



Perception of Academics on the Implementation of Core Curriculum and Minimum Academic Standards at the University of Calabar, Nigeria

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Abstract

Original Research Article

For a considerable time, Nigeria's higher education system has struggled to keep academic standards uniform throughout its many institutions. There are significant differences in graduate capabilities, the general reputation of Nigerian university degrees, and the quality of education due to the lack of a strong core curriculum and clear minimum academic criteria. This research looked at how professors at the University of Calabar in Nigeria felt about the implementation of the Core Curriculum and Minimum Academic Standards (CCMAS). The goal of the research was to determine how academics' views on gender and pedagogy affected the way CCMAS was implemented. A descriptive survey research approach was used in the study. For this study, two research questions were used. Using the purposive sampling approach, a sample of 400 respondents - 200 men and 200 women - were chosen for the research. The Perception of Academics on the Implementation of Core Curriculum and Minimum Academic Standards Questionnaire (PAICCMASQ) was the tool used to gather data. The reliability test was conducted using the Cronbach coefficient Alpha reliability technique. The instrument's subscales had reliability estimates which gives reliability index of 0.79. Consequently, the instrument was found to be adequately reliable for use in the study. Mean, standard deviation, and simple percentage were used to answer the research question. The findings revealed that the educational views of academics have an impact on how they implement the CCMAS. At the University of Calabar, it was also discovered that male academics agreed more with and had higher expectations for the pedagogical views of their peers about the implementation of CCMAS than did their female counterparts. Among other things, it was suggested that professional development courses be created with varied pedagogical views of academics.

Keywords: Academics' perception, Curriculum, University, Academic standards, CCMAS, Academic pedagogy.

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Introduction

For a considerable time, Nigeria's higher education system has struggled to keep academic

standards uniform throughout its many institutions. There are significant differences in graduate capabilities, the general reputation of



Nigerian university degrees, and the quality of education due to the lack of a strong core curriculum and clear minimum academic criteria. The establishment of a uniform core curriculum and strict minimum academic requirements in Nigerian colleges has been called for again in recent years. This movement is motivated by the realization that taking such steps is necessary to guarantee the provision of top-notch instruction and to generate graduates who can compete in both domestic and international labour markets. Regardless of their chosen area of study, all students in a given educational institution must take a core curriculum, which is a series of courses or disciplines. Within the framework of Nigerian institutions, a well-crafted core curriculum will guarantee that all graduates have an identical set of knowledge and abilities. Research conducted by the National University Commission (NUC) found that there are notable differences in the course offerings and learning objectives across Nigerian institutions as a result of the absence of a unified core curriculum (NUC, 2021). Because of this, graduates have varying degrees of readiness, which makes it challenging for employers to evaluate prospective candidates' skills. This problem would be solved by instituting a core curriculum, which would set minimum standards for the knowledge and abilities that all graduates of universities must have. This will raise the employability and competitiveness of Nigerian university graduates in addition to improving the overall quality of education (Adeyemi, 2022).

For Nigerian higher education to be of a high calibre, basic academic criteria must be established in addition to a core curriculum. The minimal requirements for academic programs, including course content, instructional strategies, evaluation standards, and student learning objectives, are outlined in minimum academic standards. According to a World Bank research, Nigerian colleges must meet strict minimum academic requirements in order to allay rising worries about the quality of higher education in the nation (World Bank, 2023). According to the research, the growth of academic programmes that fall short of requirements and the generation of graduates who are unprepared for the needs of

the job market are caused by the absence of uniform minimum criteria. Therefore, a crucial first step in raising the quality of higher education in Nigeria is the establishment of a core curriculum and minimal academic standards at the nation's institutions. By taking these steps, Nigerian university graduates would become more competitive, and the nation's higher education system would grow and gain recognition as a whole. Nigerian universities may lead the way toward a more resilient and internationally acclaimed higher education system that satisfies the changing demands of the labour market and society in the twenty-first century by adopting these changes.

The objective of establishing basic academic standards in Nigerian colleges is to augment the quality and uniformity of education across the nation. According to Tolu-Kolawole's (2023) article for Punch Newspapers, the NUC has highlighted many significant advantages of CCMAS, which include:

- i. **Baseline Quality and Rigor:** The criteria contribute to the maintenance of a consistent standard of academic excellence between institutions by guaranteeing that all university programmes fulfil a predetermined baseline of quality and rigor. Regardless of the institution they attend, this is essential for maintaining academic integrity and guaranteeing that every student receives a strong education.
- ii. **Promotion of Academic brilliance:** The goal of the minimal academic requirements is to foster both the growth of exceptional graduates and academic brilliance. These standards include innovations and best practices from throughout the world to provide students the information and abilities they need to succeed on a national and international level.
- iii. **Consistency in Education Quality:** Putting these criteria into practice encourages more uniformity in the quality of education offered by

various colleges. This guarantees that graduates from various schools have equivalent levels of competence and knowledge and lessens disparities in educational results.

- iv. Increased Credibility and reputation: Nigerian institutions may raise the stature and reputation of their degrees by upholding these criteria. In addition to helping students become more employable, this enhances the standing of Nigerian higher education institutions abroad.

The Core Curriculum Minimum Academic Standards (CCMAS), as stressed by the National Universities Commission, are meant to direct curriculum design and bring about the innovations required to accomplish these ends. Part of a larger plan to position Nigerian universities among the finest in Africa and internationally competitive, the CCMAS document comprises 70% of the curriculum, with the other 30% customized by individual institutions (Tolu-Kolawole, 2023).

Literature review

In recent years, there has been a lot of scholarly discussion and controversy around the establishment of core curriculum and Minimum scholarly Standards. Many academics think that all students may benefit from a strong foundation in fundamental knowledge and abilities if a core curriculum is well-designed and includes learning goals and minimum criteria that are clearly specified. There are a number of factors to consider when analysing lecturers' opinions about the core curriculum and minimum academic standards and how they implement it. These elements fall into three categories: individual, institutional, and systemic. Taken together, these variables affect how lecturers understand and use these rules for instruction. This research examines how academics' views on gender and pedagogy affect the way core curriculum and minimal academic standards are implemented at a few chosen public universities

in Nigeria.

Academics' pedagogical beliefs and core curriculum implementation

One of the most important aspects of educational policy and practice is the adoption of core curriculum and basic academic standards, which are designed to guarantee quality and uniformity across educational institutions. The effective integration of these criteria is significantly shaped by the educational views of academics. These opinions include approaches to instruction, results of learning, and the general objectives of education. Scholars often have differing opinions about the core curriculum, which consists of the fundamental knowledge and abilities that every student should acquire. These attitudes have a big impact on how they embrace the material and how they teach. For instance, some educators argue that conventional topics like language arts, mathematics, and science should be emphasized heavily since they impart the critical thinking and problem-solving abilities that are essential for success in the future (Schmidt, Wang & McKnight, 2022). Others stress that in order to make learning more applicable to students' life, multidisciplinary methods and the inclusion of current topics must be integrated (Darling-Hammond, Flook, Cook-Harvey, Barron & Osher, 2023). The aims of the curriculum and the beliefs of educators must often coincide for a core curriculum to be implemented successfully. In the event of a mismatch, teachers may be reluctant to embrace new methods or may not devote themselves entirely to the curriculum, which might result in uneven experiences for the students in their learning (Buchanan & Stern, 2023).

Academics' opinions on the Core Curriculum and MAS are influenced by their assumptions about the processes of teaching and learning. Rigid standards may be seen as restricting by those who take a student-centered approach, but they may also be seen as important to preserve quality by others. The implementation of basic academic standards is more likely to be supported by faculty members who follow the "mastery learning" approach, according to a 2022 research published in the Journal of

Curriculum Studies. According to these instructors, providing pupils with defined benchmarks encourages them to accomplish learning objectives and understand fundamental subjects (Smith & Jones, 2022). On the other hand, other scholars warn that strict standards and highly prescribed core curriculum might hinder creativity and make it more difficult for instructors to adapt their lessons to the particular requirements of each student. According to a 2021 Harvard Educational Review study, flexibility for individualized pedagogy and consistent learning goals must be balanced (Williams & Chu, 2021).

Scholars have also emphasized how crucial it is to match core curriculum and standards with practical skills that help students succeed outside of the classroom. The need of aligning academic standards with the critical thinking, problem-solving, and teamwork abilities required in the workforce of the twenty-first century was highlighted by a 2023 research published in the Review of Educational Research (Park & Kim, 2023). While academics generally agree on the benefits of core curriculum and standards, there is still room for constructive disagreement about how best to create and carry out these rules. Research on how to foster academic rigor and student-centered flexibility in educational institutions is still ongoing.

Previous studies have been conducted by many researchers in various aspects. For example, Kporyi and Arko (2024) conducted a study on the academic accomplishment of pupils in junior high schools in Ashaiman, Ghana, and the pedagogical competence of instructors. According to the research, the instructors' pedagogical competencies included giving students relevant feedback, adapting to changing circumstances, clearly explaining material to them, and successfully communicating learning objectives. Additionally, it was shown that there was a marginally favourable correlation between students' academic success and instructors' proficiency in classroom management. In a similar vein, Fischer and H€anze (2020) investigated the values, beliefs, and impact of university professors on instructional strategies. Multiple regression models revealed that rapport, active student participation, and

observed structure were all impacted by the value of instruction. Although constructivist views were positively correlated with student-reported clarity of teaching, student participation stimulation, and rapport, transmissive beliefs had an influence on the observed quality of instruction.

Gender differences in perception and core curriculum implementation

When implementing core curriculum and basic academic requirements, it is crucial to take into account the perspective of academics based on gender, both male and female. Gender biases may affect how academics assess and apply educational policies and procedures, according to research. Male academics were more likely to emphasize technical proficiency and "hard" skills in the core curriculum, according to a 2022 study published in the journal "Gender and Education," whereas female academics placed more value on holistic development and "soft" skills (Sánchez-Moreno, Altopiedi & Lavié, 2022). This implies that the content and emphasis of the core curriculum may be influenced by the gender distribution of academic decision-makers. In a similar vein, Chu and Jiang's 2021 article in the "Journal of Higher Education" looked at how gender functions when it comes to establishing minimal academic requirements. The researchers discovered that male academics often set higher minimum criteria, especially in historically male-dominated disciplines, which might pose challenges for female students. On the other hand, standards that took into consideration the varied learning requirements and backgrounds of students were more likely to be supported by female academics.

The significance of gender diversity and inclusion in academic leadership and curriculum and standard-related decision-making processes is underscored by these results. According to Timmers, Willemsen, and Tijdens (2019), ensuring a fair representation of viewpoints may support more equitable and inclusive educational practices and lessen the effects of gender prejudices. The Scholars recommended that universities and other academic institutions

aggressively support gender diversity in faculty recruiting, promotion, and leadership roles in order to solve these problems. (ii) Train academics and organize awareness-raising events to assist them in identifying and addressing their own gender prejudices. (iii) Involve a range of stakeholders, including students, in the creation and evaluation of the academic standards and core curriculum. (vi) Continually assess how standards and curriculum affect pupils of various genders and make the required modifications. Therefore, institutions may strive toward more inclusive and effective educational policies that meet the interests of all students by considering the role of gender in academic decision-making.

Statement of the problem

The University of Calabar and Nigerian institutions have been observed to have inadequately implemented core curriculum and minimal academic standards, a phenomenon that has raised serious concerns and undermined the value of higher education and its ability to advance national development. This has nothing to do with the poor students' performance and declining reputations of the institutions over time. Negative perceptions and attitudes toward the academic community, such as a lack of professional development opportunities, resistance to change, gender bias, and a lack of funding, are to blame for the inadequate implementation of the core curriculum and minimum academic standards in Nigerian universities. These attitudes also make it difficult to acquire necessary resources, like up-to-date textbooks, lab equipment, and instructional aids. Furthermore, academic staff members often lack access to ongoing professional development opportunities, which leads to antiquated teaching strategies that neither successfully engage students nor encourage critical thinking. The inconsistent curriculum delivery among institutions, with notable differences in learning objectives and course content, is another important concern. This discrepancy often results from inadequate inspection and control by educational authorities, which causes the

curriculum to be out of step with the changing demands of the labour market. As a result, it's common to discover that graduates lack the abilities and information required to succeed in their professional employment.

Implementing the core curriculum is made more difficult by the deficiencies in many colleges' infrastructure, which include small classroom sizes, slow internet access, and limited research facilities. These deficiencies impede learning opportunities and restrict students' capacity to participate in worthwhile research projects, which are critical for their development both academically and professionally. The issue of inadequate execution also encompasses university-based monitoring and assessment systems. In order to make sure that academic requirements are being reached and to pinpoint areas that need improvement, there are often insufficient methods for thorough evaluation and feedback. Universities cannot make data-driven choices that might improve academic achievement and programmes delivery without efficient monitoring. Therefore, the inadequate execution of the core curriculum and minimal academic requirements in Nigerian institutions poses a complex issue that jeopardizes the level of higher education. Nigerians are dissatisfied with the quality of education, graduation abilities, and degrees earned by graduates; year after year, student achievements fall short of what the public and parents had anticipated. According to reports, the Federal Government of Nigeria has worked extremely hard to raise graduate competencies, the standard of education, and the reputation of Nigerian university degrees in order to raise students' overall performance. To this end, seminars and workshops have been held to encourage academics to think more creatively about how to implement core curriculum and minimal academic standards that will support students' learning. However, the learning results of the pupils have decreased. This leads the current research to ask: Does the way academics are perceived impact the way core curriculum and minimal academic requirements are implemented? This is the study's main objective.

Aim and Objective

Aim: The main aim of this study was to assess the perception of academics on the implementation of Core Curriculum and Minimum Academic Standards at the University of Calabar, Nigeria.

Objectives

- i. academics' pedagogical beliefs and the implementation of core curriculum and minimum academic standards at the University of Calabar, Nigeria.
- ii. differences between male and female academics' perception on the implementation of core curriculum and minimum academic standards at the University of Calabar, Nigeria.

Research questions

- i. What is the impact of academics' pedagogical beliefs on their implementation of core curriculum and minimum academic standards at the University of Calabar, Nigeria?
- ii. What are the differences between male and female academics' perception on the implementation of core curriculum and minimum academic standards at the University of Calabar, Nigeria?

Theoretical Discussion

The theory which would serve as the framework for the study is Curriculum Implementation Theory by Michael Fullan. Curriculum Implementation Theory was notably developed by Michael Fullan, a Canadian educational researcher, in the 1980s. Fullan's work primarily focused on understanding the dynamics of educational change, particularly how innovations like curriculum reforms are implemented in schools. The theory emphasized that successful curriculum implementation goes beyond simply introducing a new curriculum; it requires changes in teacher beliefs, instructional practices, and the organizational context of schools.

In his seminar work, *"The Meaning of*

Educational Change" (first published in 1982), Fullan outlined key components that influence curriculum implementation such as teacher commitment, stakeholder involvement, leadership, and contextual factors like policy and resources. Fullan argued that without addressing these interconnected elements, implementation efforts are likely to fail or produce superficial change.

Michael Fullan's Curriculum Implementation Theory is based on several key assumptions including that; change is a process, not an event – Implementation unfolds over time and requires sustained effort; Implementation requires individual and collective capacity – Teachers and stakeholders need skills, motivation, and support; Context matters – School culture, leadership, and external environments influence outcomes; Change involves emotional and intellectual engagement – People must believe in the value of the change; Top-down and bottom-up strategies must align – Successful implementation needs both leadership direction and grassroots involvement, among others.

Michael Fullan's Curriculum Implementation Theory is highly relevant to this study as it emphasizes the central role of teachers' (or academics') beliefs, attitudes, and professional understanding in successful curriculum implementation. Fullan highlights that meaningful change occurs when implementers internalize and adapt reforms to their context - making academics' perceptions and gender-based differences critical factors in how Core Curriculum and Minimum Academic Standards are interpreted and applied in higher education settings.

Material and methods

A descriptive survey research approach was used in the study. The population consisted of all 1,462 academic employees of the university, 843 of whom were men and 619 of whom were women, spread among the institution's 99 departments. The study's 400 respondents—200 men and 200 women - were chosen using the purposive sampling approach. The Perception of Academics on the Implementation of Core Curriculum and Minimum Academic Standards

Questionnaire (PAICCMASQ) was used as the data collection tool to gauge the pedagogical beliefs of academics as well as their perceptions of male and female academics in relation to the implementation of these standards. It was created using a four-point Likert scale with the codes 4, 3, 2, and 1 for Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD). For every study topic, the scale had eight (8) items, each of which was verified by specialists in measurement and evaluation as well as language arts education. Through the use of Cronbach alpha reliability, the PAICCMASQ reliability coefficient was determined, and it varied between .78 and .79. The study topics were addressed using straightforward frequency and percentage methodologies. Mean, Standard

Deviation and simple percentage were used to answer the research questions.

Research questions

What is the impact of academics' pedagogical Beliefs on their implementation of core curriculum and minimum academic standards at the University of Calabar, Nigeria? To answer this research questions, descriptive statistics was employed, and the result presented in Table 1.

What are the differences between male and female academics' perception on the implementation of core curriculum and minimum academic standards at the University of Calabar, Nigeria? To answer this research questions, descriptive statistics was employed, and the result presented in Table 2

Table 1: Frequency, simple percentage and mean distribution of respondents' responses on academics' pedagogical beliefs on implementation of core curriculum and minimum academic standards (N=400)

pedagogical beliefs on implementation of core curriculum and minimum academic standards (17-400)													
S/N	Variables/Items	SA		A		D		SD		Expected mean	Observed mean	Decision	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%				
	Academics' pedagogical beliefs												
1	My teaching methods align well with the core curriculum requirements	140	35	164	41	40	10	56	14	2.50	2.97	Agreed	
2	I frequently incorporate new pedagogical strategies to enhance the implementation of the core curriculum	144	36	120	30	56	14	80	20	2.50	2.82	Agreed	
3	There is sufficient flexibility in the core curriculum to allow for innovative teaching approaches	128	32	152	38	56	14	64	16	2.50	2.86	Agreed	
4	The minimum academic standards provide a clear framework for assessing student performance	160	40	124	31	36	9	80	20	2.50	2.91	Agreed	

5	The core curriculum encourages the development of critical thinking skills in students	172	43	120	30	40	10	68	17	2.50	2.99	Agreed
6	The adoption of a student-centered approach in my teaching significantly enhances the implementation of the core curriculum	108	27	164	41	60	15	68	17	2.50	2.78	Agreed
7	Integrating technology into my teaching practices supports the effective implementation of the core curriculum and minimum academic standards	168	42	116	29	40	10	76	19	2.50	2.94	Agreed
8	Collaborating with colleagues improves the implementation of the core curriculum and ensures adherence to minimum academic standards	172	43	144	36	40	10	44	11	2.50	3.11	Agreed
	Overall	37. 25	29 8	34. 5	27 6	11. 5	92	16. 75	13 4	20	23.38	Agreed

(Source: Researchers' field work, 2024)

Key: SA-Strongly Agreed, A-Agreed, D-Disagree, SD-Strongly Disagree

Based on four options: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD), Table 1 displays respondents' responses to the sub-scale using simple percentage analysis on academics' pedagogical beliefs as they influence their implementation of core curriculum and minimum academic standards at the University of Calabar. As can be seen in Table 1 above, the majority of respondents marked the questions in this subscale as Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), or Strongly Agree (SD). The majority of respondents strongly agree or agree with all of

the sub-scale items as well as the overall items indicating that academics' pedagogical ideas impact how they execute the University of Calabar's core curriculum and basic academic standards. This is seen in Table 1 above. Additionally, there is agreement among the items as seen by the observed means of each item and the overall mean in research question 1, which are higher than the projected means of 2.50 and 23.38, respectively. This implies that while recognizing teachers own pedagogical perspectives, rules should provide frameworks that assist educators in executing core

curriculum and minimal academic requirements.

Research question two

What are the differences between male and

female academics' perception on the implementation of core curriculum and minimum academic standards at the University of Calabar, Nigeria? To answer this research question, descriptive statistics was employed, and the result presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Frequency, simple percentage of the differences between male and female academics' perception on the implementation of core curriculum and minimum academic standards (N=400; Male 200, female 200).

S/ N	Variables/Items	Strongly Agreed (%)			Agreed (%)			Disagreed (%)			Strongly disagreed (%)		
		SA	M	F	A	M	F	D	M	F	S D	M	F
1	I believe that the core curriculum effectively addresses the needs of students in my field	140	80 (57.1%)	60 (42.9%)	164	102 (62.2%)	62 (37.9%)	40	21 (52.5%)	19 (47.5%)	56	36 (64.3%)	20 (35.7%)
2	My teaching methods align well with the core curriculum requirements	144	102 (70.8%)	42 (29.2%)	120	70 (58.3%)	50 (41.7%)	56	34 (60.7%)	22 (39.3%)	80	60 (75.0%)	20 (25.0%)
3	I frequently incorporate new pedagogical strategies to enhance the implementation of the core curriculum	128	74 (57.8%)	54 (42.3%)	152	84 (55.3%)	68 (44.7%)	56	30 (53.6%)	26 (46.4%)	64	35 (54.7%)	29 (45.3%)
4	There is sufficient flexibility in the core curriculum to allow for innovative teaching approaches	160	90 (56.3%)	70 (43.7%)	124	64 (51.6%)	60 (48.4%)	36	20 (55.6%)	16 (44.4%)	80	50 (62.5%)	30 (37.5%)

5	The minimum academic standards provide a clear framework for assessing student performance	172	90 (52.3 %)	82 (47.7 %)	120	70 (58.3%)	50 (41.7 %)	40	25 (62.5 %)	15 (37.5 %)	68	38 (55.9 %)	30 (44.1 %)
6	The core curriculum encourages the development of critical thinking skills in students	108	64 (59.3 %)	44 (40.7 %)	164	88 (53.7%)	76 (46.3 %)	60	40 (66.7 %)	20 (33.3 %)	68	42 (61.8 %)	26 (38.2 %)
7	The adoption of a student-centered approach in my teaching significantly enhances the implementation of the core curriculum	168	98 (58.3 %)	70 (41.7 %)	116	64 (55.2%)	52 (44.8 %)	40	28 (70.0 %)	12 (30.0 %)	76	45 (59.2 %)	31 (40.8 %)
8	Flexibility in instructional methods helps in better adherence to the core curriculum and achieving minimum academic standards	172	96 (55.8 %)	76 (44.2 %)	144	82 (56.9%)	62 (43.1 %)	40	26 (65.0 %)	14 (35.0 %)	44	32 (72.7 %)	12 (27.3 %)
	Overall	1192	694 (58.2 %)	498 (41.8 %)	1104	624 (56.5%)	480 (43.5 %)	368	224 (60.9 %)	144 (39.1 %)	536	338 (63.1 %)	198 (36.9 %)

(Source: Researchers' field work, 2024)

Key: M-Male, F-Female

Table 2 shows the responses to the sub-scale on the differences in perceptions between male and female academics at the University of Calabar, Nigeria, regarding the implementation of the core curriculum and minimum academic

standards. The responses are based on four options: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Agreed (SD). The data in Table 2 above indicates that a greater proportion of male academics than female

counterparts strongly agree with every item in the second study question. This indicates that opinions on the application of the core curriculum and minimal academic standards at the University of Calabar, Nigeria, vary between male and female professors in terms of I am of the opinion that the core curriculum adequately meets the needs of students in my field; that teaching methods are in line with the requirements of the core curriculum; that the core curriculum is flexible enough to accommodate innovative teaching approaches; that the minimum academic standards offer a clear framework for evaluating students' performance; that the core curriculum promotes the development of critical thinking skills in students; that the implementation of the core curriculum is greatly enhanced by the use of a student-centred approach in my teaching; and that the flexibility of instructional methods facilitates better adherence to the core curriculum and the achievement of the minimum academic standards. The outcome also demonstrates that male academics - compared to their female counterparts - perceived and agreed with higher levels of pedagogical attitudes on the implementation of core curriculum and basic academic standards.

Discussion of findings

The developed and examined research questions and the study's results serve as the foundation for the findings discussion. Research question by research question, the conversation was conducted. The examination of the first study question's answer reveals that the University of Calabar's core curriculum and minimal academic standards are implemented in response to the pedagogical views of academic staff. Table 1 demonstrates that there is a noteworthy impact. The fact that academics' pedagogical beliefs frequently originate from their personal teaching philosophy, which includes their opinions on how students learn best, may be the cause of the potential influence of these beliefs on the implementation of core curriculum and minimum academic standards. Their teaching style and the tactics they use in the classroom are shaped by these ideas. This result corroborates that of Fischer and Heanze

(2020), who found that observed structure, student active participation, and rapport were all impacted by the value of instruction. The results are consistent with those of Smith and Jones (2022), who discovered that faculty members who follow a "mastery learning" approach are more likely to be in favour of using minimal academic requirements. According to these instructors, providing pupils with defined benchmarks encourages them to accomplish learning objectives and understand foundational subjects.

The examination of the second study question's result showed that male academics, in comparison to their female counterparts, had higher perceptions of, and agreement with academics' pedagogical ideas about the execution of core curriculum and minimal academic standards. The results are consistent with Chu and Jiang's (2021) findings, which showed that male academics tended to establish higher minimum criteria, especially in disciplines where males have historically had a dominant role. This might possibly create obstacles for female students. The results corroborated those of Sánchez-Moreno, Altopiedi, and Lavié (2022), who found that academics who identified as male were more likely to emphasize technical proficiency and "hard" skills in the core curriculum, while academics who identified as female were more likely to emphasize holistic development and "soft" abilities. This implies that the content and emphasis of the core curriculum may be influenced by the gender distribution of academic decision-makers.

Conclusion

The way academics approach teaching and the implementation of curricula is greatly influenced by their pedagogical ideas, which are reflected in the different degrees to which basic curriculum principles and academic standards are adhered to. Perceptions of male and female academics are particularly important because they may introduce prejudices that interfere with the equal provision of education. The research emphasizes how important it is for academics to be more aware of and trained in impartial educational techniques in order to guarantee that curricular

requirements are implemented consistently. Promoting an inclusive and excellent learning environment that serves all students equally requires addressing these elements.

Practical implications for teaching and learning process

- The goal of ongoing professional development should be to bring academics' pedagogical principles up to date and make them consistent with modern educational methods and standards. This guarantees the efficacy and inclusivity of their instructional strategies. Teachers need to be trained to identify and deal with their own gender prejudices and biases. This may lessen the impact that individual opinions may have on the way they teach and execute the curriculum.
- Establish a classroom climate that is impartial and supportive in order to promote equitable involvement from all kids. This entails aggressively advancing gender equality while using a variety of instructional strategies that accommodate various learning preferences. Create impartial and fair judgments. To guarantee that all students are assessed according to their skills and performance, educators should be educated to identify and steer clear of any possible biases in their assessment procedures.
- Provide strong channels for feedback so that students may voice their concerns about any injustices or prejudices they may have seen. It is important to consider the input provided and make the required modifications to the curriculum and teaching methods. Establish mentoring programmes that provide equitable assistance to students of both genders. This supports pupils' development of a good learning attitude and self-concept.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended among others that:

1. Programmes for professional development have to be created with academics' various pedagogical views in mind. Workshops, seminars, and courses that assist in bridging the belief gap and actual application might be examples of this.
2. Female academics should have access to workshops, training sessions, and collaborative learning opportunities in order to better understand and value CCMAS. This may contribute to the development of a more gender-neutral educational worldview, which in turn may result in more reliable and efficient application of the standards.

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