



Original Research Article

Factors affecting implementation of competence based curriculum in selected Secondary Schools of Kabale Municipality- Kabale District

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This study aimed to explore factors affecting the implementation of the competence-based curriculum in selected secondary schools in Kabale municipality, Kabale district. The research objectives were to identify the teaching approaches used, determine the impact of instructional materials, and assess the role of education agencies in the implementation of the curriculum. The study used Social constructivism theory by Lev Vygotsky, a Russian psychologist who believes that individuals play an active role in creating their own knowledge. The study used a case study design alongside qualitative approach, and data was collected through interviews guides in one on one and focus group discussion with teachers, learners, and head teachers, from the selected secondary schools and Municipal education officer and analysed thematically. Purposive sampling was used to get the study population of 126. Findings revealed that project-based learning, experiential learning, inquiry-based learning, and collaborative learning were the common teaching approaches used in the implementation of the competence-based curriculum. Instructional materials were found available though inadequate to have a significant impact on the implementation of the curriculum. Furthermore, education agencies such as the Ministry of Education and Sports, the NCDC and UNEB are the responsible bodies and play crucial role in providing guidelines, training, and support to teachers and head teachers to ensure the effective implementation of the curriculum. The study recommends that teachers should be trained on various teaching approaches to effectively implement the curriculum through training programs and workshops organized by Education agencies to equip teachers with necessary skills and knowledge to provide quality education and ensure that students receive the best possible education and also should provide adequate support and resources to ensure the effective implementation of the competence-based curriculum.

Key words: Competence based curriculum, Secondary school, teaching approaches, Education Agencies.

INTRODUCTION

Curriculum is the medium through which nations all over the world empower the general public with the values,

knowledge, skills, and attitudes required for them to be economically and socially engaged in order to achieve

national and personal development (Wambua, (2019). It refers to all learning that is designed and directed by schools, whether it occurs in individual or group settings, and whether it occurs outside or inside the school (Kelly, 2013).

Uganda's secondary school curriculum has undergone significant changes from a teacher-centered/knowledge-based approach to a learner-centered/competence-based approach (Baguma, 2020). Martin and Griffiths (2014) noted that this change was necessary to ensure that learners can easily understand the concepts being taught in this approach without undue stress though its implementation is not clearly understood.

A competency-based curriculum is one that focuses on what learners are expected to do rather than what they are expected to know (Makunja, 2016). In theory, such a curriculum is learner-centered and adaptable to changing student, teacher, and societal needs. Curriculum is generally regarded as the experiences that learners go through in the educational process in a logical manner that allows the learners to understand the concepts easily and without much stress.

Educational program advancement is an ongoing process that is driven by the need to respond to change, as noted by Stabback (2016). A quality educational program should be aligned with global trends in information development, communication advancements, and changing job market requirements to ensure that students have the necessary skills to succeed. Currently, there is a global shift towards capability-based education, as identified by Gardner (2017), with its origins traced back to the 1920s when educational reforms were linked to action plans outlining desired outcomes (Williamson, 2000).

Historical Perspective

Over the years, the field of education has witnessed significant changes and advancements, leading to a shift in focus from traditional content-based approaches to more student-centered and skill-oriented frameworks (Smith, 2017). Historically, education in Uganda has largely been influenced by colonial legacies, where the curriculum was designed to meet the needs and interests of the colonial powers (Jones, 2005).

However, in recent decades, there has been a growing recognition of the importance of a curriculum that prepares students for the demands of a rapidly evolving globalized world (Johnson, 2012). The introduction of a Competence-based Curriculum in Kabale Municipality can be seen as part of this broader trend towards a more relevant and holistic approach to education. Such a curriculum aims to equip students with not only subject knowledge but also the practical skills and competencies necessary for their personal and professional development (Brown, 2019). Additionally, globalization and technological advancements have played a crucial role in shaping the need for a Competence-based Curriculum. In an increasingly interconnected world, where information is readily available, there is a greater emphasis on skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving, communication, and collaboration (Smith et al., 2020). The Competence-based

Curriculum aligns with these demands by focusing on the development of transferable skills that empower students to adapt and thrive in World of work.

Theoretical Perspective

This study is anchored on the Social constructivism theory by Lev Vygotsky, a Russian psychologist who believes that individuals play an active role in creating their own knowledge. (Abdullahi, 2019). According to constructivism, learners are encouraged to actively engage with complex information, transforming it into their own understanding through personal discovery. This approach emphasizes student-centered instruction, with teachers assuming the role of guides who facilitate the process of meaning-making rather than controlling classroom activities. By applying the constructivist perspective, the research aims to uncover insights into how the Competence-based Curriculum can be effectively implemented.

It recognizes the importance of social interaction in learning, as individuals learn from one another and instructors construct lively learning groups (Abdullahi, 2019).

Vygotsky's research examined how social environments impact the learning process, concluding that learning occurs through interactions between students and their peers, teachers, and experts. According to Abdullahi, (2019), Teachers are responsible for creating an environment that maximizes the potential for engagement through discussion, hands-on activities, and feedback. Teaching Approaches used for Effective Implementation of Competence Based Curriculum.

Contextual Perspective

Though Uganda has embraced Competence Based curriculum, teachers' resistance to implementing competence-based curriculum is hindering its success, as they perceive it to be time-consuming in terms of preparation and instructional materials. However, Ondimu (2018) argues that competence-based curriculum is simpler than knowledge-based curriculum, and teachers' resistance may stem from a preference for the old approach and reluctance to adapt to new methodologies. McMillan (2000) suggests that teachers should have knowledge and skills in conducting assessments, integrating assessments into teaching, and using effective approaches, techniques, and strategies to improve students' competencies. Therefore, Mulenga and Lubasi (2019) suggest that the amount of time teachers allocate and use for teaching and learning activities is crucial for improving learning outcomes, as the amount of time that learners actually spend on learning-related activities is critical for improving learning outcomes.

Problem Statement

Teaching using competency-based curriculum to teaching and learning may assist students in acquiring competencies such as generic skills, Values, concepts and Attitudes (Mazabow, 2003). At the beginning 2008, the Ministry of

Education and Sports (MoES) made a decision to undertake a reform of the Lower Secondary Education Curriculum starting with Curriculum, Assessment and Examination (CURASSE)(Clegg et al., 2012). And in 2020 a conclusive decision to roll out Competence Based Curriculum was taken which aimed at making a shift from knowledge based curriculum to a broader and more inclusive curriculum that can satisfy needs of individuals and the entire society (NCDC, 2020). A competency-based curriculum, therefore, emphasizes what learners are expected to do rather than what they are expected to know in order to be competitive in the job market. (Murungi, 2020).

Despite the fact that government has come to out to support the implementation of the new competence based curriculum through many trainings conducted by Ministry of Education and Sports in collaboration with NCDC, with an aim of updating, developing, and broadening the knowledge of different stake holders in education sector. Competence Based curriculum approaches are still unclear to teachers due to limited knowledge on its application at classroom level, usage of teaching learning resources is also lacking such as learners books and teachers guides. There are no viable studies carried out to establish the factors affecting the implementation of competence based curriculum in Kabale in particular which has prompted the researcher to carry out a study on the factors affecting the implementation of competency-based curriculum in selected secondary schools in Kabale municipality, Kabale District.

Research Gap

In this study, a significant research gap identified concerning the factors affecting the implementation of the competence-based curriculum in selected secondary schools of Kabale Municipality. Despite the importance of this topic, no prior research has been conducted in this specific context, leaving a considerable knowledge gap. Moreover, the existing literature on factors influencing the implementation of competence-based curriculum is outdated and does not align with current trends, necessitating this study to address this gap specifically within the context of Kabale Municipality. Additionally, it is worth noting that previous studies predominantly utilized methods such as focus group discussions, whereas this study employed a qualitative research approach and a case study design to comprehensively investigate the factors impacting the implementation of the competence-based curriculum in selected secondary schools within Kabale Municipality.

Specific objectives of the study included the following

- i. To identify the various teaching approaches used in selected secondary schools for the effective implementation of competence-based curriculum.
- ii. To determine the impact of instructional materials on the implementation of competency-based curriculum in Kabale municipality secondary schools.
- iii. To assess the role of education agencies in the implementation of competence-based curricula in selected

secondary schools

METHODOLOGY

Case study design alongside qualitative approach was used in this study which was reflected in both data collection and analysis. The design was chosen because it was adaptable to the research instruments to be used, such as Focus Group Discussion guides and interview guides. Qualitative methods provide an in-depth explanation because they collect the data that were needed to meet the objectives. As a result of this paradigm, the data collection tools were designed in a semi- structured manner to allow for explanatory responses and enabling researchers to probe deeper into participants' responses and uncover rich, detailed data. It also allows participants to express their thoughts freely, providing a more nuanced understanding of the topic under investigation.

Study Population

This study included five secondary schools in Kabale Municipality, which was chosen based on various religious denominations known as foundation bodies. The study included 100 students who benefited from the new curriculum, 20 teachers who were direct implementers in the classroom, 5 head teachers who were the immediate supervisors of the implementation, and 1 municipal education officer who represented education agencies in each division of the municipality. The sample population included 126 people of which teachers were aged twenty five (25) and forty (40) years, being the majority in the teaching profession. This age bracket provides the most active teachers with new knowledge about competence based curriculums because most of the teachers in this age bracket are still young and are active in understanding the new curriculum and also (12) years and (16) years being majority of senior one and two learners active and vibrant beneficiaries of the curriculum

Sampling Technique

Head teachers from selected schools, teachers and Municipal Education Officer were chosen using purposive-sampling. Purposive-sampling, according to Adams (2007), is a non-probability sampling method that allows for the selection of a sample with experience and knowledge of the study variables. It was also used to select schools as are of study. However, learners were chosen by simple random sampling to give them equal chance of being chosen. The study looked at both government-aided and private secondary schools that are implementing competency-based curriculum and can provide the necessary information without bias.

Data Collection Methods and Instruments

Data was collected using Focus Group Discussion and interview guides.

Focus Group Discussion: In this case, the researcher

conducted focused groups with students from each school. Each FDG had 20 learners, 10 from senior two and another group of 10 from senior one. The main invigilator was the researcher, who introduced a subject of research questions and sub-questions for further deliberation by the participants. Ho (2006) contends that FGDs are effective at combining collective ideas provided by various participants into a single theme based on written minutes of what was discussed and the list of participants. This was because the studies intend to develop themes and categories from the stories of the various participants and are appropriate for thematic development. The researcher organized group discussions.

Interview Method: Following the identification of key informants, the researcher conducted interviews with guiding questions to gather information on factors influencing competence-based curriculum in Kabale municipality, Kabale District. This method was used because it allowed the researcher to clarify questions and allow informants to respond in any way they see fit, as well as allowing the interviewer to observe verbal and nonverbal behavior of the respondents. It also reduces anxiety, allowing potentially sensitive topics to be studied (Kothari 2003). An interview guide was used to collect data from principals using a list of unstructured questions based on the study's objectives.

Data Analysis

Data analysis is the process of bringing order, structure, and meaning to a large amount of information, Creswell et al. (2004).

Qualitative data from open ended questions as well as interviews were analyzed thematically. This was done by narrative as recorded during face to face interview, focus group discussion and through observation. The researcher used a quick impressionist summary in analyzing qualitative data; summarized key findings by noting down the frequent responses of the respondents during the interview on various factors influencing the implementation of a Competence-based Curriculum in selected secondary schools.

The collected data was organized in an orderly fashion by the researcher in order to minimize errors and maintain maximum accuracy. Richards (2014) refers to this method as systematic analysis because it entails categorizing data into the same group in order to determine whether the instrument was generated from the research objectives and measured what it was supposed to measure consistently. All information from the interviews was quoted directly and arranged according to themes, with each quotation supported or disagreed with by the researcher's views. To ensure accuracy, audio recordings were transcribed.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the present study were presented and discussed basing on the three research questions extracted from previous objectives respectively according to themes. Social constructivism theory was used to interpret and

discuss the presented data to understand the dimension concerning how the factors influencing the implementation of a Competence-based Curriculum in selected secondary schools in the school contextualization.

H1: Teaching Approaches used in Selected Secondary Schools for the Effective Implementation of Competence-Based Curriculum.

A number of sub-questions were paused to guide in data collection and analysis. a) What is your experience with implementing competence-based curriculum in your teaching practice?

b) What teaching approaches do you use to effectively implement competence-based curriculum in your classroom?

c) How do you ensure that your students' learning experiences align with the objectives of the competence-based curriculum?

d) Are there any challenges faced by teachers in implementing competence-based curriculum?

These sub-questions were intended to capture school managers, Learners and teachers' perceptions about teaching approaches as one of the factors influencing the implementation of a Competence-based Curriculum in selected secondary schools in Kabale Municipality-Kabale District in their school duties. Using Social constructivism theory, a number of sub-themes were deduced from the raw data and transcripts.

Teaching Experience

Majority of the teachers and Head teachers revealed that they had five years and above in teaching practice although some had one to two years of experience in teaching competence based curriculum classes and they would define Competence-based curriculum as an approach to education that focuses on developing students' skills and abilities, rather than just imparting knowledge and it help students acquire the competencies and skills they need to succeed in their future careers and in life. During Focus Group Discussion with teachers in school A they said;

Implementing competence-based curriculum in teaching practice can be challenging, especially for teachers who are used to more traditional approaches. It requires a shift in mindset and pedagogical practices to focus on developing specific competencies in students. Teachers need to carefully plan and design their lessons and assessments to ensure that they align with the competencies outlined in the curriculum which is still a struggle to some of their members (Respondent from school A).

The above observation was in line with Umunodi, (2012) who added that teachers frequently encounter mixed abilities in their classes, some of which have behavioral issues. Teachers are restricted to teaching in groups or individually. Small group teaching entails dividing the class into different ability groups and teaching the children in various ways.

Competence Based Approach

The competency-based education (CBE) approach allows

students to advance based on their ability to master a skill or competency at their own pace regardless of environment (Omana, 2010). This method is tailored to meet different learning abilities and can lead to more efficient student outcomes. The learning outcomes can only be achieved through active engagement in the learning process rather than simply observing knowledge given by the teacher as it is observed by this female teacher in school B, who raised her Voice that:

we teachers, we need to rebuild on the learners out knowledge and experience and create learning activities through from the learning outcomes in the syllabus book in which learners can explore the meaning of what is being learned and understand how it is applied in practical situation" (Respondent from school B).

During focus group discussions teachers in three schools, disclosed that they were trained about several teaching approaches such as group discussion, inquiry-based learning, experiential learning, and said they had gained to impart their subject matter knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge using these approaches. But they complained project-based learning approach is still a challenge. A male teacher had to say;

There are several teaching approaches that we normally use in implementing competence-based curriculum in the classroom such as group discussion, inquiry-based learning guided discovery and others. But project-based learning is an issue to many of us teacher even now we have not conducted the required project with our senior one and two students yet they are soon joining senior three (Respondent from school D).

The above findings were in line with Daudau (2010), who revealed that children learn to look into problems through discussions and are thus motivated to think, express their own views, and listen to other children's views in order to review their own. He added that teacher must make certain that each child has an equal opportunity to participate in discussions. The findings were also in agreement with Umunodi, (2012) who revealed that Small group teaching entails dividing the class into different ability groups and teaching the children in various ways. This would assist the children in learning by imitating and assisting one another, as well as applying what they have learned to other situations. It also helps to strengthen the children's ability to communicate and collaborate with one another.

Teachers who perceive competence-based curriculum to be time-consuming did not realize that the CBC is far simpler than the Knowledge Based Curriculum (Ondimu, 2018). Child-centered approach is exemplified in a way that every classroom is made up of activity centered where the children are given time and opportunity to hone their skills and capabilities.

During a focus group discussion, learners of school C asserted that some old teachers use few approaches such as group discussions and sometimes use knowledge-based approaches. One of the teachers said;

some of our teachers lack student-centered teaching approaches particularly in some science subjects, here still some give us notes and others do not give and at times we get confused of which way is right (Respondent from school C).

Competence and Skill Based

Competency-based learning or Competency based Education (CBE) is an outcome-based approach to education to ensure proficiency in learning by students through demonstration of the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes required for dealing with real life situations at the age and grade appropriate level (Baguma, 2020). Competence can be used as an organizing principle of curriculum. In a competency-based curriculum, exit profiles specify the classes of situations that learners must be able to handle competently by the end of their education. Depending on the type of education, these classes of situations are identified either on the basis of real-life or work-related situations or on the internal logic of the discipline in question. Competence as an organizing principle of the curriculum is a way to bring real life back into the classroom (UNESCO, 2012)). It is thus a move away from the idea that curriculum is mainly implemented by having students reproduce theoretical knowledge and memorise facts (the conventional knowledge-based approach).. One male teacher in school B pointed out that

Learners need to develop the ability to apply their learning with confidence in arrange of situation, they need to use the knowledge creatively that require an active, learner centered rather than passive, teachers-centered approach (Respondent from school B)

Teachers Influence in the Implementation of Competence Based Curriculum

In a Competency-based classroom, teachers facilitate discussions and help students explore and set goals. They may move between groups of learners or engage in direct instruction with a few students at a time. According to Richards (2013), classrooms may have flexible seating arrangements and students participate in decisions about how and where they learn. In this environment, teachers support their students to take risks and try new things without fear of failure. This collaborative school culture is fostered by district leaders who encourage teamwork and cooperation among everyone involved in the educational process. In an interview with a head teacher in School A stated that:

It gives us trouble implementing new curriculum especially students were used to old curriculum in their Primary Schools thus becoming difficult for teachers to implement it effectively. In this school student are still behind to understand the new methods of teaching thus affecting academic performance (Respondent from School A)

Respondents from school A emphasized that:

Learners are given activities in groups to discover, discuss and come up with the answer. Therefore, students are able to discover when learners are guided on the topic and learning out come to make notes out of it basing on the information generated and that researched on (Respondent from school A)

There are those respondents who emphasized that the competence curriculum is very difficult to implement and

for student to adopt because this new curriculum does not suit subject areas where it is difficult to prescribe specific competencies or where new skills and new knowledge need to be rapidly accommodated. This was raised from the responses of a group of teachers in a Focus Group Discussion in School E, and they had this to say:

CBC is involved with many challenges such as inadequate learning facilities, lack of adequate training teachers, shortage of teachers, lack of adequate teaching and learning materials, ignorance and lack of cooperation from parents, whose role in the whole system remains opaque (Female respondent from school E)

Achieving Excellence

Achieving excellence was pointed out as one of the key sub-themes that critically explain challenges faced in the implementation of competence-based curriculum. According to Makunja (2016), a competency-based curriculum requires educational institutions to demonstrate an uncompromising commitment to excellence. He added that, the key concerns they face here include; -how to ensure that the rigor and quality of the curriculum-based programs remain equitable across the board? How will the curriculum realize this goal of achieving excellence? How will the competency-based approach break the path of mediocrity and move beyond the fate of other general education trends?". It was further mentioned by a female teacher in school C that:

Competency-based learning is a relatively new learning model. Students graduating through this method of learning are sometimes greeted by skeptical employers who aren't aware of the model" (Respondent from school C)

Additionally,

A respondent from school c said that competence-based curriculum is considered effective if; learners are able to apply the content learned in the daily life of theirs and others (Respondent from school C)

H2: The Impact of Instructional Materials on the Implementation of Competency-Based Curriculum in Kabale Municipality Secondary Schools

Data collected under this theme was in relation to the following sub-questions: a) in your opinion, why is it essential to have instructional materials for the successful implementation of CBC? b) How do you ensure that the instructional materials you use are relevant to the needs of your students and the objectives of the competence-based curriculum? c) Under what circumstance do you consider instructional materials in Competency-based curriculum to be a challenge?

Role of instructional materials in the Implementation of Competence-Based Curriculum .

Instructional materials are meant to enhance education quality for effective performance in academic and intellectual ability of learners in all areas of their learning. Sufficient instructional materials available in classroom for all learners influence the quality of education given to

them.

Materials in the classroom is to assist both the teacher and the learners be consistent in educational content and achieving educational objectives. Instructional materials are essential since they help the teacher and learners avoid overemphasis on recitation and rote learning that can easily dominate a lesson (Ebinehi, et al.; 2016). Mosha (2012), added Resource materials allow learners to have practical experiences which help them to develop skills and concepts and to work in a variety of ways. When there is availability of materials and good teaching approaches, competency-based in classroom, teachers are moving between groups of learners; facilitating discussions, helping students explore and set goals, or may be engaged in more direct instruction with a few students at a time. In an interview from respondent in school D;

In our school, instructional materials are essential since they help the teacher and learners avoid over emphasis on recitation and rote learning that can easily dominate a lesson, also resource materials allow learners to have practical experiences which help them to develop skills and concepts and to work in a variety of ways (Respondent from school D)

Learners obtain number of working skills, depending on the instructional equipment given to them within the setting of their learning (Ebinehi et al 2016). For instance, Instructional materials are the basic channel of communication in classrooms for purpose of experience of effective process of teaching (Mundia, 2017). In a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with four teachers in School D, it was revealed that:

There was a gap between the curriculum textbooks, syllabus books as well as other teaching/learning materials. They maintained that competence-based curriculum is an innovation that was not yet familiar to many traditional book writers who were more used to writing books from a content-based perspective. Teachers also lack knowledge on the use competency-based textbooks and other materials, even they required much time of lesson preparation. (Respondent from school D).

According to Monsha (2012), inadequate educational resources pose a challenge to the implementation of the competence-based curriculum. The study found that many schools lack the necessary materials and resources needed to deliver the curriculum effectively. Instructional resources are essential educational inputs that aid the implementation of the curriculum, and they refer to the materials used by teachers to make the learning process more practical and comprehensible to students (Chen and Wei, 2015). Instructional materials are tools that disseminate information in the classroom and promote easier learning.

In an interview conducted with Head teacher and teachers of school B, it was revealed by two male teachers that:

We teacher, we know that instructional helps materials make hard concepts easily understood, students are active while using instructional materials (Respondent from school B)

Additionally; other teachers in school C who were interviewed revealed that;

Instructional materials created learners involvement and better use of local environment as it enhance the understanding (Respondent from school C)

According to Chijioke (2014), the utilization of instructional materials facilitates better and efficient communication between teachers and students. The use of such materials offers teachers an engaging way to convey information that motivates learners, helps overcome obstacles, creates a sense of reality and situations, and encourages active participation from students.

To ensure that instructional materials align with the objectives of the competence-based curriculum and are appropriate for my students, said by the head teacher in school B

I work closely with my colleagues to review and select materials that align with align the materials with the learning outcomes, use authentic materials that can help learners to contextualize learning and monitor student progress and adjust the instructional materials as needed arise. We also seek feedback from our students to ensure that the materials are engaging and relevant to their needs (Respondent from school B)

The researcher found out that instructional materials are meant to enhance education quality for effective performance in academic and intellectual ability of learners in all areas of their learning. Sufficient instructional materials available in classroom for all learners influence the quality of education given to them. Learners obtain number working skills, depending on the instructional equipment given to them within the setting of their learning (Ebinehi et al., 2016). For instance, Chemongese (2020) notes that the performance of the students on the intended learning outcome provides the justification – loop on the success of the interaction and instruction. Instructional materials are the basic channel of communication in classrooms for purpose of experience of effective process of teaching (Mundia, 2017)

Chijioke (2014) conducted a study on instructional materials and categorized them into different types based on their sensory appeal. According to the study, audio or aural aids use the sense of hearing only, and include devices such as radio, audio tape recording, and television. Visual instructional materials, on the other hand, are those that appeal to the sense of sight only, such as the chalkboard, chart, slide, and filmstrip. Audio-visual aids combine devices that appeal to both hearing and seeing, such as television, motion picture, and computer. Printed materials include textual materials such as magazines, newspapers, journals, as well as programmed learning materials that students read and memorize for understanding of science concepts. The study also classified instructional materials into projected or electronic materials, non-projected materials, and manipulative materials.

The study findings also revealed that majority of teachers acknowledged lack of enough text books that prevented their effort to educate learners. Inadequate of learning resources materials has negative impact on teacher success in the use of suitable instruction approaches noted by (Waweru et al., 2013). In another study done by Wanjiru et al. (2008), advocated that the materials supplied are sometimes not to the standard. These studies show that

instructional resources are available in quantities that are not enough. This makes it difficult for teachers in most schools to encounter challenges in meeting the success of teaching and learning as it is expected of them as immediate implementers.

Relevance of instructional materials to students' needs.

The findings of the study revealed that NCDC is held responsible for the designing, developing and disseminating teaching aids and instruction materials. Moreso, the review of instructional materials which should be done periodically to ensure their relevance and effectiveness (Mundia, 2017). Educational research and advancements can bring new perspectives and better resources so regularly updating the materials helps maintain their alignment with the evolving needs of students and the requirements of the curriculum. In an interview with two male teachers in school E, it was Found out that instructional materials can be made relevant following teachers in put as one said;

The instructional materials should be closely aligned with the objectives of the competence-based curriculum. Through revising the curriculum guidelines and standards, you can identify the key concepts, skills, and knowledge that need to be covered. Then choose materials that explicitly address these elements, ensuring a strong alignment between what is being taught and the curriculum goals.

Challenges that are faced in the Implementation of Competence Based Curriculum

The implementation of a curriculum may encounter various obstacles that differ based on factors such as the curriculum itself, location, political and economic situation, teacher training, and available resources. The successful execution of a curriculum requires adequate funding and well-trained teachers who possess the necessary competencies to teach the subject matter or implement changes in the curriculum.

Okoye (2013) stated that insufficient funding can hinder access to new materials, equipment, and technology, which could be attributed to budgetary constraints. To overcome this challenge, it may be necessary to seek funding from external sources such as donors who are willing to support the implementation process.

In a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with six teachers in School D, it was revealed that;

When instructional materials are inadequate, teaching and learning becomes less effective, there is also inadequate skilled manpower (teachers) who know how to effectively use materials available to effect the competence-based curriculum (Respondent from school D)

This is in line with the study by Butler (2010), who noted that quality of education has direct relevance to availability and adequacy of teaching and learning resources. Inadequate of learning resources materials has negative impact on teacher success in the use of suitable instruction approaches noted by (Waweru 2013) Based on the findings from the secondary school teachers, it was obvious that the

schools had available teaching and learning materials in terms of text books, teachers guide books and. However, the schools lacked adequate ICT equipment, audio-visual equipment laboratory equipment and many more.

In a focus group discussion conducted on teachers and learners, it was established that writers were not well versed in the paradigm of competence-based curriculum, hence, their ability to write relevant text books was limited and many had notes and some were just work books not to the standard of CBC.

It was further revealed by learners in a Focus group discussion in School E that there was a gap between the curriculum and textbooks as well as other teaching/learning materials. Teachers were also reluctant to use competency-based textbooks and materials as they required lengthy periods of lesson preparation. Worse still, there were instances of textbooks shortage in schools due to inadequate funds for procuring them from suppliers.

There is also an issue of books miss match for example according to different authors, on additionally there is also limited materials to the schools with large numbers of students, learning materials are not easily accessed (Respondent from school E)

H3: Role Played by Education Agencies in the Implementation of Competence Based Curriculum in Selected Secondary Schools.

The following sub questions were paused to guide in data analysis and interpretation.

a) What is the role of education agencies in implementing the competency-based curriculum in your school? b) Have you received any training or support from education agencies to implement the competency-based curriculum? c) Are there some challenges that education agencies encounter in the implementation of the competency-based curriculum? d) What changes, if any, do you think education agencies could make to better support the implementation of the competency-based curriculum? The sub-questions were intended to capture the role played by education agencies in the implementation of competence-based curriculum, using Social constructivism theory.

The Statutory Functions

During an interview with the Municipal education officer, it was found that Education agencies are responsible for Providing clear guidelines and frameworks for the implementation of the curriculum helps all stakeholders understand what is expected of them and know goals of the curriculum, provides a consistent and structured approach to implementation that can minimize confusion and ensure that all aspects of the curriculum are covered. Providing training and professional development opportunities to teachers helps them to build the necessary skills and knowledge teaching on methodologies, assessment strategies, and the use of instructional materials and technology for effective implementation.

The officer said:

Providing resources such as instructional materials, technology, and other learning resources that include

textbooks, software, laboratory equipment, and other, Monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the curriculum is also our role to ensure that the curriculum is meeting its goals. However, we have identified gaps in some areas where additional training may be needed and ways to improve the curriculum to better meet the needs of students.

He went ahead to say:

Since 2020 Ministry of education and sports through NCDC has trained a number of teachers in the several trainings where four to six teachers from every school in the municipality were prepared on methodology, content, usage of curriculum documents and other issues of assessment

Therefore, according to the Municipal education officer, He asserts from the subsequent trainings that were conducted since 2020 about 60 percent of teachers in the Municipality have attended in-set trainings to advance their knowledge and promote the desired skills to successfully implementation of the competence- based curriculum. He however, say that more trainings are required if the implementation is to be called a success. Which is in accordance with the argument put by Bozkurt and Sharma (2019),that clear guidelines and frameworks for the implementation of the curriculum are vital make the stakeholders understand what is expected of them in line with the goals of the curriculum. Providing training and professional development opportunities to teachers is vital to build the necessary skills and knowledge to implement the curriculum effectively Kigwilu (2014)

To ensure that the new curriculum equips learners with practical skills, the Ministry of Education and Sports must ensure that trainers in schools teach practical subjects practically, as stated by (Ebenehi et al., 2021). He further notes that teaching computer skills without demonstrating on a computer is ineffective and can make computing seem like a hoax to learners. Similarly, the woodwork class would not make much sense if there were no wood or equipment for practice. Lindblom-Ylanne (2013) points out that the curriculum does not provide clarity on the ability of learners to choose what they want to be taught. The current teacher-centered mode of teaching gives the teacher the power to determine what is to be taught, which can hinder learners' ability to make decisions about their education.

Support from education agencies to implement the competency-based curriculum

Training that has played a significant role in supporting the implementation of the Competence-based Curriculum in selected secondary schools. Training programs have been organized to equip teachers with the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively implement the curriculum. Education agencies have also provided guidance and resources to schools, including curriculum guidelines, teaching manuals, and assessment frameworks. Education officer said;

The agencies have offered free training, conducted monitoring and evaluation activities to assess the progress and identify areas for improvement in the implementation process. They have been actively involved in providing ongoing support, conducting workshops, and facilitating collaboration among teachers to enhance the

implementation of the Competence-based Curriculum.

Challenges Faced by Education Agencies in Implementation of CBC:

Large Class Size

Implementing a competency-based curriculum is a major challenge due to the issue of large class sizes. According to Mpeirwe (2020), having a large number of students in a classroom can negatively impact student-instructor interactions and limit peer exchanges during discussions. This is because students have different learning styles, and the instructor's pace may not work for everyone in a high-density class. As a result, it becomes difficult to apply interactive teaching methods that are learner-centric. To overcome this challenge, reducing class size can be beneficial for both students and educators. This will enable instructors to provide individualized assistance to students with learning difficulties, leading to improved student performance. During interview with teachers, in school C, a male teacher had to say;

Limiting class size can have benefits for both students and educators, resulting in improved performance of learners. This is because with smaller class sizes, teachers are able to provide individual attention and support to students who may be struggling with learning difficulties. As a result, students are more likely to receive personalized instruction that meets their unique needs, leading to better academic outcomes (Respondent from school C).

Assessment Standardization

Implementing Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) in higher education presents a challenge in standardizing the assessment of competencies or skills. Since CBC is a personalized learning approach that prioritizes subject mastery regardless of the place, time, or pathway to completion, it becomes difficult to develop standardized assessment mechanisms. In an interview with teachers from School D, this challenge was highlighted as a major issue in the implementation of CBC in higher education., A female teacher had to say;

Institutions may struggle with various concerns when implementing assessments, such as how to measure each student's performance outcome for every competency. This challenge arises because CBC focuses on individual mastery of skills and competencies, which requires personalized assessment mechanisms. Therefore, institutions must develop effective strategies to measure student performance for each competency or skill, while also considering the unique learning needs and abilities of each student. (Respondent from school A)

Competency-based learning has generated significant interest among higher education institutions and education stakeholders because of its innovative approach to learning. Despite its effectiveness in helping learners acquire specific competencies, there are various challenges facing the implementation of a competency-based curriculum, as highlighted by Chemonges (2020). To systematically address these challenges, institutions need to focus on

building faculty capacity by providing them with the necessary skills to implement learner-centered programs. This can be achieved through various faculty development programs that enable them to acquire the skills needed for innovative educational programs like CBC, while also learning on the job.

Strategies used in Addressing Challenges of Implementing Competence-based Curriculum

The successful implementation of CBC requires a re-engineering of the educational system, including training and re-training of educators, introduction of new assessment methods, different classroom organization to facilitate and monitor assessment, providing additional time for school administration and management, and setting up new structures (Martin and Griffiths, 2014). Teachers' strategies to address challenges in implementing CBC include using a learner-centered approach during classroom interactions, problem-based learning, and subject clubs to promote self-directed learning among students. Learner-centered teaching strategies advocated for the implementation of CBC in schools include role-playing, problem-solving, projects, case studies, simulations, discussions, and outdoor activities. Regarding assessment, CBC emphasizes the use of formative assessment focused on the prescribed competencies.

Student awareness

Teachers recognized the importance of students' awareness and adoption of a learner-centered approach for effective implementation of CBC. As such, they decided to orient students towards the significance of using a learner-centered approach, which would enable teachers to employ teaching methodologies that are more student-oriented. Moshia (2012) highlighted that the awareness of students towards adopting a learner-centered approach is crucial because it promotes active and autonomous learning. During focus group discussion with teachers in school C, they had to say;

Learners who are not aware of the teaching and learning process may become passive and disengaged, leading to weak attention and unfocused learning. Orientation towards a learner-centered approach promotes active participation, autonomy, and better learning outcomes. (Respondent from school C)

Teaching and learning environment

Creating a conducive environment for teaching and learning is crucial for the successful implementation of competency-based learning (CBC). Both teachers and students' perception of classroom interaction can be shaped by the teaching and learning environment. The environment includes the proper arrangement of the classroom, availability of desks, teaching and learning aids, and materials, among others. These factors can either create a friendly or unfriendly environment that can significantly influence the implementation of CBC (Butler, 2010). During an interview with teachers in school B, a

female teacher had to say;

A class or school is space in which students feel safe and supported in their pursuit of knowledge ,value and attitude, as well as inspired by their surrounding in which we as teachers should prepare well if it has to support learner centered mood .(Respondent from school B)

According to Ali (2010), the classroom environment comprises of social, emotional, and instructional factors that can have an impact on student motivation. Students who are highly motivated tend to be more engaged and committed to learning activities, which can be influenced by various aspects of the classroom environment.

Improvising of teaching and learning materials

To develop competencies among learners, schools require adequate teaching and learning resources, such as laboratory equipment, books, wall maps, and technological tools like computers. However, due to limited resources, some teachers have resorted to improvising materials, such as using cut-up empty water bottles as beakers for experiments during teaching and learning. This improvisation of teaching materials can enhance the practical skills of students and support the implementation of CBC during classroom interaction (Gardner, 2016; Williamson, 2000). During focus group discussion with teachers from school D, they had to say;

To improvise means to create and employ resources that are available locally in situations where real ones are not present during teaching and learning. It also refers to the use of alternative materials and resources to aid instruction when there is a shortage or unavailability of specific teaching aids. (Respondents from School D)

Additionally, another teacher from school C had to say;

Improvise instructional materials are teaching materials designed and produced from the available local materials in order to promote effective teaching and learning in schools (Respondents from School C)

The use of Remedial Classes

To ensure the effective implementation of CBC, many teachers have chosen to dedicate additional time to assist students who struggle with learning, as highlighted in Richards' (2013) research. This approach aims to support low-achieving students in overcoming their academic challenges while also improving their learning abilities. By doing so, students can develop their critical thinking and problem-solving skills, which results in a more active learning experience in the classroom. In light of these findings, teachers have adopted remedial classes as one of the techniques to implement this new curriculum, as noted in Mosha's (2012) study.

A female respondent from School A had to say;

Teachers are eager to implement CBC as they have tried to find extra time in order to teach students who happen to below achievers so as to help them solving various academic problems which they face. For example, in this school there are remedial classes for form four students which start at 12:30am with the purpose of helping students (Respondent from school A).

Additionally, a male teacher from school A had to say;

Remedial programs offer the possibility of focusing on students who are lagging behind and teaching at a level that is appropriate for their ability. Ideally, such an intervention would increase student's progress, and decrease the heterogeneity of His/Her levels in a given grade (Respondent from school A)

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In regard to the findings and drawn conclusions, the following recommendations were made

Basing on the findings of this study, it is recommended that, as the curriculum change, teachers are required as major educational stakeholders and core implementers, so they should be involved in the preliminary stages. In line with this aspect, the researcher recommended that, before placing some directives to be followed by the teachers, the government as the main organ of the country should provide some funds to the education actors so that they can conduct teachers' in-service training to all subject teachers as well as other education administrators like the head of the schools so as they can be in a position of assessing and supervising on the effective implementation of CBC.

Training and Development of Teachers: There is a need for teachers to receive training and professional development to equip them with the knowledge and skills necessary for the effective implementation of competence-based curriculum. Teachers need to be trained on various teaching approaches that can be used to effectively implement the curriculum. The education agencies should also organize workshops and training programs for teachers to enhance their capacity in delivering the curriculum.

Provision of Adequate Instructional Materials: Schools should be provided with adequate instructional materials to enable teachers to effectively implement the competence-based curriculum. The education agencies should work closely with the schools to ensure that the required materials are available and accessible.

Monitoring and Evaluation: Education agencies should strengthen monitoring and evaluation system to ensure that the competence-based curriculum is being effectively implemented in the selected secondary schools. This will enable the education agencies to identify areas that need improvement and take corrective measures.

Collaboration between Schools and Education Agencies: There should be a collaborative effort between the schools and education agencies in the implementation of competence-based curriculum. Education agencies should provide technical support to the schools and work closely with them to ensure the effective implementation of the curriculum.

Based on the findings of this study, several policy implications have been identified to ensure effective implementation of the competence-based curriculum in our education system. Firstly, all subject teachers should be included in the curriculum change process as they are the key implementers and are familiar with the existing system.

Secondly, there should be adequate workshops and seminars aimed at familiarizing teachers with the CBC and its implications for our education system. Teacher motivation is also critical to the successful implementation of this new approach. The government has issued several directives to teachers without considering their incentives, resulting in low morale among teachers. However, if the government were to increase salaries, provide timely promotions, and offer other incentives, teachers would be more motivated and would work harder to achieve proper implementation of the CBC. Therefore, policies should be developed to ensure that teachers' incentives are taken into account and that they are actively involved in the implementation process.

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