

Teachers' Pedagogical Preparedness for the Implementation of the Competency-Based Curriculum in Public Secondary Schools in Kirinyaga County, Kenya

Mohamed, Moses Muchiri

*M.Ed. Social Studies, Department of Educational Communication and Technology
Kenyatta University*

Prof. Ondigi, Samson Rosana

*Senior Lecturer, Department of Educational Communication and Technology
Kenyatta University*

Dr. Mueni, Ngungui Kiio

*Senior Lecturer, Department of Educational Communication and Technology
Kenyatta University*

Abstract

The study addresses the issue of teachers' pedagogical preparedness for the implementation of the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) in Secondary Education Level (SEL). It adopted descriptive survey design where the target population was limited to; 24 secondary schools, 24 head teachers and 100 geography teachers. Purposive sampling was used to select the sample, which comprised of: 40 respondents; 30 geography teachers and 10 head teachers. Piloting: validity and reliability of research instruments was conducted in two schools; one from a Sub-County school and the other from a day secondary school to pre-test and adjust the instruments. Validity was ensured by face, construct, and content validity while test re-test technique ensured instruments' reliability. Data was collected using: questionnaires; for geography teachers, and interview guides; for head teachers. The findings were analysed both quantitatively and qualitatively. Quantitative data was analysed using measures of central tendency to determine the mode and mean. Measures of spread were used to determine the standard deviation. Qualitative data was processed by first sorting and discussing responses for each item according to the objectives before editing, coding and reporting through descriptive narrative of the views, experiences and opinions of both geography teachers and head teachers. From the findings of the study, majority of the respondents had not attended in-service training and therefore, were not conversant with the concept of the CBC. It was therefore, concluded that, a good number of them were struggling with the concept of the CBC and lacked the capacity demanded by the CBC framework. It was established that teachers should be subjected to in-service training to be equipped with core competencies. Early preparedness would encourage them to be proactive in initiating subject dialogue in order to increase their experience hence enhancing the implementation of the CBC.

Keywords: *Competency Based Curriculum, Concept, Competencies Readiness, Digital literacy, In-service*

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I. Introduction

Background to the Study

Geography is a discipline that is alive. Its aim is to aid learners into acquiring knowledge, skills, values and attitude that will in turn assist them to institute expected reforms in society for the support of humanity by contributing towards individual growth, national growth and sustainable development for the good of the society. Geography is essential to our education for it is not all about naming rivers or giving direction but multidisciplinary, that is, understanding environment for man's ecological, social, economic, political and technological purposes as it extends to every discipline (Ondigi, 2012). According to KICD (2016) geography, one of the social science subjects in Competency- Based Curriculum (CBC) is a practical subject that requires the use of core competencies that give learners hands-on experiences so as to relate better with the environment. The CBC seeks to impart in learners the ability to apply appropriate skills, values and attitude to real-life situations in order to successfully perform a function (Republic of Kenya, 2016).

The 2-6-3-3-3 curriculum focuses on what learners can do with the education they have received to ensure that education responds to the needs of the society. The new curriculum is expected to be skill-oriented.

Learners will be equipped with skills rather than being examination-oriented. The CBC will allow specialization on the areas of interest where learners will express their talents and abilities alongside academic work (Republic of Kenya, 2016). According to Mosha (2012), CBC puts more emphasis on what learners are expected to do rather than what they are expected to know. He further argues that the CBC aims at developing in a learner the ability to do things, to learn and learn how to learn and know. Studies done in Australia, the United States of America, Europe, Tanzania, Rwanda and other parts of the world showed that lack of skilled manpower in adoption and use of ICT- Oriented Curriculum slowed the degree of achievement in educational reforms (Mingaine, 2013). Thus, teachers' preparedness need to be taken seriously, otherwise, reforms shall remain artificial and cosmetic. Teachers' preparedness and integration of ICT may provide insight into the extent to which opportunities for continued learning prepared them for most compelling classroom demands.

Objective of the Study

i. Establish geography teachers' readiness for the implementation of the Competency-Based Curriculum.

Theoretical Framework

The study was underpinned by Shulman (1987), model of knowledge growth in teaching. He introduced the concept of Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK), which raised the issue to what teachers should know and be able to do. He developed an idea of going beyond content or subject matter knowledge to include how to teach particular content. Within PCK, Shulman included ideas of representation, illustrations, explanations, demonstrations, and adaptation to make a comprehensive understanding of particular problem or issue. He stated that in the understanding of content-related material, PCK theory involved the use of affective and cognitive domains. Teaching and learning any discipline are highly complex cognitive activities in which teachers and learners must apply knowledge from affective and cognitive domains. PCK theory has a link in this study in that it is about a teacher who can teach specific discipline clearly and effectively. Adapting this theory, for effective implementation of the CBC requires geography teachers with core competencies. Therefore, the theory will help the study to establish geography teachers' preparedness in terms of their readiness towards the implementation of the CBC. In-service training programmes for geography teachers are vital for equipping them with relevant skills, knowledge, values and attitude necessary for developing idea of going beyond content to include how to teach particular content. Hence, the adopted theory formed the main basis of the study since it focused on what a teacher should know and be able to do. That is, the selected theory was quite relevant to the present study as it facilitated an in-depth study of the problem.

II. Review Of Related Literature

Teachers' Readiness for the Implementation of the CBC

Teacher preparedness incorporates what a trained teacher brings to a classroom from pre- service learning and on-the-job learning (Ondigi, 2012). According to Tiberius and Billson (1991), Teacher Education should be developed procedurally on the foundation of an improved receptiveness by changing teacher's monopoly of the instruction to facilitator, whose task is to guide and drive the teaching and learning process. Therefore, teachers must be prepared adequately to adopt a complex evolutionary approach considering curriculum changes as they provide an opportunity for the learners to realize and develop their full potential. Furthermore, the analysis in curriculum for Basic Education Curriculum Framework (BECF) indicates that teachers are not intended to be the main users of the CBC even though they are expected to be its implementers (KICD, 2017). This assertion is true, although it is not clear on how much of this is real as perceived by the government of Kenya and other stakeholders.

Mosha (2012), in his study noted that many schools did not have enough instructional support resources such as textbooks and teachers' guidebooks to deliver the CBC in Tanzania. He further noted that teachers did not receive adequate in-service training, making implementation of the CBC difficult. In his findings, book writers had limited and fragmented knowledge about the concept of the CBC thus affecting the quality of the textbooks produced. Teachers were hesitant to utilize the textbooks and other instructional support resources related to the CBC since they required long periods for scheming and lesson planning (Mosha, 2012). A phenomenological study conducted by Luhambati (2013), on teachers' conceptions of the curriculum change from Knowledge-Based to Competency-Based in secondary education in Tanzania, underscore the fact that teachers seemed to understand that the curriculum had changed but that they had a confused understanding about the change. From the findings, teachers conceived the curriculum as being complex and impractical while others regarded the new textbooks as being irrelevant and scarce. From the reviewed literature, despite the fact that the CBC has been implemented for over a decade in Tanzania, it appears that teachers' experience and voice in implementing the curriculum have not been given first priority by the curriculum developers (Muneja, 2015). The study resonates closely with the findings of Altinyelken (2010), who also argued that the Matric

Curriculum in Uganda although majority of teachers were enthusiastic about the new curriculum, their implementation efforts were constrained by a magnitude of challenges not limited to lack of classrooms for interaction between teachers and learners.

In Zambia a study carried out by Mulenga and Kabombwe (2019), sought to establish whether secondary schools teachers were actively involved in the CBC development process. The findings revealed that, teachers were not adequately involved in the curriculum development process with their role being mainly to implement the already developed curriculum. According to Darling-Hammond, Wei and Andree (2010), on their study noted that developing countries which supported in-service training programmes for professional development and involved teachers in decision-making demonstrated quality classroom instruction for implementation of the new curriculum. A study by Makunja (2016), on "difficulties facing teachers in implementing CBC in Tanzania" found that teachers had not been oriented through in- service training to keep them abreast with core competencies for implementation of the CBC. The respondents confirmed that inadequate teachers' pedagogical preparedness was encumbering the implementation of the CBC. Teachers who were critical stakeholders lacked ethics, skills, and knowledge for implementation of the CBC in Tanzania.

The Bench mark of a well prepared Teacher

A well prepared teacher display a well prepared school (Barnett, 2003). The most effective teachers have optimistic attitude and come to class each day ready to teach. According to Walker (2008) teachers that make the most significant impact on learners' lives are said to be effective. There are characteristics that describe a particular teacher's special personal qualities that the learners feel and enable the teacher to achieve success (Walker, 2008). Most memorable characteristics of an effective teacher are; he or she comes to class prepared, maintained positive attitude about teaching and about students, has high expectations for all students, shows creativity in teaching the class and treat and grade learners fairly. A well prepared teacher display a personal, approachable touch with learners, cultivate a sense of belonging in the classroom, deal with learners' problems compassionately, has a sense of humor and do not take everything seriously (Barnett, 2003). An effective teacher respect learners and do not deliberately embarrass them, forgive and do not hold grudges and admitted his or her mistakes (Walker, 2008). In a classroom with a well prepared teacher, it is easy to learn because they are ready for the day. They don't waste instructional time and they start class on time. Time flies in their classes because learners are engaged in learning. Teachers are central to curriculum development effort. Better geography teachers, therefore, support better teaching and learning because they are utmost knowledgeable about the practice of teaching and learning and are responsible for introducing course by course in the classroom.

III. Research Methodology

Research Design

The researcher adopted descriptive survey research design in the study because it was suitable for primary data collection about geography teachers' preparedness and offered an opportunity to observe phenomena, which involved qualitative and quantitative methodology. The research design helped in collecting a complete, and possibly, accurate data from the research subjects which was used for detailed analysis and leading to important recommendations that were made.

Target Population

The target population of this study was secondary school geography teachers and head teachers in Mwea East Sub-County. The population for the study consisted of the twenty-four (24) secondary schools. Mwea East Sub-County had a population of 24 public secondary schools. The researcher involved all head teachers in the 24 public secondary schools as they were expected to supervise the implementation of the CBC in their respective schools. The study targeted 24 secondary school head teachers and 100 geography teachers, under Teachers Service Commission (TSC), who were drawn from the target population of 124 respondents.

Sampling Techniques and Sample Size

A proportional stratified sampling was used to select 10 secondary schools across the Sub-County according to the distribution of schools namely: Nyangati Ward 7, Tebere Ward 7, Gathigiriri Ward 2 and Murinduko Ward 8 out of 24 secondary schools. Proportional stratified random sampling involves dividing the population into homogeneous sub-groups and taking a sample random in each group (Mujere, 2016). A purposive sampling was used to obtain a sample of 30 geography teachers and 10 head teachers. The population was stratified into categories of schools according to the admission of students in form one, that is; National, Extra-County and County schools. Simple random sampling was used to select a sample size of 32.3% of the

target population. According to Kothari (2004), a sample size of 10% to 30% for the target population is sufficient to make a generalization.

Research Instruments

The study used questionnaires for the geography teachers and interview schedules for head teachers as tools to collect the data. According to Kothari (2004), questionnaires are used because of their capacity to gather more data in a reasonably short period. Interview schedules were used to complement the questionnaires and bridge the gap in case there was any inadequacy on either research tools. All the tools were personally designed and developed by the researcher.

Validity of Research Instruments

According to Kothari (2004), validity is when an instrument shows the degree to measure what it is supposed to measure. Content validity was to some great measure ascertained by giving out instruments to professionals such as the researchers, supervisors in education research in the Department of Educational Communication and Technology to determine whether the instruments measured what they were purported to measure. Construct validity was achieved by ensuring that the instruments were restricted to geography teachers' preparedness for the implementation of CBC.

Data Analysis Techniques

According to Mwituria (2012), data analysis is the process of looking at and summarizing data with the intended useful information to develop a conclusion. All data collected was assembled, coded and analysed as per the objectives of the study. Quantitative data was analysed using measures of central tendency to determine the mode and mean. Measures of spread were used to determine the standard deviation. Qualitative data was processed by first sorting and discussing responses for each item according to the objectives before editing and coding and reporting through descriptive narrative of the views, experiences and opinions of both geography teachers and head teachers. The coded data were entered into the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) programme Version 21.0., and descriptive statistics was obtained.

Logistical and Ethical Considerations

The researcher sought permission from relevant authorities like MoEST, Kenyatta University Ethics Research Committee (KUERC) and the National Commission for Science, Technology, and Innovation (NACOSTI) to have a smooth research period, before going to the field. A work plan for the tasks that would be done was laid out. Sampling was done so that schools where research was to be conducted could be identified. The investigator then printed enough copies of the research instruments and familiarized with locale of study by visiting areas where research was to be conducted and then commenced on data collection. Permission was sought from the head teachers where data was collected. The teachers and head teachers were assured of anonymity where numbers were used to label data instead of their names. Information given by the participants was treated with confidentiality by maintaining respondents' rights and privacy even after the research. The researcher made it clear to them that, the information was purely for academic purpose and that their participation was voluntary and any decision to withdraw or decline any information whatsoever at any time would be respected. Finally, informed consent was sought from the respondents through a written request attached to the research instruments.

IV. Presentation Of Findings, Interpretation And Discussion

Geography teachers' readiness for the implementation of the CBC

The investigator sought to find out geography teachers' readiness for the implementation of the CBC in public SEL. He used indicators like the meaning of the CBC, attendance of in-service training programmes, areas trained in, areas not trained and areas of interest to be given in-service in order to examine their readiness for the implementation of the CBC.

Meaning of the Competency-Based Curriculum

The meaning of CBC was first identified because it addressed the need to find out how respondents explained it. The overall finding from both head teachers and geography teachers were not competent in defining the components of the CBC before they could give a response. Terms like: outcome based learning, self-efficacy, Inquiry-Based Approach, ICT curriculum, communication and collaboration, learning to learn, creative and imaginative learning would be expected. However, the only word frequently used was "learner-centered approach". The findings indicated that regardless the roll out of CBC in the year 2018 and the conversation in the social and mainstream media, majority of the respondents were not conversant with the concept of CBC. One of the head teachers shared her understanding, "it is a way a teacher makes a learner to

understand more by using learner-centered approach.” On the same aspect, one of the geography teachers said, “This is a learner-centered approach that has emphasis on hands-on experience.”

The findings were in consistent with Muneja (2015), who shared a similar experience of teachers who found it challenging to give a unified definition of the CBC in Tanzania. He argued that the range of meanings implies a lack of coherence and focus in the communication of the policy on the CBC. The study concurs with his findings because, if in-service training for secondary schools’ teachers kicked off immediately after its roll out, the respondents would be competent in defining the concept of the CBC. The findings agreed with a report by KICD (2018) which indicated that over 85.4% of primary school teachers had ability to derive content from the curriculum designs after in-service training. Hence, since schools’ administrators and teachers had varied understanding of the CBC, this was an indication of less or no in-service training.

Attendance of In-service Training Programmes

It was assumed that all teachers had been trained in pedagogical approaches during pre- service development. So, all the sampled teachers had been trained in at least two teaching subjects.

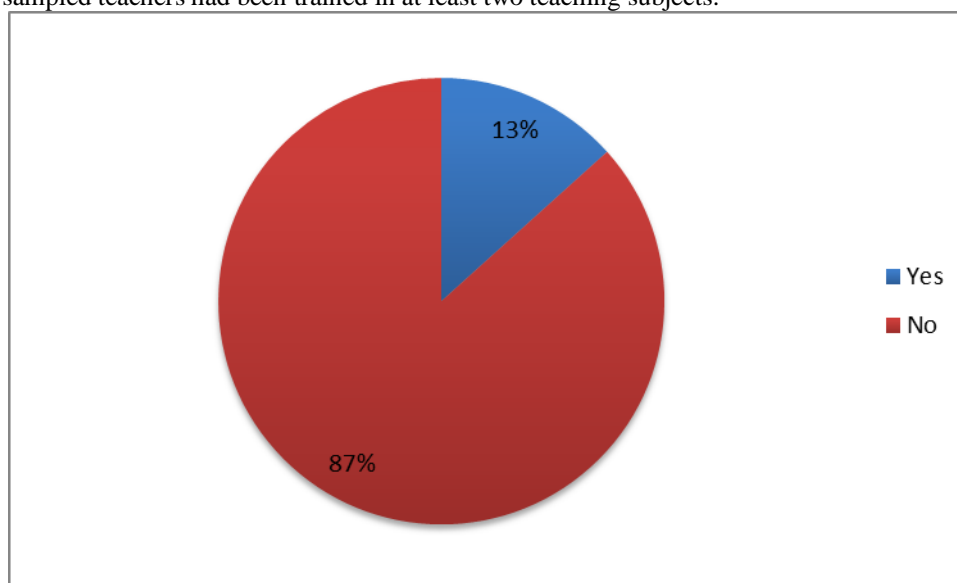


Figure 1. 1: Attendance of in-service training programmes

Figure 1.1 shows that over three-quarter of geography teachers (87.0%) had not attended in-service training programmes for the CBC. Teachers’ in-service and induction programmes are vital for their preparedness to implement the CBC (Muneja, 2015). Frequent in-service training has the potential not only to improve capacity building but also actual implementation of any curriculum. This shows the reason to why most of geography teachers and head teachers did not have a clear understanding of the concept of the CBC. In fact, majority of geography teachers had no idea at all about CBC in-service training programmes.

In line with a study by Darling-Hammond, et al. (2010), who observed that countries that supported advance teachers’ in-service training programmes, and that involved them in decision-making demonstrated high learners’ achievement. Therefore, the KICD should provide differentiated learning support to all secondary school teachers and administration, so that they can move to the next level with the required competencies. Hence, to ensure successful implementation of the CBC in SEL, time has come to emphasize the need for a participatory approach in curriculum design, assessment and monitoring by all education stakeholders.

Table 1. 1: Number of pilot in-service training attended on the CBC

Number of in-service	Frequency	Percentage %
One	2	7.7
Two	1	3.8
Three	0	0.0
Four	0	0.0
None	23	88.5
Total	26	100.0

The findings in Table 1.1 show that (7.7%) of geography teachers had attended only one in-service training programme, (3.8%) had attended two workshops on Community Service Learning (CSL) one of the core subjects in Senior Secondary School. A majority (88.5%) of teachers had not attended any seminar or workshop on CBC. This implies that majority of respondents (88.5%) were not well versed on the concept of the CBC. From the findings, the (7.7%) of the in-serviced teachers were the heads of department from the extra-county schools while the (88.5%) were classroom teachers from the Sub-County secondary schools. The findings further imply that there might be deficiency in implementing CBC due to inadequate in-service training. The results disagreed with what is found in TSC website that Secondary Education Quality Improvement Programme (SEQIP) training was going on in 31 counties of Kenya, aiming at improving the transition from primary to junior secondary school and also enhancing retention of learners in school.

Table 1. 2: Areas covered during the pilot in-service training programmes

Areas covered	Frequency	Percentage %
Pedagogy and Subject matter	1	33.3
Community Service Learning	2	66.7
Lesson planning and SOW	3	100.0
Assessment and Evaluation	2	66.7

Table 1.2 shows that three (3) out of twenty six (26) geography teachers who attended the workshops (100%) trained on lesson planning and schemes of work. From the findings (66.7%) of the respondents indicated that they were trained on CSL, (33.3%) indicated pedagogy and subject matter while (66.7%) indicated were trained on subject's assessment and evaluation. During in-service training, majority of the respondents covered four areas; CSL, scheming and lesson planning, assessment and evaluation. According to KICD (2019), CSL with information on the Constitution of Kenya had enable them to participate responsibly in communities, entrepreneurship, financial literacy, life skills, communication skills and research.

However, over three-quarter of respondents claimed that the duration of CBC in-service training was too short to equip them with the required PCK and digital skills. This may imply that geography teachers given in-service training generally had limited knowledge and skills for the successful implementation of the CBC. During the face-to-face interview, one of the head teachers disclosed that, "for a secondary school teacher to have a clear understanding of CBC they need a short course training on the CBC for at least two months. Either during April and/or August holiday" Majority of geography teachers (88.5%) indicated that the in-service training programmes were not a success. Therefore, geography teachers needed ample time for in-service training for them to have considerable PCK and technological skills to understand the CBC and be able to implement it successfully. According to a report by on CBC activities KICD (2018), change of curriculum calls for changes in teaching and learning methods and resources.

Table 1. 3: Areas to be trained on for effective implementation of the CBC

Areas to be covered	Frequency	Percentage %
Pedagogy	7	26.9
Digital literacy	14	53.8
Curriculum designs	3	11.5
Evaluation	2	7.8
Total	26	100.0

Table 1.3 shows that (53.8%) of geography teachers wished to be trained on ICT. Other geography teachers (26.9%) wished to be given in-service training on pedagogical activities such as new methods of teaching and learning, (11.5%) on the interpretation of core competencies and (7.8%) on evaluation. This was in line with the findings by Chege (2014), on teachers' readiness to integrate ICT, found that only (13.8%) of the teachers were very confident about their digital literacy ability in teaching and learning. He therefore, recommended in-service training to make them more knowledgeable on ICT curriculum. In addition, a report by KICD (2018), on CBC activities in primary schools presented to National Steering Committee, which found that (61.0%) of the teachers were not trained on digital literacy. Hence, teachers in all levels should be conversant with all aspects of digital learning. In addition, there is need to ensure that there is provision of various digital devices for learning.

Table 1.4: Teachers' responses on whether they were ready to implement the CBC

I am prepared to implement the CBC	Frequency	Percentage %
Neutral	4	15.4
Agree	2	7.7
Disagree	20	76.9
Total	26	100.0

The findings in Table 1.4 indicate that only (7.7%) of the respondents agreed that they were to an extent ready to implement the CBC. During the face-to-face interview, one of the head teachers disclosed that majority of geography teachers would rely on their teaching experience and knowledge acquired from pre-service training under 8.4.4 system of education to implement the new curriculum. The head teacher said, "CBC would bring about difficulties among teachers because so far there was no formal training to orient them towards new approaches, lesson planning and integration of ICT. There is a probability that most of teachers will use traditional teaching and learning methods if not given in-service training one year prior to its implementation."

The results disagreed with Waweru (2018) findings which revealed that teachers were adequately prepared and willing to implement the CBC. Further agree with Kaviti (2018), on education paradigm shift in Kenya which revealed that the new curriculum had failed to address formal training of teachers towards new approaches. The findings affirm that CBC may not be effectively implemented in SEL due to the lack of advance preparation of teachers and in-service training. This was in agreement with the findings of study by Tilya and Mafumiko (2010) and that of Moshia (2012), that in reality, a large number of teachers were not prepared in advance to implement the CBC in Tanzania. Thus, in Kenya, most of secondary school teachers have limited knowledge on the concept of the new curriculum among other challenges. The results draw a fundamental question, how will CBC improve the quality of secondary schools' education when teachers who are the major implementers felt unprepared for the new curriculum? Therefore, teachers' perceptions need to change as most of them have ability to derive content from the curriculum designs.

V. Conclusion And Recommendations

Conclusion of the Study

From the study findings, the researcher concluded the following, based on the research objective. The findings indicated that respondents had a limited understanding of the concept of CBC. While some respondents defined some components of the CBC, over three-quarter of them were struggling with the definition and lacked the capacity demanded by the CBC framework. The results indicated that regardless the roll out of CBC in the year 2018 and the conversation in social and mainstream media, majority of the respondents were not conversant with the concept of CBC. However, some of the respondents agreed that they were to an extent ready to implement the CBC in SEL if in-serviced in advance one year before actual implementation. It is therefore, concluded a situation analysis for teachers' preparedness in other social science disciplines for the implementation of the CBC in SEL should be undertaken. Hence, there should be consistent re-training of teachers and schools' administrators for effective implementation of the new curriculum.

Recommendations from the Study

Based on the results of the study, the following were the recommendations derived from the study:

- i. Geography teachers should become lifelong learners. It was established that they should be enrolled for CBC short courses during April and August holidays, one year prior to the actual implementation of the curriculum. This will help them acquire core competencies in advance to implement the CBC effectively. Early preparedness would encourage them to be proactive in initiating subject dialogue from departmental to school level in order to increase their experience hence enhancing the implementation of the CBC. The same kind of dialogue should be carried out in other social science subjects from the zonal to the national level. It was established that it would be wise to invite and work in synergy with other critical stakeholders such as KICD, MoEST, publishers, private sectors and any other interested parties.
- ii. The study also recommended that in order to make implementation of the CBC practically possible and interesting in SEL, stakeholders should come together and agree on a manageable format of in-service training programmes whose effect after training would have good results. It was recommended that in-service training should be taken closer to the teachers in zonal levels. The vital organs of the GOK that have been vested with the responsibility of curriculum design, assessment and monitoring should create an effective framework of in-service training on pedagogy, CBC content, and core competencies on its paradigm shift. The in-service courses should be designed one year prior to the actual implementation of the curriculum.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

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