

The Influence of In-Service Training of Teachers on the Implementation of Competency Based Curriculum in Private Primary Schools in Kirinyaga Central Sub-County in Kenya

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Abstract: The purpose of this research paper is to present the findings of a study that investigated the influence of in-service training of teachers on the implementation of Competency Based Curriculum in private primary schools in Kirinyaga Central Sub-County in Kenya. The study employed a descriptive study design to collect data from the target population who were the head teachers, lower primary school teachers in the private schools offering the Competency Based Curriculum and Kirinyaga Central Sub-County. The study collected data from a sample size of 149 respondents selected using random sampling and census techniques. Data were collected using questionnaires and interview schedules and analyzed by descriptive and correlational statistics using Statistical Package for Social Sciences tool version 27 and through thematic narrations for qualitative data. The results of the study showed that in-service training of teachers had a significant influence on the implementation of Competency Based Curriculum. The Pearson's Moment Correlation Analysis Coefficient was 0.84 implying that there is a statistically significant relationship between the independent and the dependent variables. The study recommends that the government should train the teachers who have not received in-service training in the Competency Based Curriculum.

Keywords: Competency Based Curriculum (CBC), teachers, in-service training, curriculum implementation, educational reforms.

1. Introduction

A. Background to the Study

The curriculum review from the Knowledge Based Curriculum to Competency Based Curriculum began in the United States of America in the 1970s and later expanded to European countries such as the United Kingdom and Germany in 1980s (Ford, 2014). It then spread further to other countries such as Australia, Canada, India, Denmark, New Zealand, Brazil, Malaysia and Finland. The developing countries of Asia and Africa such as South Africa, Nigeria, Rwanda, Ethiopia and Zambia started adopting the CBC in their respective countries in the late 2000s (Muraraneza, Mtshali and Mukamana, 2017). The aim of the curriculum review was to equip learners with practical skills and competencies so that they can fit in the ever-dynamic job market.

Ghana has implemented the Competency Based Curriculum in all public schools across the country with varied levels of success. A study conducted by Acquah, Frimpong and Kwame (2017) on the status of the implementation of Competency Based Training Programs (CBT) in training institutions in Ghana established that the programs had not been effectively implemented in some institutions due to the inadequacy of infrastructure and funding, ill-prepared instructors and weak policy guidelines in the institutions. This study clearly shows that the teacher/instructor should be at the centre of the implementation of any new curriculum.

Kenya is currently implementing two education systems concurrently: The Competency Based Curriculum (CBC) and the Knowledge Based Curriculum (popularly known as the 8-4-4 curriculum). The latter is being implemented from form two upwards to the university) and the newly introduced Competency Based Curriculum (CBC), is being implemented from the Pre-School, Grade One to Grade Six and Junior Secondary School, now at Grade Nine. The 8-4-4 structure has been criticized as being theoretical in terms of its curriculum content and does focus less on the skills and competencies of the learners. The system is heavily inclined towards learners mastering the content and being too examination oriented rather than emphasizing on the acquisition of competencies and skills that are needed in the job market (MOE, 2019).

Due to the shortcomings of the 8-4-4 system of education, the Ministry of Education formulated Sessional Paper No. 2 of 2015 on 'Reforming Education and Training in Kenya' which recommended the adoption of the competency-based approach, Amutabi, (2019). A taskforce was formed to examine to education system in Kenya. The taskforce recommended the introduction of Competency Based Curriculum in the schools, (MOE, 2019). This led to the rolling out of the

Competency Based Curriculum (CBC) in January 2019. However, the roll out of the new curriculum was beset with a myriad of challenges including inadequate facilities and ill-preparedness of teachers who are the key stakeholders in the implementation of any curriculum reforms in schools.

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B. Statement of the Problem

The Competency Based Curriculum is relatively new in Kenya and is being implemented in both public and private schools in Kenya. Private schools in Kenya have been given freedom to run the teaching and learning of the new curriculum with minimum supervision from both Ministry of Education yet they majorly operate as business enterprises. The implementation of the CBC is fraught with systemic and institutional challenges key among them being the ill-preparedness of teachers who are the key implementers of the new curriculum in schools. Teacher preparedness is very key before the full implementation of any new substantive curriculum. This will be in form of in-service training of teachers. Teachers act as the bridge or interface between the curriculum designers and the curriculum consumers (learners) and therefore no curriculum implementation can succeed without involving the teachers. This study therefore seeks to assess the influence of in-service training of teachers on the implementation of Competency Based Curriculum in private primary schools in Kirinyaga Central Sub-County in Kenya.

C. Research Objective

The objective of the study was to assess the influence of the in-service training of teachers on the implementation of Competency Based Curriculum in private primary schools in Kirinyaga Central Sub-County, Kenya.

D. Research Question

To what extent does the level of in-service training of teachers influence the implementation of Competency Based Curriculum in private primary schools in Kirinyaga Central Sub-County, Kenya?

E. Significance of the Study

The findings of this study will inform the stakeholders in the education sector such as fellow teachers, school administrators and government on the measures to take it order to ensure a smooth implementation of the new competency-based curriculum. The findings of this study will build the body of knowledge in academic on the status and the approaches of the implementation of the competency-based curriculum in Kenyan private primary schools.

F. Scope of the Study

The study was conducted in private primary schools in Kirinyaga Central Sub-County, Kenya. The respondents were limited to the teachers' handling learners in lower primary school (Grade One to Grade Three) and the head teachers of those respective schools.

G. Theoretical Framework

The study was underpinned by the Curriculum Implementation Theory which was originally formulated by Gross (1971) but revised by Rogers (1981). The theory postulates three conditional factors that are important for the success of the implementation of any new curriculum or educational programme: the competence and ability of the teacher, the clarity of the implementer, and the support from the

management (Gross, 1971: Tom 1981). The teacher, who in this case is the core implementer should be very competent by being knowledgeable of the changes of the innovation or the new curriculum. The teachers should have a positive attitude towards the new curriculum and be equally innovative in terms of its implementation. According to Omollo, Odongo and Raburu, (2016), a teacher who is not aware of the changes in the new curriculum will not be competent enough to implement it. However, the competence of the teacher can be enhanced through in service training in new content areas and teaching methodologies.

H. Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework is the graphical presentation of the relationship between the study variables. Figure 1 shows the diagrammatic representation of the independent and the dependent variables.

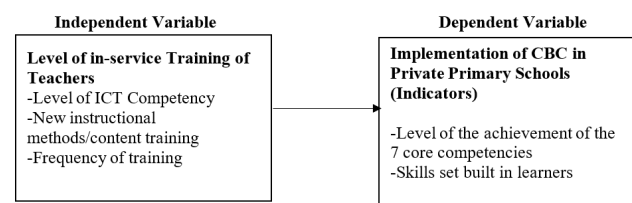


Fig. 1. Conceptual framework

2. Literature Review

A. The Relationship Between In-Service Training of Teachers and Curriculum Implementation

In-service training of teachers is defined by Osamwonyi (2016) as the continuing education for teachers designed for re-skilling, retraining and updating of any new knowledge or method in the field of education. In-service training enriches a teacher with new and additional ideas, concepts and instructional methodologies thus improving the overall performance of the teacher. The aim of in-service is to prepare teachers for any anticipated needs or changes in the structure, form and content of the education system or curriculum.

The National Institute for Excellence in Teaching (NIET) (2020) based in the United States of America, contends that for in-service training of teachers to be effective and meaningful, there is need for curriculum trainers to create time and space for teachers to work collaboratively. Teachers should be supported to address specific student needs. For this to be achieved, there is need for each education zone or school to have trained curriculum champions or teacher leaders who will act as the Trainer of Trainers (TOTs). The curriculum champions should be senior teachers who serve in the school management team as curriculum design and lead teachers who can observe and provide constructive feedback to the school management on the state of the implementation of the Competency Based Curriculum (NIET, 2020).

Studies carried out in South Africa by Lumadi (2014) on the challenges faced by teachers in the implementation of changes in the school curriculum found out that 53% of the teachers had complained of not receiving adequate in-service training for handling Competency Based Curriculum that had been

introduced in the country. Therefore, teachers need relevant knowledge and skills that will enable them address the demands of the new curriculum (Zieger, 2014). Indeed, studies conducted by Makunja (2016) on the challenges facing the implementation of CBC in Tanzania found out that most teachers were inadequately prepared for the full rollout of the CBC in the country, a factor that compromised its quality of implementation.

Teachers are the key stakeholders in the implementation of any curriculum reforms in schools. According to the Kenya National Union of Teachers (KNUT) (2018), teachers should have undergone sufficient training before the full rollout of the Competency Based Curriculum. KNUT (2018), further notes that the CBC was rushed during implementation without the teachers having adequate training about the curriculum. Teacher preparedness is very key before the full implementation of any new substantive curriculum. A study conducted by Kimosop (2019) in Baringo North Sub County among early childhood teachers established that teachers who had undergone in-service training were better prepared and more motivated to implement the CBC than those teachers who had not.

This study therefore was meant to assess the extent of in-service training of teachers in private primary schools and the impact it has on the implementation of the Competency Based Curriculum in Kenyan schools using Kirinyaga Central Sub-County, Kenya as a case reference point.

3. Research Methodology

A. Research Design

This study adopted a descriptive study design. Cooper and Shindler, (2003) opine that descriptive design can be used when determining how variables of a study influence each other. This research design was appropriate because it enabled the researcher to gather both quantitative and qualitative data on how in-service training of teachers influence the implementation of the Competency Based Curriculum in Kirinyaga Central Sub-County.

B. Target Population and Sample Size

The study target population were the teachers in the private primary schools handling lower primary section and the head teachers of those schools. Lower primary implies learners from Grade One to Grade Three. The total target population of the study were the head teachers of private primary schools, teachers and the Sub-County Director of Education. The study sampled 169 respondents using simple random and census sampling techniques.

C. Research Instruments

This study employed the questionnaire as the primary instrument for data collection from the teachers and the head teachers. The questionnaire contained both open-ended and closed-ended question items with a variety of alternative answers for the respondents to choose from. The closed-ended question items were graded on Likert scale. The study also interviewed the Sub-County Director of Education because this

was a key informant who supervises the implementation of the Competency Based Curriculum in the entire sub-county in both public and private schools.

D. Validity and Reliability of the Research Instrument

Validity of a research instrument is the extent to which such an instrument accurately measures what it is expected to measure (Cresswell 2009). In order to ensure the validity of the research instruments, the question items were evaluated and appraised by the experts in the field of curriculum design and implementation and adjustments made to ensure that the question items truly covered and represented the domain of indicators under study.

Reliability of the research instruments is the extent to which the research items produce consistent results after repeated trials (Cresswell, 2009). In order to test the reliability of the research instrument, the researcher employed test-retest method by administering the questionnaire twice to a sample of twenty respondents from the neighbouring Mwea East Sub-County within an interval of two weeks. The results of the two set of tests were then computed and correlated using the Pearsons Product Moment Correlation Coefficient model (r) to test the strength of the test-retest reliability coefficient which produced a value of 0.732, which is an acceptable and good measure of reliability coefficient.

E. Data Analysis Procedures

This study collected both qualitative data and quantitative data. Qualitative data which was collected through interviews and from the open-ended questions was described into themes and presented in content narrative summaries through holistic description of the objective of the study. Quantitative data, which will be collected from the closed-ended items in the questionnaire, was coded and entered into the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 27 tool and then analyzed into descriptive and correlations using Pearsons Product Moment Correlation Coefficient analysis.

4. Findings

A. Demographic Information

The findings of the demographics revealed that majority of the respondents were female teachers (68%) while the male teachers were 32% as shown in Figure 2.

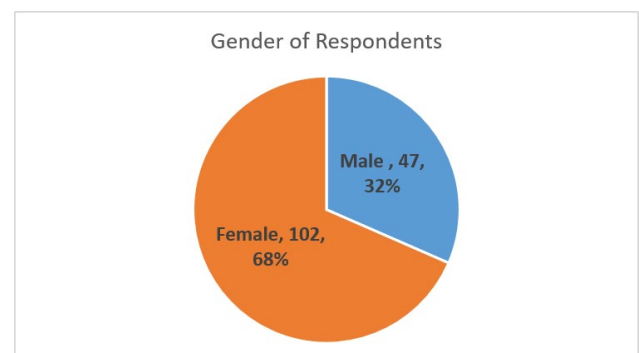


Fig. 2. Gender of respondents

Figure 2 shows that the number of female teachers is more than double that of the male teachers. This implied that there is a gender imbalance in terms of teachers employed by private primary schools especially at the lower primary level, between Grades One and Three. Most schools prefer female teachers over their male counterparts. In terms of age, majority of the respondents were in the age bracket of between 20-39 years. It was further noted that majority of the respondents had three-four years of experience in teaching the competency-based curriculum. In terms of education level of teachers, majority of the respondents either had a certificate or diploma in education. A few of the respondents had graduate and postgraduate qualifications.

B. Teachers' Level of Preparedness for Competency Based Curriculum

The study sought to establish the teachers' level of knowledge and preparedness for the implementation of the Competency Based Curriculum. The findings are as captured in Table 1.

Table 1
Teacher's level of preparedness for CBC

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Low	29	19.5
Moderate	26	17.4
High	94	63.1
Total	149	100.0

The findings showed that 29 (19.5%) of the respondents stated their level of preparedness for the CBC was low. This shows that they did not have confidence in themselves implementing the CBC to the learners. The findings further showed that 26 respondents (17.4%) stated that they had substantial knowledge of the CBC curriculum and were prepared to a moderate level. Those respondents who stated being ready and prepared for the implementation of the CBC were 94 (63.1%). Since the CBC curriculum has already been rolled out in schools, it is expected that all teachers should be well prepared for its implementation. Therefore, these inadequacies in teacher preparedness should be addressed through more training forums, either internal or external.

The major areas covered during the in-service training were preparation of professional documents, teaching methodologies, assessment tools and the CBC content areas. Some of the grey that needed more training include evaluation models and ICT integration in the instructional methodology.

C. The Level of Satisfaction with the Implementation of CBC

The study further sought to establish the level of satisfaction of the respondents with the implementation of the CBC in their respective schools. The findings are captured in Table 2.

Table 2
Level of satisfaction with the implementation of CBC

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Dissatisfied	29	19.5
Moderate	39	26.2
Satisfied	81	54.4
Total	149	100.0

It was established that 29 (19.5%) of the teachers were dissatisfied with how the curriculum was being implemented; 39 (26.2%) were moderately satisfied while 81 (54.4%) % of the respondents were generally satisfied. Dissatisfaction in the delivery of the curriculum can be caused by internal institutional factors or external factors inherent in the curriculum design itself. Internal institutional factors include teacher remuneration, nature of the working environment, motivation and availability or unavailability of teaching and learning materials, equipment and physical and material resources.

D. The Extent to which In-Service Training of Teachers Influence the Implementation of CBC in Schools

The study further established the extent to which the in-service of teachers influences the implementation of the CBC in primary private schools in Kirinyaga Central Sub-County, Kenya.

The findings are captured in Figure 3.

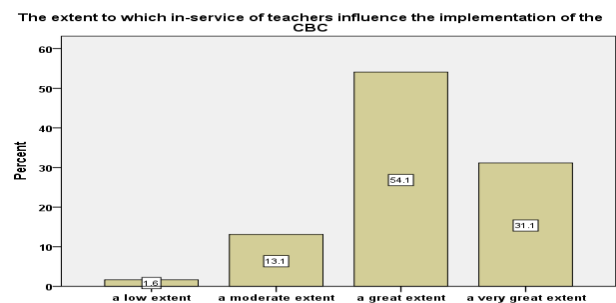


Fig. 3. The extent to which in-service training of teachers influences the implementation of CBC in schools

The study established that 31.1 % of the of the teachers and head teachers stated that in-service training of teachers influenced the implementation of CBC to a very great extent while 54.1% stated that it influenced to great extent. The respondents who stated it influenced to a moderate extent were 13.1% while those who thought it influenced to a low extent were 1.6%.

The interview guide showed that there were some challenges in the acquisition of the training modules and conducting adequate training sessions because of the insufficient funding because the central government does not have a budget set out for private schools. It is imperative that teachers as the key implementers of this curriculum upgrade their skills and knowledge through continuing training, capacity building and professional growth.

E. Correlations Analysis between the Variables

A correlation analysis of the influence of in-service training of teachers on the implementation of the CBC produced a coefficient value of 0.840 implying that the relationship between the variables was significant and that there is a strong positive correlation between in-service training of teachers and the implementation of the CBC. Therefore, for the objectives and objects of Competency Based Curriculum to be greatly achieved, there is need for continuous in-servicing of teachers

by the government so that the teachers are equipped with relevant knowledge and instructional approaches for better implementation of the Competency Based Curriculum in both public and private schools in Kenya.

5. Conclusions

The study concludes that in-service training of teachers is very important for the implementation of the Competency Based Curriculum in schools because it equips teachers with new knowledge and emerging methodologies of learner instruction. The study found out that not all teachers and head teachers in private primary in Kirinyaga Central Sub-County had undergone the in-service training, though a majority had.

6. Recommendations

This study recommends that the all teachers who have not been re-trained through in-service training should be trained so that they are kept abreast with the competency areas of the Competency Based Curriculum and how best to disseminate it to learners. The government of Kenya and private schools should partner to ensure that all teachers are adequately re-tooled for effective and smooth implementation of the Competency Based Curriculum in schools in Kenya.

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