

LECTURERS' RETOOLING IN KENYA. A CASE OF COMPETENCY BASED CURRICULUM (CBC)

Dr. Benjamin K. Koskei
Kenyatta University, Kenya
benjamin.koskei@ku.ac.ke

Abstract

Kenya as a country has embarked on curriculum reforms that have seen the introduction of Competency Based Curriculum (CBC) to replace the Outcome Based Curriculum, which put more emphasis on examination outcome rather than learner's competency. The purpose of the study is to investigate lecturers' retooling in the case of Competency Based Curriculum (CBC) in Kenya. Related literature was reviewed from studies done locally, regionally and internationally concerning the current curriculum. The research employed descriptive survey design. The researcher used stratified and purposive random sampling technique. A sample of 200 lecturers took part in the study. The researcher used questionnaire in collecting data. A pilot study was carried out and a CronchBach Alpha method was used to determine the reliability of the research instrument. Expert judgment was employed to determine the validity of the research instrument. The data collected in the field was analyzed using descriptive and null hypotheses tested at $\alpha= 0.05$. The finding of this study revealed that lecturers' retooling significantly influenced the implementation of the Competency Based Curriculum. The researcher recommends that there is need of adequate and effective retooling of facilitators and trainers. It also recommended consistent retooling sessions for efficient and effective implementation of the curriculum. The researcher also recommends stakeholders should adequately create a framework for retooling programs on preparing the lecturers on the paradigm shift from teaching to learning.

Key words: *Lecturers' Retooling, Implementation, Competency Based Curriculum.*

Introduction

In Kenya, formal education was introduced during the British colonial era. Between 1964 and 1985, an education structure 7-4-2-3 (seven years of primary school, four years of secondary school, two years of high school, and three years of university education) was modeled and adopted (Kinuthia, 2009). The 8-4-4 system of education (Eight years of primary school, four years of secondary school and four years of university) was later introduced in January 1985, following concerns that the basic education provided previously lacked the necessary content to promote widespread sustainable self-employment. The Kenyan primary curriculum is approved for all public schools and

private schools except for international schools which usually offer the British or American curriculum, followed by the corresponding examination certificates, the subjects provided in the primary level are; English, Kiswahili, Mathematics, Science, Social studies, Religious education, Creative Arts, Physical education and Life skills (Kinuthia, 2009). In a major departure from the 8-4-4 system, the new curriculum the proposed system of 2-6-3-3-3 which was launched in 2017 with a design to take (two years in pre-primary, six years in primary education, three years in Junior secondary education, three in Senior secondary education and three at the University). The Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) has brought new changes in that, Early Childhood Education Development (ECED) was incorporated to the basic education and has two levels only (Pre-Primary 1 and 2) that is PP1 and PP2 and the subject areas are now referred to learning areas. The Pre-Primary learning areas are; Mathematical Activities, Language Activities/Kenya Sign language/Pre Braille Activities, Environmental activities, Psychomotor and Creative activities/outdoor activity, Religious Education(CRE,IRE,HRE) with a total of 25 lessons per week. While the Lower Primary, learning areas are; Literacy Activities and Indigenous Languages /Braille, Kiswahili Language Activities/Kenya Sign Language, English Language activities, Mathematical activities, Environmental activities, Hygiene and Nutrition activities, Religious activities (CRE, IRE, HRE), Movement and Creative activities and Pastoral Programme with a total of 35 lessons per week. In designing the Competency-Based Curriculum it is envisioned that at the end of the learning period every learner should have competence in the following seven core competency areas; communication and collaboration, critical thinking and problem solving, imagination and creativity, citizenship, learning to learn, self-efficacy and digital literacy. However, Khan, (2012) noted that, the need for a criteria or guidelines on how competencies are evaluated and attained during each phase or level of development for instance it is expected that after completion of each level, there are should be clear specifications that a learner started as a beginner level then moved to competent level and then proficient level and lastly expert level.

In practice, a competency is the ability to apply learning resources: skills, knowledge, ethics and attitudes adequately in various defined real-life contexts of education, work, personal or professional development (Njeng'ere, 2017). Learners are thus expected to be presented with resources which they interact with and construct meaning out of them in the Competency-Based Approach (Barman, 2011). The Competency-Based models are mainly applicable in vocational education and training due to the emphasis on standards of competence in occupational sectors. The concept is thus more useful in vocational education, since the emphasis is on the ability of the student to perform a set of related tasks with a high degree of skills in addition in the vocational education a particular competency can be broken down through task analysis into its component skills (Brandt & Tyler, 2011).

Literature

A study conducted by Koskei & Chepchumba, (2020) concerning teacher preparedness on the implementation of Competency-Based Curriculum in lower primary schools in Nakuru County.

Findings based from the study established that teachers were not prepared in implementing the CBC especially in the new subjects. Kimosop (2019) conducted another study on teacher competence and preparedness. The purpose was to investigate teacher preparedness on the implementation of the early childhood education development curriculum in Kenya. The study established that majority of pre-school teachers in the country were not well prepared in the implementation of the curriculum. Teachers need to be involved when the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD) and Ministry of Education (MOE) were preparing the curriculum since they are the key implementers. Waweru (2018) conducted a study on the influence of teacher preparedness on the implementation of competency-based curriculum in primary schools. Findings based on the study established that 98.8 percent of the teachers indicated they were not prepared to implement the CBC especially in the new subjects while 95 percent noted that preparing lesson plans for all lessons was impossible owing to the time writing a single lesson plan takes. The study also established that over 50 percent of the teachers needed support on infusing creativity and imagination, designing assessment rubrics, which are tasks tailored towards discerning learners' abilities in performing specific tasks. A study conducted by Hwande & Mpofu (2017) on the preparedness of the primary school to implement the grade three new curriculums in Zimbabwe. The findings showed that teacher development training received was not equal to the teacher's needs, while some of the facilitators were not fluent with the demands of the new curriculum in addition to lack of textbooks and the internet despite the fact that the new curriculum requires internet search among teachers. Paulo (2014) conducted a study on Pre-service teacher's preparedness to implement the Competency-Based Curriculum in Secondary Schools in Tanzania. The findings showed that since the competence based curriculum was introduced in secondary schools in the year 2005, there was no evidence that teacher education curriculum at the University of Dares Salaam where secondary school teachers are trained had changed to cater for new demands arising from the introduction of Competence Based Curriculum in secondary schools. A study by Kafyulilo, (2012) posits that teacher training ought to be a priority in order to actualize reform in education. Any functional system of education should involve consistent retraining of teachers for the efficient implementation of the curriculum. With the CBC seeking an enhanced teacher's role in providing opportunity for the learner to realize and develop full potential, teachers need significant knowledge, skills and ability to interact with all students, setting manageable standards and choosing instructional materials that can accommodate students at different levels. For effective learning especially under the CBC, a good choice of a variety of pedagogy is paramount. Teachers need to be highly knowledgeable in the application of teaching strategies necessary to make pupils learning effectively.

Research Methodology

This study employed descriptive survey research design to get opinions from lecturers in public universities about lecturers' retooling and implementation of CBC. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), descriptive survey design is used in collecting data from the members of a population in order to determine the current status under study. This design is deemed appropriate because it is an efficient method of collecting descriptive data regarding characteristics of a sample.

3.3 Location of the study

The location of this study was the public universities in Kenya. These comprised of the following universities: Nairobi, Kenyatta, Moi, Egerton, Masinde Muliro, Maseno, Laikipia, Eldoret and Pwani. The reason for selecting public universities selected is mainly because they normally have a large population of students pursuing Education courses hence becoming future teachers.

Sample

Two hundred lecturers were selected from a target population of 4,513 lecturers. Stratified random sampling was adopted. The technique placed the respondents into two strata on the basis of gender (male and female). Simple random sampling was used because it necessitated selecting of schools in such a way that each school had an equal probability of being included in the sample. The main factor to consider in determining the sample size was the need to keep it manageable. Purposive sampling technique was used to sample head of departments.

Instrumentation

Data was collected using a questionnaire and interview schedule. The questionnaire used included both closed and open-ended items. A closed-ended questionnaire is one which the respondent is offered the choice of alternative responses. Open-ended questionnaire is not followed by any kind of choice and the answers have to be recorded in full in order to support and check the alternative choice responses given by the respondent. Interview guide was also used in collecting data because it provide highly personalized data, high return rate and there are opportunities for probing Koskei & Simiyu, (2015)

Findings & Discussions

From the study, the following were the findings:

1. The findings indicate that 90% of the lecturers were not re-tooled on the CBC before rolling out thus they still use the old pedagogical methodology in teaching the students.
2. The retooling sessions were conducted online for two days only. This is contrary to the stipulated period, hence giving lecturers a raw deal.
3. Retooling sessions were largely ineffective due to the overload of the content in the two days period which was deemed inadequate.
4. Incompetent facilitators had not conceptualized or understood the CBC, hence were unable to adequately facilitate the retooling sessions efficiency and effectively.
5. The trainees were too many hence could not be accommodated in one online platform and this made the trainees to wait to be let in without success.
6. Lack of adequate training materials and inadequate information on the new curriculum.

CONCLUSIONS

On the basis of the findings of the study, the following conclusions are made;

1. The implementation of the Competency- Based Curriculum was hurriedly done before the majority of the lecturers were retooled on the contents and teaching methodology.
2. The data suggested that inadequate retooling of lecturers will hinder most of them from obtaining a solid base of essential knowledge of Competency Based Curriculum.
3. The study has concluded that most public universities lecturers were not retool on the CBC and the few that attended retooling workshops were not adequately retool.
4. Lecturers were generally negative about CBE implementation and the retooling sessions.
5. The implementation of CBC is faced by untold hiccups for example lack of adequate knowledge, skills on CBC and teaching approaches among the lecturers, Lack of adequate approved textbooks for lecturers and learners, Lack of lecturers instructional materials.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Since no research was done to justify the change from Outcomes Based Curriculum to Competency-Based Curriculum framework, education stakeholders should commission summative evaluation of the pilot phase of CBC to determine its effect on learners. This means that CBC should not be implemented.
2. Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development in collaboration with university curriculum experts should conduct a comprehensive revision of CBC. It should also develop clear manuals for lecturers and the Curriculum Support Officers.
3. The Ministry of Education should initiate a mechanism for systematic in-service and pre-service training of lecturers on the CBC.
4. There is an urgent need to incorporate aspects of CBC in teacher training curriculum in Universities. This will enhance lecturers' pedagogical skills.

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