



**CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION AND PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS PERFORMANCE
IN WAJIR EAST SUB-COUNTY, KENYA**

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ABSTRACT

The influence of curriculum development and implementation on the performance of public secondary schools is a critical area of study, particularly in regions like Wajir East Sub-County, Kenya, where educational outcomes face various challenges. This study investigated the impact of curriculum development and implementation on the performance of public secondary schools in Wajir East Sub-County. Using a descriptive survey research methodology, both quantitative and qualitative data were collected from 15 public secondary schools in the sub-county, involving 255 educators, 15 principals, and 15 board of management (BOM) members, totaling 285 respondents. Data collection tools included principal interview guidelines and teacher questionnaires, which underwent pilot testing to ensure validity and reliability. The findings revealed significant relationships between the examined variable and school performance. Curriculum development and implementation was found to positively influence school performance, with an emphasis on aligning the curriculum with national standards, providing adequate teacher training, and promoting student-centered teaching methods. Based on the study findings, several recommendations were proposed to improve school curriculum development and implementation. These included prioritizing curriculum alignment with national standards.

Key Words: Curriculum Development, Curriculum Implementation

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INTRODUCTION

According to the Ministry of Education in Kenya, BOMs play a critical role in ensuring quality education delivery, promoting a conducive learning environment, and providing leadership in school management (Republic of Kenya, 2013). However, despite the BOM's significance, the quality of education in public secondary schools in Wajir East Sub-county, Kenya, remains low, with students performing poorly in national examinations. The BoM has the mandate to formulate policies and oversee the implementation of these policies in the schools (Ireson, 2018). The policies and practices adopted by the BoM have a significant influence on the motivation of teachers. Teacher motivation is a critical factor that determines the success of any educational system. Motivated teachers are more likely to provide quality instruction and have a positive impact on student learning outcomes. BoM governance practices have been identified as one of the factors that influence teacher motivation in public secondary schools across the globe (Bhatti, 2019).

Globally, in many countries, the governance practices of the Board of Management (BOM) have been identified as a key factor influencing teacher motivation in public secondary schools. This is due to the fact that the BOM is responsible for the management and oversight of school operations, including the allocation of resources and the development of policies and procedures. Therefore, understanding the influence of BOM governance practices on teacher motivation is crucial for the effective management of public secondary schools.

In the United States, several studies have highlighted the importance of effective governance practices on teacher motivation. For example, a study by the National Council on Teacher Quality (2018) found that schools with strong governance practices had higher levels of teacher satisfaction and retention. The study recommended that school districts prioritize the development and implementation of effective governance practices to improve teacher motivation.

Regionally, in Ghana, studies have shown that the Board of Governors (BoG) has an important role to play in the motivation of teachers in public secondary schools. However, there are concerns about the effectiveness of BoG governance practices, including inadequate training for members, lack of resources, and political interference, which may hinder their ability to effectively manage schools and motivate teachers (Abdul-Rahman, 2018; Yidana, 2019).

In Kenya, the government established Boards of Management (BoMs) to oversee the management of public schools. The BoMs are made up of elected members from the school community and appointed members by the government. The BoMs are responsible for managing the school's finances, overseeing academic programs, and ensuring compliance with government policies.

Several studies have examined the impact of BoM governance practices on teacher motivation in Kenyan public secondary schools. For example, a study by Njoroge et al. (2018) found that BoM support for teachers, such as providing teaching materials and organizing teacher development programs, was positively associated with teacher motivation. On the other hand, BoM interference in teacher management and lack of transparency in decision-making were negatively associated with teacher motivation. In Wajir East Sub-County, which is predominantly inhabited by pastoralist communities, there is a need to investigate the influence of BoM governance practices on teacher motivation. The study will contribute to the existing literature on BoM governance practices and teacher motivation in Kenya, and provide insights for policy and practice in the education sector.

Statement of the Problem

The Board of Management (BOM) plays a crucial role in shaping the educational environment and determining the overall performance of secondary schools in Wajir County. The BOM is responsible for making important decisions related to resource allocation, curriculum implementation, teacher

recruitment, and school governance (Abdi & Karanja, 2019). Their decisions and actions can have a direct impact on the academic achievements of students in these schools. Through effective management and strategic decision-making, the BOM can create an environment conducive to learning, provide necessary resources, and support teachers in delivering quality education. However, despite the existence of BOMs in public secondary schools, there are concerns about their effectiveness and their impact on school performance. Wajir East Sub- County, located in Kenya, is no exception. The performance of public secondary schools in the sub-county has been a matter of concern, with low academic achievement and high dropout rates being observed (Ministry of Education, 2018). This raises questions about the role and influence of BOM practices on school performance in the Sub-County.

In Wajir County, a multitude of intertwined challenges deeply affect student academic performance. These issues encompass resource constraints in schools, including inadequate facilities, and are exacerbated by prevalent poverty, leading to nutrition and resource scarcity (Noor, 2021). Cultural norms, such as early marriages and FGM, hinder girls' education. A shortage of qualified teachers and disparities in teaching quality further impede learning. Additionally, limited access to technology compounds these challenges, creating a complex barrier to academic success (Njeri, 2022). This study therefore investigate the influence of curriculum development and implementation on public secondary school's performance in Wajir East Sub- County, Kenya.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to assess the influence of curriculum development and implementation on public secondary school's performance in Wajir East Sub- County, Kenya. The study was guided by the following research question:

- What is the influence of curriculum development and implementation on public

secondary school performance in Wajir East Sub- County, Kenya?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Empirical Literature Review

Curriculum development and implementation in public secondary schools refer to the processes and strategies employed by education authorities, school boards, and educators to design, adapt, and deliver an effective educational program to students. This encompasses the selection of subjects, content, teaching methods, assessment tools, and the alignment of the curriculum with national educational standards. Curriculum development is an ongoing, dynamic process that aims to meet the diverse needs of students and prepare them for future challenges.

A well-structured and updated curriculum ensures that the content taught is relevant to students' needs and current societal demands. When the curriculum is closely aligned with national standards and learning objectives, students receive an education that equips them with the necessary knowledge and skills. A study by Ngoma and Kinga (2016) in Kenya found that schools with a curriculum aligned with national standards tended to perform better in national examinations. Effective curriculum development promotes diversity and inclusivity by catering to the varying learning styles, abilities, and backgrounds of students. Inclusive curricula acknowledge the unique needs of all learners, including those with special educational needs. This approach creates a more equitable learning environment and contributes to improved academic outcomes (Englund & Olofsson, 2017).

A comprehensive curriculum focuses not only on academic subjects but also on the development of essential life skills. Curriculum development that emphasizes critical thinking, problem-solving, communication, and creativity fosters well-rounded individuals who are better prepared for future challenges in the workforce and society (Okumbe & Kariuki, 2015). Curriculum implementation involves

the adoption of effective teaching methods that engage students and enhance their understanding of the content. When teachers are trained in innovative and student-centered teaching techniques, it positively impacts the learning experience and academic performance of students (Naim & Naseer, 2019). Curriculum implementation includes the use of appropriate assessment tools to measure students' progress and identify areas that need improvement. Continuous assessment practices allow for timely intervention and targeted support for struggling students, contributing to overall improved performance (Aslam & Alipour, 2017).

Ngoma and Kinga (2016): *The Impact of Curriculum Alignment with National Standards in Kenya*. Ngoma and Kinga's study in Kenya found that schools with curricula closely aligned with national standards tended to perform better in national examinations. This alignment ensured that students were exposed to the content and skills required for standardized assessments. However, the study did not explore the specific strategies or challenges involved in aligning curricula with national standards, leaving room for further research in this area.

Naim and Naseer (2019): *Teacher Training and Curriculum Implementation in Pakistan*. Research by Naim and Naseer in Pakistan revealed that effective teacher training and professional development were associated with improved curriculum implementation. Well-trained teachers were better equipped to deliver the curriculum effectively, positively impacting students' academic outcomes. Future research could delve into the specific elements of teacher training programs that are most effective in enhancing curriculum implementation and address potential barriers or challenges teachers face in accessing training opportunities.

Okumbe and Kariuki (2015): *Inclusivity and Holistic Skill Development in Kenya*. Okumbe and Kariuki's study in Kenya emphasized the importance of

inclusive curricula that address diverse learning needs and promote holistic skill development. Inclusive curricula lead to more equitable learning environments and improved student performance. Further research could explore the experiences of students with disabilities in inclusive curricula and investigate the specific strategies that schools use to create inclusive learning environments.

Aslam and Alipour (2017): *Innovative Teaching Strategies in Pakistan*. Aslam and Alipour's research in Pakistan found that schools where teachers employed innovative and student-centered teaching methods exhibited improved academic achievements. Effective teaching strategies played a crucial role in curriculum implementation. Future studies could delve into the impact of specific innovative teaching strategies on student engagement and learning outcomes, providing practical insights for educators.

Englund and Olofsson (2017): *Continuous Assessment for Student Progress in Sweden*. The study highlighted by Englund and Olofsson in Sweden emphasized the value of continuous assessment practices in monitoring student progress and providing timely support. These practices contributed to improved student performance by addressing learning gaps. Research could focus on the effectiveness of various types of continuous assessment methods and explore how they align with curriculum objectives and student needs.

Okumbe and Kariuki (2015) study on *Life Skills and Beyond in Kenya*. Okumbe and Kariuki discussed the significance of curriculum development that goes beyond academic subjects to emphasize essential life skills. Such curricula prepared students for future challenges, positively impacting their overall performance. Further research could investigate the long-term effects of life skills-focused curricula on students' post-school outcomes, such as employment and well-being.

Aslam and Alipour (2017): *Digital Age Challenges and Access to Technology in Pakistan*. In today's

digital age, limited access to educational technology and the internet can put students at a disadvantage. Research by Aslam and Alipour called attention to the challenges posed by this limitation and its potential impact on students' academic growth. Future research could explore strategies for bridging the digital divide and increasing access to technology in underprivileged areas, focusing on their impact on student performance.

Ngoma and Kinga (2016) conducted a study on the effects of Board of Governors Practices on Academic Performance in Public Secondary Schools in Kenya, focusing on Lugari Sub-County. Their research in Kenya found that effective board of governors practices, which encompassed financial management, resource allocation, and curriculum oversight, had a positive impact on academic performance in public secondary schools. However, the study also underscored the need for further research to delve into the specific mechanisms through which board practices influence academic outcomes, as well as to investigate the role of board training and capacity building.

School performance encompasses the overall effectiveness and outcomes of a school in terms of student learning, academic success, and other relevant indicators. It comprises various dimensions, including academic performance, student engagement, school climate, teacher quality, and the overall organizational effectiveness (Rumberger & Palardy, 2005).

Academic performance is a crucial element of school performance and is often assessed through standardized test scores, examination results, graduation rates, and college acceptance rates. It indicates the extent to which students have acquired the expected knowledge, skills, and competencies at their grade level. Multiple factors, such as teaching quality, curriculum design, student support systems, and school leadership, influence academic performance (Wang & Holcombe, 2010).

Student engagement is another significant aspect of school performance. Engaged students actively

participate in the learning process, display strong commitment to their studies, and exhibit a positive attitude towards education. High levels of student engagement are associated with increased motivation, better academic outcomes, and reduced dropout rates. Factors that contribute to student engagement include a stimulating and supportive learning environment, relevant and challenging curriculum, and opportunities for student involvement in decision-making processes (Cohen, 2006).

Furthermore, school climate is a vital determinant of school performance. It pertains to the overall atmosphere, social relationships, and prevailing culture within a school. A positive school climate fosters a sense of belonging, safety, and mutual respect among students, teachers, and staff. It contributes to improved student well-being, academic achievement, and reduced behavioral problems. Effective discipline policies, strong teacher-student relationships, and supportive administrative practices are among the factors that influence school climate (Darling-Hammond, 2017).

Theoretical Review

The Resource Dependency Theory

The Resource Dependency Theory was initially introduced in 1978 by Jeffrey Pfeffer and Gerald R. Salancik in their book titled "The External Control of Organizations: A Resource Dependence Perspective" (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978). This theory emphasizes the significance of external resources and relationships for organizational performance. In the context of public secondary schools, this theory suggests that effective board of management practices can positively influence the school's access to and management of crucial resources, such as financial, human, and material resources. By establishing partnerships with relevant stakeholders, securing funding, and efficiently allocating resources, the board can enhance the school's performance. Leveraging external resources and reducing dependency on limited government funding can result in improved

educational programs, infrastructure, teacher quality, and student support services, ultimately leading to enhanced overall performance of public secondary schools (Barney, 2001).

In the context of public secondary schools in Wajir East Sub- County, Kenya, the Resource Dependency Theory provides a framework for understanding how infrastructure development practices can influence school performance (Tilman, 2004). Public secondary schools rely on their external environment for resources such as funding, staff, and physical infrastructure. Without adequate infrastructure, such as classrooms, libraries, and laboratories, schools may struggle to provide a conducive learning environment for students, which

can negatively affect their academic performance (Ray, Barney, & Muhanna, 2004).

Several studies have used the Resource Dependency Theory to examine the relationship between infrastructure development and organizational performance in education. For example, a study by Ondabu and Mogambi (2016) examined the relationship between infrastructure development and academic performance in public secondary schools in Kenya. The study found that schools with better infrastructure, such as well-equipped libraries and laboratories, tended to have higher academic performance than schools with poor infrastructure (Peteraf, & Barney, 2003).

Conceptual Framework

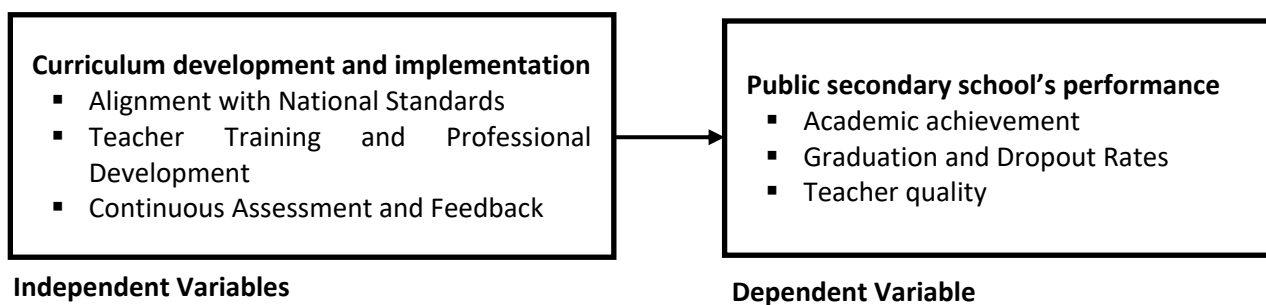


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a mixed-methods approach, utilizing both quantitative and qualitative methods to gain a comprehensive understanding of the research issue. A descriptive survey approach was used, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative methods. The location of the study was Wajir East Constituency which is a voting district situated in Kenya, and it formed one of the six constituencies within Wajir County. For the purpose of this study, the focus was on 15 public secondary schools situated in Wajir East Sub-County, Kenya. As such, the total number of participants targeted was 285 individuals. This comprised 255 teachers, 15 school principals, and 15 members of the Board of Management (BOM). The study's sample size was calculated using Yamane's Formula. A sample size of 167 was used in

the study. A purposive sampling method was used to select 40 teachers and one principal from each zone's public secondary schools. In this study, various tools were employed to collect information related to the specific themes of the research goals. These tools encompassed principal interviews and the distribution of questionnaires to teachers for their input. In the preliminary stage of the research, a sample of 17 individuals from public secondary schools in Wajir East Sub-county was used to test the research tools.

In this study, the data analysis process commenced with identifying recurring themes within the accounts provided by participants regarding their experiences. Initially, the quantitative data were collected and analyzed, followed by the examination of qualitative data. The relevant

content was condensed into succinct phrases or sentences to convey clear and individual ideas. To gain a deeper insight into the characteristics of the participants, closed-ended question responses were assigned codes and labels, and frequency counts were calculated.

For the qualitative data, a thematic analysis was performed, presenting the findings in a narrative style aligned with the study's objectives. The quantitative data underwent descriptive analysis using SPSS Version 26, which included computing frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviation. Additionally, inferential analysis using multiple linear regression was conducted to examine the relationships between the variables. The results of the quantitative analysis were displayed through tables and charts. Correlation and regression analysis were used to explore the relationships between the variables.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Response Rate

The researcher administered a total of 158 questionnaires to respondents comprising of teachers and the BoM. A total of 130 questionnaires were dully filled and returned which represented a response rate of 82.3%.

Descriptive Analysis

Descriptive research entails using statistical procedures to characterize the population under investigation. The responses to each of the items of the means, as well as the standard deviation.

Curriculum Development and Implementation on Public Secondary School's Performance

The study sought to determine the influence of curriculum development and implementation on public secondary school's performance in Wajir East Sub- County, Kenya. The study responses are as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Curriculum Development and Implementation on Public Secondary School's Performance

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
The curriculum taught in our school is aligned with national educational standards and objectives.	130	4.20	.782
Teachers in our school receive adequate training and support to effectively implement the curriculum.	130	4.40	.743
The curriculum at our school caters to the diverse learning needs of students, including those with special educational needs."	130	4.08	.895
Our school's curriculum emphasizes not only academic subjects but also the development of essential life skills.	130	4.14	.824
Teachers at our school use innovative and student-centered teaching methods to enhance the learning experience.	130	4.32	.647
Continuous assessment practices are effectively used to monitor students' progress and provide timely support.	130	4.28	.610
Our school's curriculum encourages critical thinking, problem-solving, and creativity among students	130	4.25	.778

Source: Researcher (2024)

As per the findings presented in Table 1, respondents generally agreed that the curriculum taught in their school aligns well with national educational standards and objectives, as indicated by a high mean score of 4.20. This suggests a commitment to adhering to educational guidelines set by the government. This finding aligns with the

research of Kagema (2018), who found that alignment with national standards positively correlates with academic achievement. The majority of respondents also believe that teachers receive adequate training and support to effectively implement the curriculum, with a mean score of 4.40. This indicates a recognition of the importance

of continuous professional development for educators. This finding is consistent with the study by Lund and Kirk (2019), which emphasized the significance of teacher training in improving curriculum delivery. The curriculum is perceived to cater to the diverse learning needs of students, including those with special educational needs, with a mean score of 4.08. This underscores the importance of inclusivity in education, which resonates with the findings of Jonyo and Jonyo (2019) on the positive impact of inclusive education practices on student performance. Respondents indicate that the curriculum emphasizes not only academic subjects but also the development of essential life skills, reflected in a mean score of 4.14. This finding is in line with the research by Kibera (2016), who highlighted the importance of life skills education in preparing students for real-world challenges beyond academics.

They also agreed that, teachers are perceived to use innovative and student-centered teaching methods to enhance the learning experience, with a mean score of 4.32. This echoes the findings of Awan and Khan (2018), who emphasized the positive impact of innovative teaching approaches on student engagement and performance. Continuous assessment practices are effectively used to monitor students' progress and provide timely support, with a mean score of 4.28. This finding corroborates the research by Kilonzo and Mutua (2017), which highlighted the importance of continuous assessment in facilitating personalized learning and improving academic outcomes. The

Public Secondary School's Performance in Wajir East Sub- County, Kenya

The study sought to determine the public secondary school's performance in Wajir East Sub-

curriculum encourages critical thinking, problem-solving, and creativity among students, as indicated by a mean score of 4.25. This finding resonates with the work of Kiamba and Ndirangu (2019), who emphasized the importance of nurturing critical thinking skills in students to enhance academic performance and lifelong learning.

On interview, the school principals said that "In our school, the curriculum development process is a collaborative effort involving various stakeholders including teachers, administrators, and the school board. We regularly review the curriculum to ensure its relevance and effectiveness. Decisions regarding curriculum content and structure are made through consultations and deliberations among these stakeholders, considering factors such as student needs, national educational standards, and emerging trends in education.

As for the alignment of our curriculum with national educational standards and objectives, we strive to adhere closely to the guidelines provided by the Kenyan Ministry of Education. Our curriculum is designed to meet the learning outcomes specified by the national curriculum framework. However, two of the principals while responding to the question regarding the alignment of the curriculum with national educational standards and objectives said, "We recognize that there may be areas where improvements can be made to better align with these standards. This indicated that there is room for further refinement and alignment to ensure our curriculum effectively meets the national educational objectives and standards."

County, Kenya. The study responses are as shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Public Secondary School's Performance

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
The academic performance of students in this school is commendable.	130	4.20	.730
The school provides extensive resources and facilities to enhance teaching and learning.	130	4.14	.869
The school efficiently manages its financial resources to optimize benefits for students.	130	4.20	.709
The teachers in this school are highly skilled and dedicated to their profession.	130	4.18	.734
The school effectively implements strategies to foster student discipline and positive conduct.	130	4.29	.640
The school actively engages parents and the community in school activities and decision-making processes.	129	4.16	.734
The school efficiently prepares students for further education or employment opportunities after graduation.	130	4.18	.802

Source: Researcher (2024)

The findings as presented in Table 2 revealed that most respondents perceive the academic performance of students in the schools to be commendable, as indicated by a mean score of 4.20. This suggests a positive view of the educational outcomes achieved by these institutions. This finding aligns with the research by Orodho (2018), who emphasized the importance of academic excellence in measuring school performance. The perception that schools provide extensive resources and facilities to enhance teaching and learning is valued by respondents, reflected in a mean score of 4.14. This indicates a recognition of the importance of adequate infrastructure and resources in supporting student achievement. These findings resonate with the study by Njagi and Mwangi (2019), which highlighted the positive impact of resource provision on school performance. Respondents perceive schools to efficiently manage their financial resources to optimize benefits for students, with a mean score of 4.20. This underscores the importance of effective financial management in ensuring resource utilization aligns with educational goals. This finding aligns with the research by Wawire and Otieno (2016), who emphasized the role of financial stewardship in enhancing school effectiveness. Highly Skilled and Dedicated Teachers: The perception that teachers in these schools are highly skilled and dedicated to

their profession is valued by respondents, as indicated by a mean score of 4.18. This suggests confidence in the quality of teaching staff and their commitment to student success. These findings are consistent with the study by Awan and Khan (2018), which highlighted the importance of teacher quality in driving school performance.

The respondents perceive schools to effectively implement strategies to foster student discipline and positive conduct, with a mean score of 4.29. This indicates a focus on maintaining a conducive learning environment conducive to student success. This finding resonates with the research by Kiamba and Ndirangu (2019), who emphasized the importance of discipline in promoting academic achievement. While slightly lower, respondents still acknowledge the active engagement of parents and the community in school activities and decision-making processes, with a mean score of 4.16. This suggests recognition of the importance of collaboration between schools and the community in promoting student success. These findings align with the study by Kibera (2016), which highlighted the positive impact of community involvement on school performance. The respondents perceive schools to efficiently prepare students for further education or employment opportunities after graduation, with a mean score of 4.18. This underscores the importance of equipping students

with the necessary skills and knowledge for future success. This finding is consistent with the research by Ngaruiya and Wambui (2017), who emphasized the role of secondary education in facilitating transitions to higher education or the workforce.

SUMMARY

The study revealed that curriculum development and implementation play a pivotal role in shaping the educational landscape. It was found that the curriculum in public secondary schools aligns well with national educational standards and objectives. Moreover, teachers receive adequate training and support to effectively implement the curriculum, ensuring its successful delivery. The curriculum is tailored to cater to the diverse learning needs of students, including those with special educational needs, emphasizing not only academic subjects but also essential life skills. Innovative and student-centered teaching methods are employed to enhance the learning experience, while continuous assessment practices monitor student progress and provide timely support. Ultimately, the curriculum encourages critical thinking, problem-solving, and creativity among students, fostering a holistic approach to education.

CONCLUSIONS

The study concluded that the alignment of the curriculum with national educational standards and

objectives, coupled with adequate training and support for teachers, significantly influences the performance of public secondary schools. When the curriculum is effectively implemented, incorporating diverse learning needs and emphasizing critical thinking and life skills, students benefit from a more comprehensive education, ultimately leading to improved academic outcomes.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The study recommended that educational authorities and school administrators should prioritize curriculum alignment with national educational standards and objectives. This includes ensuring that the curriculum caters to the diverse learning needs of students, emphasizes critical thinking and life skills, and incorporates innovative teaching methods. Additionally, the study emphasized the importance of providing continuous training and support for teachers to effectively implement the curriculum. Professional development programs should focus on enhancing teaching skills, incorporating new pedagogical approaches, and addressing emerging educational trends. By strengthening curriculum alignment and teacher training, schools can improve the quality of education and enhance student outcomes.

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