

Preparedness of Public Primary Schools for the Implementation of Competence-Based Curriculum in Meru South Sub-County, Tharaka Nithi County, Kenya

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Abstract

The purpose of the study was to determine the preparedness of public primary schools for CBC implementation in Meru South Sub-County, Tharaka Nithi County, Kenya. One of the objectives that guided the study was to establish the preparedness of teachers for CBC implementation in public primary schools of Meru South Sub-County, Tharaka Nithi county, Kenya. Descriptive survey research design was used in the study where the researcher used questionnaires and interview schedules to collect data. The target population comprised of 70 head teachers, 1 Curriculum Support Officer, 294 teachers and 15 parents making a total of 380 respondents. The teachers to be sampled were chosen using simple random sampling. The study findings were analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively. Data analysis and interpretation was done using SPSS version 26 and data presentation was done using tables and bar graphs. Testing of the null hypothesis was done using Chi-square at $\alpha = 0.05$ significance level. The study findings established that there is inadequate preparation of teachers for CBC implementation. The researcher recommended that the Ministry of Education should offer more training opportunities to teachers. The findings of this study may be helpful to the Kenyan institutions to sensitize them on areas to focus on that will lead to successful CBC implementation. Further research was proposed for the study on preparedness of private primary schools for Competence Based Curriculum implementation in Kenya and a comparative study of public and private schools' preparedness for the implementation of Competence Based Curriculum in Kenya.

Keywords: Preparedness of teachers, implementation and Competence Based Curriculum.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background Information

Countries have done curriculum reforms and implemented Competence-Based Education (CBE) to empower learners with 21st-century skills and to enable them to have a competitive advantage in the job market. Competence-Based Education in the USA started in the 19th century from 1960s due to high schools taking up the challenge of producing learners who are ready to fit in the society and the place of work. This came about as a result of the United States Education system's failure to meet the needs of its populace. According to Wambua (2019), schools implement CBC, and learners progress to higher levels of education when they have demonstrated mastery of prior knowledge, skills and concepts without considering the pace, level or time. On the concern for teacher training, Jacob and McGovern (2015) argue that USA prioritizes on teacher training through in-service teacher professional development, where it spends almost 18 000\$ per teacher and 19 days of teacher training every year, which increases students test scores by 2.5%. However, colleges and universities in the USA face challenges while implementing CBE programs where, according to Nodine (2016) the enrolment systems cannot accommodate students beginning or completing a course outside the usual semester or quarter time frames. The systems are not set up to accommodate students moving on to the next level at their own rates according to Nodine (2016). The researcher investigated the preparedness of public primary school teachers of Meru South Sub-County as they implement CBC.

Bristow and Patrick (2014) did an international study in competence-based education postcards from abroad and the findings of the study revealed that Finnish teachers are well prepared, where they are endowed with knowledge on research training in psychology and curricular theory to an extent where they come up with their own curriculum around laid national standards. In Finland, the society has a lot of confidence in the teachers and schools and the findings from Bristow and Patrick (2014) study revealed that; the school administrators and teachers define the general goals of education for their schools locally, they are responsible for assessment of their own students, self-assessment and improvement of the schools. The results also indicated that teachers use assessment rubrics for doing assessment depending on national key guidelines in curriculum for all common subjects. The education system of Finland achieved according to Bristow and Patrick (2014) due to the investment of the state in teacher preparedness where teachers are drawn from the best ten high school performers and trained up to master's degree financed by the state. An article by Lavonen and Korhonen (2020) entitled success factors, challenges, and the renewal of Finnish education in Finland revealed that the implementation of 21st-century

competencies was a success in Finland because of the following strategies; teachers and teacher educators are involved in designing national core curriculum, preparation and implementation, development of programs for teacher education, organizing professional learning through mentoring, training and pilot projects and through many federal meetings and seminars organized locally to encourage communication and professional knowledge. It was necessary to establish the extent of preparedness of the Kenyan education system if the country has to be successful with CBC implementation as endeavored.

Rwanda prepared for the implementation of CBC by training teachers who were the curriculum implementers to equip them with skills. Teachers were trained in a cascade model according to Mulenga and Kabombwe (2019) where 100 national teacher trainers, three thousand district master trainers and 300 teachers received training from every district to serve all schools in all districts. Twenty-nine thousand subject school leaders for the newly introduced subjects in the curriculum according to Mulenga and Kabombwe (2019) were also trained and new books in line with the curriculum were supplied to schools. The country's goal was to produce learners who will create jobs and not seek for jobs. The researcher investigated the preparedness of public primary schools of Meru South sub-county as they implement CBC.

Tanzania introduced CBC in 2005 to strengthen learners' skills so as to attain its development vision of 2025. Research done by Haki Elimu (2012) revealed that, learners were posting poor results in the national examinations of Tanzania due to teachers' inability to conceptualize CBC, poor teaching and learning methods and a substandard environment for implementing the curriculum. A study by Mariam (2017) on challenges faced by the system for the implementation of Competence-Based Education and Training (CBET) in technical colleges in Tanzania revealed that; lack of teachers who were appropriately trained hindered the effectiveness of CBET implementation. An article by Nombo (2022) on the challenges of CBC in the teacher training colleges of Tanzania revealed that there was shortage of training opportunities for teachers. The researcher endeavored to establish the preparedness of teachers of the public primary schools of Meru South sub-county as they implement CBC.

The purpose of the study was to determine the preparedness of public primary schools for CBC implementation in Meru South Sub-County, Tharaka Nithi County, Kenya.

1.2 Research Objective

To establish the preparedness of teachers for CBC implementation in public primary schools in Meru South Sub-County, Tharaka Nithi County, Kenya.

1.3 Research Hypothesis

H₀₁: There is no relationship between primary school teacher's preparedness in CBC and their ability to implement the CBC in public primary schools of Meru South Sub-County, Tharaka Nithi County, Kenya.

The hypothesis was tested at $\alpha = 0.005$ significant level. The decision for rejecting or accepting the null hypothesis was based on reference to a p-value computed from Chi-square analysis. Null hypothesis was to be rejected if p-value was less than $\alpha = 0.005$ level of significant and accepted if p-value equals or greater than $\alpha = 0.005$.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Preparedness of teachers refers to personal and collective knowledge, skills, attitudes, perceptions and the ability of teachers to support the implementation of CBC in public primary schools. The teacher's role in CBC as pointed out by Waweru (2018) is to give a learner the chance to discover and grow their full potential. This teaching and learning approach interchanges the responsibility of a teacher from being a monopoly of the teaching program to being a guide or a facilitator in the process of learning. The 8-4-4 education system was characterized by teachers being monopolies of the instructional process but under CBC, the work of a teacher in the teaching and learning process is to guide the learners. A functional system of education, as stated by Waweru (2018) should involve constant re-equipping of teachers with skills for effective curriculum implementation. According to Waweru (2018), enough training ought to be done to teachers on the new curriculum through professional development programs to be able to execute their duties effectively. According to Lovat and Clement (2008), different classes may have varied needs and different subjects have different needs in the implementation strategy where practical contexts and work out strategies that change regularly during the teaching career lead to activities during teacher professional development programs that address the issues raised. This enlightens the researcher on the role of in-service teacher professional development in enhancing students' performance.

Findings of a study by Momanyi and Rop (2019) on early grade primary school teacher preparedness for CBC implementation in Bomet East Sub-County revealed that; teachers have a challenge while implementing CBC where instead of using discovery methods they are still using the teacher centered methods of teaching. A study on constraints facing teachers in competence-based curriculum implementation by Makunja (2016) in Tanzania revealed that; teachers had not been introduced to Competence-Based Curriculum through workshops or in-service programs in preparation to implement CBC. The findings indicated that poor preparation of teachers affected the implementation of CBC and that teachers who are the key curriculum implementers had inadequate knowledge,

skills, and understanding to successfully implement Competence-Based Curriculum. This study endeavored to find out the preparedness of teachers for CBC implementation.

Findings on constraints facing the successful CBC implementation by Muasya and Waweru (2019) in Machakos County revealed that, teachers who are the basic curriculum implementers were unprepared fully to implement the new curriculum and it was difficult to adjust their styles of teaching to learning styles for individual learners. A study by (Isaboke et al., 2021) on teacher preparedness and CBC implementation in public primary schools in Nairobi City County revealed that; most pre-primary teachers did not receive any training on CBC and the few teachers who were trained had inadequate knowledge and skills to handle various areas integrated into the curriculum. An article by Nombo (2022) on the challenges of CBC in the teacher colleges of Tanzania revealed that there was a shortage of training opportunities for teachers. The researcher investigated the level of preparedness of teachers for the successful implementation of CBC as planned.

A study by Abdullahi (2020) on school-based factors influencing CBC implementation in public pre-schools in Garissa Sub- County established that; 68% of teachers did not participate in specialized courses for CBC implementation. Another study by Diana (2020) on constraints experienced by educators in CBC programs implementation in Laikipia East Sub- County found out that; teachers had received training on CBC and 95% of teachers received a one-week training on CBC every term. Another study by Mariam (2017) on challenges faced by the systems of technical colleges of Tanzania on Competence-Based Education and Training implementation revealed that; lack of properly trained teachers affected the successful implementation of CBET.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

The study used descriptive survey research design to establish the preparedness of teachers for CBC implementation in public primary schools in Meru South Sub-County, Tharaka Nithi County, Kenya.

3.2 Population and Sample

Meru South Sub- County has 84 public primary schools which include 74 public day primary schools and 10 public boarding primary schools. From a population size of 84 primary schools 70 primary schools were the sample size for this study arrived at using Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table for determining the size of the sample. 70 head teachers from the chosen 70 primary schools responded to the questionnaires. There are 616 TSC teachers in the public primary schools of Meru south Sub County and teachers were the main respondents for this study. From the selected 70 schools, the researcher purposively selected 294 teachers with the help of the head teacher who responded to the questionnaires. The Curriculum Support Officer of Meru South Sub- County was interviewed by the researcher on the preparedness of public primary schools to implement Competence-Based Curriculum.

3.3 Data Analysis

The type of data that was generated from this research was qualitative and quantitative in nature. After data collection, data coding and analysis was done using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 26. Qualitative data was analyzed continuously from the beginning of fieldwork to determine; patterns, categories and themes. Descriptive statistics for example; frequency, mean, percentages and standard deviation with the help of SPSS version 26 were used to analyze quantitative data. Testing of the null hypothesis was done using chi-square at $\alpha = 0.05$ significance level. The open-ended items were analyzed with the study objectives as the main themes and patterns. The fundamental themes forthcoming from the study were guided by the conceptual and theoretical frameworks. Presentation of analyzed data was done using tables and bar graphs. The following decision criteria was used to interpret the mean of the responses for the five-point likert scale questions; An average score ranging from 4.20 to 5.00 implied that the respondents agreed strongly with the statement, an average score ranging from 3.40 to 4.19 implied that the respondents agreed with the statement. An average score ranging from 2.60 to 3.39 implied that the respondents were undecided about the statement. An average score ranging from 1.80 to 2.59 implied that the respondents disagreed with the statement. An average score ranging from 1.00 to 1.79 implied that the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

The researcher included items on the questionnaires seeking to find out the level of preparedness of teachers for CBC implementation. A likert scale containing five points which ranged from strongly agree to strongly disagree rated the opinions of teachers. Table 1 presents the results.

Table 1: Preparedness of Teachers for the Implementation of Competence-Based Curriculum

Statement	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
I have good knowledge of the CBC assessment techniques and am able to use the CBC assessment rubrics	290	4.03	0.71
I understand the principle of formative assessment and keep learners' records after assessment	290	3.90	0.66
I have been given clear guidelines on how to transform students from passive to active learners	290	3.90	0.69
I have been trained on how to report learners' progress after formative assessment	290	4.07	0.25
I have received adequate training in CBC	290	3.97	0.17
I prepare and deliver lessons using ICT devices in class to my pupils	290	2.51	0.79
I present lessons in class using the projector	290	2.19	0.58
I have received training on foreign language	290	1.00	0.00
I feel well prepared in the management of challenges brought about by the integration of ICT in classroom teaching of the CBC competencies	290	2.51	0.66
I am prepared on CBC content implementation	290	3.42	0.51
I am prepared on how to prepare CBC lesson plan	290	3.51	0.51
I am prepared on how to prepare CBC schemes of work	290	3.48	0.51
I am prepared on how to assess learners progress according to the requirements of CBC	290	3.39	0.52
My knowledge on subject content matter for CBC is good	290	1.12	0.33
I use the Teacher Digital Device and Learner Digital Device in classroom teaching	290	1.37	0.99

Information of the results on Table 1 established that teachers agree that they have good knowledge of CBC assessment techniques and they are able to use the CBC assessment rubrics as revealed by an average mean of 4.02. An average mean of 3.90 from the information of the results on Table 1 meant that teachers agree that they understand the principle of formative assessment and kept learners records after assessment.

The information of the results on Table 1 established that teachers agree that they have been given clear guidelines on how to transform students from passive to active learners as revealed by an average mean of 3.99. An average mean of 4.07 from the information of the results on Table 1 revealed that teachers agree that they have received training on how to report learners' progress after formative assessment. The information of the results on Table 1 established that teachers agree that they have been adequately trained on CBC as revealed by an average mean of 3.97. An average mean of 2.51 from the information of the results on Table 1 revealed that teachers disagree that they use ICT devices in class with the pupils to prepare and deliver lessons. The Information of the results on Table 1 established that teachers disagree that they present lessons in class using the projector as revealed by an average mean of 2.19 which contradicts the statement of head teachers that teachers are able to use ICT devices in classroom learning and teaching. An average mean of 1.00 from the information of the results on Table 1 revealed that teachers strongly disagree that they have received training on foreign languages.

The information of the results on Table 1 established that teachers disagree that they feel well prepared in managing the challenges brought about by the integration of ICT in classroom teaching of CBC competencies as revealed by an average mean of 2.51. An average mean of 3.42 from the information of the results on Table 1 revealed that teachers agree that they are prepared to implement the new CBC content. The information of the results on Table 1 established that teachers agree that they are prepared on how to prepare CBC lesson plans as revealed by an average mean of 3.51. An average mean of 3.48 from the information of the results on Table 1 revealed that teachers agree that they are prepared on how to prepare CBC schemes of work. The information of the results on Table 1 established that teachers were undecided on whether or not they are prepared on how to assess learners' progress according to the requirements of CBC. An average mean of 1.12 from the information of the results on Table 1 indicates that teachers strongly disagree that their knowledge on subject content matter for CBC is good. The information of the results on Table 1 established that teachers strongly disagree that they use Teacher Digital Devices and Learner Digital Devices in classroom teaching. To check whether the responses given by teachers were in agreement, the same constructs were presented to head teachers and the findings are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Preparedness of Head Teachers for the Implementation of Competence-Based Curriculum

Statement	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Teachers have received adequate training on CBC implementation	68	4.49	0.50
Teachers have been trained on the CBC assessment methods	68	4.32	0.47
Teachers have been trained on the foreign languages	68	1.00	0.00
Teachers have been trained on how to identify and nurture learners' talents	68	4.26	0.44
Teachers are able to use the ICT devices in classroom teaching and learning	68	3.46	1.39
Teachers have been trained on sign language	68	1.35	0.97

Information of the results on Table 2 established that head teachers strongly agree that teachers have been trained on the CBC assessment methods as revealed by an average mean of 4.32 which agrees with these findings that teachers have good knowledge of CBC assessment techniques. The information of the results on Table 2 established that head teachers strongly agree that teachers have been trained on how to identify and nurture learners' talents as revealed by an average mean of 4.26. An average mean of 4.49 from the information of the results on Table 2 revealed that head teachers strongly agree that teachers have received adequate training on CBC implementation. Muasya and Waweru (2019) contradicts these findings by noting that the basic curriculum implementers who are teachers were unprepared to implement the new curriculum and adapting their styles of teaching to individual child learning styles was difficult. Mariam (2017) contradicts these findings by pointing out that lack of properly trained teachers hindered effective implementation of CBET in Tanzania. Nombo (2022) also contradicts these findings by stating that there was shortage of training opportunities for teachers in Tanzania. The information of the results on Table 2 established that head teachers agree that teachers are able to use the ICT devices in classroom teaching and learning as revealed by an average mean of 3.46. The information of the results on Table 2 established that head teachers strongly disagree that teachers have been trained on the foreign languages as revealed by an average mean of 1.00 which agree with the statement that teachers have not received training on foreign languages. An average mean of 1.35 from the information of the results on Table 2 revealed that head teachers strongly disagree that teachers have been trained on sign language.

To further verify the results of the descriptive analysis, the Curriculum Support Officer was interviewed and the findings are presented in excerpt 1.

Excerpt 1

Researcher: *How have teachers been prepared to implement CBC?*

Respondent: *In Tharaka Nithi County the primary school teachers and head teachers have attended several seminars and workshops to receive training on CBC. The seminars were scheduled over the holidays when schools close and so far, almost all teachers have been trained on CBC except those that are newly employed who should be trained by other teachers who have already received training.*

From the research findings on preparedness of teachers, it is evident that there is teacher preparedness for CBC implementation. From objective one of the study on preparedness of teachers in readiness for the implementation of CBC in public primary schools in Meru South Sub-County the following null hypothesis was formulated. That there is no relationship between primary school teacher's preparedness in CBC and their ability to implement the CBC in public primary schools of Meru South Sub-County, Tharaka Nithi County, Kenya. Testing of the null hypothesis was done using Chi square. Table 3 presents the chi square analysis findings on preparedness of teachers for CBC implementation.

Table 3: Chi Square Analysis on Preparedness of Teachers for CBC Implementation

	Value	DF	Asymptomatic significance (2-sided)	Exact significance (2-sided)	Exact significance (1-sided)	Point probability
Pearson chi-square	37.848	3	0.000	0.000		
Likelihood Ratio	43.302	3	0.000	0.000		
Fisher's Exact Test	36.605			0.000		
Linear-by-Linear Association	6.022	1	0.014	0.017	0.015	0.008
N of valid cases	290					

The information of the results on Table 3 reveal that the chi square statistics used to examine the association between the recoded categorical variables on the level of preparedness to implement CBC and the implementation of CBC. There is significant association at 5 % significance level between the variables on preparedness to

implement CBC and implementation of CBC at Fisher's Exact Test revealing $\chi^2 = 36.605$, $df = 3$, $p = 0.000$. Therefore, the null hypothesis that stated that there is no relationship between primary school teacher's preparedness in CBC and their ability to implement the CBC in public primary schools of Meru South Sub-County Tharaka Nithi County, Kenya was nullified in favor of the alternative hypothesis that there is relationship between primary school teacher's preparedness in CBC and their ability to implement the CBC in public primary schools of Meru South Sub-County, Tharaka Nithi County, Kenya.

4.2 Areas that Teachers require more Training on for Successful Implementation of CBC

The researcher asked for the areas that teachers need more training on for effective implementation of CBC and the results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Areas that Teachers Require more Training on for Successful Implementation of CBC

Statement	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
I require more training on movement and creative arts	290	3.34	0.71
I need more training on hygiene and nutrition	290	3.07	0.37
I require more training on learner assessment using rubrics and portfolios	290	3.46	0.76
I need more training on sign language and foreign languages	290	5	0.00
I require more training on the use of digital devices	290	4.93	0.37
I need more training on Agriculture Activities	290	3.19	0.54

Information of the results on Table 4 revealed that teachers strongly agree that they require more training on the use of digital devices as revealed by an average mean of 4.93. An average mean of 3.34 from the information of the results on Table 4 revealed that teachers were undecided on whether or not they require more training on movement and creative arts. The information of the results on Table 4 revealed that teachers agree that they require more training on learner assessment methods using rubrics and portfolios as revealed by an average mean of 3.45. An average mean of 3.07 from the information of the results on Table 4 revealed that the teachers were undecided on whether or not they require more training on hygiene and nutrition. The information of the results on Table 4 revealed that teachers strongly agree that they require more training on sign language and foreign languages as revealed by an average mean of 5.00. An average mean of 3.19 from the information of the results on Table 4 revealed that teachers were undecided on whether or not they require more training in Agriculture activities. It was apparent that training on sign language and foreign was language was not done and the teachers felt it should be done.

4.3 Teachers Preparedness to Infuse the Various Competencies during Classroom Instruction

The researcher sought for the opinions of teachers on their preparedness to infuse the various competencies during classroom instruction and the results are presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Teachers Preparedness to infuse the various Competencies during Classroom Instruction.

Statement	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
I am prepared to infuse communication and collaboration during teaching	290	4.54	0.56
I am prepared to infuse critical thinking and problem-solving during teaching	290	4.30	0.82
I am prepared to infuse creativity and imagination during teaching	290	4.36	0.84
I am prepared to infuse citizenship during teaching	290	4.37	0.84
I am prepared to infuse learning to learn during teaching	290	4.30	0.83
I am prepared to infuse self-efficacy during teaching	290	4.18	0.91
I am prepared to infuse digital literacy during teaching	290	2.79	0.93

The information of the results on Table 5 established that teachers strongly agree that they are well prepared to infuse communication and collaboration during teaching as revealed by an average mean of 4.54. An average mean of 4.30 from the information of the results on Table 5 revealed that teachers strongly agree that they are well prepared to infuse critical thinking and problem-solving during classroom teaching. The information of the results on Table 5 established that teachers strongly agree that they are well prepared to infuse creativity and imagination during classroom teaching as revealed by an average mean of 4.36. The information of the results on Table 5 established that teachers strongly agree that they are well prepared to infuse citizenship during teaching as revealed by an average mean of 4.37. An average mean of 4.30 from the information of the results on Table 5 revealed that teachers strongly agree that they are well prepared to infuse learning to learn during classroom teaching. The information of the results on Table 5 established that teachers agree that they are prepared to infuse self-efficacy during teaching as revealed by an average score of 4.18. The information of the results on Table 5 established that teachers were undecided on whether or not they are prepared to infuse digital literacy during classroom instruction as revealed by an average mean of 2.79.

5. CONCLUSION

The study concluded that there is inadequate preparation of teachers for Competence-Based Curriculum implementation where they have not received any training on sign and foreign language and they require more training on the use of digital devices and learner assessment methods using rubrics and portfolios.

6. RECOMMENDATION

The recommendation was made based on the study findings that; the ministry of education should offer more training to teachers on the use of digital devices and learner assessment methods using rubrics and portfolios and that the ministry of education should employ teachers who are specialists in music, sign language and foreign language who will be training learners on such areas.

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