pedagogy, curriculum, and practice. This paper presents an assessment of existing literature and policy documents on the curriculum for sustainable interior architectural education in Nigeria, its challenges and possibilities within the context of global and local imperatives. An assessment of scholarly publications, institutional reports, the NUC policy documents on CCMAS Architecture 2023 for interior architecture and design education in Nigeria, and accreditation guidelines was conducted using desktop research methodology. However, promising opportunities are emerging from a greater focus on sustainable development, technological advancements, and the integration of indigenous knowledge systems into sustainable interior education and practices. The study recommends that successfully embedding sustainable local content into interior architectural education requires curriculum reform, enhanced faculty capacity, stronger collaborations between industry and academia, and contextually adapted approaches that align global standards with Nigeria's socio-cultural realities. The paper concludes by offering practical recommendations for designers, educators, policymakers, researchers, industry stakeholders, and community members. They are intended to emphasize pathways that boost the role of sustainable, future-oriented education, enabling graduates to create spaces that are in harmony with the environment, enrich lives, and promote future well-being.

Keywords: Curriculum, education, Interior Architecture and Design, Nigeria, sustainable

Introduction

Interior architecture and design have been significant in people's daily lives since ancient times (Jia, 2025), and the focus on education in this profession has grown considerably over the years. Interior architecture and design, as an occupation, involves creating and shaping internal spaces that are functional, safe, sustainable, and visually appealing within the built environment (Kaçar, 1998 as cited in Kaptan, 2016). The interior architecture and design also integrate spatial design, environmental performance, material innovation, and cultural expression to enhance human well-being (Habbak, 2021). Therefore, students in this field must receive comprehensive training and acquire the knowledge necessary to help create a better environment for everyone. In the event of this, Leong et al. (2024) have posited that interior architecture education is increasingly focusing on sustainability through specialized courses, the adoption of new teaching paradigms, and collaborations with industry and accreditation bodies. However, despite this development, Rashdan *et al.* (2024) argued that interior architecture and design represent a crucial yet frequently neglected domain within the broader spectrum of architectural studies. This is evident in the Nigerian context, where the interior architecture and design profession has experienced significant

underdevelopment and remains largely within the architectural discipline, resulting in a scarcity of scholarly inquiry into its educational trajectories and the integration of sustainable curriculum and practices (CCMAS, 2023). Again, while architectural education has garnered significant academic interest, interior architecture and design education has not received the necessary attention in the study of sustainable pedagogy, curriculum, and practice (CCMAS, 2023). Therefore, this study aims to assess the curriculum for sustainable interior architecture education in Nigeria, focusing on identifying its challenges and exploring the possibilities within the program. The objectives are to assess the integration of sustainability into the current interior architecture and design pedagogy and curriculum in Nigeria. To determine whether the requirement for faculty expertise and resource limitations can be effectively addressed to improve interior architectural education in Nigeria. To assess the role that the industry, along with national and international collaborations, plays in advancing sustainable interior education architecture in Nigeria. This study utilized desktop research methodology to assess scholarly publications, institutional reports, accreditation standards, and policies in the Nigerian University Commission (NUC) policy documents on the CCMAS Architecture 2023, data from institutional websites, international academic information and

Nigerian repositories, such as peer-reviewed journals. This was framed within the context of both local and international regulatory authorities, for sustainable pedagogical practices, curriculum development, and the professional practices pertinent to the field.

In a significant development of the educational landscape for Nigeria, the National University Commission (NUC) implemented the Core Curriculum and Minimum Academic Standards (CCMAS) in 2023. This initiative marks a critical advancement in the formal recognition and definition of Interior Architecture and Design as an independent discipline within the framework of Nigerian higher institutions. The introduction of CCMAS represents a concerted effort to elevate academic standards and develop the pedagogical structure of the field, thereby fostering a more rigorous and specialized academic environment for future practitioners in Interior Architecture and Design. This initiative is expected to foster and establish a strong academic environment conducive to the development and recognition of interior architectural studies (CCMAS) 2023). This is a four-year Bachelor of Science (BSc) program in Interior Architecture and Design, formed to educate and equip students with the skills needed to enhance and optimize human interaction and experience within spaces. Although the unbundling of architecture as a faculty into different departments is an ongoing process in Nigerian universities, there is, in parallel, a sizeable number of private training institutions in interior design that offer certificates and short-course pathways that respond to market demand but do not replace NUC-accredited degrees. Some of these centres frequently partner with industry and can be leveraged for practice-based exposure (Jenniez School of African Interior Design, n.d.; Zephyr Interior Design Academy, n.d.) The discourse on sustainable education has gained increasing global prominence, particularly within disciplines concerned with the built environment (Australia & Edition, 2017). This study is significant due to the adoption of the CCMAS by the NUC and the 2015 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 193 UN member states, which promote inclusive and equitable quality education to facilitate lifelong learning for all (Opoku, 2016). By enhancing design education in current and future institutions, the research seeks to strengthen the authority and credibility of interior architecture and design education and the practice.

Unbundling of the Faculty of Architecture

Most universities, whether federal, state, or private, are still in the process of unbundling their programmes. Among many Nigerian Universities offering Architecture, some have made significant progress in this direction, such as the Federal University of Technology, Minna, which was unbundled in December 2024, in April 2025, the University of Jos announced the unbundling of its B.Sc. in Architecture into three separate departments:

Architecture, Interior Architecture and Design, and Landscape Architecture (University of Jos, 2025). Obafemi Awolowo University (OAU) offers a comprehensive Executive Master's program in Interior Design (M.I.D.) through its Centre for Distance Learning, within the Department of Architecture. This program is specifically tailored for professionals actively engaged in the workforce (Obafemi Awolowo University, 2024). In a significant development, the University of Lagos unveiled a new Faculty of Architecture in August 2025, encompassing the departments of Architecture, Interior Architecture and Design, and Landscape Architecture (Akinrefon, 2025). These federal universities, representing a diverse array of Nigerian geopolitical zones, were randomly selected to illustrate advancements in interior architecture and design education.

Evolution of Interior Architecture and Design

Interior architecture and design is a dynamic and multifaceted field of study, continually shaped by a complex interplay of cultural influences, historical legacies, and technological innovations (Enwin *et al.*, 2024). This is evident in Pile (2013) as cited in Enwin *et al.* (2024) who traced the evolution of interior design from antiquity, highlighting the development of historical periods, and examined the cultural, social, and technological factors that influenced its trajectory. Historically, interior architecture and design first emerged and became institutionalised in the United States of America, and spread worldwide, with both fields of education and profession developing concurrently (Kaptan, 2014; Kaptan, 2016). The 19th century introduced new inventions that transformed people's lives, leading to a variety of new social needs for a richer lifestyle. This highlights the emergence of new concepts and roles, driven by innovative tools and changing social values. This increase in accessible information enabled individuals to use it effectively, bringing about radical changes in educational models and traditional professions, supported by programs that educated individuals in these areas gained widespread acceptance (Kaptan, 2016). Specialisation in the field became a natural outcome of these developments. By this stage, interior architecture and design emerged as both occupations and academic disciplines, spreading across the globe and becoming institutionalised in the early 20th century. The evolution from traditional decorative practices to a recognised professional discipline began at established institutions such as the New York School of Interior Design in 1916. What initially was regarded as the art of decorating has now evolved into a highly specialised programme that requires years of study and experience (Darbandi, *et al.*, 2023). A statement by Guerin (1992) also corroborated that interior design has changed dramatically since the beginning of the twentieth century, when it was

merely interior decoration. Looking beyond the 20th century, Gurien prompts a crucial question about the evolution of interior design education and how educators must navigate the complexities of identifying key issues that will influence the profession. This includes exploring how problem-solving in interior design may evolve and re-evaluating teaching methods that effectively equip students in this dynamic landscape. Ultimately, educators must focus on balancing these diverse challenges. Additionally, this prompts a further examination of pedagogical methods, emphasizing the need for effective educational frameworks that enable students at all academic levels to develop into competent designers in an increasingly culturally layered environment. Gurien (1992) noted that there has been significant progress in professionalism, recognition, and the emergence of the field of interior design over the past two decades, thanks to the efforts of the Interior Design Education Council (IDEC), Foundation for Interior Design Education and Research (FIDER) and other professional organisations. While this has established a solid foundation, it is essential to prepare for professional development in the years to come, as Gurien's emphasis suggests.

Interior Decoration and Interior Design

Originally called "interior decoration," this field primarily focused on textiles and furnishings in the 19th century. However, over time, it expanded to include the arrangement of spaces and the placement of furniture. These rapid changes underscored the need for educational programmes in the field, prompting some universities to begin offering related courses (Kaptan, 2016; Ormecioglu & Ucar, 2012). It is important to note that in the 20th century, as the concepts of interior architecture and design emerged, various professional groups began to engage in the design of interior spaces. Courses in interior decoration became available only in 1904, with the New York School of Applied and Fine Arts, now known as the Parsons School of Design, one of the first institutions to offer such programs (Piotrowski 1989, as cited in Kaptan, 2016). These courses were established after Frank Alvah Parsons joined the faculty, at which point there was sufficient interest among some students (Tate *et al.*, 1986). The demand for education in interior decoration led the National Association for Decorative Arts and Industries to create a program that met the era's needs. The curriculum included three main areas: fine and decorative arts, home economics, and architecture (Veitch, 1992 as cited in Kaptan, 2016).

Philosophy of Interior Architecture and Design Education

The study of interior architecture and design is a complex blend of art and science, and its philosophy serves as a guiding principle for creating meaningful

spaces. According to the International Federation of Interior Architects and Designers (IFI), interior architecture involves efforts in enhancing the quality of life and well-being, safeguarding health, comfort, and safety (IFI, 2011). The design approach in interior architecture emphasises the relationship between users and their spaces, positing that addressing users' needs contributes significantly to improving quality of life. This discipline tackles design challenges by considering functional, structural, and aesthetic dimensions, creating a synergy among them. Before the establishment of interior design schools, the practice was shaped by various experiences and apprenticeships influenced by cultural, social, and technological factors. This history underscores the connection between interior design and other fields such as architecture, art, psychology, and sociology, emphasizing theoretical concepts of space, form, function, and aesthetics (Enwin *et al.*, 2024). The main focus of the philosophy of interior architecture and design is on harmonizing aesthetics with functionality. The ability to create spaces and furnishings that not only look beautiful but also enhance our everyday lives is the philosophy deeply rooted in understanding the needs and emotions of the inhabitants (Ahmed, 2019). The most important aspect of this philosophy is balance because it creates a sense of tranquillity, making spaces feel welcoming and comfortable. As environmental awareness grows, designers are increasingly focused on creating eco-friendly environments by using sustainable materials, maximising energy efficiency, and incorporating biophilic design principles. As a result, sustainability is becoming an essential component of interior design philosophy (Enwin *et al.*, 2024). By prioritizing sustainability, interior designers can create spaces that are not only beautiful but also responsible, by transforming ordinary spaces into extraordinary experiences that enrich occupants' lives. With a solid understanding of the principles of balance, identity, and sustainability, designers can create interiors that meet aesthetic standards while also promoting well-being and a sense of belonging.

The Role of Interior Architect and Interior Designer in the Built Environment

Interior architecture and interior design both strive to enhance user experiences in interior spaces, but they differ in approach. Interior architecture emphasizes functionality, structure, and space planning, creating liveable environments while considering human and environmental relationships (Fitoza, 2014). The responsibilities of interior architects include a broad range of duties: research, spatial analysis, making design decisions, preparing projects, selecting materials, detailing, modelling, presenting ideas, and solving production and application issues. Taking into account aspects such as colour, texture, natural and artificial lighting, sound, heating, ventilation, air conditioning, and other elements related to the built

environment, among many others. An interior designer enhances the aesthetics and refreshes a space with new finishes, furniture, and decorations without altering the building's structure. The term "interior architecture" has become the globally accepted designation for those working in this field (Kaptan, 2014).

The Current State of Interior Architecture Education in Nigerian Universities

The Core Curriculum Minimum Academic Standards (CCMAS) for the Nigerian University System, a document initiated by the Nigerian University Commission (NUC), the regulatory body, was introduced in 2023 for all university disciplines, including Architecture. This notable policy in the NUC's new CCMAS page for architecture-related disciplines lists the B.Sc. Interior Architecture and

Design alongside Architecture, Furniture Design, Landscape Architecture, and Naval Architecture. This formal recognition creates a supportive policy framework for universities to establish interior architecture and design degrees with sustainability-aligned outcomes. The programme is based on a sound philosophy of combining arts and science through theoretical and practical means. It emphasises equipping the students with the necessary 21st-century skills to enhance their employability. This is further enhanced by unique features such as local Nigerian content, exposure to best practices in the profession, and the necessary entrepreneurial skills for self-employment and job creation. This will culminate in the production of professionals equipped with the requisite knowledge and competencies to practice (CCMAS, 2023).

Table 1: Structure and Regulatory Assessment of Interior Architecture and Design Education Programme in Nigerian Universities

Institution/Provider	Programme Title, Type & Level	Accreditation	Sustainability Coverage
Federal University of Technology, Minna Federal University to unbundle Interior Architecture as a distinct department University of Jos.	BSc Interior Architecture Design (launched 2025). Undergraduate degree in the Faculty of Architecture	NUC academic accreditation; ARCON recognition (under the Architecture umbrella)	Developing Inherits environmental design modules from architecture; potential for interior-specific sustainability is still emerging
Federal University to unbundle Interior Architecture as a distinct department	BSc Interior Architecture Design (launched 2025). Undergraduate degree in the Faculty of Architecture	NUC academic accreditation; ARCON recognition (under the Architecture umbrella)	Developing – Inherits environmental design modules from architecture; potential for interior-specific sustainability is still emerging
University of Lagos Federal University to unbundle Interior Architecture as a distinct department	BSc Interior Architecture Design (launched 2025). Undergraduate degree in the Faculty of Architecture	NUC academic accreditation; ARCON recognition (under the Architecture umbrella)	Developing – Inherits environmental design modules from architecture; potential for interior-specific sustainability is still emerging
Obafemi Awolowo University (OAU), Ile-Ife Targets professionals, designers, and entrepreneurs seeking advanced interior design skills	Executive Master's in Interior Design (M.ID). Professional postgraduate (distance learning and in-person)	NUC; housed in Dept. of Architecture; linked to OAU CDL	Practice-oriented programme; sustainability treated through material selection, adaptive reuse, lighting, and interior environmental systems
Other Public/Private Universities (Architecture departments). Interior courses rarely stand alone; the sustainability emphasis is diluted	Interior Architecture/Design courses as electives or options in B.Sc./M.Sc. Architecture. Embedded within Architecture programmes	ARCON + NUC (architecture accreditation)	Sustainability taught via architecture and environmental design courses; interior content limited

Sustainable Pedagogy- Interior Architecture Curriculum Content

The integration of sustainability literacy into built environment programs at all levels of higher education is also driven by the increasing need for sustainability-literate graduates across most employment sectors (Opoku & Guthrie, 2018). All educational institutions offering interior architecture and design are obliged to ensure that the students are equipped with the right theoretical, aesthetic, and practical knowledge (Aktas, 2005). These unique features of a sustainable context-specific syllabus distinguish the Interior Architecture and Design curriculum of the CCMAS from previous versions of the Benchmark Minimum Academic Standards (BMAS) and similar offerings at top universities worldwide (CCMAS, 2023).

The curriculum for all universities in Nigeria is based on the minimum standards set by the NUC- the government regulatory body for higher institutions of

learning in the country. Each department in the faculty, of which Interior Architecture and Design is a part, selects from over a hundred course titles to design its programs. Key highlights of the new curriculum include: **(i)** The curriculum provides for 70% minimum core course requirements for graduation. Each Nigerian university is expected to contribute to the remaining 30% to align with the mandate of a context-specific curriculum. **(ii)** In consonance with global best practice, the curriculum is to stimulate blended learning in its delivery. **(iii)** The unbundling of the faculty of Architecture has Architecture, Architectural Technology, Furniture Design, Interior Architecture and Design, Landscape Architecture and Naval Architecture. **(iv)** Reduction of the General Studies (GST) course from 36 credit units to 12 credit units of 6 courses. **(v)** Entrepreneurship repackaged with the introduction of program-specific (CCMAS 2023).

Table 2: The Features of the Interior Architecture and Design Curriculum

Unique features of the programme	The Employability Skills include	21st Century Skills
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The inclusion of a design studio that focuses on indigenous Nigerian culture, context and content (materials, elements and furniture), and how these can be incorporated into the design of contemporary interior spaces. 2. Introduction of a new course: Business Practices/Case Studies in Interior Architecture and Design, to be delivered online along with SIWES. 3. Prepare graduates on developing business proposals/ventures for Micro, Small and Medium-Scale Enterprises (MSME), thereby preparing them to become self-employed and employers of labour. 	<p>Graduates of the programme shall be equipped with the knowledge and competencies to undertake the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Conduct systematic theoretical and practical investigation of problems and challenges in interior environments and proffer solutions 2. Design functional and aesthetically pleasing interior spaces; 3. Present design ideas through physical and digital media and models, as well as written and verbal communication 4. Produce presentation, working drawings, and details for interior design projects 5. Write specifications and prepare cost estimates for projects 6. Design and construct basic interior furniture and fittings 7. Identify gaps and opportunities in the field and translate these into successful business ventures; 8. Manage interior architecture and design firms and outfits; and 9. Supervise interior construction projects. 	<p>Graduates of the programme will be equipped with the following 21st-century skills:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use of Building Information Modelling (BIM) software and digital media for the design and management of interior architecture and design projects 2. Critical thinking, problem solving, reasoning, analysis, interpretation, synthesizing information; 3. creativity, artistry, curiosity, imagination, innovation, personal expression; 4. perseverance, self-direction, planning, self-discipline, adaptability, initiative; 5. oral and written communication, public speaking and presenting, listening; 6. leadership, teamwork, collaboration, cooperation, facility in using virtual workspaces; and 7. economic and financial literacy, entrepreneurialism.

Table 3 presents a sample breakdown of courses into modules within the context-specific syllabus for the Department of Interior Architecture and Design at the University of Lagos, following the 70:30 ratio set by the NUC. The arrangement of these modules may vary slightly between institutions due to the emphasis on

the content-specific mandate. This example shows a broad distribution of the required courses under each module.

A key feature of the CCMAS for Interior Architecture and Design is the inclusion of a design studio that focuses on indigenous Nigerian culture, context, and

content (CCMAS, 2023). This encourages the integration of our cultural heritage into modern interior architecture and design pedagogy to foster a harmonious coexistence between culture and innovation. This interplay not only enriches our cultural heritage but also paves the way for sustainable practices in the industry. Borrowing from the claim in the research conducted by Owoicho *et al.* (2024), who have identified culture as the primary factor influencing the evolution of a community's architecture. By doing so, we contribute not only to preserving our interior architectural heritage but also to shaping the identity of the built environment. Research demonstrates that the complexities of

problem-solving in the domain of interior architecture education necessitate a multifaceted approach to curriculum development in the 21st century (Gurein, 1992). This approach should encompass various elements, including the design of a sustainable curriculum, institutional frameworks, the adequacy of faculty expertise and capacity, infrastructural resources, industry partnerships, and the integration of indigenous knowledge systems (Obiora *et al.*, 2015). Consequently, the effective implementation of such a comprehensive system is imperative for establishing a sustainable curriculum in Interior Architecture and Design within the Nigerian context.

Table 3: Example of the Modules and Course Titles for Interior Architecture and Design (70% NUC – CCMAS and 30% Faculty) University of Lagos

Module 1: Interior Design Studio	Module 2: History & Theoretical Studies	Module 3: Humanities and Social Studies	Module 4: Architectural Science, Materials & Construction Technology	Module 5: Computer Applications	Module 6: Professional Practice / Management Studies	Module 7: General Studies
Design Fundamentals, Design Communication, Space Planning & Decoration, Furniture & Product Design, Colour & Painting, Modelling & Sculpture.	Evolution of Interior Design Styles, Historical & Cultural Influences, Vernacular Interiors, Interior Design Criticism, Design Movements.	Environmental Psychology, Research Methodology, Behavioural Studies.	Evolution of Interior Design Styles, Historical & Cultural Influences, Vernacular Interiors, Interior Design Criticism, Design Movements	2D & 3D Digital Design Tools, 3D Visualization, Rendering, 3D Printing, Digital Fabrication	Project Management, Professional Ethics & Conduct, Entrepreneurship & Interior Design Business, Interior Building Codes & Regulations, Contract & Dispute Resolution, Estimation & Costing)	General Studies Courses

Faculty Expertise and Accreditation Status as Recommended by NUC

The qualifications and experience of lecturers are also important elements in assessing the quality of the curriculum for interior architecture and design education. The recommended minimum academic staff-student ratio is 1:15 (CCMAS, 2023). The NUC recommends the following academic staff ranks: Graduate Assistant, Assistant Lecturer, Lecturer II, Lecturer I, Senior Lecturer, Reader (Associate Professor), and Professor. Academic Support Personnel, including Teaching Assistants and Demonstrators, to assist lecturers with tutorials, practical, and fieldwork. Administrative support staff, such as confidential secretaries, clerical officers, typists, messengers, and cleaners, should be responsible for the smooth functioning of departments and faculty offices. A competent senior technical staff member should be available to maintain teaching and research equipment. A library or resource centre

should be provided at the programme or faculty level for quick reference. It should be stocked with reference materials, current journals, and periodicals relevant to the programme. Internet access and electronic materials are highly recommended for the library. Accreditation systems include standards that increase the frequency of international cultural educational networks, facilitate their growth, and guide them (Yusuf & Lukman, 2024). As of this assessment, the institutions offering interior architecture and design education are still in their early stages and have not yet undergone accreditation processes. The Architect Registration Council of Nigeria (ARCON) is a regulatory body responsible for maintaining the standards of knowledge and skill attained by persons seeking to become members of the architectural profession. Therefore, ARCON maintains and updates a public list of accredited architecture schools; nonetheless, no equivalent ARCON list exists for stand-alone interior

architecture and design degrees, and as such, the programme primarily falls under NUC's academic accreditation responsibility. NUC accreditation bulletins lack a searchable inventory for Interior Architecture and Design across institutions, reflecting the early stage of the national roll-out, even with its inclusion in CCMAS 2023 (arconigeria.gov.ng, NUC-CCMAS).

Challenges towards Sustainable Interior Architecture and Design Education in Nigeria

Interior architecture and design education in Nigeria is a relatively emerging field that has gained some recognition in recent years due to the growing demand for skilled design professionals. (CCMAS). The program encounters numerous challenges in effectively implementing curricula, as resources and access to advanced technology can be limited, since institutions are still at an early stage (Agoha, 2013). Cordan *et al.* (2014) asserted that educational programs and curricula represent critical components within the broader educational process. Consequently, adherence to established curriculum standards serves as the formal mechanism through which the intended educational objectives are to be realised. Others include fragile institutional frameworks, insufficient faculty capacity and expertise, inadequate infrastructure, and weak linkages with industry, as earlier anticipated in a study by Agoha (2013). Additionally, the lack of awareness about the importance of interior architecture and design education as a degree program can hinder enrolment growth and support. Currently, the professional regulation remains under ARCON, which focuses on architecture (arconigeria.gov.ng, NUC-CCMAS). This blurred disciplinary identity may hinder investment in standalone programs, limit professional growth, and restrict curriculum innovation and sustainability. Universities may face shortages of design studios, laboratories, libraries, and digital infrastructure due to funding constraints, while inadequate workshop facilities impede hands-on exploration of sustainable materials and furniture prototyping. Partnerships between universities and industry-based interior architects are not yet clearly established. Research on sustainable interior architecture and design education in Nigeria is limited, therefore reducing the evidence base for curriculum development. These can constrain the discipline's ability to respond to national and global sustainability requirements.

Professional Bodies and Industry Interface

The research indicates that private training institutions specializing in interior design provide certificates and short courses that are responsive to market demands; however, these offerings do not serve as a substitute for degrees accredited by the National Universities Commission (NUC). While organizations such as the Interior Designers Association of Nigeria (IDAN) and

various private training institutions contribute substantially to facilitating practice-based learning, there is a notable deficiency in systematic integration within the academic curricula established by the Commission for Curriculum and Monitoring in Academic Standards (CCMAS) 2023 for university programs in Nigeria. Notably, the current CCMAS framework does not incorporate a curriculum that encompasses private training initiatives.

Possibilities of Advancing Sustainable Interior Architecture and Design Education in Nigeria

While the challenges facing sustainable interior architecture and design education in Nigeria are obvious, they are balanced by emerging possibilities that could transform the discipline if integrated effectively. These possibilities include: (i) *Policy Framework*: The inclusion of Interior Architecture and Design in the NUC-CCMAS supports the development of specialized degree programs and allocates 30% of space for universities to integrate sustainability principles, aligning with the UNESCO-UIA Charter and the SDGs. Effective implementation of this reform could position Nigeria as a leader in sustainable interior architecture and design education. (ii) *Technological advancements*: The use of digital technologies in the design process offers numerous advantages in the field of interior architecture (Gere, 2019 as referenced in Demirarslan *et al.*, 2020). Software such as AutoCAD, RealCAD, Revit, 3D Max, SketchUp, ArchiCAD, Cinema 4D, Interior Design CAD, Vectorworks, and others facilitate the development of both 2D and 3D spaces. The recent surge in artificial intelligence research and the implementation of AI tools in interior architecture have significantly contributed to this emerging trend of digital technology since 1990 (Demirarslan *et al.*, 2020). (iii) *Indigenous knowledge systems*: A key feature is the design studio that highlights indigenous Nigerian culture and content (CCMAS, 2023). Utilizing Nigeria's rich interior spatial practices offers sustainable alternatives, making it vital to integrate this heritage into interior architecture curricula for enhanced sustainability and culturally relevant, affordable design solutions, and finally, industry linkages and the ability to grow a student and professional community.

Decisions and Strategies

The current state of interior architecture and design education in Nigeria is recognized as being in its formative stages. This study underscores the nascent development of this field within the country, emphasizing the critical need to implement sustainable curricula, establish robust accreditation processes, and foster collaborative relationships between industry and academia. Such measures are essential to advance the quality and relevance of education in interior architecture and design in

Nigeria, ensuring it meets both current standards and future needs.

The significant gaps revealed must be given adequate attention from the inception. However, there are emerging possibilities, such as a growing emphasis on sustainable development, technological advancements, and the inclusion of local knowledge to enhance sustainable interior education and practice. However, all curricula must be directly evaluated by the respective institutions in accordance with the National Universities Commission (NUC)'s mandate. This obliges each university to develop a context-specific sustainable curriculum for teaching and practice. Although Nigeria has endorsed the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (Alamu, 2017), there must also be explicit national policies requiring the integration of sustainability into interior architecture and design education; universities and faculties must independently innovate in collaboration with NUC, as outlined in the CCMAS (CCMAS, 2023). It is important to recognise that Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4) emphasises providing inclusive and equitable quality education, as well as promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all (Hanachor & Wordu, 2019)

Conclusion

This assessment encourages a rethink of interior architecture and design education in Nigeria and underlines its contribution to sustainable development. The curriculum should include cultural contexts, especially when examining traditional interior building materials, indigenous knowledge about layouts and interior spaces, and adaptive reuse practices. Additionally, the teaching methods should be adapted to promote community-based learning and integrate traditional apprenticeship-style design studios. This approach can be achieved through case studies, hands-on design studios, and research that not only highlight the environmental, but also the cultural and economic benefits of indigenous methods to better align with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Interior architecture and design is a specialized discipline that should work in harmony with other allied professions to design interior spaces within the built environment. It should equip students with the requisite knowledge and skills needed to create better interior environments that promote human well-being. In a constantly evolving design landscape, interior architects have a wide range of responsibilities that must be effectively managed. The study concludes that it is essential to reform the curriculum periodically, enhance faculty training and expertise, and foster stronger partnerships between industry, academia and other stakeholders. Ultimately, interior architecture and design should align with global standards and best practices with Nigeria's geopolitical and cultural realities.

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