

Pupil's Creativity and Achievement Goals under the Competency-Based Curriculum in Public Primary Schools in Kisii-Central Sub-County, Kisii, Kenya

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ABSTRACT

The Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) in Kenya emphasizes the development of practical skills, critical thinking, and creativity, shifting away from traditional content-based education. Despite this focus, the relationship between pupils' creativity and their achievement goals under the CBC remains underexplored. This study examined the relationship between pupils' creativity and their achievement goals in public primary schools in Kisii-Central Sub-County, Kenya. The study was guided by the Divergent Theory of Creativity and employed a correlational research design. The target population consisted of 3,923 Grade 6 pupils from 75 public primary schools in Kisii-Central Sub-County. A sample of 350 pupils was selected using stratified and simple random sampling techniques. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire designed to measure pupils' creativity, with achievement goals assessed using school-based CBC assessment scores. The findings revealed a statistically significant negative relationship between creativity and achievement goals ($r = -0.241$, $p < 0.01$), indicating that pupils with higher creativity levels tend to set lower achievement goals. This result challenges conventional assumptions about the role of creativity in achievement goals and suggests that creative pupils may prioritize skill mastery and intrinsic motivation over external performance metrics. The study recommends that educators and policymakers revise assessment frameworks to better capture and reward creativity, ensuring that creative pupils are supported in balancing their innovative approaches with measurable academic outcomes.

Keywords: Creativity, Achievement Goals, Competency-Based Curriculum, Public Primary Schools, Kisii-Central Sub-County, Kenya

INTRODUCTION

Education reforms globally have increasingly emphasized the need for learners to acquire skills, competencies, and attitudes necessary for thriving in a rapidly changing world. In Kenya, the shift from the 8-4-4 system to the CBC marked a critical transformation in the education system. The CBC focuses on nurturing pupils' ability to apply knowledge creatively and productively rather than merely reproducing content (KICD, 2017). Among the core competencies of CBC, creativity stands as one of the competencies which need to be nurtured among pupils for fostering innovation and adaptability in pupils and in align with SDG 9. According to Beghetto & Kaufman, (2018) creativity enables pupils to generate original ideas, solve problems, and explore multiple perspectives, which are vital for holistic growth. However, despite this emphasis, pupils' creativity and its relationship to their achievement goals remain underexplored.

Creativity has been widely recognized as a fundamental cognitive ability that enhances problem-solving, adaptability, and engagement in learning (Runco & Jaeger, 2012). Studies have shown that creativity fosters innovative thinking and supports the development of skills that are vital for achievement goals. However, the relationship between creativity and achievement goals is complex and not always straightforward. For instance, Gajda et al. (2017) found that while creativity can predict achievement goals, it is not always a strong determinant of achievement goals. This inconsistency highlights the need for further empirical investigation, particularly in the context of competency-based education systems like the CBC.

Achievement goals refer to the aspirations pupils set for themselves in their academic pursuits, reflecting their commitment to accomplishing specific outcomes (Lee et al., 2018). Understanding how creativity influences these goals is critical for optimizing educational outcomes and ensuring that the CBC fulfills its objectives of nurturing well-rounded, competent learners.

In Kenya, studies on the CBC have primarily focused on curriculum implementation, teacher preparation, and challenges facing its adoption, with limited attention to the psychological factors influencing achievement goals (Mulenga & Kadombwe, 2019). Kituu et al. (2022) investigated the influence of core competencies nurtured in the CBC on creativity as a learning outcome among Grade 4 pupils in Makueni County. Their findings indicated a positive relationship between core competencies and creativity, underscoring the importance of nurturing creativity to enhance achievement goals. However, there remains a gap in understanding how creativity specifically influences achievement goals under the CBC.

Statement of the Problem

While the CBC emphasizes holistic and skills-based development, noticeable variations in achievement goals exist among pupils in public primary schools in Kisii-Central Sub-County. According to a report from the Kisii County Director of Education (2023), only 20% of pupils in public primary schools exceeded expectations in the Kenya Primary School Education Assessment (KPSEA), while the majority fell below expectations. This disparity raises concerns about the effectiveness of the CBC in addressing pupils' achievement goals, particularly regarding its educational outcomes as perceived by both parents and teachers.

Despite concerted efforts by the national government to ensure the full transition of all pupils from one grade to another and the provision of learning resources, challenges persist in pupils' achievement goals in Kisii-Central Sub-County. The role of creativity as a psychological determinant in predicting achievement goals under the CBC remains unclear. This study seeks to explore how pupils' creativity influences their achievement goals in the CBC, with the aim of enhancing achievement outcomes among pupils across different grades.

Objective of the Study

To examine the relationship between pupils' creativity and their achievement goals under the Competency-Based Curriculum in public primary schools in Kisii-Central Sub-County, Kisii County, Kenya.

Hypothesis

H01: There is no statistically significant relationship between pupils' creativity and their achievement goals within the Competency-Based Curriculum in public primary schools in Kisii-Central Sub-County, Kisii County, Kenya.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Pupils' Creativity and Achievement Goals in the Competency-Based Curriculum

Creativity is widely recognized as a fundamental cognitive ability that fosters innovative thinking, problem-solving, and adaptability (Runco & Jaeger, 2012). In the context of the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC), creativity is considered a core competency that enables pupils to thrive in dynamic learning environments (KICD, 2017). The CBC emphasizes the development of competencies such as critical thinking, collaboration, and creativity, which are essential for success in the 21st century (Palmer, 2017). Creativity, in particular, plays a crucial role in nurturing critical thinking, problem-solving, and adaptability among pupils, all of which are vital for achievement goals and personal growth (Beghetto & Kaufman, 2018).

Empirical studies on the relationship between creativity and achievement goals have yielded mixed findings. Some research indicates a positive correlation between creativity and achievement goals. For instance, Du et al. (2020) conducted a study in China to investigate the effect of achievement goals on creativity and the mediating

role of self-efficacy among senior high school students. The findings revealed that students with both mastery and performance-approach goals scored higher on creative tasks than those with performance-avoidance goals. This suggests that creativity enhances goal attainment, particularly when pupils are intrinsically motivated to master skills and perform well.

Similarly, Puente-Díaz and Cavazos-Arroyo (2017) examined the influence of growth and fixed creative mindsets on task approach, performance approach, and avoidance achievement goals among business students in Mexico. The study found a positive correlation between a growth creative mindset and task-approach achievement goals, as well as creative self-efficacy. This indicates that pupils who perceive creativity as a malleable skill are more likely to set and pursue challenging academic goals, leading to improved performance outcomes.

In contrast, other studies have reported conflicting results. Gajda et al. (2017) found that while creativity can predict achievement goals, it is not always a strong determinant of achievement goals. This inconsistency highlights the need for further empirical investigation, particularly in the context of competency-based education systems like the CBC. The relationship between creativity and achievement goals may be influenced by various factors, including the educational environment, assessment frameworks, and the specific competencies emphasized by the curriculum.

In Kenya, studies on the CBC have primarily focused on curriculum implementation, teacher preparation, and challenges facing its adoption, with limited attention to the psychological factors influencing achievement goals (Mulenga & Kadombwe, 2019). Kituu et al. (2022) investigated the influence of core competencies nurtured in the CBC on creativity as a learning outcome among Grade 4 pupils in Makueni County. Their findings indicated a positive relationship between core competencies and creativity, underscoring the importance of nurturing creativity to enhance achievement goals. However, there remains a gap in understanding how creativity specifically influences achievement goals under the CBC.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study is guided by the **Divergent Theory of Creativity**, which explains how creativity influences pupils' achievement goals within the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC). The Divergent Theory of Creativity, developed by J.P. Guilford in the 1950s, emphasizes cognitive processes such as fluency, originality, flexibility, and elaboration, which enable individuals to generate multiple, innovative ideas or solutions to problems (Guilford, 1950).

In the context of the CBC, the Divergent Theory of Creativity is particularly relevant because it aligns with the curriculum's emphasis on developing competencies such as creativity, critical thinking, and problem-solving. The CBC encourages pupils to explore multiple pathways to knowledge, engage in open-ended tasks, and apply acquired skills to real-life situations. This approach supports the curriculum's objectives by enabling pupils to generate diverse solutions, adopt various perspectives, and devise original approaches to academic tasks.

The Divergent Theory of Creativity also plays a central role in shaping pupils' achievement goals under the CBC. Pupils who exhibit high levels of creativity and divergent thinking are more likely to adopt mastery-oriented achievement goals, which emphasize the pursuit of knowledge, skill development, and personal growth rather than outperforming peers or meeting minimal standards. Such pupils typically demonstrate intrinsic motivation, perseverance, and confidence attributes that are essential for achieving the learning outcomes outlined in the CBC.

Unlike broader theories of learning or motivation, such as behaviorism or information processing theories, the Divergent Theory of Creativity provides a targeted explanation of the creative cognitive processes that drive pupils' academic behavior. It explains how pupils generate and apply novel ideas in academic settings, which is particularly relevant in a curriculum designed to foster learner autonomy, innovation, and real-world application. This theory is instrumental in understanding how creativity predicts pupils' achievement goals in the implementation of the CBC in public primary schools in Kisii-Central Sub-County, Kenya.

Summary of Review and Research Gap

The reviewed literature highlights the importance of creativity as a psychological determinant of achievement goals in the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC). Studies have shown that creativity fosters innovative thinking, problem-solving, and adaptability, which are critical for achievement goals (Runco & Jaeger, 2012; Du et al., 2020). However, the relationship between creativity and achievement goals is complex and not always straightforward. While some studies indicate a positive correlation between creativity and achievement goals, others suggest that creativity may not be a strong determinant of achievement goals (Gajda et al., 2017).

In Kenya, research on the CBC has primarily focused on curriculum implementation, teacher preparation, and challenges facing its adoption, with limited attention to the psychological factors influencing achievement goals (Mulenga & Kadombwe, 2019). Kituu et al. (2022) found a positive relationship between core competencies nurtured in the CBC and creativity as a learning outcome among Grade 4 pupils in Makueni County. However, there remains a gap in understanding how creativity specifically influences achievement goals under the CBC.

This study seeks to address this gap by examining the relationship between pupils' creativity and their achievement goals in public primary schools in Kisii-Central Sub-County, Kenya. By focusing on this objective, the study aims to provide empirical evidence on how creativity, as a psychological determinant, shapes pupils' academic aspirations and performance under the CBC. The findings are expected to inform educational practices and policies, particularly in the context of the CBC, where fostering creativity is a key priority.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employed a **correlational research design**, which is particularly useful for describing the relationship between variables and testing hypotheses (Best & Kahn, 2006). In this design, the researcher does not manipulate the variables nor influence the occurrence of events (Cooper & Schindler, 2003). The correlational design is essential in observational research, as it allows for the examination of interrelations between study variables without experimental manipulation.

The correlational research design was selected as the most appropriate for analyzing the relationship between **pupils' creativity** and their **achievement goals** under the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) in public primary schools in Kisii-Central Sub-County, Kenya. This design facilitated the identification and quantification of the relationship between these psychological determinants and achievement goals, providing insights into how creativity influences academic aspirations and performance within the CBC framework.

Study Area

The study was conducted in **Kisii-Central Sub-County**, an administrative unit within **Kisii County**, located in southwestern Kenya. Kisii-Central Sub-County is characterized by a mix of rural and urban environments, providing a diverse setting for examining the influence of psychological factors on pupils' achievement goals. The sub-county is known for its strong emphasis on education, with high enrollment rates in both public and private primary schools.

Kisii-Central Sub-County was chosen as the study area due to documented disparities in pupils' achievement goals under the CBC, as highlighted in recent **Kenya Primary School Education Assessment (KPSEA)** reports. These inconsistencies are believed to be closely linked to **creativity**. By focusing on this locality, the study aimed to explore how these psychological factors influence pupils' achievement goals, which served as the dependent variable.

The educational context of Kisii-Central Sub-County provided a unique opportunity to examine how the interplay between pupils' psychological characteristics and school-level factors impacts their academic orientation within the CBC framework. For instance, a positive self-concept could bolster motivation and foster a constructive attitude toward learning, thereby enhancing achievement goals. Conversely, disparities in

infrastructure and learning resources across schools may hinder the development of creativity and negatively affect learners' attitudes, limiting their goal-setting capabilities.

Target Population

Educational Regions	Number of Schools	Number of Pupils
Birongo	13	480
Bobaracho	13	1,101
Ibeno	15	567
Keumbu	11	367
Kiogoro	12	406
Kisii-Central	11	1,002
Total	75	3,923

Source: County Director of Education, Kisii (2024)

Sample Size and Sampling Techniques

Sampling Techniques

This study utilized a combination of probability and non-probability sampling techniques to ensure a comprehensive and balanced sample. Purposive sampling was employed to select the study locale (Kisii-Central Sub-County), public primary schools, and Grade 6 pupils. Stratified sampling was used to select schools based on their administrative regions: Birongo, Bobaracho, Ibeno, Keumbu, Kiogoro, and Kisii-Central. Simple random sampling was then applied to select 23 public primary schools from the six strata, representing 30% of the total number of primary schools in Kisii-Central Sub-County. This percentage is considered sufficient for social science studies and accounts for the variability of the population (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003).

Purposive sampling was further used to select Grade 6 pupils from each stratum, as these pupils were the specific target for the study. Grade 6 pupils were chosen because they had transitioned to Grade 6 under the CBC framework and were deemed capable of comprehending the information being collected. To ensure a fair distribution of respondents in each stratum, the proportionate sampling allocation formula was used to select pupils from each stratum. Finally, simple random sampling was used within each stratum to obtain the respondents for the study.

Sample Size Determination

Sampling refers to the process of selecting a subset of individuals or objects from the entire population for the purpose of making inferences about the population based on the features observed in the sample (Creswell, 2014). **Cochran's formula (1977)** was used to determine the sample size for the study. A sample of 350 pupils were selected for the study from a population of 3,923 pupils who have been registered in KPSEA in 2025

Table 2: Sample Size Distribution

Region	Number of Schools	30% Sample	Population (N _h)	Proportion (N _h /N)	n _h (Unrounded)	Sampled Pupils
Birongo	13	4	480	0.12235534	42.82436911	43
Bobaracho	13	4	1,101	0.280652562	98.22839664	98
Ibeno	15	5	567	0.144532246	50.58628601	51
Keumbu	11	3	367	0.093550854	32.74279888	33

Kiogoro	12	4	406	0.103492225	36.22227887	36
Kisii-Central	11	3	1,002	0.255416773	89.39587051	89
Total	75	23	3,923	1	350	350

Data Collection Instruments

The tools employed for this study included questionnaires and document analysis for CBC assessments.

Pupil's Questionnaire

A structured questionnaire was used to collect information from pupils. The questionnaire included sub-scale measuring pupils' levels of Creativity having 16 items in which pupils were supposed to respond in four-point Likert scale: Strongly Disagree (SD) 2: Disagree (D) Agree (A) 4: Strongly Agree (SA)

The creativity scale was adapted from Guilford (1950). Each pupil was expected to respond to all items in the questionnaire. Care was taken to ensure an acceptable level of validity and reliability for the instruments.

Document Analysis

School-based assessments from KNEC, performance rubrics, and project scores obtained by pupils who participated in the study were used to assess achievement goals in the CBC. The achievement goals were categorized into four levels: Exceeding Expectations (80–100%), Meeting Expectations (60–79%), Approaching Expectations (40–59%) and Below Expectations (0–39%)

Pilot Study

A pilot study was conducted to determine the feasibility, ambiguity, and bias of the data collection instruments. The pilot study involved 40 participants from two public primary schools within the same locale, which were not included in the main study sample. These schools were assumed to share similar characteristics with those in the study sample. The data and feedback gathered were analyzed to refine the research instruments and procedures, thereby enhancing the accuracy and reliability of the study's investigation of the variables.

Validity of the Instrument

Content validity was established by aligning the questionnaire items with the study objectives and the constructs under investigation. Each item was reviewed to confirm that it adequately represented the theoretical and conceptual domains of the study variables.

Expert judgment was sought from two supervisors and one specialist in educational psychology. These experts examined the questionnaire for clarity, appropriateness of language, and relevance of the items to the constructs being measured. Their feedback led to the refinement of ambiguous items and the restructuring of certain statements to improve comprehensibility for the target respondents.

Reliability of the Instrument

Cronbach's Alpha was computed for each of the sub-scale in the questionnaire to measure internal consistency. According to Orodho (2016), a reliability coefficient ranging from 0.7 to 1.0 is considered acceptable for social science research. The results are presented in Table 3:

Table 3: Reliability Test of Items

Sub-Scale	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items	Interpretation
Creativity	0.808	16	High reliability

The finding indicated that all the sub-scales yielded reliability coefficients above the recommended threshold of 0.70. The creativity scale ($\alpha = 0.808$). This value demonstrate that the items within each sub-scale were internally consistent and reliably measured the intended constructs. Therefore, the questionnaire was deemed reliable and suitable for use in the main study.

Data Collection Procedures

An introductory letter was obtained from the Directorate of Postgraduate Studies, Maasai Mara University, which was presented to the National Commission for Science, Technology, and Innovation (NACOSTI) to seek a permit to carry out the study. The permit was then presented to the County Director of Education in Kisii County for authorization to collect data from the selected public primary schools.

The researcher proceeded to the selected public primary schools in the sub-county and explained the purpose of the study to the headteachers and headmistresses before administering the questionnaire to the pupils. The pupils were required to fill out the questionnaire, which was then collected by the researcher. Informed consent was obtained before the administration of the questionnaire to the pupils, as they were presumed to be minors.

Data Analysis Techniques

Both parametric and non-parametric data analysis techniques were employed. The data were sorted, processed, and cleaned to check for any missing or incorrectly entered data. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequencies and percentages. To establish the relationship between variables, inferential statistics were applied using Pearson's product-moment correlation and chi-square tests, with an alpha level set at 0.05.

The hypotheses were tested as follows:

Hypothesis	Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	Statistical Technique	Level of Significance
H01	Pupil's Creativity	Achievement Goal in CBC	Pearson Correlation	0.05

Ethical and Logistical Considerations

Ethical Considerations

To ensure ethical considerations, informed consent was obtained from the headteachers, detailing the purpose and benefits of the study for collecting data from the pupils. Pupils were also given an age-appropriate explanation to ensure their willingness to participate in the study. The pupils were assured of the confidentiality of the data collected and the purpose of the data collection to ensure the integrity of the data. To prevent harm to the pupils, the questions were designed to be age-appropriate.

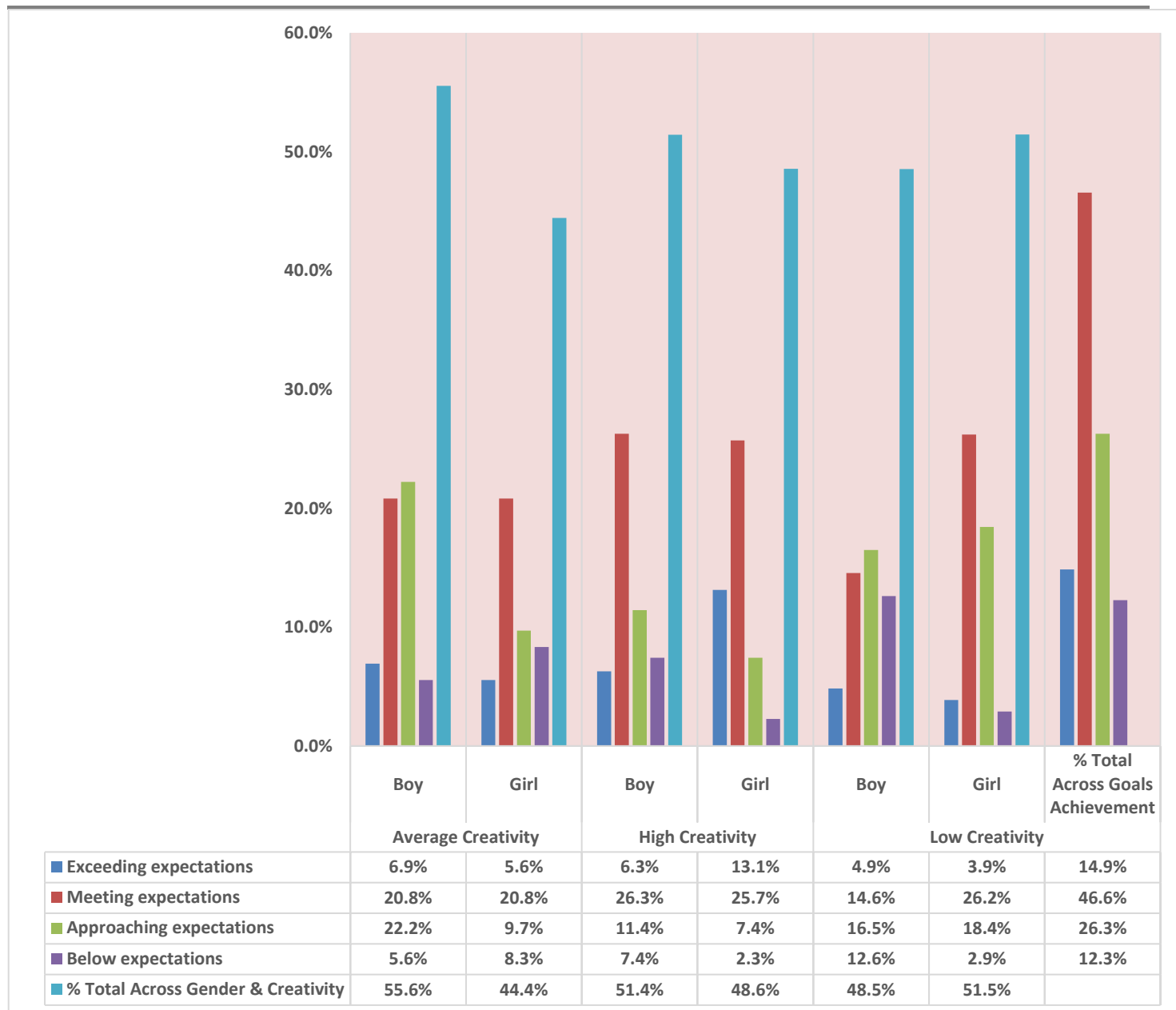
Logistical Considerations

To ensure logistical considerations, the researcher obtained a permit to conduct the study from NACOSTI and the County Director of Education. A pilot study was conducted to test the instrument's reliability and validity, and scheduling was coordinated with schools to avoid disruption of regular activities. Data collection sessions were planned to suit the timetable of the schools.

FINDINGS

Distribution of Respondents by Gender, Achievement Goals, and Creative Levels

Figure 4.1 illustrates the distribution of respondents by gender, achievement goals, and creativity levels, highlighting how creativity influences academic performance under the CBC. The findings reveal a strong association between pupils' creativity levels and their achievement goals.



The results demonstrate that girls with high creativity exhibited the highest achievement goals, with 13.1% exceeding expectations, compared to 6.3% of boys with high creativity. This suggests that higher levels of creativity are positively associated with better achievement outcomes, particularly among female learners. Conversely, boys with low creativity recorded the lowest proportion of those exceeding expectations (4.9%), indicating that reduced creativity may hinder their ability to perform at higher academic levels. These findings align with research by Beghetto and Kaufman (2014), who emphasize that creative thinking enhances cognitive flexibility, intrinsic motivation, and problem-solving ability, all of which contribute to improved learning outcomes.

Further analysis shows that pupils with high creativity (both boys and girls) were more likely to meet or exceed expectations compared to those with average or low creativity. For instance, 26.3% of boys with high creativity and 25.7% of girls with high creativity met expectations, while pupils with low creativity were less likely to achieve similar results. This trend suggests that creativity plays a critical role in helping pupils adapt to learning challenges and employ innovative strategies to meet academic standards.

The most striking differences were observed in the category of pupils performing below expectations. Boys and girls with low creativity recorded the highest percentages of poor performance (12.6% and 12.9%, respectively), while girls with high creativity recorded the lowest rate of underperformance (2.3%). This reinforces the idea that creativity is a key determinant of achievement goals, particularly for girls, who tend to perform better overall when engaged in creative tasks.

The findings highlight the need for targeted interventions to promote creativity, especially among boys with low creativity, who tend to perform worse academically. Providing more opportunities for creative activities, fostering critical thinking, and improving engagement in creative learning methods could help improve achievement outcomes, particularly in rural schools, where creative learning opportunities are more limited.

Statistical Characteristics of the Creativity Scale

Descriptive Statistics for Creativity Scores

		Creativity score
N	Valid	350
	Missing	0
Mean		77.44
Median		77.35
Mode		75.00
Std. Deviation		9.18
Variance		84.32
Skewness		-0.22
Range		54.70
Minimum		45.30
Maximum		100.00

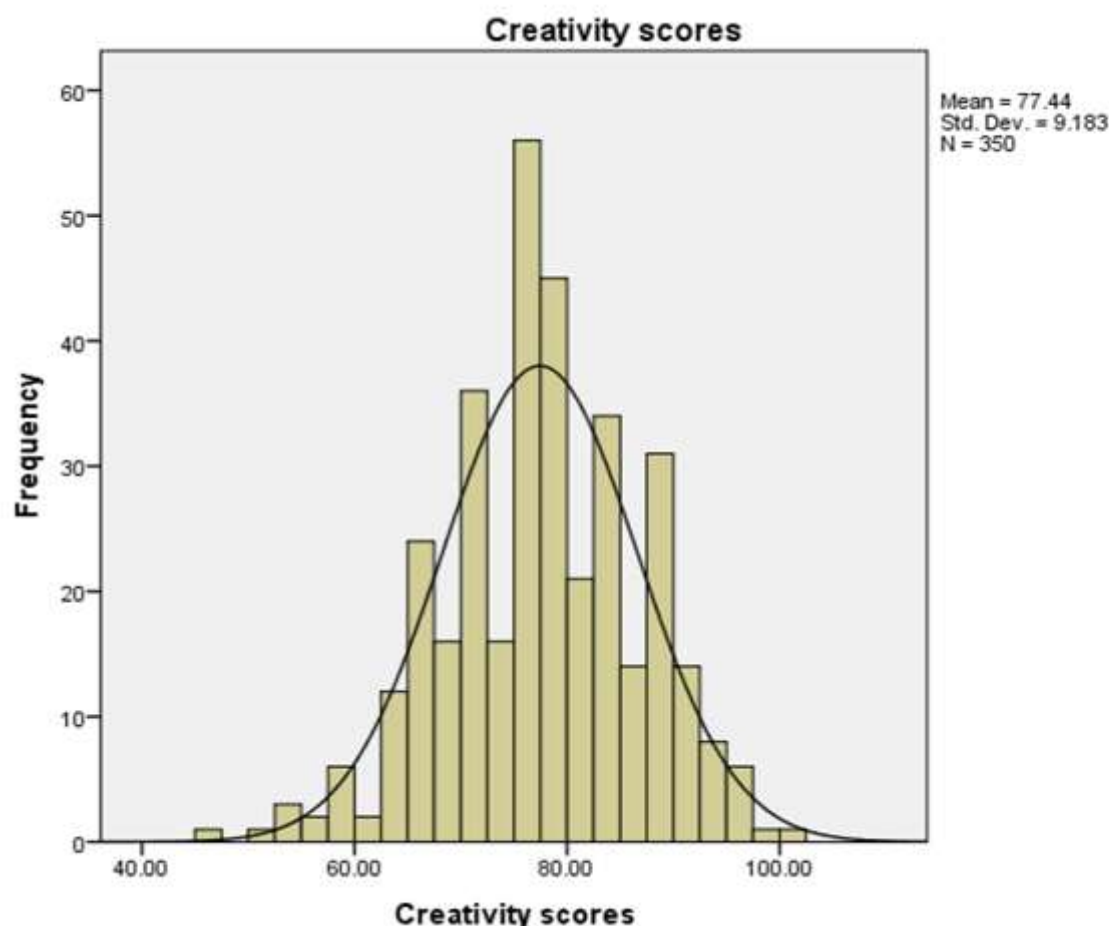
The descriptive statistics for the creativity sub-scale, presented in Table 4.3.1, show that the mean score for creativity was 77.44, with a standard deviation of 9.18. This indicates that, on average, pupils exhibit moderate to high levels of creativity, which is essential for success under the CBC. The skewness value of -0.22 suggests a slight inclination toward higher creativity scores, implying that most pupils possess strong creative potential, though some variability exists.

The histogram for creativity scores (Figure 4.2.1) reveals a relatively normal distribution, with a slight positive skew. This indicates that while the majority of pupils exhibit moderate levels of creativity, a notable number demonstrate higher creativity levels, reflecting the diversity in pupils' creative abilities. The peak of the distribution around the mean score of 77.44 suggests that most pupils fall within the average to above-average range for creativity. However, the spread of scores (from a minimum of 45.30 to a maximum of 100.00) reflects variability in how pupils approach creative tasks, which could be influenced by external factors such as access to resources, exposure to creative learning opportunities, and teaching methods.

The slight positive skew indicates that there are fewer pupils with very low creativity scores, likely due to the overall positive academic environment in the study area. However, the presence of pupils on the lower end of the creativity scale highlights the need for targeted support, particularly in rural schools, where resource limitations may hinder pupils' ability to fully engage in creative tasks. Teacher training and the incorporation of hands-on, creative pedagogies could help boost creativity scores among these pupils.

Histogram for Creativity Scores

Figure 4.2.2 presents the histogram for creativity scores, illustrating how pupils' creativity is distributed across the sample. The histogram reveals a normal distribution with a slight positive skew, indicating that while most pupils exhibit moderate levels of creativity, a significant number demonstrate higher creativity levels. This diversity in creative abilities suggests that pupils have varying capacities to generate novel ideas and solutions, which is a key component of the CBC.



The mean score of 77.44 implies that pupils generally possess the cognitive flexibility and problem-solving skills emphasized by the CBC. However, the leftward skew suggests that some pupils, particularly in rural areas, may struggle with creativity due to limited exposure to creative learning opportunities. Addressing this disparity through teacher training, resource allocation, and creative pedagogies could enhance creativity levels among all pupils, regardless of their geographical location.

Hypothesis Testing

Relationship Between Creativity and Achievement Goals

The study tested the hypothesis:

H01: There is no statistically significant relationship between pupils' creativity and their achievement goals within the Competency-Based Curriculum in public primary schools in Kisii-Central Sub-County, Kisii County, Kenya.

		Achievement goals in CBC
Creativity score	Pearson Correlation	-.241**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	350
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).		

Pearson Correlation:

Creativity score: $r = -0.241$, $p = 0.000$ (Significant at the 0.01 level, 2-tailed)

The results, presented in Table 4.4.1, reveal a statistically significant negative relationship between creativity and achievement goals, with a Pearson correlation of -0.241 ($p = 0.000$). This indicates that higher levels of creativity are associated with lower achievement goals, which contradicts the conventional understanding that creativity fosters higher academic performance.

This unexpected result may be attributed to the nature of the CBC, which emphasizes competency development rather than traditional academic outcomes. Pupils with high creativity may focus more on innovative problem-solving and skill mastery rather than conforming to predefined performance goals. This aligns with the Divergent Theory of Creativity (Guilford, 1950), which posits that creative individuals generate multiple ideas and solutions, often prioritizing process over outcomes.

The findings suggest that while creativity is a critical skill in the CBC, it may not always align with traditional assessment frameworks that prioritize standardized testing. This misalignment could explain the negative correlation between creativity and achievement goals. Educators should therefore revise assessment frameworks to better capture and reward creativity, ensuring that creative pupils are not disadvantaged by traditional performance metrics.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Creativity and Achievement Goals: A Negative Correlation

The study found that pupils with high creativity scores (mean = 77.44, SD = 9.18) were less likely to set high achievement goals, as evidenced by the negative correlation ($r = -0.241$). This suggests that while creativity is a core competency in the CBC, it does not necessarily translate into higher academic aspirations. Instead, pupils with high creativity may prioritize skill mastery, innovative problem-solving, and intrinsic motivation over traditional performance metrics such as grades or standardized test scores.

This finding aligns with the Divergent Theory of Creativity (Guilford, 1950), which posits that creative individuals generate multiple ideas and solutions rather than focusing on a single, predefined outcome. In the context of the CBC, which emphasizes competency-based learning, pupils with high creativity may be more engaged in exploring diverse approaches to learning rather than aiming for high external performance goals. For example, the data showed that only 6.3% of boys with high creativity exceeded expectations, compared to 13.1% of girls with high creativity. This suggests that while girls with high creativity are more likely to achieve high academic outcomes, boys with similar creativity levels may not set equally high goals, possibly due to differences in motivation, self-efficacy, or external support.

The histogram of creativity scores (Figure 4.2.2) further supports this interpretation, showing that while most pupils scored within the moderate to high creativity range (70–90), a subset of pupils scored significantly lower (below 60). This variability indicates that not all pupils benefit equally from creative learning opportunities, particularly in rural schools where resources and support may be limited. Addressing this disparity through targeted interventions, such as creative pedagogies and teacher training, could help bridge the gap between creativity and achievement goals.

Gender Differences in Creativity and Achievement Goals

The study revealed significant gender differences in how creativity influences achievement goals. Girls with high creativity were more likely to exceed expectations (13.1%) compared to boys with high creativity (6.3%). This disparity suggests that girls may be more effective at leveraging their creativity to achieve achievement goals, possibly due to stronger self-regulatory skills, intrinsic motivation, or greater support from teachers and peers.

Conversely, boys with low creativity recorded the highest rate of underperformance (12.6%), indicating that low creativity levels may hinder their ability to meet academic expectations. This finding is particularly concerning for rural boys, who face additional challenges such as limited access to creative learning resources and larger class sizes, which may further suppress their creative potential. The data showed that only 4.9% of boys with

low creativity exceeded expectations, compared to 12.9% of girls with low creativity, reinforcing the need for gender-sensitive interventions to support boys in developing their creative skills.

These gender differences align with research by Daumiller et al. (2021), which found that female learners often exhibit stronger academic resilience and persistence in the face of challenges. In contrast, boys may require additional encouragement and structured support to translate their creativity into achievement goals. Programs that emphasize collaborative learning, mentorship, and hands-on creative activities could help boys develop the confidence and skills needed to set and achieve higher academic goals.

Urban vs. Rural Disparities in Creativity and Achievement

The study also highlighted disparities between urban and rural pupils in terms of creativity and achievement outcomes. Urban pupils generally exhibited higher creativity levels and better achievement outcomes compared to their rural counterparts. For instance, 27.6% of urban boys and 28.2% of urban girls reported using reading and revising as a strategy to meet their academic goals, compared to only 20.1% of rural boys and 24.1% of rural girls. This suggests that urban pupils benefit from more resource-rich environments, including better access to learning materials, smaller class sizes, and stronger teacher support, all of which foster creativity and academic engagement.

In contrast, rural pupils particularly boys were more likely to leave academic challenges unresolved (58.3%), compared to only 25.0% of urban pupils. This indicates that rural boys may lack the motivation, self-efficacy, or external support needed to engage effectively with creative tasks. The histogram of creativity scores (Figure 4.2.1) further supports this, showing a wider spread of scores in rural schools, where some pupils scored as low as 45.30 on the creativity scale.

These disparities underscore the need for policy reforms and resource allocation to ensure that rural schools have equitable access to creative learning tools, teacher training, and extracurricular activities. By addressing these inequities, educators can help rural pupils particularly boys develop their creative potential and improve their achievement goals.

Implications for the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC)

The findings of this study have important implications for the implementation of the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) in Kenya. The negative correlation between creativity and achievement goals suggests that while the CBC successfully fosters creative thinking and problem-solving skills, it may not adequately align creativity with traditional academic aspirations. This misalignment could lead to underachievement among highly creative pupils, particularly boys, who may not see the value in setting high performance goals.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

The objective of this study was to examine the relationship between pupils' creativity and their achievement goals under the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) in public primary schools in Kisii-Central Sub-County, Kenya. The findings revealed a statistically significant negative correlation ($r = -0.241$, $p < 0.01$) between creativity and achievement goals, indicating that pupils with higher levels of creativity tend to set lower achievement goals. This result challenges conventional assumptions about the role of creativity in achievement goals, suggesting that creative pupils may prioritize skill mastery, intrinsic motivation, and innovative problem-solving over traditional performance metrics such as grades or standardized test scores.

The study's results align with the Divergent Theory of Creativity (Guilford, 1950), which posits that creative individuals generate multiple ideas and solutions rather than focusing on a single, predefined outcome. In the context of the CBC, which emphasizes competency-based learning, pupils with high creativity may be more engaged in exploring diverse approaches to learning rather than aiming for high external performance goals. The data also highlighted gender differences, with girls exhibiting higher achievement outcomes when creativity was

high, while boys with similar creativity levels did not set equally high goals. This disparity underscores the need for targeted interventions to support boys in leveraging their creativity for achievement goals. Additionally, urban pupils generally demonstrated higher creativity levels and better achievement outcomes compared to their rural counterparts, pointing to inequities in access to creative learning resources and support.

Recommendations

The findings of this study underscore the need for educators, policymakers, and curriculum developers to rethink how creativity is integrated and assessed within the CBC framework. To ensure that creative pupils are supported in balancing their innovative approaches with measurable academic outcomes, it is essential to revise assessment frameworks to better capture and reward creativity. This could involve incorporating project-based assessments, portfolios, and open-ended tasks that allow pupils to demonstrate their creative problem-solving skills and intrinsic motivation.

Furthermore, targeted interventions should be implemented to address the gender and urban-rural disparities observed in the study. Schools should provide additional support for boys, particularly in rural areas, through mentorship programs, collaborative learning activities, and teacher training focused on fostering creativity. Ensuring equitable access to creative learning resources and opportunities across all schools will help bridge the gap between creativity and achievement goals, ultimately enhancing the overall effectiveness of the CBC in nurturing well-rounded, competent learners.

Lastly there for teachers need to incorporate activities which can enhance creativity on their daily lessons. Thus allowing pupils to explore multiple solutions and use of imaginations thus to boost their engagement in learning, consistent with CBC's emphasis on innovation and problem-solving.

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