

Secondary School Principals' Preparedness on Implementation of Competency- Based Education in Tigania West Subcounty, Meru County

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ABSTRACT

The study sought to evaluate the secondary school principals' preparedness on implementation of competency-based education in Tigania West Sub County. The objectives of the study were to find out ways principals' ensured stability of school human resource in readiness to implementing competency-based curriculum education; establish the school initiatives undertaken by principals in readiness to implementing competency-based curriculum education and assess the principals' leadership styles exercised during the implementation process in readiness to competency-based curriculum education. The study used descriptive survey design and targeted a population of 867 participants comprising of 51 principals, 255 HoDs, 510 teachers, and 51 parents in the study area. Using stratified sampling technique based on Yamene sample size tables, this yielded sub samples of 10 principals, 30 HoDs, 60 teachers and 10 parents. The study instruments were questionnaires, and interviews. Quantitative and qualitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics and statistical packages for social sciences version 20.0 respectively. A response rate of 98.5% was achieved. The major findings of the study showed that; 80 % of the principals supported both teaching and non-teaching staff by facilitating them to attend to relevant workshops and seminars, being sensitive to individual needs, organizing separate joint retreats and educational trips for each category. A44.7% of the secondary school principals employed democratic leadership styles during preparation for CBC implementation. 21.3% of the principals engaged networking and linkages processes for school to create network with local NGOs and agencies to provide the required learning resources in readiness for CBC. Further, 90% of the parents lamented high additional costs they incurred in preparation to CBC. The study concluded that most of the school were on high gear preparing for implementation of CBC despite the changes of acquiring the requisite resources. The study recommended for a harmonized way of mobilizing resources within the constituencies via the elected leaders offices so as not to leave behind some secondary school.

Keywords: Principals, implementation, human resource, competency-based curriculum, initiative and leadership styles.

INTRODUCTION

Competency-based education is a process of outcome-based learning, which ensures the production of competent graduates, who possess knowledge, skills and attitude; are able to serve their society successfully; and satisfy the national qualifications framework, stakeholders, and labor market (Fernandez *et al.*, 2012; Frank *et al.*, 2010).

Norich (2020) observed that education, training and research are among the components for delivering the social pillar and acts as a foundation under vision 2030. According to Evarand and Morris (1996), principals need to be able to plan, organize and control all the resources including human resources to ensure successful implementation of competency-based education which is a solution to some of the challenges facing the education sector. Among the challenges facing education sector is efficiency in the management of educational resources of which this study seeks to address by critically investigating the ability of secondary school principals in maintaining and developing resources to facilitate implementation of competence-based education (sessional

paper No. 10 of 2012 on Kenya vision 2030).

Principals ensure that teachers receive ongoing professional development and training to equip them with the necessary skills and knowledge for CBC. This involves organizing workshops, seminars, and in-service training programs focused on competency-based education (Desimone *et al.*, 2015). Establishing mentorship and support systems for teachers is crucial. Creating a positive and supportive school culture is essential for teacher satisfaction and retention. Principals work to build a collaborative and inclusive environment that values and supports teachers. According to UNESCO (2016) ensuring that teachers have access to necessary resources and a conducive working environment is vital for stability.

Principals focus on improving infrastructure and providing adequate teaching materials. Maintaining open lines of communication and involving teachers in decision-making processes helps in building trust and commitment. Principals ensure that teachers are well-informed and their input is valued. Supporting the physical and mental well-being of teachers ensures that they are motivated and capable of delivering quality education. Principals can introduce wellness programs and provide support services (Greenberg *et al.*, 2016)

Objectives

The study objectives were to:

1. Find out ways principals ensured stability of school human resource in readiness to implementing competency-based curriculum education.
2. Establish the school initiatives undertaken by principals in readiness to implementing competency-based curriculum education.
3. Assess the principals' leadership styles exercised in readiness to competency-based curriculum education.

LITERATURE REVIEW

a) Stability of school human resource and competency-based curriculum implementation

For demonstration of interpersonal leader, principal must be effective; show concern for teachers, protect and help them improve their skills (James 2019). To be democratic he needs to take interest in school activities and supervise them, receive opinions from teachers before making decisions and be realistic on what can and can't be accomplished (Chen, Berkovich & Eyal, 2021). The sufficiency of human resources is an important factor that affects implementation effectiveness. The availability of manpower with the necessary knowledge base in competency teaching facilitates implementation. Other resources that facilitate access to teaching and learning resources, materials and equipment. The sources of these resources include; allocated funds of the government, registration and tuition fees and incentives in the form of remunerative power such as salaries and commissions.

b) School initiatives in readiness to implementation of competency-based curriculum

Principals prioritize professional development and training for teachers to equip them with the skills and knowledge necessary for CBC (Waweru, 2018). This involves workshops, seminars, and continuous learning opportunities focusing on competency-based education principles and practices. Principals work on aligning the school curriculum with national competency-based standards. They collaborate with curriculum developers and educators to ensure that the learning materials and assessments meet the required competencies.

Effective implementation of CBC requires adequate resources. Principals ensure the availability of teaching and learning materials, technology, and infrastructure to support the new curriculum. This includes acquiring textbooks, digital tools, and creating conducive learning environments. Engaging stakeholders, including parents, teachers, students, and the community, is crucial for CBC implementation. Principals organize meetings, forums, and communication campaigns to raise awareness and gain support for the new curriculum.

c) Assess the principals’ leadership styles exercised in readiness to competency-based curriculum education.

Transformational leadership involves inspiring and motivating teachers and staff to embrace change and work collaboratively towards common goals. Principals who adopt this style focus on vision-building, professional development, and fostering a positive school culture (Chen, Berkovich & Eyal, 2021). Transformational leaders create a clear vision for CBC implementation, inspiring teachers to align their efforts with this vision. They prioritize ongoing training and development to equip teachers with the skills needed for CBC. Such leaders foster an inclusive and supportive culture, encouraging innovation and creativity.

METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted using descriptive survey design. The study target population was 867 participants; 51 principals, 510 teachers, 255 heads of department and 51 parents from the study area. A sample size of 10 principals, 60 teachers, 30 heads of department and 10 parents were selected using Yamene sample size tables. Data was collected using questionnaires, observation checklist and interviews. Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics while qualitative data for open ended questions on questionnaire and interview was coded and categorized according to the items in the interview guide and questionnaires and then the data was keyed in as per the coded themes. Percentages and frequency distribution tables of the organized data was obtained and interpreted using statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) version 20.0.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The results based on the study objectives are presented as follows. The discussion points are presented in tables and figures herein.

Means by which principals’ ensured stability of human resource within the school

Table 1: Opinion of teachers on stability offered to human resource by principals

Teachers’ and Hods’ opinions on stability of human resource	Percentage
Supporting staff to attend to relevant workshops and seminars	31.9
Being sensitive to individual needs	25.5
Organizing joint retreats	21.3
Organizing for educational trips for each category	14.9
Rewarding all staffs during prize giving days	6.4

Source: Field data (November, 2022)

The findings in the table 1 shows that 31.9% of teachers who participated in the study indicated that their principals support staff to attend to relevant workshops and seminars, 25.5% said that principals are sensitive to individual needs by playing father figure’s role, 21.3% indicated that their principals organize joint retreats, 14.9% indicated that their principals organize educational trips for each category while 6.4% said that their principals reward all staffs during prize giving days. It was apparent that 80 % of the principals supported both teaching and non-teaching staff facilitating them to attend to relevant workshops and seminars, being sensitive to individual needs, organizing separate joint retreats and educational trips for each category.

This implies that majority of the principal ensures stability and equity of teachers and support staff. These findings are in agreement with Omolo and Sinatwa (2019) who argues that uniting teaching and non-teaching staff influences academic performance of learners which is a key managerial role of secondary school principal

in the implementation of CBC.

Responses on the Initiatives that should be taken by the Principals for the Successful Implementation of the CBC.

Table 2: Viable initiative implemented in school

Initiative	Percentage
Encouraging teachers to undertake CBC in service training	40.4
Support Staff preparedness	29.8
Construction of new classrooms	19.2
Resourcing ICT learning Materials	10.6

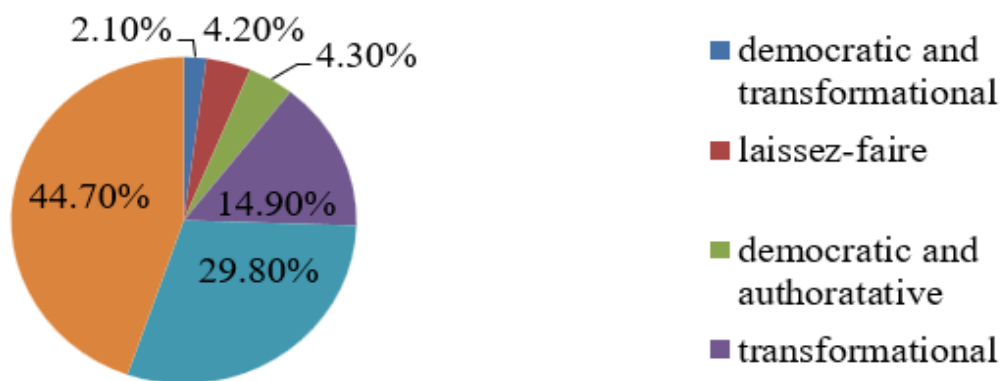
Source: Field data (November, 2022)

The information in table 2 indicates that 40.4% of teachers who participated in the study indicated that their principals have been encouraging them to undertake CBC in service training, 34% of teachers indicated that their principal have employed new Support Staff such as laboratory technicians in preparedness for CBC implementation. 19.2% of them indicated MoE has constructed new classrooms while 10.6% of teachers indicated that their principals have been acquiring learning Materials.

Teachers and Hods Opinion on the Leadership Style used by School Principals.

Teachers were asked to indicate the leadership style used by the principal.

Figure 1: Leadership styles used by principals

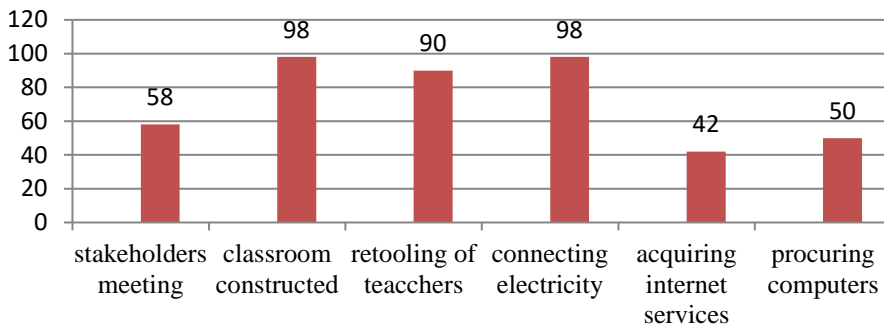


Source: Field data (November, 2022)

The findings presented in figure 1 revealed that (44.7%) of the teachers who participated in the study indicated that their principals were using democratic leadership style, (29.8%) indicated authoritative leadership style, (14.9%) indicated transformational, (4.3%) indicated that their principals uses both democratic and authoritative leadership style, (4.2%) indicated laissez-faire however, smaller percentage of 2.1% indicated that their principal uses both democratic and transformational. These findings clearly demonstrate that majority (44.7%) of the secondary school principals employ democratic leadership styles while preparing for CBC. In addition, principals stated in an interview that they are using Democratic, Instructional, Coaching and Transformational Styles. This study is in line with the study conducted by (Chen, Berkovich and Eyal, 2021) which revealed that to be democratic, the principal needs to take interest in school activities and supervise them, take opinions from teachers before making decisions and be realistic on what can and can't be accomplished.

Preparations conducted by schools in readiness to implementation of CBC

Figure 2 Preparations schools have done in readiness to implement CBC



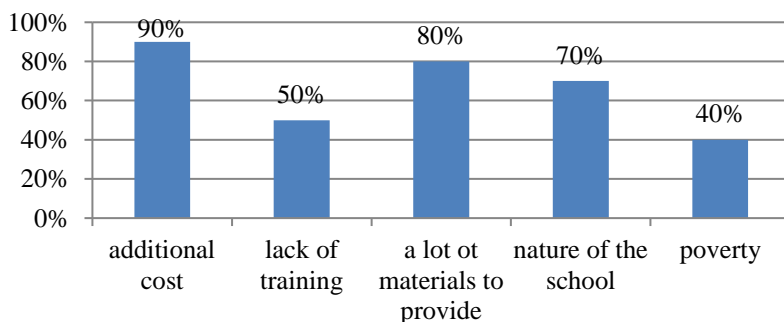
Source: Field data (November, 2022)

From figure 6 most of the teachers who participated in the study said that MOE of education had constructed at least one classroom, trained some teachers and most of the schools were connected to electricity ready to implement CBC. However, teachers cited challenges hindering the CBC roll out such as inadequate internet services, computers and proper sensitization of parents. This is a clear indication that most schools are ready to roll out CBC system if well planned and necessary materials provided. This study is in concurrence by a study done by Ondimu, (2018) which concluded that teachers are prepared to implement the competency-based curriculum. Nonetheless, factors like limited in-service trainings, inadequate learning materials, and many records to keep, a lot of workloads, lack of ICT skills among the teachers and lack of parental support were hindering effective implementation of the competency-based curriculum.

Parents Response on Challenges they are Facing While Preparing the School for Curriculum Transformation

Parent representatives were requested to list some of the challenges they encounter while preparing the school for smooth curriculum transformation. The primary data collected was tallied and analyzed as shown in figure 4.19 below.

Figure 3: Challenges Parents are Facing while Preparing the School for Curriculum Transformation



Source: Field data (November, 2022)

Figure 3 shows some of the challenges parents are facing as they prepare institutions for curriculum implementation. These challenges include and not limited to additional cost, lack of training on what they should do, poverty, a lot of materials to provide for teaching and learning, nature of the school among others. Principals interviewed added that they have had challenges involving parents due to bad economic times and poverty which hinders extra levies as observed from the huge fee balances. The findings concur with the study by Omariba A. (2022) on challenges faced by parents in implementing competence-based curriculum which included lack of necessary materials, communication barriers among others

CONCLUSIONS

Principals support both teaching staff and non-teaching staff in various ways like supporting them to attend to relevant workshops and seminars, being sensitive to individual needs, organizing joint retreats and educational trips for each category. This implies that majority of the principals ensures stability and equity of teachers and support staff.

Most of the principals use democratic leadership style; support workshops and seminars, ensure stability and equity and encourage CBC training. The schools could also embark on procuring requisite resources for teaching and learning as well as putting up both classrooms and laboratories. Also, secondary school's principal involves parents in many ways which include fees payment, academic progress, discipline, motivation, community sensitization among others. Further the study concluded that secondary school could engage into thorough preparations so as to expedite implementation of the CBC. This would entail conducting programs of in-serving teachers on pedagogical techniques in conformity to 21st century classroom management.

RECOMMENDATION

The study recommended that as a matter of priority, secondary schools should embark on retooling of teachers on CBC pedagogical skills and competencies for effective implementation of competency-based curriculum. Principals should recognize the role of parents as mentors and involve them as motivational speakers. Schools should be upgraded and adequate resources acquired for successful implementation of CBC. The following are suggestions for further study:

Challenges facing competency-based curriculum implementation in junior secondary schools. The level of teachers' preparedness for implementation of the competency-based curriculum at secondary schools can also be done.

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