Parental Involvement in the Implementation of Competency-Based Curriculum

Brenda Amagove., Dr.Charity Limboro and Dr. Wilfrida Itolondo

Department of Educational Management, Policy and Curriculum Studies, Kenyatta University

ABSTRACT

Numerous studies have been conducted on competency-based curriculum (CBC), but fewer have focused on parental involvement in its implementation. This study aimed to assess the roles of parents in CBC implementation, identifying barriers to effective involvement and proposing strategies for improvement. The research was guided by the following objectives: to examine parental provision of learning resources to children; to determine parental involvement in monitoring and guiding children to complete homework; and to ascertain whether parents provided a conducive atmosphere for learning to occur among children in primary schools in Kakamega county. A descriptive research design was employed in this study. The target population included 50 primary schools, 245 class teachers, 3190 grade six learners, and 245 parents in Kakamega County, Kenya. The sample size was 447, consisting of 8 primary schools, 49 class teachers, 341 grade six learners, and 49 parents. Respondents were sampled through simple random and stratified sampling procedures. The researcher created Likert scale questionnaires and interview schedules which were used for data collection. A pilot study was conducted in two schools. Content validity was used to determine the instruments' validity, while reliability was determined using Pearson product-moment correlation. Data were analyzed both qualitatively and quantitatively according to the research objectives. Quantitative analysis used descriptive statistics (frequencies and mean) to analyze data. The qualitative data, on the other hand, were examined thematically as per the study's objectives. The study's findings revealed that parental involvement in the CBC implementation in Kakamega County was significantly influenced by various factors. It was found that while some parents provided adequate learning resources and created conducive learning environments, others faced barriers such as limited financial resources and lack of awareness regarding their roles. Additionally, the study showed that parental guidance and monitoring of homework completion was consistent, with parents actively engaging in children's studies. The conclusion drawn from the study indicated that for effective CBC implementation, there needed to be increased parental awareness and involvement, particularly in monitoring and providing learning resources. The study recommended the development of targeted sensitization programs to educate parents about their critical roles, the establishment of community support systems to address financial barriers, and regular workshops to equip parents with skills necessary for supporting their children's education. These strategies were deemed essential to enhance parental engagement and ensure the successful implementation of the CBC in primary schools.

BACKGROUND TO STUDY

Education is a pivotal driver for economic and social progress globally. Countries with robust educational systems have significantly advanced economically and technologically (Momanyi & Rop, 2020). Consequently, regular curriculum reviews are necessary to align education with contemporary societal needs. Curriculum reform, particularly shifting from content-centered to competency-based curricula, aims to address political, social, and economic challenges by fostering a well-educated society and enhancing labor market competitiveness (Mulenga & Kabombwe, 2019).

Historically, in the mid-1970s, several European countries, including the United Kingdom, experienced an

economic crisis that exposed deficiencies in educational outcomes, particularly fundamental skills, leading to high unemployment among school-leavers (Mulenga & Kabombwe, 2019). This spurred a policy shift towards vocational education in the 1980s and 1990s, emphasizing practical application and relevance.

In South Africa, competency-based curriculum (CBC) was implemented in 1998 to address the shortage of technical skills, a model later adopted by countries like Zambia and Rwanda (Mulenga & Kabombwe, 2019). One challenge faced by African nations in CBC implementation is inadequate parental involvement in school activities (Amunga, 2020). Rwanda transitioned to CBC in 2015, emphasizing practical skills and critical thinking (Nsengimana, 2020).

Kenya officially adopted CBC in December 2017, spearheaded by Professor Douglas Odhiambo and the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD), as part of educational reforms aligned with the 2010 constitution and Vision 2030. A key principle of Kenya's CBC is empowering parents to nurture learners' potential (KICD, 2019). This involves providing parents with training sessions to support their child's development effectively.

Globally, parental involvement is recognized as crucial for academic and socio-emotional growth (Lara & Saracostti, 2019). Countries like Chile and Canada have policies encouraging parental engagement in various educational activities, highlighting its importance (Jabar, 2021; Hamlin & Flessa, 2018). Despite these global recognitions, Kenya lacks a comprehensive policy for parental involvement in education.

Comparative studies show varying levels of parental involvement, with Finland emphasizing it more in policy and practice compared to Sweden, resulting in higher engagement in educational matters (Uusimäki, 2019). In Ontario, Canada, financial support for parental involvement initiatives is available, underscoring its importance (Hamlin & Flessa, 2018).

Effective parental involvement is linked to improved learner performance, regular school attendance, and better adaptability to school (Tuli & Tarekegne, 2019). However, a gap exists between educators' expectations and actual parental participation (Paulynice, 2020). In Rwanda, efforts to engage uneducated parents in CBC implementation highlight the challenges faced in underprivileged communities (Tabaro & Uwamahoro, 2020).

Parental involvement includes creating a conducive learning environment, guiding internet use, and supporting homework, all correlating with better academic outcomes (Amunga, 2020; Mwarari, 2020). Despite various measures to enhance parental involvement, schools still struggle to implement comprehensive programs effectively (Wairimu, 2022).

Learning resources, including materials, financial, and human resources, are crucial for effective CBC implementation (Njati & Ireri, 2022). Parents' provision of these resources significantly impacts the success of CBC (Rupia, 2022). Studies indicate that parental engagement in homework can have varied effects, but overall, it contributes positively to academic success (Zhou, 2020).

The Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD, 2019) outlines specific parental roles in CBC implementation, including providing resources, volunteering, and ensuring a conducive learning environment. Despite these guidelines, the effectiveness of parental integration in CBC execution remains a question (Ondieki, 2019).

This study seeks to explore the impact of parental involvement initiatives on CBC implementation in Kakamega County, examining whether such initiatives exist and their effectiveness in fostering parental engagement in education.

Statement of the Problem

Parental involvement is crucial for educational success, especially within Kenya's Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) which focuses on learner-centered and holistic approaches. With the shift from the 8-4-4 system to CBC, the role of parents in education is being redefined. This research explores the extent and nature of parental involvement in CBC and its impact on learners' academic and social development, addressing the evolving empirical knowledge in this area.

Objectives of the Study

The study's objectives were:

1. Examine parental provision of learning resources to children in primary schools in Kakamega County.
2. Determine parental involvement in monitoring and guiding children to do homework in primary schools in Kakamega County.
3. Determine whether parents provide a conducive atmosphere for learning among children in primary schools in Kakamega County.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study employed a descriptive design integrating both qualitative and quantitative methods. It was conducted in Kakamega County, Kenya, chosen for its urbanization and the researcher's familiarity, facilitating reliable data collection. The target population included 50 primary schools, 245 class teachers, 245 parents, and 3,190 grade six learners. Using stratified and simple random sampling, eight schools were selected. From these, 49 class teachers, 49 parents, and 341 grade six learners were sampled.

The researcher developed closed ended questions which included Likert scale items to quantify specific aspects of the research variables. This items were used on parents and pupils. Interview schedules were also developed and used on teachers. Both Likert scale and interview schedule had four questions. These questions addressed; demographic characteristics, provision of learning resources, homework monitoring, and the learning environment.

A pilot study in two primary schools assessed the clarity and precision of data-gathering tools. Content validity was ensured through expert evaluation, and reliability was confirmed with a Pearson correlation coefficient above 0.75 using the test-retest method.

Upon obtaining proper authorization and participant consent, the data collection process commenced. The data was gathered by a researcher who was well-versed in the study area and the research objectives. The researcher distributed and collected questionnaires from learners and parents, conducted interviews with teachers, and ensured the completeness and accuracy of the collected data by providing necessary guidance and clarification to participants. Questionnaires were utilized for gathering data from learners and parents, whereas teachers were engaged through interviews. The collected data was then systematically categorized and coded for both quantitative (descriptive statistics) and qualitative (thematic analysis) analysis. The findings were presented using tables for quantitative data and verbatim quotes for qualitative insights.

RESULTS AND DISCUSIONS

Parental Provision of Learning Resources

The researcher gathered insights from grade six parents, teachers, and students regarding the provision of learning resources by parents. These perspectives were crucial since they were key stakeholders in education. The collected data was been displayed in tables, followed by interpretation and discussion of the findings.

Parents' response on provision of learning resources to children

Data on parents' response on provision of learning resources was outlined as per table 5.1 below

Table 5.1 Parents response on provision of learning resources to children

Learning resources	Never	Rarely	sometimes	Often	Always	Rating
	1	2	3	4	5	Average
Parents provide learning materials to support your children learning at home	0	2	4	11	31	4.48

Parents allocation of financial resources to educational expenses for their children	2	4	10	14	18	3.88
Parents provide human resources to support the child's education at home	8	12	10	13	5	2.89
Rating scale: Never (1), Rarely (2), Sometimes (3), Often (4), Always (5)					

The data on parental provision of learning resources shows that parents frequently supported their children's education at home by providing learning materials, with an average rating of 4.48, indicating a high level of consistency. Financial support for educational expenses also received significant attention, though less consistently, with an average rating of 3.88. However, the provision of human resources, such as direct support in education, was less common, with an average rating of 2.89, reflecting more variability and less frequent engagement.

Pupils' response on provision of learning resources to children

Data on pupils' response on provision of learning resources was outlined as per table 5.2 below

Table 5.2 Pupils response on roles of parents in the provision of learning resources to children

Learning Resources	Strongly Disagree (1)		Disagree (2)		Agree (3)		Strongly Agree (4)	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Parents/guardians provide you with the necessary learning materials for your studies	10	3%	20	6%	68	21%	228	70%
Parents provide financial support on education-related expenses	14	4%	28	9%	109	33%	175	54%
Parents provide family members or tutors who help you with your studies	26	8%	46	14%	118	36%	136	42%
Parents participate in school activities (e.g., academic and sports day) as required	16	5%	24	7%	104	32%	182	56%

The data from Table 5.2 illustrated pupils' perceptions of their parents' involvement in providing learning resources. A significant majority of students (70%) strongly agreed that their parents or guardians supplied the necessary learning materials, while only a small fraction (3%) strongly disagreed. Financial support from parents for education-related expenses was also notable, with 54% strongly agreeing and 4% strongly disagreeing. When it came to academic assistance from family members or tutors, 42% of pupils strongly agreed, whereas 8% strongly disagreed. Lastly, 56% of students strongly agreed that their parents participated in school activities, with only 5% strongly disagreeing.

Teachers' response on the role of parents in the provision of learning resources to children

Teachers noted varying levels of parental involvement in providing learning resources for children at home. Some parents were proactive, consistently ensuring their children had necessary materials, while others struggled due to financial constraints or depended on the school's guidance. Students brought diverse resources to school, ranging from basic supplies like textbooks and notebooks to advanced items like tablets and educational toys. Financial contributions from parents also varied, with some parents regularly supporting school activities and others contributing only when necessary. Parental participation in school events was generally positive, with active involvement in sports days, meetings, and fundraising activities, which helped strengthen the school

community.

Parental Monitoring and Guiding Homework

The researcher gathered insights from grade six parents, teachers, and students regarding parental monitoring and guiding children on homework. These perspectives were crucial since they were key stakeholders in education. The collected data was been displayed in tables, followed by interpretation and discussion of the findings.

Parents' response on monitoring and guiding children on homework

Data on parents' response on monitoring and guiding children on homework was outlined as per table 5.3 below

Table 5.3 Parents response on monitoring and guiding children to do homework

Monitoring and Guiding Children to Do Homework.	Never (1)		Rarely (2)		Sometimes (3)		Often (4)		Always (5)	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Parental time to assist your child with homework	1	2%	3	6%	6	13%	12	25%	26	54%
Cross-check completed assignments of your child	2	4%	5	10%	7	15%	25	52%	9	19%
Communication with your child's school regarding homework progress?	0	0%	0	0%	5	10%	11	23%	32	67%
Parent involvement in assisting your children to do homework improves their academic performance at school	0	0%	0	0%	2	4%	8	17%	38	79%

The data indicated that a majority of parents frequently monitored and guided their children with homework, enhancing their academic performance. Specifically, 54% of parents always found time to assist with homework, and 52% regularly cross-checked completed assignments. Communication with schools regarding homework progress was consistent, with 67% of parents always in touch. Furthermore, 79% of parents believed that their involvement significantly boosted their children's academic success. This trend underscores the pivotal role of active parental engagement in educational outcomes.

Pupils' response on monitoring and guiding children on homework

Data on pupils' response on monitoring and guiding children on homework was outlined as per table 5.4 below

Table 5.4 Pupils response on monitoring and guiding children to do homework

Monitoring and Guiding Children to Do Homework	Never (1)		Rarely (2)		Sometimes (3)		Often (4)		Always (5)	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Frequency of parents checking completion of assignments?	0	0%	16	5%	34	10%	78	24%	198	61%
Parents assistance with homework when you find it difficult	7	2%	24	7%	52	16%	77	24%	166	51%

Parents communication with the school regarding your homework	0	0%	12	4%	23	7%	69	21%	222	68%
Supervision of homework by parents	6	2%	39	12%	65	20%	73	22%	143	44%

The data indicated that the majority of parents frequently monitored and assisted their children with homework. Specifically, 61% of parents consistently checked assignment completion, and 51% often helped when children faced difficulties. Communication between parents and the school regarding homework was also prevalent, with 68% engaging regularly. Additionally, 44% of parents frequently supervised their children's homework. This demonstrated a strong parental involvement in children's homework activities.

Teachers' response on parents monitoring and guiding children to do homework

Teachers reported varying levels of parental involvement in monitoring and assisting with their children's homework. Some parents checked and provided feedback on assignments daily, while others did so occasionally due to busy schedules or a lack of understanding of the tasks. In some cases, parents rarely checked the homework. Assistance strategies also differed; some parents worked closely with their children, while others supervised from a distance, stepping in when necessary. Challenges included parents' unfamiliarity with the curriculum, causing frustration. Communication about homework progress occurred through notes in communication books, emails, phone calls, and during parent-teacher meetings.

Provision of a Conducive Learning Environment

Parents' response on provision of a conducive environment

In examining parents' responses on creating a conducive learning environment for their children under the CBC curriculum, several key themes emerged. Parents emphasized establishing structured study schedules and providing necessary educational materials to support their children's learning. They participated actively in their children's education by offering emotional support and engaging in school activities. Dedicated study spaces were provided, equipped with essential supplies and designed to be distraction-free. To ensure digital safety, parents implemented parental controls, used safe websites, and supervised online activities. However, challenges such as balancing work and educational support, financial constraints, limited space, and difficulties understanding the CBC curriculum were common obstacles faced by parents.

Pupils' response on parental provision of learning resources to children

Data on pupils' response on provision of a conducive learning environment was outlined as per table 5.5 below

Table 5.5 Pupils response on the provision of a conducive environment for learning

Provision of a Conducive Environment for Learning	Never (1)		Rarely (2)		Sometimes (3)		Often (4)		Always (5)	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Provision of a dedicated space at home for studying	10	3%	15	5%	32	10%	73	22%	196	60%
Parental guidance on the use of digital devices for learning	0	0%	21	6%	59	18%	80	25%	166	51%

The data illustrated that the majority of pupils benefited significantly from a conducive learning environment at home. A substantial 60% always had a dedicated space for studying, and 51% consistently received parental guidance on using digital devices for learning. Additionally, 22% and 25% often experienced these supportive conditions respectively. Conversely, a small minority rarely or never had such provisions, with only 3% lacking a dedicated study space and 6% seldom receiving digital guidance. This indicates a strong trend towards

supportive home environments for most pupils.

Teachers' response on parental provision of a conducive environment

Teachers highlighted the significant impact of a conducive study environment on students' comprehension and performance in CBC concepts. They observed that quiet, organized spaces at home allowed students to concentrate better, leading to improved understanding and academic achievement. Conversely, inadequate study spaces, characterized by noise and distractions, hindered students' progress, often resulting in lower performance. Additionally, teachers noted that digital safety measures were crucial for effective online learning, recommending parental education on safe internet practices, the use of antivirus software, and open communication to mitigate risks. Instances of cyberbullying and privacy concerns were mentioned as barriers to students' engagement in digital learning, underscoring the need for robust digital safety protocols.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that parental involvement is crucial in supporting children's education within the framework of the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) by providing essential learning resources, monitoring homework, and creating conducive learning environments. While parents are adept at offering material and financial support, there is a noticeable gap in direct human resources such as tutoring, highlighting the need for increased personal engagement. The CBC's emphasis on practical skills and continuous assessment underscores the importance of regular communication between parents and schools. Parents' efforts to establish dedicated, distraction-free study spaces are vital for student success, although economic and spatial constraints present challenges. Addressing these issues through community support, policy interventions, and innovative solutions can enhance learning environments and ensure that parental involvement, coupled with effective resource allocation and support systems, significantly boosts students' educational outcomes and development in the CBC framework.

RECOMMENDATIONS

I. The Ministry of Education should enhance existing policies to provide financial support and resources to parents, especially those from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, to ensure equitable provision of learning materials and human resources in children in CBC.

II. Policies should be formulated to promote parental involvement in CBC. These policies should include training programs for parents on effective ways to support their children's learning and monitoring their homework.

III. Research should focus on the effectiveness of digital safety measures implemented by parents and their impact on children's online learning experiences, identifying best practices and areas for improvement

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