

INFLUENCE OF CAPACITY BUILDING PRACTICES ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COMPETENCY-BASED CURRICULUM IN JUNIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN SOIN-SIGOWET SUB-COUNTY, KENYA.

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Abstract

The rapid changes in the 21st-century job market demand that graduates possess not only academic knowledge but also practical skills, values, and attitudes that can be applied in real-world scenarios. Although several studies have examined CBC implementation at national and county levels, few empirical studies focus specifically on capacity-building practices. This study aimed at addressing that gap by examining the influence of capacity-building practices on CBC implementation in junior secondary schools in Soin-Sigowet Sub-County. Specifically, the study investigated the role of infrastructure resources development, learning resources development, and personnel resources development in shaping CBC implementation. The research was guided by complex adaptive system theory. A concurrent embedded research design was employed involving both qualitative and quantitative data. A sample size of 194 respondents comprising of 145 teachers, 46 head teachers and 3 curriculum support officers was determined using the Yamane Taro formula, and simple random sampling was employed. Data was collected using structured questionnaires, interview schedules, and a document guide where the response rate were 136 (93.15%) for teachers, 40 (86.96%) for head teachers and 3 (100%) for CSO respectively. The findings showed that learning resources development, personnel resources development and head teachers' leadership style had positive and significant influence on the effectiveness of curriculum implementation ($\beta=0.133$, $p<0.01$; $\beta=0.178$, $p<0.01$ and $\beta=0.502$, $p<0.01$; respectively). However, infrastructure resources development depicted negative and significant influence on curriculum implementation ($\beta=-0.073$; $p<0.1$). The inclusion of interaction terms shows that head teachers' leadership style changes the positive influence of learning resources development. The findings provided valuable insights for educational stakeholders, including school administrators, policymakers, and researchers, in improving the implementation of CBC in similar contexts.

Keywords: *Capacity Building Practices, Competency-Based Curriculum, Infrastructure, resources, Leadership.*

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1. Background of the Study

The job market of the 21st century is evolving rapidly, placing an increasing emphasis on the need for graduates who possess not only academic knowledge but also practical skills, values, and attitudes necessary for performing real-life tasks efficiently (Gulled, 2023). Employers are increasingly prioritizing competencies such as problem-solving, critical thinking, and practical application over rote memorization of facts. This shift in the job market has prompted a global change in educational systems, moving towards the adoption of competency-based curricula (CBC) that are designed to help students develop the required skills, knowledge, and attitudes. A competency-based curriculum emphasizes mastery of specific competencies, which may include both cognitive and non-cognitive skills, and places a greater focus on learning outcomes rather than simply the process of learning (Martes, 2020). CBC, which emphasizes a learner-centered approach, ensures that students develop the necessary competencies required to excel in the real world.

However, the successful implementation of CBC requires the development of adequate capacity across various dimensions, including infrastructure, personnel, and learning resources. Despite its recognized importance, many countries, including Kenya, face significant challenges in ensuring that the necessary resources are available to implement CBC effectively. As noted by Kericho County Education Office (2024), the successful implementation of any curriculum, including CBC, depends on the strategic alignment of resources with the curriculum's goals and the development of new and effective teaching practices. Without sufficient resources, including qualified teachers, adequate teaching materials, and appropriate physical infrastructure, the full potential of the CBC approach cannot be realized.

Globally, several countries have encountered challenges and successes in the implementation of CBC. The United States, for example, has adopted the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) to evaluate and compare educational systems worldwide. Through this benchmarking initiative, the U.S. has identified several weaknesses in its education system, particularly in areas such as technology, reading, and mathematics. These insights have led to the formulation of targeted policies aimed at improving these sectors (Thomson et al, 2020). In Scotland, the government successfully implemented CBC by ensuring that adequate resources were allocated for infrastructure and personnel capacity-building, though challenges such as social preparedness and teacher training persisted (Doyle & Wang, 2023). In Finland, the top-ranking global education system of 2016, the success of CBC implementation is largely attributed to the availability of highly trained teachers, significant government investment in educational resources, and the flexibility given to educators in designing their lessons (Pelkonen, 2023). Finland's focus on nurturing not just academic excellence but also life skills and competencies has set an exemplary model for CBC implementation worldwide.

While these global examples provide useful insights, the challenges faced by countries in implementing CBC are not unique. In developing nations, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, the lack of sufficient resources has been a major hindrance to the successful rollout of CBC. In Zambia, for example, Mulenga and Ng'andu (2022) found that despite training teachers in CBC, the curriculum was not effectively implemented due to inadequate teaching resources, lack of training on the proper use of these resources, and the inability of teachers to adapt to the CBC approach. Similarly, in Nigeria, the implementation of CBC has faced significant challenges related to insufficient capacity, such as a shortage of qualified teachers, inadequate infrastructure, and insufficient support for capacity-building initiatives (Ohibime, Mohammed, & Adebisi, 2023). These examples highlight the crucial role of capacity building in overcoming barriers to effective CBC implementation.

In Kenya, the transition from the 8-4-4 education system to CBC began in 2017, with full implementation expected over several years. The goal of CBC is to produce self-reliant individuals who are equipped with the skills and competencies required to thrive in an increasingly dynamic world. However, the implementation process has not been without its challenges. Despite government initiatives aimed at supporting the transition, such as in-service teacher training programs, curriculum material provision, and infrastructural development, significant gaps remain. According to Mbai, Bomett, and Kipropo (2014), these challenges include insufficient teacher training, inadequate learning facilities, and poor physical infrastructure in schools. In particular, the shortage of qualified teachers trained in the new CBC methods remains a major barrier to successful implementation. Mutua (2023) further emphasized that despite the availability of in-service training, challenges such as the lack of teaching and learning materials, overcrowded classrooms, and insufficient infrastructure continue to affect the quality of CBC delivery in Kenya.

In response to these challenges, the Kenyan government has provided significant support through various initiatives aimed at building the capacity of educational institutions. These include teacher training programs administered by institutions such as the Kenya Institute of Education (KIE) and the Kenya Education Management Institute (KEMI). Additionally, the government has initiated projects like the Basic Education Project (BEP) to improve the financial management capabilities of schools and develop work plans for the effective implementation of CBC. However, the effectiveness of these initiatives in addressing the core challenges faced by schools, particularly in rural areas such as Soin-Sigowet Sub-County, remains unclear. According to Avsheniuk (2021), despite these efforts, schools in rural areas still face severe limitations in their capacity to implement CBC effectively.

Soin-Sigowet Sub-County, located in Kericho County in the Rift Valley region of Kenya, is a rural area that faces unique challenges in terms of educational resource allocation and infrastructure development. The region is home to numerous Junior Secondary Schools that have struggled with inadequate teaching and learning materials, insufficient physical infrastructure, and a shortage of qualified teachers (Ngeno, 2023). While there have been efforts to provide teachers with CBC training, the implementation of the curriculum remains

hindered by these resource constraints. Additionally, the rapid population growth and increased enrollment in schools have placed further strain on already limited resources. The lack of sufficient classrooms, instructional materials, and trained personnel in Soin-Sigowet Sub-County mirrors the challenges faced by many rural regions in Kenya, where the effective implementation of CBC is often compromised by these capacity issues.

In this context, this study sought to examine the influence of capacity-building practices on the implementation of the Competency-Based Curriculum in Junior Secondary Schools in Soin-Sigowet Sub-County. The study focused on the role of infrastructure resources development, personnel resources development, and learning resources development in enhancing the effectiveness of CBC implementation in the region. By investigating how these capacity-building practices can address the challenges faced by schools in Soin-Sigowet Sub-County, this study aims to contribute valuable insights that can inform policy and practice, not only in Soin-Sigowet but also in other similar rural areas across Kenya. Through this study, it is hoped that more targeted interventions can be developed to support the successful implementation of CBC in regions that face resource constraints.

2. Statement of the Problem

The global shift toward competency-based education reflects the demand for graduates who possess not only theoretical knowledge but also the practical skills, values, and attitudes required in the 21st-century world of work. Kenya's adoption of the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) in 2017 aimed to equip learners with these competencies. Despite commendable efforts by the government such as in-service teacher training, infrastructure development, and curriculum support programs, CBC implementation continues to face persistent challenges. Teachers and other stakeholders have raised concerns over inadequate facilities, insufficient instructional materials, and varying levels of teacher preparedness, which have hindered the effective realization of CBC objectives. Although previous studies have examined CBC implementation at national and county levels, much of this research emphasizes general challenges without adequately analyzing how specific capacity-building efforts shape implementation at the school level. In rural areas like Soin-Sigowet Sub-County, where schools operate with limited resources, the success of CBC depends largely on how infrastructure, learning resources, and personnel development interact to support instructional delivery. It is plausible that these capacity-building factors jointly influence teachers' ability to translate curriculum intentions into classroom practice. However, empirical evidence explaining how these interrelated elements influence CBC implementation in junior secondary schools remains scarce within this context. Understanding these dynamics is critical for bridging the gap between policy and practice. Therefore, this study examined how infrastructure resources development, learning resources development, and personnel resources development influence the implementation of CBC in junior secondary schools in Soin-Sigowet Sub-County, with the goal of informing targeted interventions that strengthen curriculum delivery in similar settings.

3. Purpose of the Study

The main focus of the study is to assess the influence of capacity building practices on the implementation of the competency-based curriculum in junior secondary schools in Soin-Sigowet Sub-County, Kenya.

4. Specific Objectives of the Study

The specific objectives of the study are as follows:

- i. To determine the influence of infrastructure development on the implementation of the Competency-Based Curriculum in junior secondary schools in Soin-Sigowet Sub-County, Kenya.
- ii. To establish the influence of learning resources development on the implementation of the competency-based curriculum in junior secondary schools in Soin-Sigowet Sub-County, Kenya

5. Research Questions

- i. To what extent does school infrastructure development influence implementation of the Competency-Based Curriculum in junior secondary schools in Soin-Sigowet Sub-County, Kenya?
- ii. To what extend does learning resources influence the implementation of the Competency-Based Curriculum in junior secondary schools in Soin-Sigowet Sub-County, Kenya?

6. Methodology

The study adopted a **Concurrent Embedded Research Design**, which integrates both quantitative and qualitative approaches within a single study to provide a comprehensive understanding of the research problem (Creswell, 2013). A structured Likert-scale questionnaire was used to collect quantitative data on capacity-building strategies influencing the implementation of the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC), while interviews generated qualitative data that provided deeper insights into participants' perceptions and practical experiences. The mixed-methods approach enhanced the validity of the findings through triangulation and enabled a holistic analysis of the relationship between capacity-building strategies and CBC implementation (Pardede, 2019). The research design provided a systematic framework for data collection, analysis, interpretation, and presentation of findings (Collis & Hussey, 2021; Kothari, 2017).

The study was conducted in **Soin-Sigowet Sub-County, Kericho County**, one of the six administrative sub-counties in the county. The area was purposively selected because it faces significant challenges in the implementation of the Competency-Based Curriculum at the junior secondary school level. Reports indicate that fewer than 45% of teachers in the sub-county have received comprehensive CBC in-service training, ICT integration remains low, and schools have the lowest CBC implementation readiness in Kericho County (Ministry of Education [MoE], 2022; Teachers Service Commission [TSC], 2023; Kericho County

Education Office, 2024). Previous studies also identified a research gap on capacity-building practices at the junior secondary level, particularly in rural and under-resourced settings such as Soin-Sigowet (Ngeno, 2023). According to the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (2019), the sub-county has a population of approximately 126,500 people and covers an area of 466.2 km².

The **target population** comprised all Grade Seven teachers, headteachers, and Curriculum Support Officers (CSOs) working in the 90 public junior secondary schools within Soin-Sigowet Sub-County. According to records from the Sub-County Education Office (2024), the target population consisted of **280 Grade Seven teachers, 90 headteachers, and 6 Curriculum Support Officers**, giving a total population of **376 respondents**. This population was selected because these stakeholders are directly involved in the implementation and supervision of the Competency-Based Curriculum (Kothari, 2017).

To obtain study participants, the researcher employed both probability and non-probability sampling techniques. **Simple random sampling** was used to select teachers and headteachers for the questionnaire survey, while **purposive (judgmental) sampling** was used to select Curriculum Support Officers for interviews based on their expertise and involvement in CBC implementation (Guarte & Barrios, 2006). The sample size was determined using **Yamane's (1967)** sample size determination formula. Consequently, the study selected a total sample of **194 respondents**, comprising **145 Grade Seven teachers, 46 headteachers, and 3 Curriculum Support Officers**. This sample was considered adequate for generating representative data on the influence of capacity-building strategies on the implementation of the Competency-Based Curriculum in public junior secondary schools within Soin-Sigowet Sub-County.

Table 1: Sample Size

Category	Target	Sample Size
Teachers	280	145
Head teachers	90	46
Curriculum Support Officers	6	3
Total	376	194

7. Findings

Influence of Infrastructure Development on the Implementation of the Competency-Based Curriculum

Model 1 shows that infrastructure resources development depicted negative and significant influence on the effectiveness of curriculum implementation ($\beta = -0.073$; $p < 0.1$). This suggests that the development of infrastructure resources decreases the effectiveness of CBC implementation. Model 2 shows that the interaction effect *infrastructure resources*head teachers' leadership style* suggests that head teachers' leadership style strengthens the negative effect of infrastructure resources development on CBC implementation, however, not statistically significant ($\beta = -0.060$; $p < 0.01$).

Interviews were conducted among three CSO to evaluate the effectiveness of curriculum implementation. The analysis of responses suggests that the development of infrastructure resources is considered as satisfactory since the inception of CBC. For instance, interviewee 1 suggested that:

"There is development of Grade 7 classrooms".

"There is very adequate infrastructural facilities such as playground, laboratories, dormitories, library and classrooms".

However, interviewee 2 and 3 suggested that the infrastructure resources are below the standards. This is in line with the quantitative findings which depicted negative influence of infrastructure resources on CBC implementation. For instance, interviewee 2 stated that:

"Some of the institutions are not well funded by CDF and learners are studying in classrooms below the standards".

Therefore, the findings based on both qualitative and quantitative analysis clearly indicate that there is negative correlation between infrastructure resource development and effectiveness of curriculum implementation. This contradicts the research hypothesis of the study and not in line with findings of Gleeson et al. (2020) and Ngeno et al. (2021). According to Gleeson et al. (2020), there is increased teacher autonomy in reform implementation, as well as physical resource investment toward technology integration and digital infrastructure. However, the negative associations between infrastructure resources and curriculum implementation support the findings of Mulenga and Kabombwe (2019); Kuria (2022) and Mgaya et al. (2022). According to these studies (Mulenga and Kabombwe, 2019; Kuria, 2022 and Mgaya et al., 2022), the schools lacked enough funds to construct more physical resources, and fundraisings were ineffective in acquiring resources required for CBC implementation.

8. Influence of Learning Resources Development on the Implementation of the Competency-Based Curriculum

Model 1 depicts that learning resources development showed positive and significant influence on the effectiveness of curriculum implementation ($\beta=0.133$; $p<0.01$). This implies that the development of learning resources increases the effectiveness of curriculum implementation. Model 2 shows that the interaction effect *learning resources development* **head teachers' leadership style* suggest that the interaction term weakens the effects of personnel resources, reducing its positive influence on CBC implementation, but not statistically significant ($\beta=0.070$; $p<0.01$).

The qualitative findings show that there are satisfactory learning resources in schools which support the quantitative findings obtained from Model 1. For instance, interviewee 1 suggested that:

"There is provision of textbooks and other supplementary materials to all grades by the government".

However, interviewee 2 and 3 suggested that there are not enough learning resources in learning institutions. This is in line with the findings from Model 2 depicting a significant negative influence of learning resources on CBC implementation after moderating for head teachers' leadership style. For instance, interviewee 2 commented that:

"In some institutions, the enrolment rate is high and the ratios of books to children is not 100%".

The findings show that there is significant positive association between learning resources development and curriculum implementation in line with the findings of Kaindi and Kimiti (2019), Manizabayo (2019) Mwita and Onyango (2022). However, the findings contradict those found by Campbell-Phillips (2020), Jadoon et al. (2020), and Mulenga and Ng'andu (2022), as insufficient learning resources such as instructional materials, books, and audio-visual aids affected curriculum implementation.

Table 2: Moderated Multiple Regression Analysis

Variables	Model 1 (CBC implementation)	Model 2 (CBC implementation)
Main Effects		
Infrastructure resources	-0.073* (0.038)	0.155 (0.189)
Learning resources	0.133** (0.054)	-0.128 (0.310)
Head teachers' leadership style	0.502*** (0.050)	0.689*** (0.260)
Interaction Effects		
Infrastructure*Head		-0.060

teachers' leadership		(0.048)
Learning*Head teachers'		0.070
leadership		(0.079)
Constant	1.021*** (0.254)	0.291 (1.037)
F (4, 171)	68.218	
F (7, 168)		39.131
Prob	0.000	0.000
R-Squared	0.615	0.620
Adjusted R-Squared	0.606	0.604
R-Squared change	0.615	0.005
Observations	176	176

Standard Errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Following the first research question which aimed at examining the influence of infrastructure resources development on CBC implementation, the findings depicted a significant negative relationship. This implies that physical structural expansion may results in operational bottlenecks or instructional disruptions if not carefully managed. This contradicts the research hypothesis and is not consistent with the findings of many studies as reviewed in the literature section including the findings of Gleeson et al. (2020) and Ngeno et al. (2021). However, the negative association between infrastructure resources and curriculum implementation supports the findings of Mulenga and Kabombwe (2019); Kuria (2022) and Mgaya et al. (2022) demonstrating that schools lacked enough funds to construct more physical resources, and fundraisings were ineffective in acquiring resources required for CBC implementation.

Moreover, the study evaluated the influence of learning resources development and personnel resources development on curriculum implementation, where the findings revealed significant positive relationship. These indicate that investments in teacher professional growth and instructional materials directly enhance classroom delivery. These align with the findings of various studies including Kaindi and Kimiti (2019), Manizabayo (2019), Mwita and Onyango (2022), Nzairwehi and Atuhumuze (2019), Silas (2020) and Owuor (2022). The findings also show that the control variable, head teachers' leadership style depicted positive and significant influence on curriculum implementation. This supports the findings of Owuor (2022) who noted that principals' leadership styles are associated with creating supportive teaching environments. The hierarchical regression analysis demonstrated that the inclusion of head teacher's leadership style as an intervening variable completely changed the statistical significance of the individual influences of the research variables. Specifically, the

model depicted that there is no statistically significant influence of infrastructure resources, personnel resources, and learning resources once head teacher's leadership style is included as a moderator. The change in statistical significance demonstrates that physical and human resources do not function in isolation, but their influence is entirely dependent on the leadership environment within the school

9. Conclusion

1. Influence of Infrastructure Development on the Implementation of the Competency-Based Curriculum. The study concluded that infrastructure development alone does not guarantee effective implementation of the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC). Infrastructure resources exhibited a negative influence on CBC implementation, and this negative effect was further strengthened by head teachers' leadership style, although the moderating effect was not statistically significant. The findings suggest that physical infrastructure must be accompanied by effective leadership and sound management practices to ensure that infrastructural investments support, rather than hinder, curriculum implementation.
2. Extent to Which Learning Resources Influence the Implementation of the Competency-Based Curriculum. The study concluded that learning resources positively influence the implementation of the Competency-Based Curriculum to a considerable extent by enhancing teaching and learning processes. However, the effectiveness of learning resources depends on how they are utilized under the leadership of head teachers. The findings indicate that while learning resources are essential for successful CBC implementation, their contribution may be reduced where leadership fails to create an enabling environment for their effective use. Thus, learning resources are necessary but require supportive instructional leadership to achieve their full impact on curriculum implementation.

10. Recommendations

1. Based on the findings that infrastructure development alone does not significantly enhance the implementation of the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC), it is recommended that the Ministry of Education, school boards, and other education stakeholders prioritize not only the provision of adequate physical infrastructure but also strengthen the leadership and management capacity of head teachers. Head teachers should receive continuous professional development through leadership training, seminars, and workshops to enable them to effectively plan, utilize, and manage school infrastructure in ways that support curriculum implementation. This will ensure that investments in classrooms, laboratories, libraries, ICT facilities, and other physical resources translate into improved instructional delivery and learner outcomes.
2. Since learning resources were found to positively influence the implementation of the Competency-Based Curriculum, it is recommended that the government and other education partners ensure the adequate and equitable provision of textbooks, ICT

equipment, instructional materials, and other teaching and learning resources in all junior secondary schools. In addition, teachers should be regularly trained on the effective utilization of these resources through continuous professional development programmes, while parents should be encouraged to support learners in the use of learning materials at home. These measures will enhance effective curriculum delivery and improve the achievement of CBC Learning outcomes.

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