Analysis of managerial roles of secondary school Principals in implementing Competency Based Curriculum (CBC) in Tigania West Sub-county, Meru, Kenya

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ABSTRACT

The study sought to analyze roles of secondary school principal in implementing Competency Based Curriculum (CBC) in Tigania west Sub County. The objectives of the study were; determining leadership skills possessed by principals in secondary schools; establishing availability of resources used by principals; examining how principals involve teachers in monitoring and evaluation; and establishing ways in which principals are involving parents in implementation of competency based curriculum. The study was conducted using descriptive survey design. The target population in the study was 867 participants; 51 principals, 255 HoDs, 510 teachers, and 51 parents in the study area. The sample size of 10 principals, 30 HoDs, 60 teachers and 10 parents were selected using Yamene sample size tables. The test instruments used to collect data were questionnaires, observation checklists and interviews. Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics while qualitative data was coded analyzed and interpreted using statistical packages for social sciences version 20.0 and summarized into frequency tables, pie charts and bar charts. The response rate was 98.5%. The findings of the study revealed that; principals use democratic and transformational leadership styles which inspire teachers to interact with other teachers; enhance cluster setting of exams, marking and attending workshops together which enhance assessment of learners. In addition, parents are involved in junior secondary school because since CBC had not started in senior Secondary schools. From the findings, the study concluded that, 80% of the secondary school principals are not ready to implement the Competency Based Curriculum due to resource constraints and in-service training of teachers. The study also found that, parents are not much involved on the implementation of Competency Based Curriculum (CBC) in the secondary schools in Tigania West Sub- County in Kenya

Introduction

Global demands for acquisition of 21st Century skills and application of knowledge as well as globalization of the labor market have affected the nature of learning and teaching process in order to achieve key educational competencies for personal and social development (Premier, 2017).

The 21st century skills and knowledge acquisition have emphasized on collaboration, communication, critical thinking, digital literacy, imagination, creativity, career and life skills as the key competencies that need to be developed through Competency Based Curriculum (CBC). Competency

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Based Curriculum (CBC) focuses on what the student learn to do with the knowledge rather than knowledge itself. Generally, Competency Based Curriculum (CBC) nurtures ability to master skills and competencies that lead to efficient students' outcomes. It is a process of outcome based learning to ensure production of a competent learner processing knowledge, skills and competencies that meets the needs of the labor market (Fenandez et. al., 2012).

Low quality of learner achievements and teacher training were the concerns that led to introduction of CBC in United States of America (USA). There was need to structure learning outcomes in a manner that encouraged teaching objectives to be expressed in observable students' behavior or expected learning outcomes. Knowledge and integration of competency based practices in South Africa, Nigeria and Rwanda were found to lack professional support and teacher training which as a result, affected assessment and practices in the classroom (Ogegbo, Adewusi & Jijani, 2020). Lack of expert participation in curriculum design and development, lack of quality textbooks and insufficient motivation to implement to implement educational curriculum were the challenges associated with Competency Based Education (CBE) in Tanzania (Muneja, 2015). The Competency Based Education (CBE) in Indonesia shifted the role of o teacher to that of a facilitator to support learners in retrieving and retaining knowledge as a practice for lifelong training (Masdugi, 2016).

The above studies have concluded that, most of the countries that have attempted to introduce Competency Based Curriculum (CBC) have faced poor training and under resourcing as challenges that are attributable to managerial roles of the principals in secondary schools. The study was set to investigate the principal's managerial roles in the implementation of competency based curriculum in public secondary school in Kenya.

Statement of the Problem

Education in Kenya is undergoing reform; a shift from 8.4.4 system of education to competency-based curriculum. Due to this reform some of the duties and responsibilities of secondary school principal are vital. These roles may include: supervise the interpretation and implementation of curriculum and ensure teachers prepare schemes of work, lesson plans and other professional documents, ensure instructional materials are sourced, availed and utilized by teachers and learners to support curriculum implementation among others (TSC, 2018 ; career progression guidelines). This is an indication that the managerial roles of secondary school principals are important in the implementation of competency-based curriculum. With the implementation of CBC the MoE and other stakeholders need to know whether secondary school principals possess the required leadership skills, resources are available and how would teachers and parents be involved. CBC eradicates the idea of teacher as a dictator, know-it-all and omnipresent, the role of the principals' changes from being the main actor to a facilitator (Amutabi, 2019). As Mazurka (2007) argues, principals occupy unique leadership position and exercise influence in structural, operational and instructional matters in the school. Thus, principals need to understand the curriculum well, the resources requirements for implementation and strategize how to involve teachers and parents. Therefore, this study seeks to analyze the managerial roles exercised by secondary school principals to ascertain their readiness in implementation of CBC and help MoE prepare for their training and that of teachers and even parents.

Study objectives

i) To determine leadership skills possessed by principals in Tigania West secondary schools

ii) To establish the availability of resources used by principals in the implementation of CBC in Tigania West secondary schools

iii) To examine how principals involve teachers in the monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of CBC curriculum in Tigania West Secondary schools

iv)   To establish ways in which principals involve parents in the implementation of CBC curriculum in Tigania West secondary schools

Literature review

Theoretical Literature

The study majored on contingency management theory and scientific management theory. Contingency management theory was established by Fred Fielder in the year 1958 during his research on the effectiveness of the leader in group situations. He believed that effectiveness in leading depends on controlling the situation and the style of leadership (Shala, Prebreza and Ramona's 2021). The contingency approach depends on the experience of secondary school principals which determines their leadership skills and competencies necessary in resource management and other stakeholder's involvement.

Scientific management theory was established by Fredrick Taylor in the year 1940 from his text principles of scientific management. He states that, forcing people to work hard is not the best way to optimize results. Ranman and Lim (2018), argues that there is no relationship between managerial roles and the three demographic factors of gender, school grades and length of service. How a principal runs an institution; the ability to simplify the task has nothing to do with their gender, length of service or qualification.

Empirical Literature

a) Principals' Leadership Skills and Competency Based Curriculum Implementation

Omolo and Sinatwa (2019) argued that principals' leadership skills namely; student and teacher monitoring , training on management skills, program in schools, uniting teaching and non-teaching staff, as well as initiating teamwork among the staff, monitoring students' discipline, quality improvement measures, communication and listening skills and in addition execution of students' assessment influence students' academic performance in secondary schools. These skills affect how effective a school is in decision making and general running which determines the success of curriculum implementation. This is why Owala (2021) recommends reskilling and training of teachers. Although there are other factors that determine the effectiveness of the curriculum which may include learning facilities, infrastructure, time and learning processes. Seen from management perspective, effective schools seek optimal utilization of all schools' components (Kamari 2017). Schools that have a strong principal leadership are predicted to be able to develop effective school management because they are supported by various aspects, such as application of technology, school culture, information systems and developed organizations (Imam, 2019).

b) Availability of Resources and Competency Based Curriculum Implementation

Kimani, et al, (2022) established 21st century pedagogical skills of teaching can be achieved through ICT integration in management of classroom and the entire school. According to Mutisya (2019), under resourcing and shortage of quality teaching materials in most schools is a common phenomenon that is hindering the implementation of CBC. Teachers need technological resources to help them improve their pedagogical practices and access to other online resources. In terms of financial resources, key academics point out the importance of financial resources as a key player in administration. Schools may also need additional financial support to run activities that are vital to students' achievements. Technical resources such as: high quality curriculum, books and other instructional materials, assessment instruments, laboratory equipment, computers and adequate space are vital.

c) Teacher Involvement in Monitoring and Evaluation of Competency Based Curriculum.

A teacher must be enabled to guide learners towards 21st century skills and competencies needed at different levels of education: standards, curriculum, instruction and assessment. Teachers

themselves need to acquire competencies to teach 21st Century Skills to their students, to purposefully integrate these skills into the core curriculum (Cretu, 2017). Valli, Perkkilä, and Valli (2014) in a study on the ways an adult pre-service teacher applies 21st century skills in the practice established that it critically important that a graduating teacher have requisite professional competencies and skills to implement 21st 4Cs in their work skillfully.In studies done by Mulenga and Kabombwe (2019), Momanyi and Rop (2019) and Koskei and Chepchumba (2020) concur that teachers should use differentiated modes of instructions and evaluation for learners to benefit individually and progress meaningfully. This is in response to early research that clearly targeted the preparedness of the teacher to implement competency education. It established that teachers knowledge of CBC were vague, ill prepared and hence their inability to reach and evaluate the new curriculum. Koskei and Chepchumba (2020) suggested further training and more sessions for retooling through the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD) in order to prepare teachers adequately in pedagogy, assessment and document preparation. The ministry of education policy guidelines on basic education in Kenya documents that the CBC teacher retooling design is robust and springs onto best practices by leveraging functional and existing training structures such as the County Teacher Capacity Development Committees and Strengthening Mathematics, Science Education to support the in- service training (GoK, 2023).

Parental Involvement and Competency Based Curriculum Implementation

According to Akala (2021), the role of the Parent is of great importance especially in harnessing and nurturing their children's talents and gifts. Similarly, Kindiki (2017) observes that when there is adequate parental involvement in their children's education, an increase in their academic motivation and achievements can be observed. Parental involvement helps the students to develop the ability to think and reason, build self-respect and respect for others, and reach their full potential as individual members of the community and citizens of the world.

Methodology

The study was conducted using descriptive survey design. The study target population was 867 participants; 51 principals, 510 teachers, 255 heads of department and 51 parents from the study area. A sample size of 10 principals, 60 teachers, 30 heads of department and 10 parents were selected using Yamene sample size tables. Data was collected using questionnaires, observation checklist and interviews. Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics while qualitative data was coded analyzed and interpreted using statistical packages for social sciences version 20.0 and summarized into frequency tables, pie charts and a bar graphs.

Results, discussions and interpretation

The results based on the study objectives are presented as follows:

The respondents provided their opinions on

Statement of Activities	Applicable	Not applicable
Staff brainstorm on CBC implementation	29	18
Team teaching and conveyor belt marking	36	11
Means of communication are modern and effective	43	04
Delegation of lesson observation is effective	39	08
Effective management of change in curriculum	37	10

Table 1: *Activities fit for a school . Source: Field data (November, 2022)*
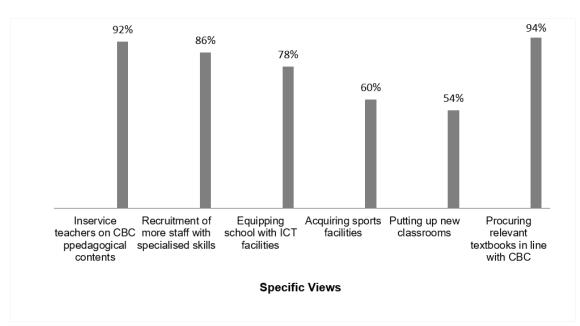
Figure 1: *Teachers' views on what schools should do to prepare for the CBC Source: Field data 2022*

their readiness to absorb the pioneer CBC learners into their schools.

Table 1 shows that majority of the secondary school teachers who participated in the study indicated Staff brainstorm on resolutions, team teaching and conveyor belt marking are practiced, means of communication are modern and effective, effective delegation and Effective management of change in curriculum are some of the activities in their schools. The findings clearly demonstrate that the aforementioned activities are very crucial for implementation of CBC. This study is in concurrence with the study done by Omolo and Sinatwa, (2019) who argued that principals' leadership skills namely; student and teacher monitoring, training on management skills, program in schools, uniting teaching and non-teaching staff, initiating teamwork among the staff, monitoring students' discipline, quality improvement measures, communication and listening skills and execution of students' assessment influence students' academic performance in secondary schools. These skills affect how effective a school is in decision making and general running which determines the success of curriculum implementation.

Availability of Resources used by Principals to Imple- ment Competency Based Curriculum

It is quite clear that majority of the respondents (94%) suggested schools could procure relevant teaching textbooks in line with CBC requirements while almost the same number of respondents foresaw the need to retool teachers on CBC pedagogical skills. Such actions if implemented ahead of commencement of junior secondary school grade 7 would put things and teaching and learning would commence smoothly. These findings were supported by Valli, Perkkilä, & Valli, (2014) on training of teachers in modern pedagogical skills that includes inculcation of the 21st century skills among the teacher trainees. The competencies acquired in this case are utilized in teaching the learners the modern ways of acquiring knowledge skills and competencies in different learning areas.

From table 2, out of the 10 sampled schools only 5 teach computer studies as a subject to selected learners whose number is commensurate to number of computers; at least two learners per computer. Through observation checklist, it was established that out of the 5 schools offering computer studies, 2 do not have computer laboratories. Instead, they use computers available in the library section to teach their learners. It was further noted that the five schools offering computer studies each had a qualified computer teacher who is also in-charge of all ICT operations

Zone	School	Computer lab	Number of functional computers	No of learners per class
Kianjai	Miathene Boys	Yes	20	25
	Kanjalu girls	Yes	10	15
Akithi	Kitheo secondary	No	1	0
Uringu	Kimachia sec	No	12	20
	Uringu Girls	No	20	24

Table 2: *Number of computers available in sample schools. Source: Field data 2022*

in schools. These are some of the oldest and well-established schools within the Sub- County. Other schools are faced with financial challenges and therefore they could not afford to purchase computers. One of the principal's lamented that "given the poor financial status these schools were in and faced with scenario of providing the basics such as food and buying computers, you would obviously provide learners with food before engaging into other expensive undertakings". The principal further asserted that: "With the introduction of free day secondary schooling, parents no longer want to pay extra money for their children to make a mile-stone in modern ways of teaching and learning. Any time we educate them to subsidize government grants; they ignore and say the government donations are enough." Such actions are usually experienced in communities that are poorly economically endowed; some principals asserted that there has been an in-service training for teachers on digital literacy few days in secondary school term. However, these observations confirmed the school's adherence on policy on information, communication and technology in education and training, (Murithi and Yoo, 2021) that the recommended ratio of computer to student is 1:3 despite the fact that many schools could not afford to buy computers to offer computer studies to their learners.

Involvement of Teachers in Monitoring and Evaluation.

According to the research results presented in the figure 2, most of secondary school teachers cited that they have been trained in readiness for the implementation of CBC. Teachers who have been trained further added that they were trained on Basic education curriculum structure, pedagogical skills, materials, talent identification, class size and staffing 21st century core competencies of CBC, assessment and progression, digital Literacy which is a boost to their professional development. This shows that teachers are the key players in the implementation of any curriculum. This study is in agreement by a study done by Koskei and Chepchumba (2020) and Njeru and Itegi (2018) who opined that teachers are an integral part of implementing any education reform agenda.

The table 3 shows that (63.8%) of the teachers who participated in the study agreed that formative feedback helps identify performance gaps, (78.8%) agreed that progress of every learner should be monitored regularly, (66.0%) agreed that evaluation data is used to asses attainment of set targets while (74.5%) data should be collected to keep track of learner's strengths and weakness.

According to figure 3 most of secondary school principals involve parents in community sensitization, providing resources, maintaining discipline, academic clinics, paying school fees and motivating learners. This shows parents are very vital in secondary schools and curriculum reform in general. This study concurs with Masa and Mila (2017) who argue that there are more than 100 ways in which parents can be involve in matters pertaining their children education.

Statement	Agree	Disagree
Formative feedback helps identify performance gaps	63.8%	36.2%
Progress of every learner should be monitored regularly	78.8%	21.2%
Evaluation data is used to assess attainment of set targets	66%	34%
Keeping track of learner's strengths and weakness	74.5%	25.5%

Table 3: *Teachers' Opinion on Monitoring and Evaluation of Learners with Respect to CBC Implementation.*
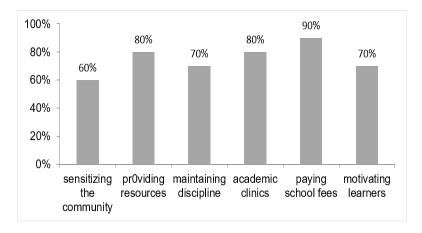
Source: Field data (November, 2022)

Figure 3: *Response on parental involvement*

Source: Field data (November 2022)

Conclusions

Most of the secondary school principals and teachers were not for CBC rollout at the time of the study due to a number of factors such as inadequate space, inadequately in-served teachers and lack of requisite resources liked books, ICT facilities among others. Further the study concluded that secondary school could engage thorough preparations so as to expedite implementation of the CBC. This would entail conducting programs of in-serving teachers on pedagogical techniques in conformity to 21st century classroom management.

The schools could also embark on procuring requisite resources for teaching and learning as well as putting up both classrooms and laboratories. The study perceived that ICT resources are enablers of teaching and learning. Therefore, each school should ensure ICT facilities are availed to both teachers and learners so as to expedite the process of CBC teaching and learning processes.

Finally, the study concluded that teacher should be retooled on the use of 21st century skills for teaching and learning purposes. These skills are vital ingredients in delivering lessons to the CBC millennial learners.

Recommendations

The role of secondary school principal is very important in any curriculum reform. Though some principals find it difficult due to the nature of school among other challenges, thus the research recommends upgrading of the secondary schools for effective implementation of CBC

The study recommended that as a matter of priority, secondary schools should embark on re-looking of teachers on CBC pedagogical skills and competencies. Secondary schools should quickly acquire embark on acquiring ICT facilities that are perceived to be the at the core of CBC teaching and learning. Parents should be sensitized or rather be trained on the roles they should play in schools to ensure smooth curriculum implementation.

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