

# School Management Practices and their Influence on Implementation of Competence Based Curriculum in Public Primary Schools, Lang'ata Sub County, Nairobi Kenya

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## ABSTRACT

In 2017, Kenyan government through the ministry of education and Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD) embarked on major reforms in education. These reforms aimed at introducing Competency Based Curriculum (CBC) to replace the 8-4-4 which was in operation since 1985. CBC went through need assessment and piloting was done in 2017 at grade three before implementation was rolled out in 2018. This move was projected to having a system that was aligned to global changes and new universal trends at the same time being compliant with 2010 Kenyan constitution. Competence Based Curriculum is a system of education which aims at equipping learners with core competencies and core values. Learners compete with themselves and the teacher is a facilitator of learning. This is opposed to exam oriented system of learning which encourages rote learning. The success of this curriculum depends on so many aspects among them the role played by school management. This study sought to establish how supervision of learning programs as a managerial practice influences implementation of Competence Based Curriculum in Lang'ata sub county, Nairobi Kenya. The researcher used Gross curriculum implementation theory of 1971. The study targeted 270 respondents which included 248 teachers, 11 head teachers and 11 curriculum coordinators all drawn from 11 public primary school in Lang'ata sub-county, Nairobi. There were six sampled schools which translated to 6 head teachers, 6 curriculum coordinators and 55 teachers. Mixed methodology was used combined with descriptive survey design. Data collection was through administration of questionnaires and observation checklists. Published research on complacency of school management has revealed some gaps in supervision of educators which has impacted implementation of CBC. Supervision as a managerial practice ensures that teachers do the right thing in implementation of CBC. Supervision is purely an initiative by school management which pushes educators to be 'hands on' in their professional conduct. Data analysis was done using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 28. Interpretation revealed that most school managers are not making proper follow up in their supervisory roles which has affected learners' acquisition of core competencies and core values. A small percentage of the head teachers (16.7%) ensured learners had portfolio. It is also evident that staff meetings served as the major method of conveying information in most institutions (93%). This was confirmed through observation checklists and questionnaires administered. Lack of adequate supervision created huge gaps in; preparation of professional documents, sampling of learners books, monitoring punctuality among others. This study therefore recommends some measures like; having proper supervisory policy by the Ministry of Education and Teachers Service Commission where school heads are kept updated on their roles and responsibilities as supervisors.

**Keywords:** Competence, Curriculum, implementation, supervision, management, influence

## INTRODUCTION

Education serves as a tool through which humanity gets empowered by gaining knowledge, skills and

attitude. Many people across the world have come up with a system of responding to needs and changes in dynamics. This has seen educational reforms that serve as vehicles to address a certain challenge or future projections. In this changing world, people can only remain relevant when they are consistent with current trends and responding to current and projected demands (Phillip, 2004).

Morris (2016) posits that a competence based system of education dwells on what a learner is able to do and at their own pace. The teacher's role is that of facilitation and his/her task is to help the learner unleash full potential through a systematic and structured mode of pedagogy. The system of education which was inherited from colonial masters in Kenya was in place for a period spanning to twenty two years before being replaced by 8-4-4 system in 1985. This system of education saw several modifications through commissions but still failed to address many emerging issues. Colonial masters left 7-4-2-3 ( 7 years in primary, 4 years in ordinary levels, 2 years in advanced levels and 3 years in the university ) which was later replaced by 8-4-4 (8 years in primary, 4 years in secondary and four years in university) system. Despite these changes, the system was still mutilated along the way and it was purely exam oriented which encouraged rote learning in schools (Were, 2009). It was seen as a conduit or conveyor belt of a final product that was not independent minded.

Competence Based Curriculum was an initiative pegged on need assessment done across the 47 counties in Kenya and its introduction was aimed at moulding a holistic learner who is ethical, engaged and empowered. This was also to equip learners with seven core competencies; self-efficacy, learning to learn, digital literacy, communication and collaboration, critical thinking and problem solving, imagination and creativity and citizenship. Further, some core values aimed to be acquired by the learners include; love, patriotism, responsibility, unity, respect, peace, social justice and integrity. Subjects were replaced with learning areas and ranking was replaced with assessment levels with: 4-exceeding expectations, 3-meeting expectations, 2- approaching expectations and 1- below expectations. Assessment rubrics were introduced to replace mean scores and report forms (Kilile, 2019).

In view of the above background, it is clear that this is a learning system that needs serious supervision in order to ensure it meets desired outcomes. It is through supervision that we can ensure quality when the prescribed blueprint is followed. Therefore, we can see that school management has a big role in ensuring all these components of CBC are in sync and desired outcomes are achieved. This paper therefore sought to explore the influence of supervision by school management on implementation of competence based curriculum

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Supervision is always aimed at pushing an agenda and ensuring that things are done in the correct manner and objectives achieved. School managers give direction on how things should be carried out which ensures desired outcomes are experienced. Supervision is distinguished from inspection in that it strives to correct the supervisee on areas they could be doing wrong. Inspection is pegged on fault finding which does not motivate supervisee in terms of improving and getting recognised for good performance (Enamul 2020). Supervision of educators is supposed to be a continuous process with no prescribed schedule. Unlike supervision, inspection is periodic and it follows a certain schedule. School management is supposed to monitor and coach besides monitoring teachers. A good manager should be the one who motivates, trains, mentors and identifies strengths and weaknesses of the supervisee (Ongwari, 2018).

Supervisory roles are not to be taken lightly because the school management assesses and initiates school based evaluation which tends to annoy the ones being supervised. The supervisee will always tend to drift away from their supervisors. This collaboration is to be enhanced because it is the one that leads to effective implementation of curriculum. This is based on the fact that supervision of CBC programmes is purely

pegged on constructive feedback after observation. This is followed by mechanisms to help improve on such areas. Constant supervision ensures that facilitation is done timely and in the desired manner by giving clear guidance and proper direction. Supervision deviates from inspection in its manner of application. This is because unlike inspection which is done periodically, supervision is done continuously with an aim of improving operations in running of institutions (Levin,2016).

Supervision is supposed to identify any need in the system and come up with a strategy to solve or improve them. This is done after critical analysis and developing a framework on solving such an issue. Informed by these needs, the management should come up with enhancement procedures and follow up activities. School management plays a pivotal role in enhancing proper implementation of Competence Based Curriculum despite challenges like; time and financial constraints and slow response from the government and other sponsors. Supervision is better understood as a way in which leadership boosts attainment of set goals and objectives coupled with professional growth (Moshia, 2016).

Educational reforms in Kenya have faced numerous challenges one of them being supervision mechanisms. Through the inspectorate of quality assurance, programmes have been initiated but consistency at school level has been wanting. These efforts had been boosted by defunct Teacher Advisory Centre (TAC) tutors later to be replaced by Curriculum Support Officers (CSO) at zonal level. The main bodies in this, Teachers Service Commission (TSC) and Ministry of Education (MOE) have been seen to make such efforts in collaboration with other officers on ground. Many scholars who have explored this area of supervision have cited many gaps which exist as a result of professional discord between school managers and officers from these two bodies. The school heads tend to slacken as soon as monitoring by the officers is complete and reports written. Such heads should have capacity to ensure that members who are under them are fully organised and equipped (Shatzer, 2013).

The school head should also delegate responsibilities to deputy head teachers and curriculum coordinators. This creates efficiency in the whole exercise as opposed to a centralised system of operation. It does not matter how much the government invests both in policies and resources but this will be futile if proper supervision is not done at school level. Proper supervision translates to proper curriculum implementation (Martin, 2010).

### **Theoretical framework**

This paper was anchored on Gross Curriculum Implementation Theory of 1971. Gross Theory states that for a successful curriculum implementation, there has to be three major components; teacher's competence, sound use of support materials and clarity by the implementor. This theory was insync with this study because CBC as a curriculum needs the three components for its implementation to be successful. Further, Gross states that an implementer of a curriculum must be conversant with learning area content matter of this curriculum and proper pedagogies.

CBC being a new curriculum requires that school management breaks it down in its simplest form to enable all other stakeholders

grasp the concept. One cannot supervise something that they are not fully conversant with and therefore, school managers have no option in dissection of CBC content. In addition, supervisory roles demand that a supervisor cannot oversee something s/he is not conversant with. This ranges from preparation of professional documents to content delivery. This theory gives school heads the mandate to supervise junior staff in collaboration with other managerial post holders and advise on the required mode of curriculum implementation.

There can never be curriculum implementation without looking at areas like; school related factors which

include staffing, professional policy to guide the programme and in-service training sessions. Educators’ attitude cannot be left out because this is the final stage of curriculum implementation. This determines how content delivery and time management are handled as learners are taken care of (Orodho 2009).

Being a new concept in Kenya, CBC should be executed with precision in order to solve emerging problems before systems are fully rolled out. This means a school head should be conversant with functioning of Basic Education Curriculum Framework (BECF). First-hand information by school management comes in as a boost to efficiency in the way curriculum implementation is handled.

## METHODOLOGY

### Population and sampling techniques& procedures

This study targeted 270 respondents across all 11 schools found in Lang’ata Sub county comprising; 11 head teachers, 11 curriculum

Coordinators and 248 teachers. The targeted respondents were seen as instrumental in implementation of CBC and from management perspective, the researcher was keen on both the supervisor and supervisee. Sample selection was done by simple stratified method which was basically on the two social classes found in Lang’ata Sub County. This was to obtain a sample of six schools with head teachers of these sampled schools becoming first respondents by default. Selection of teachers was through random sampling in the six sampled schools giving a total of 55 teachers.

### Research Design and data collection

This study used mixed methodology since the researcher was keen on both qualitative and quantitative data. The researcher further did triangulation of data based on the fact that collection was done from different areas and using different research instruments. Data collection was done through administration of questionnaires and observation checklists. Descriptive survey was used which enabled the researcher collect data from school heads, curriculum coordinators and classroom teachers.

**Table 1: Public Primary Schools in Lang’ata Sub County**

	School	Teachers	Head teachers	Curriculum coordinators
1	Joash Olum Primary School	20	1	1
2	Karen C Primary School	21	1	1
3	Kongoni Primary School	23	1	1
4	Lang’ata Barracks Primary School	26	1	1
5	Lang’ata Road Primary School	30	1	1
6	Lang’ata West Primary School	24	1	1
7	Madaraka Primary School	22	1	1
8	Ngei Primary School	18	1	1
9	Ngong Forest Primary School	21	1	1
10	St. Mary’s Karen Primary School	25	1	1
11	Uhuru Gardens Primary School	18	1	1
		248	11	11

Source: Teachers’ Service Commission (TSC) 2023

**Table 2: Sample Population**

Population category	Population targeted	Size of the sample	Percentage
Head teachers	11	6	8.9
Curriculum coordinators	11	6	8.9
Teachers	248	55	82.2
<b>Totals</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Researcher 2023

### Data analysis

The researcher used descriptive statistics to summarize the data by use of frequency and percentages. Collected data was examined, coded and classified for ease in analysis before presenting the findings in tables, charts and graphical illustrations. Descriptive statistics shows and summarizes basic features of a set of data.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

School management is a combination of many people who are coordinated by school heads. The school head is supposed to oversee programs and ensure that educators do the right thing professionally. Samuel Hall cites professional supervision as a component that creates the right environment for CBC implementation, based on mentoring and coaching. Structured and objective supervision has been linked to improved academic performance and acquisition of core competencies and core values. He draws a comparison and contrast between private run schools with public schools and concludes that private institutions have well-structured supervision mechanisms. Supervision encompasses many things and this paper considers a number of them. Professional documents have to be kept in any learning institution and this is an indicator of how school management is running the institution. The table below shows how respondents rated availability of such documents in their institutions.

**Table 3: Availability of professional documents**

Document	Head teachers		Curriculum coordinators		Teachers	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
Staff clocking	6	100	6	100	23	41.8
Lesson attendance sheets	1	16.7	2	33.3	18	32.7
Staff leave out	2	33.3	3	50	20	36.4
Schemes of work	6	100	5	83.3	55	100
Lesson plans	6	100	2	33.3	40	72.7
Record of work	3	50	1	16.7	32	58.2
Progress record	4	66.7	3	50	22	40
Learners' portfolio	1	16.7	2	33.3	20	36.4
<b>Totals</b>	<b>29</b>		<b>24</b>		<b>230</b>	

F = frequency

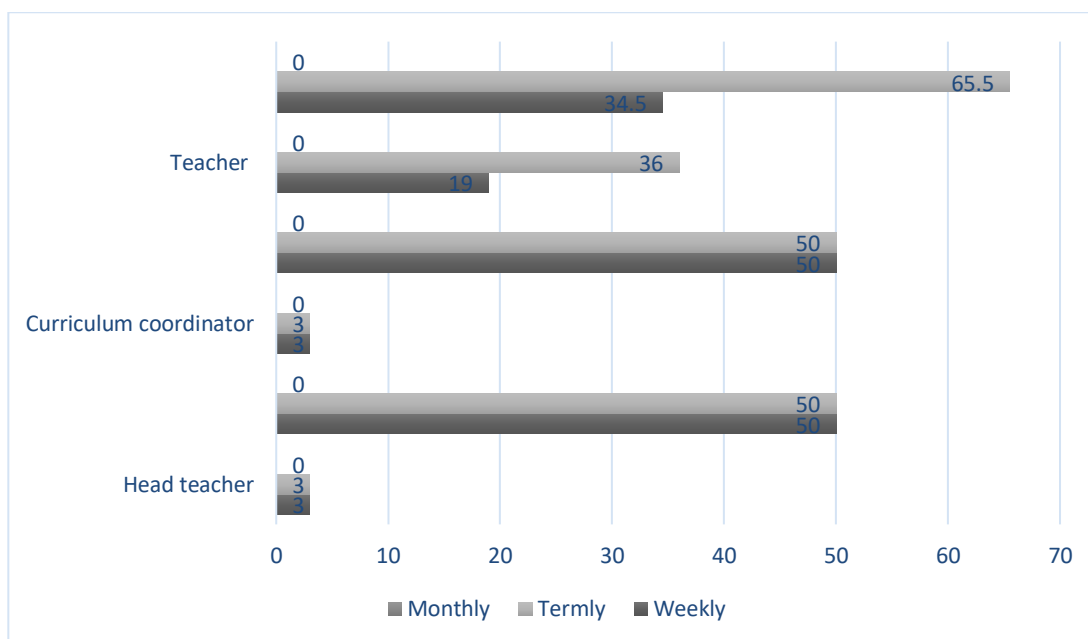
Source: Researcher 2023

This paper used questionnaires and observation checklist to ascertain availability of such documents. The finding was that most schools were making efforts to prepare professional documents. However, it was clear

that more emphasis was put on the very basic ones like schemes of work, lesson plans and staff clocking in mechanisms. Other essential documents like records of work covered, learners’ progress, lesson plans and learners’ portfolio were conspicuously missing.

Sampling of learners’ exercise books is another managerial practice because it gives a clear picture of what learners are receiving, bearing in mind they are the main consumers of this curriculum. Through sampling of these books, school management can tell whether indeed there is learner involvement in the process. This aspect of sampling books was divided into termly, monthly and weekly. 50% of the sampled school heads and curriculum coordinators responded by indicating weekly and termly sampling. 34.5% of the sampled teachers responded on weekly while 65.5% indicated a termly sampling of books. This frequency was realistic based on the fact that most schools had high enrolment due to free primary education policy of 2012. Figure 1 shows how the sampled schools were handling this routine exercise.

**Figure 1: Routine Sampling of learners’ exercise books**



**Source: Researcher 2023**

School management is tasked with daily running and coordination of schools by performing various tasks. The researcher was keen on checking how daily monitoring was done by school heads. Table 4 shows that most administrators are keen on staff briefings/meeting, monitoring punctuality by teachers in attendance of lessons and reporting for work. 88% of sampled school heads have no clear mechanism on checking how content is being delivered in classes. This is a big problem because CBC being a new curriculum needs close monitoring by immediate supervisors. Despite the fact that Teachers Service Commission (TSC) has introduced Teacher Performance Appraisal Development (TPAD), the school head should oversee lesson observation and lesson attendance which enhance proper feedback. TPAD is a method of teacher appraisal where the appraisee and the appraiser use a monitoring tool throughout the term. The tool is usually filled online and submitted for perusal by Sub-county TSC officers. This is made available (online) for future reference if need arises.

Table 4 shows that most administrators put emphasis on staff briefings/meetings monitoring punctuality both in reporting to work and attending to learners. CBC being in its initial stages of implementation needs close monitoring and supervision. Table 4 shows that more than 88% of the head teachers have no mechanisms of monitoring how this content is being disseminated in classes. This can be seen as a setback

to effective implementation of CBC since the supervisor is not hands on in matters coaching and mentoring. Ongwari (2018) says that a supervisor has responsibility of recognizing both the strengths and weaknesses of the one being supervised and this can only be effective through interaction in content delivery. TSC has also come up with TPAD system and there is a slot for lesson observation where ratings and awarding of marks is enhanced. The school management monitors teaching learning encounter in relation to CBC implementation, gives constructive feedback, conducts lesson observation and suggests appropriate measure on the improvement in different areas.

Ondimu (2018) explains that every school head should strive to streamline operations relating to pedagogy. Moreover, the school head should ensure that the school aims goals and objectives are well spelt out to every member of staff.

**Table 4: Head teachers’ response on whether supervision affects implementation of CBC**

ROUTINE	SA		A		NS		D		SD	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Monitoring teachers clocking in and out	2	33.3	2	33.3	2	33.3	–	–	–	–
Monitoring teachers punctuality in lessons	3	50	2	33.3	–	–	1	26.7	–	–
Checking teachers professional documents	1	16.7	2	33.3	3	50	–	–	–	–
Monitoring content delivery by teachers	1	16.7	–	–	2	33.3	3	50	–	–
Organizing constant meetings/briefings	3	50	2	33.3	1	16.7	–	–	–	–

SA- Strongly Agree, A-Agree, NS-Not Sure, D-Disagree, SD-Strongly Disagree

Source: Researcher 2023

Proper communication is another pivotal practice which boosts holistic performance approach as a managerial duty. Clear communication is key in an institution which is keen on reaping maximally from its human resource. The choice made on mode of communication depends on different institution and urgency of such messages. The widely used mode of communication is staff meeting probably because it is the conventional mode which is convenient and boosts interaction. Staff meeting was rated highly (93%) followed by social media (75%) and circulars & internal memo (67%). In addition to these modes, there exists other modes like noticeboards and school assembly which are not often used. This can be linked to Table 5 where 93% is in support of organizing staff meetings as a routine managerial practice. Mbiti (1999) cites that communication is a bridge that makes people understand one another in any institution.

**Table 5: Response on mode of communication used by school management**

Mode	Yes	%	No	%	total
Circulars & internal memo	44	67	23	33	100
Notice board	17	25	50	75	100
School assembly	27	40	40	60	100
Staff meeting	62	93	7	7	100
Social media	50	75	17	25	100
Others	20	30	40	70	100

Source: Researcher 2023

CBC aims at imparting competencies and core values to learners as an indicator of achieved learning

outcomes. The researcher wanted to find out the impact of supervision on attainment of competencies. These responses were given by classroom teachers since they are the ones who interact with learners in class. Based on available CBC assessment rubrics, on a scale of 1-4, any learner who scores 4 or 3 is rated as exceeding expectation and meeting expectation respectively. A score of 1 or 2 is

below expectation and meeting expectation respectively. Learning to learn 98%, self-efficacy 98%, critical thinking and problem solving (80%), communication and collaboration (78%) responses indicate that supervision boosts acquisition of competencies which then influences implementation of CBC. This is with an exception of digital literacy which can be as a result of lack of computer devices in most public schools. This can be deduced from tabulation in table 5.

**Table 5: Teachers response on the outcome of supervision of learning programs on acquisition of core competencies**

Competency	Exceeding expectation		Meeting expectation		Approaching expectation		Below expectation	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	f	%
Learning to learn	23	42	31	56	1	2	–	–
Self-efficacy	22	40	32	58	1	2	–	–
Digital literacy	2	4	–	–	35	63	18	33
Communication and collaboration	20	36	23	42	12	22	–	–
Critical thinking & problem solving	17	31	27	49	11	20	–	–
Creativity and imagination	10	18	28	51	17	31	–	–
Citizenship	11	20	30	55	14	25		

Source: Researcher 2023

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the discussed findings from analyzed data, the researcher found out that most head teachers had amassed enough experience and had all what it takes to manage learning institutions. However, some important professional documents like learners’ portfolio were missing. This revealed a huge lacuna in supervision of school activities. This was revealed in all those missing teacher professional documents. This study recommends that Teachers’ Service Commission and Ministry of Education should come up with proper guidelines on how school management should oversee day to day running of schools. The government should not slacken in its policy formulation on how head teachers are supposed to monitor and supervise school activities. At sub county level, those officers should make keen follow ups on the same to keep school management afloat. The school managers should also sign a performance contract committing themselves to such serious supervisory roles and expectations from higher authorities

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