

Research Article

TEACHERS' READINESS ON IMPLEMENTATION OF COMPETENCE-BASED CURRICULUM IN LOWER PRIMARY PUPILS IN MUMBUNI ZONE, MACHAKOS COUNTY, KENYA

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to determine the influence of teachers' readiness on implementation of Competence-Based Curriculum in lower primary pupils in Mumbuni Zone, Machakos County. To ensure accessibility, retention, and completion of primary schooling as per Sustainable Development Goal (SDG), free primary education (FPE) was implemented in 2003. The government wanted to ensure that every child acquires the knowledge and skills necessary to promote sustainable development as per the SDGs. The persistent campaign by worldwide communities to persuade countries to respect human rights and meet basic needs has been one of the major issues of the 21st Century. Smith's theory on structural functionalism informed this study. The study adopted descriptive survey design. A target population of 24 public primary schools, 24 head teachers and 72 teachers in lower primary schools were used. A sample size of eight head teachers and 22 lower primary teachers was identified for the study based on a simple random sampling of 30% of the targeted population. Interview guide and questionnaires were used to collect data. Data was analyzed using both quantitatively and qualitatively. Descriptive analysis was used to analyze quantitative data with the use of Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS Version 27). Frequencies and percentages were created and presented using tables and figures. The reliability of the questionnaire was tested using Pearson Product moment correlation from the pilot study. The study found that most of the lower primary teachers (97.8%) were ready to execute CBC, which positively impacted lower primary pupils' learning, thus significantly affecting the implementation of Competence-Based Curriculum among pupils in lower primary schools within the Mumbuni zone. Based on the findings, the study recommends that teachers need training through in-service training, seminars, and workshops for successful implementation of CBC and positive implementation of Competence-Based Curriculum. The research concluded that teacher's readiness significantly influenced CBC implementation in lower primary pupils of Mumbuni Zone, Machakos Sub County, Machakos County.

Keywords: Teachers' Readiness, Curriculum Implementation, Competency Based Curriculum, In-service, Teachers' Training.

INTRODUCTION

Teachers must be appropriately equipped to take a complex evolutionary and responsive approach considering curricular changes in the context of huge development and creation of new knowledge and an economy-based society. In raising teachers' skills and knowledge in executing CBC, the teaching career should be developed methodically based on greater receptivity to the training requirements (Serdenciuc, 2013). According to research by Mosha (2012) on the learning resources used to deliver the competence-based curriculum, many schools lack suitable facilities, and instructors lack the necessary training, which makes implementing the CBC curriculum in the classroom challenging. It also showed that textbooks and teaching guides were not given and teachers lacked the necessary competencies. The book's writers have little experience with the CBC and no formal training. They were not knowledgeable about the CBC, which hindered their capacity to produce high-caliber novels. Since they needed a lot of time to prepare lessons, teachers were reluctant. Instead of primarily concentrating on what pupils are supposed to know, the competence-based curriculum emphasizes what pupils are required to accomplish. According to Jallow (2011), a competency-based curriculum strives to give pupils the skills necessary to perform, study, and acquire knowledge. The competency-based curriculum is suitable for meeting

the nation's evolving socio-economic and technical needs. It strives to solve the issue of young and recent graduate unemployment by focusing on acquiring knowledge, skills, behaviors, and attitudes important in carrying out diverse tasks (MaodzwaTaruvunga and Cross, 2012). According to Masika (2014) a competency-based curriculum emphasizes knowledge construction over transmission and the influence that past knowledge has on the learning process. It represents a change from the conventional input-driven curriculum, which primarily emphasizes knowledge development, to a competency-based curriculum (Maclean *et al.*, 2013). It emphasizes developing skills as a set of values, attitudes, talents, skills, and knowledge required for various jobs (Mulder, 2014). Muraraneza, Mtshali and Mukamanaza (2017) assert that because the competence-based curriculum used in developing countries is a copy of one used in affluent nations, adopting it is proving difficult. Further, under this circumstance, a curriculum change is difficult to prepare and hinders the implementation process. The competency-based curriculum focuses more on skill development than knowledge gain. The shift from a competency-based curriculum is the need to shift from rote memorization to teaching-learning strategies that enhance the development of competencies and problem-solving abilities (Hickling-Hudson and Klees, 2012).

Darling-Hammod, Wei, and Andree (2010) argue that nations with strong pupil accomplishment in schools are those that encourage ongoing professional development for teachers while they are in the classroom and include them in curriculum creation. Therefore, if teachers are adequately equipped with the relevant skills, knowledge and teaching learning materials, Competency Based Curriculum is

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likely to produce holistic learning in which pupils are spared the burden that comes with national examinations which bring about stiff and unhealthy competition among pupils, schools and all other stakeholders as a whole. Strugies (2015) points that momentum schools gives a five-part working definition of competency-based education that pupils advance upon demonstrated mastery, competencies exhibited by pupils include explicit, measurable and transferable learning objectives that empower pupils. He continues to argue that, assessment is meaningful and positive learning is experienced. Pupils get timely, distinguished support based on their individual learning needs and that implementation of Competence-Based Curriculums emphasize competencies that include application and creation of knowledge along with the development of important skills and dispositions.

Cheptoo and Ramadas (2019) asserts that CBC embracing in African countries allows the future generation to manifest its potential on the formation and accomplishment of competencies needed for an individual to be viable in the job market. The countries should envisage the proper implementation of CBC in the classroom to enhance the goals of the curriculum. CBC whip hand brings the African education achievement to the global bar on only if the required implementation is realized. The unique Africa countries need to see their CBC through the African lenses. Ambei, (2018) teachers should be involved in the crucial stage of curriculum reform, and their professional development is developed satisfactorily before the implementation of CBC. Retraining of teachers should be critical in every curriculum adoption. More so, the realignment of CBC into the African context should be maintained.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to investigate teachers' readiness on implementation of Competence-Based Curriculum in lower primary pupils in Mumbuni Zone, Machakos County.

Theoretical Framework

The study was based on Anthony Smith's (1977) structural functionalism concept. According to the structural-functionalism hypothesis, social institutions are the structures that make up human society like an organism. These societal structures are designed in such a way that they serve a variety of purposes for the community. The structural-functionalism concept seeks to define each of the numerous social institutions for the stability of society and to describe how human society is constituted in this regard (Jahnke, 2015).

In the nineteenth century, the structural-functionalism idea began to take hold and become more widely accepted. It was created and molded by scientists to comprehend human society. It claims that social structures that are generally dependable norms of social behavior direct our lives. Social systems, such as those found in the community, religious institutions, and family, are vital in shaping society. Additionally, certain rituals, like a handshake or elaborate religious rites, shape our daily lives. Each structure of society has social implications or functions that affect how the community functions. For instance, education serves several crucial social purposes like socializing, learning, and social positioning. As a result, this way of thought seemed to create a solid framework for understanding how social institutions function to shape, uphold, and perpetuate human society.

Education is a complicated institution with many different components in every human culture. It is a well-known and essential social institution designed to perform a specific task: educating society's citizens. Additionally, this theory can be used to

comprehend and explain how education contributes to the preservation and advancement of civilization. This theory is being used in lower primary schooling in Mumbuni Zone, Machakos Sub County, Machakos County to help investigate teachers' readiness in implementing the competence-based curriculum

LITERATURE REVIEW

Instead of primarily concentrating on what pupils are supposed to know, the competence-based curriculum emphasizes what pupils are required to accomplish. According to Jallow (2011), a competency-based curriculum strives to give pupils the skills necessary to perform, study, and acquire knowledge. The competency-based curriculum is suitable for meeting the nation's evolving socio-economic and technical needs. It strives to solve the issue of young and recent graduate unemployment by focusing on acquiring knowledge, skills, behaviors, and attitudes important in carrying out diverse tasks (MaodzwaTarvinga and Cross, 2012). According to Masika (2014) a competency-based curriculum emphasizes knowledge construction over transmission and the influence that past knowledge has on the learning process. It represents a change from the conventional input-driven curriculum, which primarily emphasizes knowledge development, to a competency-based curriculum (Maclean *et al.*, 2013). It emphasizes developing skills as a set of values, attitudes, talents, skills, and knowledge required for various jobs (Mulder, 2014).

Teachers must be appropriately equipped to take a complex evolutionary and responsive approach considering curricular changes in the context of huge development and creation of new knowledge and an economy-based society. In raising teachers' skills and knowledge in executing CBC, the teaching career should be developed methodically based on greater receptivity to the training requirements (Serdenciuc, 2013). According to research by Mosha (2012) on the learning resources used to deliver the competence-based curriculum, many schools lack suitable facilities, and instructors lack the necessary training, which makes implementing the CBC curriculum in the classroom challenging. It also showed that textbooks and teaching guides were not given and teachers lacked the necessary competencies. The book's writers have little experience with the CBC and no formal training. They were not knowledgeable about the CBC, which hindered their capacity to produce high-caliber novels. Since they needed a lot of time to prepare lessons, teachers were reluctant. Strugies (2015) posit that momentum schools gives a five-part working definition of competency-based education that pupils advance upon demonstrated mastery, competencies exhibited by pupils include explicit, measurable and transferable learning objectives that empower pupils. He continues to argue that, assessment is meaningful and positive learning is experienced. Pupils get timely, distinguished support based on their individual learning needs and that implementation of competence-Based Curriculums emphasize competencies that include application and creation of knowledge along with the development of important skills and dispositions.

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The research design for the study was a descriptive survey. The descriptive survey study This is the most popular approach for gathering data on people's views, beliefs, habits, or educational concerns (Nzoka and Orodho, 2014). It was acceptable to use a descriptive design because it would allow the researcher to learn about the participants' perceptions of the variables influencing learning outcomes for lower primary students in Mumbuni Zone,

Machakos County. Data was analysed using both qualitative and quantitative method.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Response Rate

A total of twenty-five questionnaires were distributed at random to teachers in lower primary schools, and eight head teachers were interviewed by the researcher. Twenty-two of the twenty-two questionnaires distributed to lower primary school instructors in schools that were selected at random were returned. The resulting response rates are presented in the Table

Table Response Rate

Description	Sample	Returned	Percentage%
Lower Primary Teachers	22	22	100.0
Head Teachers	8	8	100.0
Total	30	30	100.0

The responses from lower primary teachers and head teachers who took part in the interview are both recorded as 100% in the Table. The study's viability for data analysis was confirmed based on the response rate, which exceeded 80% among the participants. This finding aligns with the proposition made by Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) that it is feasible to achieve a response rate exceeding 50%.

Lower primary Teachers Academic Qualification

The lower primary teachers were requested to indicate their academic qualifications. Their responses were analyzed and the results are presented in the Table .

Table : Lower Primary Academic Qualifications

Academic qualification	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Certificate	8	36.36
Diploma	7	31.82
Degree	5	22.73
Masters	2	9.09
Any other	0	0.00
Total	22	100.00

The data in the Table demonstrates that the majority of lower primary school teachers at certificate level with 36.36%, diploma with 31.82%, degree with 22.73%, and masters with 9.09%. Of the sampled teachers, no one is above a master's level of education. The table shows that all the teachers have the minimum education level required in lower primary schools.

How Teachers' Readiness Determine Implementation of Competence-Based Curriculum

The study sought to determine the influence of teachers' readiness on implementation of Competence-Based Curriculum in lower primary pupils in Mumbuni Zone, Machakos County. In lower elementary schools in Mumbuni Zone, Machakos County. The study aimed to determine how prepared teachers were for implementing the Competence-Based Curriculum. Indicators like in-service training attendance, competence-based curriculum materials availability, parental involvement in the competence-based curriculum implementation, and attendance at refresher courses were used to

assess teachers' readiness for competency-based curriculum implementation.

Attendance of in-service training

Based on the findings, majority (95.45%) of lower primary teachers in the Mumbuni Zone have participated in in-service training for Competency-Based Curricula. To be ready to adopt a new curriculum, teachers ought to get in-service training and induction. This suggests that the majority of educators are prepared to implement the CBC system of education. The majority of head teachers, or 85%, acknowledged that they had planned seminars for their institution. The majority said they arranged extra workshops and seminars right away to help teachers prepare to implement the competence-based curriculum. The head teachers disclosed that the topics covered included lesson preparation, assessment, and application of key skills in addition to the work schedule. This showed a consistent trend to the opinions of the teacher that there were adequate training opportunities towards bettering implementation of Competence-Based Curricula among the government primary schools in Mumbuni zone.

This was in line with a study by Darling Hammond, Wei, and Andree (2010), which found out that countries with high levels of pupil achievement in schools emphasize teacher in-service training for continuous improvement and involvement of teachers in decision-making regarding curriculum. Therefore, all instructors should be integrated into and educated in the Competence-Based Curriculum to ensure its implementation's success. Further, this is consistent with a KICD (2018) study report that found that 83% of head teachers were able to coach and assist teachers in implementing CBC.

Number of In-service Training Sessions Attended

The researcher found out that, a fair majority (50.50%) of lower primary school teachers in the Mumbuni Zone have only attended one in-service training for competency-based curricula. This was compared to 24.5% who had attended two, 10.2% who had attended three, 9.5% who had attended four, and only 5.3% who had participated in more than five. This demonstrated that most of the lower primary teachers (50.50%) had only attended one training sessions, suggesting that they may not be conversant with the competence-based curriculum.

Practically, 86% of the head teachers believed that lower primary teachers, especially those who had participated in more than four in-service training sessions, are ready and equipped to apply the competence-based curriculum. These findings were consistent with the statements of Ondimu (2018) that quite a number of teachers have developed a positive attitude towards the implementation the Competency based curriculum after the training that they have underwent and they have the passion and will-power to implement the new curriculum. This is a success in the implementation of the curriculum because teachers who have developed a positive attitude would be able to implement the curriculum better than those whose attitude is negative. Additionally, the skills that they have acquired in the trainings also helps in boosting their knowledge and confidence which is key in the implementation of this new curriculum. This showed consistency with the teacher's view which showed that more in-service trainings meant better preparedness in implementing CBC thus better implementation of Competence-Based Curricula.

This was consistent with research by Moshia (2012) that found little to no teacher training about shifts towards a new curriculum. In his study on difficulties faced by teachers in implementing the competency-based curriculum, Makunja (2016) also noted that teachers had not

received orientation through workshops and in-service training. This demonstrates how crucial in-service training is for implementing a competence-based curriculum.

Provision of Competence-Based Curriculum Training Materials

The Provision of Competence-Based Curriculum Training Materials to lower primary teachers is as indicated in the Table below:

Table: Provision of Competence-Based Curriculum Training Materials

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Very frequently	0	0.00
Often	5	22.72
Sometimes	14	63.64
Rarely	3	13.64
Never	0	0.00
Total	22	100.00

The Table shows that majority (86.36%) of the lower primary schools in Mumbuni Zones, Machakos Sub County Machakos County had received learning materials for competence-based curriculum. However, 63.64% received sometimes whereas, 13.64% of the lower primary school teachers rarely received the competence-based curriculum teaching and learning material. Those who received competence-based curriculum learning materials were 21.8%. There was not any school that frequently or adequately received materials for competency-based curriculum. In addition, there was no school that had never received competence-based curriculum learning materials. This indicates that lower primary teachers in Mumbuni Zone are not well equipped with learning materials for the competence-based curriculum.

The finding affirmed inadequate learning and teaching materials and inadequate quality textbooks was challenge in the implementation of the Competency-based curriculum. Ondimu (2018) as quoted by Akala (2021) posit that there has been gaps during the preparations of books and also delays in the publication of books and sometimes it is not easy to get particular books for a certain class and this has worked negatively on the implementation of this curriculum as it frustrates both parents and teachers who need these books for their children and pupils respectively. This kind of situation has also been witnessed in the availability of the other learning and teaching resources which was lacking in quite a number of schools threatening the implementation of the competency based curriculum (Amunga *et al.*, 2020). This was consistent with Chege (2014) research that found that majority 63.75% of schools received training materials though not frequently. Therefore, training materials should be availed to ease the delivery of the curriculum to achieve successful Competency-Based Curriculum implementation.

Findings on Teacher's Readiness for Implementing the Competence-Based Curriculum

The results showed that lower primary teachers were ready to implement the competency-based curriculum. The study established that majority of the lower primary teachers had attended the in-service training and thus they were prepared to impart new knowledge to the pupils. This was evident because of the high percentage (95.45%) of lower primary teachers who had completed in-service training. The competency-based curriculum is ready and teachers prepared for implementation, according to 86% of the head teachers. The findings affirmed that since teachers were equipped with the necessary skills to implement the curriculum, children's implementation of Competence-Based Curriculums would be

impressing. At the same time 2.2% of lower elementary teachers have not completed in-service training on competence-based curriculum. Lower primary teachers are not prepared to execute a competence-based curriculum, according to 14% of the head teachers. Teachers who had not attended in-service training or those whose head teachers felt were not prepared were viewed as obstacles to the successful implementation of competence-based curriculum.

According to the analyzed data, the majority of lower primary teachers did not receive sufficient instruction in the competence-based curriculum. The study revealed that a fair majority (50.5%) of lower primary teachers had participated in one in-service training session, whereas 24.5% had attended two, 10.2% had participated in three, 9.5% had participated in four and just 5.3% had participated in more than five training sessions. This revealed that there was no proper and prior arrangement on how all implementers would be trained. According to the findings, inadequate topic knowledge and ICT proficiency among lower primary teachers were also shown to be contributing factors. The purpose of in-service training, seminars, and workshops was to prepare these teachers to implement the new curriculum. As a result, improper in-service training runs the risk of compromising the quality of the teacher and education.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The following are the study's recommendations, which are based on the study's findings:

- i. For the curriculum to be implemented successfully for positive learning outcomes, teachers must be sufficiently trained through in-service training, seminars, and workshops.
- ii. Teachers should receive ICT training and be given the necessary tools to apply the curriculum in the classroom.
- iii. The ministry of education through the county government to avail necessary resources in implementing the competence based curriculum.

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