

HOIs' leadership practices in vision communication for CBE sustainability in public junior schools in Kisii County, Kenya.

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ABSTRACT

Curriculum reform is vital for ensuring an education system meets societal demands. In Kenya, the sustainability of the Competency-Based Education (CBE) in public junior schools has become a critical concern in the wake of on-going educational reforms. Despite significant government investments in teacher training, retooling, instructional resources, and infrastructure, the rollout of CBE in public junior schools has encountered persistent hurdles including resistance to change among Heads of Institutions (HOIs) and restrained relationship with educators due to their deficient leadership practices as change agents. Particularly, their unpreparedness in CBE implementation is evident both at the institutional and national levels. Among others, sustaining this educational system requires more than policy directives; it necessitates visionary leadership at the school level. This study aimed at establishing HOIs' communication practices of vision in CBE application. A mixed-methods research design was employed, while data were collected using a questionnaire and an interview schedule. The study results from descriptive analysis showed high mean score for vision communication ($M = 4.23$, $SD = 0.58$). Additionally, qualitative findings corroborated the quantitative results by emphasizing shared vision, innovation, collaboration, and adaptability as key factors for sustaining CBE. The study concluded that visionary leadership practices of HOIs significantly influence the sustainability of CBE in public junior schools.

Keywords: Competency-Based Education (CBE), visionary leadership, vision communication, sustainability, change management, Kisii County, Kenya.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

While visionary leaders exhibit distinctive attributes that set them apart in educational management, a defining quality is their ability to formulate and communicate a clear and compelling vision for the future of their institutions (Candrasari et al., 2023). Accordingly, such leaders demonstrate a deep awareness of existing challenges and emerging opportunities within the education sector, enabling them to anticipate desired outcomes and establish long-term institutional goals (Bush, 2020). This clarity of vision not only guides their decision-making processes but also motivates stakeholders to align with and support realization of the institution's goals.

Visionary leadership therefore, plays a critical role in the effective management of educational institutions (Candrasari et al., 2023). It involves leaders who are capable of articulating a forward-looking vision and translating it into practical and achievable strategies. The importance of such leadership is evident in its capacity to provide strategic direction by defining institutional purpose

and setting long-term priorities. By aligning their vision with the changing needs of learners, society, and the broader educational environment, visionary leaders enable institutions to remain focused and committed to achieving their goals (Gökbulut & Turan, 2021).

Vision can be viewed as a conceptual image of a desirable and achievable future state of an organization (Ani Marlia et al., 2020a). It originates from the leader's cognitive capacity to interpret situations accurately and apply insights effectively to enhance organizational growth and sustainability. Ani Marlia et al. (2020b) further note that leadership effectiveness is influenced by key competencies, including vision formulation, goal setting, interpersonal skills, and self-awareness, alongside context-specific attributes relevant to particular organizations. Similarly, Onia (2022) describes vision as a leader's ability to anticipate the future, align team efforts with that anticipated direction, and inspire members to work toward achieving set goals. In this regard, vision not only represents a future-oriented image but also provides a rationale that motivates individuals to actively contribute toward its realization.

Visionary leadership in education is closely intertwined with instructional leadership, as school leaders are expected to perform multiple roles that collectively influence institutional success. A visionary leader not only formulates long-term goals but also acts as an instructional leader, problem solver, resource provider, and spokesperson responsible for guiding the school toward a desired future (Kadhun et al., 2023). These multifaceted responsibilities require principals to align teaching and learning processes with the school's vision while simultaneously addressing emerging challenges and ensuring the availability of necessary resources.

Principals who lead with a clear and compelling vision demonstrate confidence in their ability to achieve set goals within a defined timeframe. Such leaders are proactive and decisive, openly articulating their beliefs about what their institutions can accomplish and inspiring others to share in that commitment. Their willingness to communicate ambitious yet achievable goals foster a sense of direction and accountability among teachers and other stakeholders.

Vision itself functions as a powerful catalyst for organizational transformation. It provides guidance, shapes priorities, directs institutional efforts, and facilitates the achievement of desired outcomes (Rant, 2020). A well-communicated vision motivates stakeholders by creating a shared understanding of future aspirations, thereby encouraging collective effort toward goal attainment. In schools, such vision-driven leadership helps to establish a culture of continuous improvement, innovation, and high expectations for both teachers and learners.

The relationship between leadership and effective schooling has been widely emphasized in educational literature, with many scholars identifying leadership as a central determinant of school success. Leadership is often regarded as the cornerstone of an effective school system because it influences key aspects such as instructional quality, resource management, school climate, and student achievement. Consequently, the presence of strong visionary leadership is critical in fostering school effectiveness and sustaining educational reforms, particularly in contexts that require continuous adaptation such as Competency-Based Education (CBE).

The issues of effective school, visionary leadership practices in the process of curriculum change becomes the basis why this study is to investigate head teachers' visionary leadership practices in the sustainability of CBE in junior schools. From the literature reviewed, it is evident that none has investigated how head teachers' visionary leadership practices influence communicating a compelling and clear vision to support the sustainability of the Competency-Based Education (CBE) in public junior schools. Therefore, this study sought to investigate how head teachers

communicate a compelling vision to support the sustainability of the Competency-Based Education (CBE) in public junior schools in Kisii County, Kenya.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

Effective communication is a fundamental attribute of visionary leaders, as it enables them to clearly articulate their vision and inspire commitment among stakeholders (Candrasari et al., 2023). Such leaders are also attentive listeners who embrace diverse viewpoints and promote open communication within the organization. A central responsibility of visionary leaders is to define the strategic direction of the institution by developing a clear vision, mission, and set of objectives. They ensure that these elements are well communicated to all stakeholders, thereby providing a shared sense of purpose and guiding institutional activities. Furthermore, visionary leaders cultivate a culture of excellence and continuous improvement by motivating educators, learners, and other stakeholders to perform at their highest potential. Through fostering enthusiasm and a collective sense of purpose, they encourage active participation and commitment toward achieving institutional goals (Fullan, 2020).

Leadership occupies a critical strategic position in organizations because it directly influences institutional effectiveness and overall performance outcomes (Ford et al., 2021a). Within the education sector, leadership plays an even more pivotal role, as it determines the direction, adaptability, and responsiveness of institutions to ongoing reforms and environmental changes. In many cases, declining educational standards have been associated with leadership practices that are unable to respond effectively to dynamic policy shifts and emerging instructional demands. When school leaders fail to design and implement adaptive strategies, institutions may struggle to sustain improvements, particularly in reform-oriented systems such as Competency-Based Education (CBE).

One of the major factors contributing to the decline in national education systems is the absence of a clearly articulated strategic vision that positions education as a priority sector for development. A well-formulated vision provides a roadmap that aligns institutional goals with broader national and global educational priorities. Without such a vision, schools may operate without clear direction, leading to fragmented efforts and suboptimal performance. This underscores the argument that institutional vision is not merely symbolic but a functional determinant of educational effectiveness and sustainability.

Vision, therefore, serves as a powerful motivational and organizational tool that drives commitment toward educational excellence. It acts as a unifying force that eliminates ambiguity, inspires stakeholders, strengthens collective purpose, and enhances overall institutional performance. A compelling vision enables schools to mobilize resources, guide decision-making processes, and foster a culture of continuous improvement. In this regard, Ani Marlia et al. (2020a) conceptualize visionary leadership as being anchored on four fundamental pillars: providing strategic direction, acting as an agent of change, serving as a spokesperson for the institution, and facilitating the realization of the vision through capacity building. These dimensions highlight the multifaceted role of school leaders in ensuring that vision is not only developed but also effectively implemented and sustained.

Despite these contributions, existing literature has not sufficiently examined how head teachers operationalize and communicate their vision to support the sustainability of Competency-Based Education (CBE), particularly in public junior schools. Effective communication of vision is essential in ensuring that all stakeholders including teachers, learners, parents, and the wider

community understand, internalize, and actively participate in the realization of institutional goals. The present study, therefore, seeks to address this gap by exploring how head teachers' visionary leadership practices influence the sustainability of CBE implementation.

The concept of visionary leadership has gained prominence in educational discourse since the 1980s, particularly in relation to the evolving roles of school principals. Modern principals are no longer viewed merely as administrators but as transformational leaders who guide instructional processes, solve institutional challenges, and manage resources strategically. In their capacity as instructional leaders, principals are expected to develop, articulate, and communicate a shared vision that aligns with curriculum reforms and promotes student-centered learning (Candrasari et al., 2023).

In the context of Competency-Based Education, visionary leadership becomes even more critical, as the approach requires a shift from traditional content-based instruction to learner-centered, skills-oriented pedagogy. This transition demands leaders who can anticipate change, guide teachers through pedagogical transformation, and sustain long-term implementation efforts. Therefore, head teachers' ability to develop, communicate, and sustain a clear vision is fundamental to the successful and sustainable implementation of CBE in public junior schools.

Before initiating a change process, visionary leaders not only clarify and internalize their beliefs and values but also translate them into organizational goals that reflect the school's aspirations (Hallinger, 2020; Day et al., 2021a). This process often begins with a critical evaluation of personal and institutional goals, followed by determining strategic steps to achieve those (Ng & Ho, 2023). Such reflection requires leaders to assess the school's current reality, envision its future trajectory, and create a vivid picture of its objectives while maintaining unwavering commitment to their achievement (Harris & Jones, 2020; Leithwood et al., 2020).

Facilitating complex discussions especially amid divergent beliefs among stakeholders demands that visionary leaders deeply understand the issues at hand and actively engage in the change process with a constructive and solution-oriented mindset. Such leaders are adept at guiding collaborative dialogue and fostering a shared sense of purpose within the school community. Contemporary research underscores how transformational and distributed leadership models have evolved to prioritize inclusive, participative processes. These approaches enable school communities to jointly articulate objectives, strengthening collective ownership of institutional goals (Teng et al., 2024; Mudavanhu Phebani, 2025). By promoting environments of trust, collaboration, and shared responsibility, principals can activate the organizational capacity for sustainable change. In Ireland, leaders are shaping a combined transformational and distributed leadership model, mobilizing the entire school community toward shared intentions and high performance. In Eswatini, collaborative leadership practices grounded in shared decision-making, teamwork, and co-responsibility were found to enhance the effectiveness of school improvement plans and foster sustainable educational outcomes (Mudavanhu Phebani, 2025). Together, these insights highlight a significant gap: How do head teachers in public junior schools articulate and facilitate a shared vision among stakeholders as part of sustaining Competency-Based Education (CBE)? This remains largely unexplored and was the precise focus this study aimed to address.

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Despite these contributions, existing literature has not sufficiently examined how head teachers operationalize and communicate their vision to support the sustainability of Competency-Based Education (CBE), particularly in public junior schools. Effective communication of vision is essential in ensuring that all stakeholders including teachers, learners, parents, and the wider community understand, internalize, and actively participate in the realization of institutional goals. The present study, therefore, seeks to address this gap by exploring how head teachers' visionary leadership practices influence the sustainability of CBE implementation.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

This study employed a mixed methods research design, which integrates both quantitative and qualitative approaches to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the research problem. According to Bell et al. (2022), mixed methods design is increasingly popular as it allows for the collection of numerical data through quantitative tools and in-depth, contextual insights through qualitative tools. In this study, the researcher collected data using both questionnaires and interview guides, enhancing the validity and reliability of findings.

3.2 Target Population

The target population consisted of public Junior School teachers, heads of public Junior Schools and Sub- County Quality Assurance and Standards Officers (SCQASOs) in Kisii County, Kenya. As per the information obtained from Kisii County Teachers' Service Commission (TSC), the County has a total of 1,925 public junior school teachers, 686 public junior schools with a total population of 686 heads of public junior schools and 11 Sub- County Quality Assurance and Standards Officers corresponding to the 11 Educational Administrative Sub-Counties (Kisii County TSC Director's Office, July, 2024). These groups were selected because of the crucial role they play in the implementation and sustainability of Competency-Based Education (CBE) in public Junior Schools. This information is shown in table 1.

Table 1: Target Population

S/No	Sub-Counties	SCQASOs	Public JSs/HOIs	Public JS Teachers	Total
1.	Etago	1	58	151	210
2.	Gucha	1	47	137	185
3.	Gucha Sout	1	47	145	193
4.	Kenyena	1	77	213	291
5.	Kisii Central	1	76	206	283
6.	Kisii South	1	61	158	220
7.	Kitutu Central	1	66	161	228
8.	Marani	1	70	184	255
9.	Masaba South	1	80	202	283
10.	Nyamache	1	69	252	322
11.	Sameta	1	35	116	152
Total		11	686	1925	2622

3.3 Data collection instrument

Questionnaires were used to gather data from Junior School Teachers (JSTs) and Heads of Institutions. As a data collection instrument, the questionnaire is widely regarded as a flexible and effective tool across various research fields. Its structured design enables uniform data collection, organization, and analysis, making it particularly suitable for quantitative studies (Kuphanga, 2024). The instrument was semi-structured, comprising mainly closed-ended items alongside a few open-ended questions to capture additional insights. The study used an interview schedule for the SCQASOs.

3.4 Sample Size and Sampling Techniques

The study adopted a census technique for the Sub-County Quality Assurance and Standards Officers (SCQASOs), involving all 11 officers since the population was small, accessible, and suitable for eliminating sampling error while achieving the desired level of precision. The Yamane (1967) simplified formula for finite populations was used to determine the sample sizes for Heads of Institutions (HOIs) and JS Teachers at a 7% precision level. For HOIs, with a total population of 686, the sample size was calculated as $n = 157$ distributed proportionately to all sub-counties. As for JS teachers, with a total population of 1,925, the sample size was calculated as $n = 185$ and the sample was also proportionally distributed across the sub-counties. Overall, the sample comprised of 11 (SCQASOs), 157 HOIs and 185 Junior School teachers, hence, a total sample of 353.

3.5 Validity of Research Instruments

Validity and reliability are essential components of sound research, as they determine the accuracy and consistency of data collection instruments (Mohajan, 2017). These constructs are critical in ensuring that the data obtained adequately reflect the phenomena under investigation. In this study, both content validity and face validity were employed to assess the appropriateness of the research instruments.

3.6 Reliability of Research Instruments

The study assessed the reliability of the research instruments using internal consistency measures. Internal consistency evaluates the extent to which different items that are intended to measure the

same construct are related to one another. It is particularly applicable when multiple items are used to capture various dimensions of a single concept, as this enhances the richness and dependability of the data collected. In this study, Cronbach's alpha coefficients were computed for each Likert scale corresponding to the research questions. Cronbach's alpha, as proposed by Cronbach (1951), measures the degree of internal consistency by examining the interrelatedness of items within a scale. The study achieved a reliability threshold of $\alpha \geq 0.70$. This threshold is recommended for educational and social science research to ensure internal consistency of Likert-scale items. High reliability coefficients implied that the instruments consistently measured Heads of Institutions' visionary leadership practices and the sustainability of Competency-Based Education, thereby enhancing the credibility of the study findings.

3.7 Data Analysis

This study employed mixed research methods, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative data analysis. Quantitative data will be analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 24. Descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations summarized the data. Results were presented through tables to enhance clarity and interpretation. Qualitative data was subjected to content analysis with a thematic approach (Wutich, Beresford & Bernard, (2024). Both quantitative and qualitative data were systematically analysed using appropriate techniques to address the study objectives and enhance the credibility of the findings.

4.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Communication of a Clear Vision

Junior School Teachers (JSTs) Response

The respondents were asked to respond to whether the HOIs communicate a clear vision to support sustainability of the (CBE) in public Junior Schools. The analysis was based on respondents' ratings on a five-point Likert scale, with mean (M) and standard deviation (SD) used to determine the level and consistency of the leadership practices exhibited by JS Heads of Institutions. A five-point Likert scale was used where 1= Strongly Disagree 2 =Disagree = 3= Not sure 4= Agree 5=Strongly Agree. The results were tabulated in table 2.

Table 2: *JSTs Responses on Communication of a Clear Vision*

Statement	1f (%)	2 f (%)	3 f (%)	4 f (%)	5 f (%)	M	SD
Develops and communicates a clear vision for the future of CBE	8 (5.5)	20 (13.1)	17 (11.5)	66 (43.7)	39 (26.2)	3.72	1.12
Ensures that the school's academic goals are visibly displayed at strategic points	12 (7.7)	36 (24.0)	16 (10.9)	50 (33.3)	36 (24.0)	3.42	1.21
The vision inspires and motivates all stakeholders to effectively implement CBE	13 (8.7)	27 (18.0)	16 (10.9)	53 (35.0)	41 (27.3)	3.55	1.18
The vision aligns with the CBE competencies and principles	10 (6.6)	31 (20.8)	18 (12.0)	50 (33.3)	41 (27.3)	3.54	1.16
Efficient at managing change and guiding the school community to achieve the vision through example	10 (6.6)	34 (22.4)	20 (13.1)	53 (35.0)	33 (23.0)	3.45	1.17
Establishes a vision for the future of CBE within the school	10 (6.6)	24 (15.8)	15 (9.8)	69 (45.9)	32 (21.9)	3.61	1.09
Outlines benefits and potential impact of CBE on learners and the community	10 (6.6)	25 (16.4)	12 (8.2)	67 (44.8)	36 (24.0)	3.63	1.11
Provides a clear roadmap for success and celebrates achievements	12 (7.7)	37 (24.6)	16 (10.9)	39 (26.2)	46 (30.6)	3.47	1.24

The findings in table 2 indicate that Junior School (JTs) Heads of Institutions generally demonstrated a high level of visionary leadership practices in the implementation of Competency-Based Education (CBE), as reflected by mean scores that ranged from $M = 3.42$ to $M = 3.72$ on a five-point Likert scale. The relatively moderate standard deviation values ($SD = 1.09-1.24$) suggest a reasonable level of consensus among the respondents, with some variation in perceptions across schools. This result is consistent with transformational leadership theory. Transformational leadership emphasizes four key components: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration.

Developing and communicating a clear vision for the future of CBE recorded the highest mean score ($M = 3.72$, $SD = 1.12$), indicating that most respondents perceived school heads as effective in articulating and sharing the direction of CBE implementation. This finding suggests that JS Heads of Institutions play a central role in shaping and communicating institutional vision, which is critical

for successful curriculum reform. The results of this study particularly align with inspirational motivation and idealized influence, which are central to visionary leadership. The high mean score for developing and communicating a clear vision for CBE ($M = 3.72$) directly reflects inspirational motivation, where leaders articulate a compelling vision that inspires and aligns followers toward shared goals. According to Burns' perspective, transformational leaders elevate followers' commitment by creating a sense of purpose. In this study, JS Heads of Institutions effectively communicated the future direction of CBE, demonstrating their role as vision carriers and change agents.

Current research shows that school leaders who effectively communicate a clear vision significantly enhance the implementation of curriculum reforms. For instance, recent studies indicate that visionary leadership positively influences teacher commitment, student outcomes, and institutional adaptability in competency-based education systems (Nguyen et al., 2022b; Wanjala & Odhiambo, 2023). These studies affirm that clarity of vision and consistent communication are critical success factors, which aligns with the high mean scores observed in this study.

Similarly, outlining the benefits and potential impact of CBE on learners and the community ($M = 3.63$, $SD = 1.11$) and establishing a vision for the future of CBE within the school ($M = 3.61$, $SD = 1.09$) were rated highly. The relatively low SD values for these items indicate consistency in respondents' views, implying that these visionary practices are commonly observed across junior schools in Kisii County. The strong ratings for outlining the benefits and impact of CBE ($M = 3.63$) and establishing a school-based vision for CBE ($M = 3.61$) reinforce the idea that leaders are not only creating vision but also embedding meaning and relevance, which is a key aspect of Bass and Avolio's expansion of transformational leadership. These practices show that school heads are actively shaping perceptions and fostering buy-in among stakeholders an essential process in curriculum reform.

The alignment of the school vision with CBE competencies and principles also recorded a high mean score ($M = 3.54$, $SD = 1.16$), suggesting that JS Heads of Institutions largely ensure coherence between institutional goals and the core tenets of CBE. Moreover, the alignment of school vision with CBE principles ($M = 3.54$) reflects strategic visioning, a hallmark of transformational leadership, where leaders ensure coherence between institutional goals and broader educational reforms. This alignment is critical in ensuring that vision is not merely rhetorical but operationalized within school practices. A study by Muli and Kimathi (2021) found that Kenyan school heads who aligned institutional vision with CBC principles reported smoother implementation and higher teacher engagement. This directly supports the current finding ($M = 3.54$), demonstrating that such alignment is already being practiced in Kisii County. Likewise, inspiring and motivating stakeholders to effectively implement CBE achieved a comparable mean ($M = 3.55$, $SD = 1.18$), indicating that leadership motivation is a notable strength, albeit with moderate variability in stakeholder experiences. The finding that leaders inspire and motivate stakeholders ($M = 3.55$) further supports the transformational leadership dimension of idealized influence, where leaders act as role models who energize and mobilize others. This is consistent with Downton's early conceptualization of leadership as a relationship that transforms both leaders and followers toward higher levels of motivation and morality. Furthermore, the role of motivational leadership in driving educational change is well documented. According to Komba et al. (2022), leaders who inspire and involve stakeholders foster a collaborative culture that enhances curriculum uptake. This resonates with the finding that JS Heads of Institutions effectively motivate

stakeholders ($M = 3.55$), although the moderate variability suggests room for strengthening consistency.

Managing change and guiding the school community through example recorded a moderate-to-high mean score ($M = 3.45$, $SD = 1.17$), while ensuring that academic goals are visibly displayed at strategic points recorded the lowest mean score ($M = 3.42$, $SD = 1.21$). Although these practices were still rated above the scale midpoint, the slightly lower means and relatively higher SD values suggest that these aspects of visionary leadership are less consistently implemented across schools. However, slightly lower mean scores in areas such as managing change through example ($M = 3.45$) and celebrating achievements ($M = 3.47$) suggest partial gaps in idealized influence and individualized consideration. Transformational leadership requires leaders to model change consistently and recognize individual and collective contributions. The variability (higher SD values) indicates that while visionary practices are present, their execution is uneven across schools.

Providing a clear roadmap for success and celebrating achievements recorded a mean score of $M = 3.47$ ($SD = 1.24$), indicating moderate agreement among respondents. The higher standard deviation for this item suggests greater variation in how school heads recognize milestones and celebrate success, possibly reflecting differences in school culture and leadership styles. However, the study's findings regarding less consistent practices in celebrating achievements and managing change are also supported by recent literature. For example, Oduro and Andoh (2020) observed that while many school leaders demonstrate strong vision-setting abilities, they often underutilize recognition and reinforcement strategies, which are essential for sustaining long-term change. This suggests that visionary leadership, while present, may not be fully comprehensive in practice.

4.2 Head of Institution (HOIs) Response

The findings on vision communication practices of Junior School teachers in relation to the implementation of Competency-Based Education (CBE), the analysis focused on respondents' ratings across seven statements measured on a five-point Likert scale, with the mean (M) used to determine the level of practice and the standard deviation (SD) used to assess the degree of consensus among respondents. The results were recorded in table 3

Table 3: *HOIs Response on Communication a Clear Vision*

Statement	1 f (%)	2 f (%)	3 f (%)	4 f (%)	5 f (%)	M	SD
The head teacher regularly shares the school's vision related to CBE with staff and learners	2 (1.3)	6 (4.0)	16 (10.7)	81 (54.0)	45 (30.0)	4.07	0.86
The school's vision for CBE is clearly documented and visibly displayed	4 (2.7)	12 (8.0)	45 (30.0)	42 (28.0)	47 (31.3)	3.77	1.02
Teachers and learners are involved in refining the school vision related to CBE	1 (0.7)	12 (8.0)	38 (25.3)	61 (40.7)	38 (25.3)	3.82	0.93
The head teacher effectively communicates long-term goals of CBE to all stakeholders	1 (0.7)	12 (8.0)	27 (18.0)	68 (45.3)	42 (28.0)	3.92	0.94
A clear vision provides direction and helps align efforts towards a common goal	0 (0.0)	3 (2.0)	30 (20.0)	67 (44.7)	50 (33.3)	4.09	0.78
The vision is realistic, achievable, and motivating for all stakeholders	0 (0.0)	10 (6.7)	21 (14.0)	76 (50.7)	43 (28.7)	4.02	0.88
Actively listens to learners', teachers', and parents' issues related to CBE implementation	0 (0.0)	6 (4.0)	20 (13.3)	84 (56.0)	40 (26.7)	4.06	0.81

The results in table 3, reveals that JS Heads of Institutions demonstrated a high to very high level of vision communication practices, with mean scores ranging from $M = 3.77$ to $M = 4.09$. The relatively low standard deviation values ($SD = 0.78-1.02$) suggest a high level of agreement among respondents, indicating consistency in how these leadership practices are perceived across junior schools. The high to very high mean scores ($M = 3.77-4.09$) for vision communication practices indicate that JS Heads of Institutions are effectively practicing inspirational motivation, a core dimension of transformational leadership. Research by Nguyen et al. (2022a) demonstrates that transformational leadership practices particularly vision clarity and communications are strongly associated with improved organizational coherence and student outcomes. The current finding that a clear vision aligns efforts ($M = 4.09$) confirms this relationship, showing that vision clarity is central to coordinating CBE implementation.

Sharing the school's vision related to CBE with staff and learners recorded a high mean score ($M = 4.07$, $SD = 0.86$), suggesting that most JS Heads of Institutions regularly communicate the CBE vision to the school community. Furthermore, the importance of active listening and inclusive communication is highlighted in contemporary educational leadership research. A study by Muli and Kimathi (2021) found that school leaders who maintain open communication channels with

teachers, learners, and parents experience fewer implementation challenges and greater acceptance of CBC reforms. This supports the strong performance in stakeholder listening ($M = 4.06$) observed in this study. The finding that leaders share the school's vision related to CBE with staff and learners ($M = 4.07$) demonstrates their ability to clearly articulate goals and align stakeholders. According to Burns, transformational leaders mobilize followers by creating a shared sense of purpose, which is evident in the consistent communication practices reported in this study. Similarly, actively listening to learners', teachers', and parents' concerns regarding CBE implementation yielded a mean of $M = 4.06$ ($SD = 0.81$), reflecting strong stakeholder engagement and open communication practices. Furthermore, the importance of active listening and inclusive communication is highlighted in contemporary educational leadership research. A study by Muli and Kimathi (2021) found that school leaders who maintain open communication channels with teachers, learners, and parents experience fewer implementation challenges and greater acceptance of CBC reforms. This supports the strong performance in stakeholder listening ($M = 4.06$) observed in this study.

The findings are strongly supported by recent literature, which underscores the importance of vision communication in educational leadership and curriculum reform. Recent studies highlight that clear and consistent communication of school vision significantly improves the implementation of competency-based education. For example, Wanjala and Odhiambo (2023) found that school leaders who frequently communicate institutional goals enhance teacher alignment and instructional effectiveness. This directly supports the high mean scores for vision sharing ($M = 4.07$) and communication of long-term goals ($M = 3.92$) in this study.

The perception that a clear vision provides direction and aligns efforts toward a common goal recorded the highest mean score ($M = 4.09$, $SD = 0.78$). The low SD value for this item indicates strong consensus among respondents, underscoring the central role of vision clarity in coordinating school-wide efforts during CBE implementation. The highest-rated item a clear vision provides direction and aligns efforts toward a common goal ($M = 4.09$) directly reflects the theoretical foundation of transformational leadership. Bass and Avolio emphasize that effective leaders create clarity of purpose, which enhances coordination and organizational performance. The strong consensus (low $SD = 0.78$) further suggests that vision clarity is widely recognized as a critical driver of successful CBE implementation.

Involving teachers and learners in refining the school vision related to CBE also recorded a high mean ($M = 3.82$, $SD = 0.93$), suggesting participatory leadership practices, though with slightly more variability in responses. Likewise, effective communication of long-term CBE goals to all stakeholders recorded a mean of $M = 3.92$ ($SD = 0.94$), indicating generally positive perceptions with moderate variation. The finding that JS Heads actively listen to learners', teachers', and parents' concerns ($M = 4.06$) highlights the dimension of individualized consideration, where leaders value stakeholder input and foster inclusive decision-making. This participatory approach strengthens trust and commitment, aligning with Downton's early view of leadership as a relational and transformative process. Similarly, involving teachers and learners in refining the school vision ($M = 3.82$) reflects intellectual stimulation, as leaders encourage collaboration and innovation in shaping the vision. This participatory element ensures that the vision is not imposed but co-constructed, enhancing ownership and sustainability of CBE reforms. The study's findings on stakeholder engagement and participatory leadership are also consistent with recent scholarship. Komba et al. (2022) emphasize that involving teachers and learners in decision-making enhances ownership and commitment to curriculum reforms. This aligns with the finding that stakeholders are

actively involved in refining the school vision ($M = 3.82$), although the moderate variation suggests that participation levels differ across schools.

The documentation and visible display of the school's CBE vision recorded the lowest mean score ($M = 3.77$, $SD = 1.02$). Although still within the high practice range, the comparatively higher SD suggests that this practice is less uniformly implemented across schools, possibly due to differences in institutional priorities or resource availability. The relatively lower, though still high, mean score for documentation and visible display of the school's CBE vision ($M = 3.77$) suggests a gap in translating communicated vision into tangible institutional artifacts. From a transformational leadership perspective, this points to a partial limitation in idealized influence, where leaders are expected to model and institutionalize values consistently. The higher variability ($SD = 1.02$) indicates that while communication is strong, formal reinforcement mechanisms differ across schools. However, the relatively lower emphasis on documenting and visibly displaying the vision is also echoed in recent literature. Oduro and Andoh (2020) assert that while leaders often excel in verbal communication of vision, they may neglect formal institutionalization practices such as documentation and visual reinforcement. This gap can affect the long-term sustainability of reforms, suggesting an area for improvement in the current study context.

The mean and standard deviation findings demonstrate that JS Heads of Institutions in Kisii County exhibit strong vision communication practices that support the implementation of CBE. The low variability across most items suggests shared leadership approaches, while areas with relatively higher SD values point to opportunities for strengthening consistency in documenting and visibly reinforcing the school vision.

The interview conducted described varied approaches used by Heads of Institutions (HOIs) to articulate and communicate their vision for Competency-Based Education (CBE) implementation to stakeholders. Using thematic analysis procedures (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Creswell & Poth, 2018), three themes emerged: formal communication channels, parent and community engagement, and gaps in vision articulation.

Formal communication channels were reported in most schools. Some respondents noted that HOIs communicated their vision through strategically displayed vision statements, newsletters, WhatsApp groups, and Annual General Meetings (R2, R5). Others stated that HOIs communicated vision during Board of Management (BOM) meetings, staff meetings, and through institutional assessments (R3, R6). Such methods reflect recommended leadership practices in which administrators use multiple communication platforms to reinforce strategic direction (Hallinger & Heck, 2010).

A second theme centered on parent and community engagement. Respondents indicated that HOIs often shared aspects of their CBE vision during parents' meetings, class conferences, or parental engagement forums (R3, R6, R7, R8, R9). Some schools were said to integrate CBE principles such as hands-on learning into classroom activities, making the vision observable to stakeholders during school visits (R2). This aligns with literature emphasizing the importance of engaging parents and communities to support curriculum reforms (Hargreaves & O'Connor, 2018).

Despite these efforts, a third theme highlighted gaps in vision articulation. Most respondents observed that many schools did not display their vision, did not align their statements with CBE principles, or lacked clear values to guide implementation (R1, R4). Some HOIs were described as having "no vision to communicate," often due to limited leadership capacity or incomplete understanding of CBE (R6, R9). In certain cases, schools relied on external support for example, by

requesting assistance from Sub-County Quality Assurance and Standards Officers (SCQASO) to help clarify or communicate their vision (R10). These findings reflect research suggesting that leadership capacity is a critical determinant of whether school visions are effectively communicated and enacted (Hall & Hord, 2020; Fullan, 2016).

5.0 CONCLUSIONS

The study established that visionary leadership practices of Heads of Institutions (HOIs) play a crucial role in ensuring the sustainability of the Competency-Based Education (CBE) curriculum. One of the key conclusions drawn from the findings is that effective communication of a shared vision by HOIs is fundamental for sustaining CBE implementation. When school leaders clearly articulate the goals, expectations, and benefits of the competency-based curriculum, teachers and learners are better able to understand their roles in achieving these objectives. Consistent and inclusive communication creates a sense of ownership among stakeholders, including teachers, learners, and other members of the school community. As a result, engagement levels increase because individuals feel that they are part of the change process rather than passive recipients of policy directives. Therefore, schools where HOIs communicate the institutional vision effectively are more likely to experience smooth implementation and long-term sustainability of CBE.

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