

**INFLUENCE OF PROVISION OF CURRICULUM SUPPORT
MATERIALS ON IMPLEMENTATION OF ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS
EDUCATION CURRICULUM IN PUBLIC SECONDARY
SCHOOLS IN ISIOLO COUNTY, KENYA**

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ABSTRACT

Statement of the Problem: Curriculum support materials play a crucial role in the implementation of the Islamic Religious Education (IRE) curriculum. However, in Isiolo County, the implementation of the IRE curriculum in public secondary schools is not without challenges. Most schools have lagged behind in syllabus coverage, and students have registered low grades in IRE examinations.

Purpose of the Study: To assess the influence of school dynamics on the implementation of the IRE curriculum in public secondary schools in Isiolo County, Kenya.

Methodology: The study utilized a mixed methodology and descriptive survey design. The target population consisted of 295 respondents, including 23 principals and 272 teachers, with a sample size of 170 determined by Yamane's Formula. Stratified sampling was used to create ten strata based on the wards in Isiolo County, with one principal selected purposively and 16 teachers randomly from each ward, resulting in a sample of 10 principals and 160 teachers. Data was collected through questionnaires for teachers and interviews for principals, and analyzed using thematic analysis for qualitative data and descriptive statistics, frequencies, percentages, and linear regression analysis with SPSS for quantitative data.

Findings: The study established that the implementation of the IRE curriculum remains a challenge in public secondary schools in Isiolo County. Many teachers do not cover the syllabus on time, and classroom pedagogy remains unimproved, characterized by low student performance in IRE in the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE). This is attributed to the provision of inadequate curriculum support materials.

Recommendations: Principals should partner with other stakeholders, such as Public Benefits Organizations and donors, to ensure the adequate provision of curriculum support materials.

Keywords: *Provision of Curriculum, Support Materials, Islamic Religious, Education Curriculum, Public Secondary Schools.*

INTRODUCTION

Curriculum implementation entails a process of putting into action different aspects of the curriculum. According to Harley and Wedekind (2012), curriculum implementation is simply a process of putting an agreed plan, decision, proposal, idea, or policy into effect, which helps the learner acquire knowledge or experience. In other words, curriculum implementation takes place as the learner acquires the intended experiences, knowledge, skills, ideas, and attitudes aimed at enabling them to function effectively in society. In the context of Islamic Religious Education, Glatthorn (2013) opines that curriculum implementation involves ensuring that the syllabus is effectively covered by teachers and students register impressive grades in internal and national examinations. However, the effective implementation of the IRE curriculum has not been without challenges.

For instance, in Hong Kong, Morris (2013) reports that 67.3% of the IRE syllabus in secondary schools is not usually covered on time, with students' performance in national examinations averaging 53.4%. A similar scenario is replicated in Latin American countries such as Haiti and Nicaragua, where syllabus coverage in high schools has not been smooth, resulting in dismal student performance in national examinations (Morris, 2013). This has been attributed to various factors, including the provision of curriculum support materials. Curriculum support materials refer to didactic material things meant to facilitate the learning and teaching of IRE. Miller and Seller (2012) posit that curriculum support materials are tools, either locally made or commercialized, designed to enhance the learning process. Cognizant of these assertions, Bransford and Brown (2012) consider curriculum support materials as objects or devices that help the teacher make a lesson much clearer to the learner. These materials and resources include audiotapes, recorders, video tape recorders, projectors, still pictures, programmed instruction, filmstrips, charts, graphs, and many others, offering a variety of instructional experiences.

In Austria, Spillane, Reiser, and Reimer (2012) assert that other types of instructional resources include games, role-playing, demonstrations, experiments, real-life situations, real objects and specimens, and symbolic and pictorial representations. UNESCO (2013) reports that for the realization of IRE curriculum objectives in secondary schools, curriculum support materials

must be put in place and used effectively in classroom practice. This implies that while the introduction of free day secondary education has increased participation, it has equally created considerable challenges, including inadequacy of teaching and learning facilities like books, charts, and other important academic accessories for effective implementation of secondary school curricula such as IRE. In the same vein, the Florida Department of Education (2013) supports the fact that a well-organized and effective application of curriculum support materials in lessons removes apathy, complements available books, arouses students' interest through practical teaching, and also helps them to be creative. Similarly, a study was conducted in the Local Government Area of Kwara State, Ilorin, in Nigeria by Moronfolo (2014), which used questionnaires to collect data on the material resources available for teaching some selected subjects in ten secondary schools. Moronfolo (2014) related these to the achievements of students undertaking specific subjects and the number of resources available for teaching those subjects. The findings indicated a critical impact of material resources on the students' academic performance in these subjects. Kenya is not an exception, and Eshiwani (2009) posits that the government supplies curriculum support materials to all public secondary schools, though the supply is inadequate due to high enrollment occasioned by the free secondary education policy.

A study carried out in secondary schools in Kakamega East Sub-county by Muvango, Indoshi, and Okwara (2019) revealed that when students are taught without teaching and learning materials, they tend to forget after a short span of time. However, when taught using curriculum support materials, they do not forget the concepts quickly. According to Muvango et al. (2019), students internalize the concepts and retain them for a long time, indicating that a curriculum objective has been achieved by the teachers. These findings affirm the fact that curriculum support materials are paramount in implementing the IRE curriculum since they have benefits that define their uniqueness in classroom instruction.

In Isiolo County, however, this has not been fully realized, with the implementation of the IRE curriculum in secondary schools being slow. For example, a report by the Ministry of Education (2020) shows that in many secondary schools in Isiolo County, coverage of the IRE syllabus is often not undertaken on time, with students who study IRE registering low grades in internal and national examinations. According to MoE (2020), 47.9% of IRE teachers do not complete their syllabus on time, and sometimes students sit for examinations without

completing their IRE content. The report indicates that in 2015, students registered 43.8% in KCSE in the IRE subject, 39.2% in 2016, 34.1% in 2017, 30.8% in 2018, and 29.7% in 2019 (MoE, 2020). To mitigate these challenges, the government has introduced several initiatives, such as providing support to students from humble backgrounds through bursaries, increasing funding for school infrastructure where parents are unable to provide such support, and promoting stakeholder collaboration to provide secondary education, which have not yielded much remarkable progress. In a study carried out in Isiolo County, Shaaban (2012) revealed that the provision and effective utilization of curriculum support materials require a lot of creativity and sound knowledge of the content. When a teacher uses inferior or lower quality and inadequate curriculum support materials, the IRE curriculum objectives may not be achieved, hence compromising the quality of education. This was evidenced by low performance in the IRE national examinations (Shaaban, 2012). However, Shaaban (2012), as did other empirical researchers, did not indicate how the adequacy of curriculum support materials provided improves the process of implementing the IRE curriculum, a gap which the study sought to fill.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Curriculum support materials play a critical role in the implementation of Islamic Religious Education (IRE) curriculum. However, in Isiolo County, the implementation of IIRE curriculum in public secondary schools is not devoid of challenges. Most schools have lagged behind in syllabus coverage and students to register low grades in IRE in examinations. As noted earlier in the background, a report by the Ministry of Education (2020) shows that, in many secondary schools in Isiolo County, coverage of IRE syllabus is not often undertaken in time with students who study IRE registering low grades in internal and national examination. MoE (2020) further notes that 47.9% of IRE teachers do not complete their syllabus in time and sometimes students sit for examinations without competing their IRE content. In 2015 students registered 43.8% in KCSE in IRE subject, 39.2% in 2016, 34.1% in 2017, 30.8% in 2018 and 29.7% in 2019 (MoE, 2020). This has comprised smooth implementation of IRE curriculum. Despite this state of affairs, few empirical studies had interrogated the extent to which school dynamics determine the implementation of IRE curriculum in secondary schools, hence this study.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study was guided by the following objectives:

- i. To assess the status of the implementation of IRE curriculum in public secondary schools in Isiolo County.
- ii. To examine the influence of provision of curriculum support materials on implementation of IRE curriculum in public secondary schools in Isiolo County;

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study was guided by the Dynamic Theory of School Factors, which was proposed by Kyriakides (2009). This theory is based on the assumption that factors at the school level are expected to have not only direct effects on learner achievement but also indirect effects. School factors are expected to influence classroom-level factors, especially teaching practice. This assumption is based on the fact that effectiveness studies show that the classroom level is more significant than the school and the system level, and that defining factors at the classroom level is seen as a prerequisite for defining the school and the system level. Besides, this theory underscores the fact that dynamics or factors such as the availability of teachers, the provision of curriculum support materials, instructional supervision, and teacher motivation practices adopted by principals influence the extent to which the IRE curriculum is being implemented in secondary schools. In other words, only changes in those dynamics or factors for which schools face significant problems are expected to be associated with smooth syllabus coverage and students' performance in the IRE subject.

This study was also anchored on the curriculum implementation theory, which was postulated by Bobbit (1918). This theory is anchored on the assumption and belief that any curriculum worth being implemented should prepare learners for their future roles in the new industrial society and thus influenced the school curriculum by showing how teaching classical subjects should be replaced by teaching subjects that correspond to social needs. According to this theory, a curriculum has to adapt to the needs of an individual and the needs of the new industrial society; people should not be taught what they would never use. The curriculum being implemented should only teach those skills that were necessary to fulfill their tasks, which resulted in an early differentiation in education for girls and boys. According to Bobbit (1918), there was a need to eliminate conventional school subjects and examinations; that is, he believed that schools are charged to provide society with what it needs as determined by

scientific analyses. In this study, the theory fits in that the implementation of the curriculum considers learners' strengths, weaknesses, needs, and preferences and advocates for a change in teaching methods. It taps into learner competencies and mastery of subjects and examinations.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study used a mixed methodology with a descriptive survey research design. The target population was 295 respondents, including 23 principals and 272 teachers, from which a sample of 170 respondents was drawn using Yamane's Formula. Stratified sampling was used to create ten distinct strata based on the number of wards in Isiolo County. Using purposive sampling, one principal was selected from each ward. However, simple random sampling was used to select 16 teachers from each ward. This procedure resulted in a sample size of ten principals and 160 teachers. Teachers' data was collected using questionnaires, while principals' data was collected through interviews. The data analysis began with identifying common themes. Qualitative data were analyzed thematically based on the objectives and presented in narrative format. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages, inferentially using linear regression analysis with the help of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS Version 23), and presented using tables.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The results and discussions section present the findings of the study based on the objective, outlining the methods of presentation for the study findings and discussions. In this study, 160 questionnaires were administered to teachers, and 139 were filled and returned. The researcher also interviewed 8 principals out of the sampled 10. The principals registered a response rate of 80.0%, while teachers registered 86.9%, yielding an average response rate of 86.5%. This response rate is consistent with Creswell's (2014) assertion that a rate above 75.0% is adequate, allowing the researcher to generalize the study outcomes to the target population.

Status of Implementation of IRE Curriculum in Public Secondary Schools

The study sought to assess the levels of learning of Islamic Religious Education in public secondary schools. This was measured by assessing how often teachers cover IRE syllabus in time and analyzing students' results in Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) in

Islamic Religious Education for the last five years (2019-2023). Descriptive data were collected from the sampled teachers and results are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Frequency of Syllabus Coverage by Teachers in Public Secondary Schools

Frequency of Timely Syllabus Coverage by Teachers	No. of Teachers	
	f	%
Often	41	29.5
Rarely	77	55.4
Never	21	15.1

Table 1 shows that most of the IRE teachers do not often cover syllabus in time, 55.4% rarely whereas 15.1% never do. During the interviews, principals also stated that most teachers do not cover IRE syllabus in time. Principal, P1, noted;

In my school, I have had cases where teachers do not cover syllabus in time to accord students adequate time for revision.

These findings corroborate the assertions of Hofman and ve Hofman (2015) that, in the Netherlands, a performing or s competent teacher is regarded as one who is able to cover syllabus in time and teach a particular subject very well that is, one who perceives his or her teaching competence and believe that they can exert a positive effect on students' achievement. Having collected and analyzed data on syllabus coverage, the researcher further sought to assess the status of IRE performance in KCSE for the last five years (2019-2023) as an indicator of teacher performance. Results are shown in Table 2;

Table 2: KCSE Performance in IRE in Public Secondary Schools in Isiolo County (Mean scores)

KCSE Results in Mean Scores	Years of Examination				
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
	%	%	%	%	%
1-3 points	40.2	43.5	44.2	47.3	48.9
3-5 points	36.9	35.1	34.9	33.5	32.5
5-7 points	15.4	15.1	14.8	13.7	13.4
7-9 points	5.3	4.4	4.3	3.8	3.6
9-12 points	2.2	1.9	1.8	1.7	1.6

Table 2 shows that, in 2019, 40.2% of the secondary schools had mean points ranging between 1-3 in Islamic Religious Education (IRE), 36.9% scored between 3-5 points, 15.4% scored between 5-7 points, 5.3% scored between 7-9 points whereas only a paltry 2.2% of the secondary schools scored between 9-12 points in IRE. In the subsequent years, the performance has been on a declining trend. Table 2 shows that 43.5% of secondary schools scored between 1-3 points in 2020, 35.1% scored between 3-5 points, 15.1% scored 5-7 points and 4.4% scored 7-9 points whereas 1.9% scored 9-12 points in IRE. In 2021, 44.2% of secondary schools registered 1-3 points in IRE, 34.9% scored 3-5 points, 14.8% scored between 5-7 points, and 4.3% scored 7-9 points whereas 1.8% scored 9-12 points. Table 7 further shows that, in 2022, 47.3% of secondary schools scored between 1-3 mean points in IRE, 33.5% scored 3-5 mean points, 13.7% scored 5-7 mean points, 3.8% scored 7-9 mean points while 1.7% scored between 9-12 mean points in KCSE. In a similar trend, 48.9% of the secondary schools scored between 1-3 mean points, 32.5% scored 3-5 mean points, 13.4% scored 5-7 mean points, 3.6% registered 7-9 mean points whereas 1.6% registered 9-12 mean points in KCSE in 2023. The researcher also interviewed the principals and IRE teachers who also admitted that the academic performance of students in IRE has been on a downward trend in public secondary schools. Principal, P1, noted;

In my school, learning outcomes in national examinations for Islamic Religious Education subject has been on the decline despite the efforts we have put in place.

On their part, the teachers also indicated that, in public secondary schools, students have continuously registered low grades in internal and national examinations. Islamic Religious Education Teacher, IRET1, observed;

In public secondary schools, the management has put a lot of effort to ensure that IRE students learn and perform better in their internal and national examinations. However, this has not been the case since many students still register low performance in IRE examinations which is below average (below C+ and above).

From the above findings, both the principals, teachers and students acknowledge that students' academic performance in Islamic Religious Education in internal as well as national examinations has been on a downward trend. This agrees with the findings of a report by MoE (2022) that the performance of students in IRE in Isiolo County in KCSE has been on a downward trend with a progressive decrease in the number of students who score grade C+.

This indicates that students' academic performance in Islamic Religious Education has been progressively decreasing in public secondary schools, though regarded as a crucial tool for expounding the results of learning for students as do teachers in any school. In summary, these findings attest that learning of Islamic Religious Education entails what a student is expected to know, understand and/or be able to demonstrate at the end of a period of learning. It entails the outcomes of learning defined in terms of knowledge, skills, abilities, attitudes as well as understanding that an individual student attains as a result of his or her successful engagement in a particular set of secondary school education experiences.

Provision of Curriculum Support Materials and Implementation of IRE Curriculum in Public Secondary Schools

The study sought to assess how the provision of curriculum support materials influences implementation of IRE curriculum in public secondary schools. Descriptive data were collected from teachers and results are shown in Table 3;

Table 3: Teachers' Views on the Influence of Curriculum Support Materials on Implementation of IRE Curriculum in Public Secondary Schools

Test Items	Ratings				
	SA %	A %	U %	D %	SD %
In public secondary schools, there is provision of stationery which has enhanced the implementation of IRE curriculum	29.4	13.6	7.2	38.1	11.5
Public secondary school principals ensure that teaching aids are available and adequate as a way of enhancing implementation of IRE curriculum	50.4	14.4	5.8	20.1	9.3
In public secondary schools, reference materials are adequate and has slowed the implementation of IRE curriculum	48.2	6.5	4.3	14.4	26.6
Public secondary school principals have not ensured that every student is provided with adequate curriculum support materials to improve their performance in IRE	63.3	12.9	7.2	13.7	2.9
In public secondary schools, supply and provision of curriculum support materials have not been regular and has slowed the implementation of IRE curriculum	50.4	10.8	3.6	33.1	2.1

Table 3 shows that 41(29.4%) of the teachers strongly agreed with the view that, in public secondary schools, there is provision of stationery which has enhanced the implementation of IRE curriculum while 19(13.6%) agreed, 10(7.2%) were undecided, 53(38.1%) disagreed whereas 16(11.5%) strongly disagreed. More than half, 70(50.4%), of the teachers strongly

agreed with the view that public secondary school principals ensure that teaching aids are available and adequate as a way of enhancing implementation of IRE curriculum while 20(14.4%) agreed. However, 8(5.8%) were undecided, 28(20.1%) disagreed whereas 13(9.3%) strongly disagreed. The study found that 67(48.2%) of the teachers strongly agreed with the view that, in public secondary schools, reference materials are adequate and has slowed the implementation of IRE curriculum while 9(6.5%) agreed, 6(4.3%) were undecided, 20(14.4%) disagreed whereas 37(26.6%) strongly disagreed. Majority, 88(63.3%), of the teachers strongly agreed with the view that public secondary school principals have not ensured that every student is provided with adequate curriculum support materials to improve their performance in IRE whereas 18(12.9%) agreed, 10(7.2%) were undecided, 19(13.7%) disagreed whereas 4(2.9%) strongly disagreed. Slightly more than half, 70(50.4%), of the teachers strongly agreed that, in public secondary schools, supply and provision of curriculum support materials have not been regular and has slowed the implementation of IRE curriculum whereas 15(10.8%) agreed, 5(3.6%) were undecided, 46(33.1%) disagreed whereas 3(2.1%) strongly disagreed.

These findings are consistent with the assertions of UNESCO (2013) that, for realization of IRE curriculum objectives in secondary schools, curriculum support materials must be put in place and used effectively in classroom practice. This implies that, while introduction of free day secondary education has increased participation, it has equally created considerable challenges which include; inadequacy of teaching and learning facilities like books, charts and other important academic accessories for effective implementation of secondary school curriculum such as IRE. In other words, the slow pace in the implementation of IRE curriculum in public secondary schools evidenced by inadequate syllabus coverage, unimproved pedagogy and above all, low learning outcomes among pupils in internal and national assessments, is attributed to inadequate provision of relevant and suitable books and other key curriculum support materials.

This implies that, to implementation of IRE curriculum effectively and ensure mastery of content and improved learning outcomes in IRE, it behooves schools and stakeholders to provide adequate instructional materials. To verify the influence of provision of curriculum support materials on implementation of IRE curriculum in public secondary schools, data were collected from the 8 sampled public secondary schools on the levels of adequacy (Adequate =

3, Not Adequate = 2 and Not Sure = 1) of curriculum support materials and the average KCSE performance in IRE for the last five years (2019-2023). Results are shown in Table 4:

Table 4: Curriculum Support Materials and Implementation of IRE Curriculum in Public Secondary Schools

Levels of Adequacy of Curriculum Support Materials	Average KCSE Performance in IRE (2019-2023) (%)
3	40.30
2	39.20
2	53.90
2	37.90
2	35.50
2	58.70
1	30.10
1	23.04

Table 4 shows that, in public secondary schools where curriculum support materials are adequate, the average students' performance in IRE was high compared to their counterparts which have inadequate provision of the materials. That is, the higher the levels of adequacy of curriculum support materials, the higher the students' academic performance in IRE. Data in Table 4 were run through linear regressions analysis and the results are shown in Table 5:

Table 5: Curriculum Support Materials and Implementation of IRE Curriculum in Public Secondary Schools

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	26.516	6.740		3.934	.001
Adequacy of Curriculum Support Materials	8.635	3.058	.544	2.824	.011

Table 5 shows linear regression analysis which generated a linear model of the form; Implementation of IRE Curriculum (KCSE Results) in Public Secondary Schools = 26.516 + 0.544Adequacy of Curriculum Support Materials. From these results, the coefficient for implementation of IRE curriculum manifested by IRE results in public secondary schools in

relation to the levels of adequacy of curriculum support materials is 0.544. This implies that for every increase in the provision of curriculum support materials, the performance in IRE is expected to increase by a factor of 0.544 (positive coefficient). The value 26.516 indicates that implementation of IRE curriculum in public secondary schools is influenced by dynamics other than provision of curriculum support materials.

This may include teachers' utilization of such materials, learner readiness or stakeholders' support among others. Table 13 further shows a p-value of 0.011, which is less than 0.05 ($0.011 < 0.05$). This indicates that there is a significant influence of provision of adequate curriculum support materials on the implementation of IRE curriculum in public secondary schools. During the interviews, the principals responded in favour of the view that the provision of textbooks has been done but is not adequate for the effective implementation of IRE curriculum in public secondary schools. Principal, P4, noted;

In my secondary school, despite the concerted efforts to provide textbooks in IRE, the number is still inadequate. The supply of textbooks has not reached the standard ratio of one learner per book (1:1) for realization of quality education.

Despite these contradictions, these views underscore the vitality of the provision of adequate and relevant textbooks as key to the successful implementation of IRE curriculum in schools. On the question of stationery, principals indicated that there has been adequate provision of the same in public secondary schools. Principal, P5, noted;

In my secondary school, there has been adequate provision of stationery for all the learners.

However, most of the interviewees responded in favour of the view that there are few reference and digital materials as well as teaching aids provided by public secondary schools which have lowered the pace of IRE implementation. Principal, P6, stated;

In my secondary school, the Ministry of Education has only provided course books for teaching but rarely provides reference materials, digital tools and teaching aids. I have had to request parents and other donors to come in handy to supplement.

In summary, these views affirm the fact that curriculum support materials, such as textbooks, stationery, digital materials, reference materials and lesson notes among others, constitute a key component in the implementation of IRE curriculum in schools. This implies that, just as noted earlier, implementation of IRE curriculum in public secondary schools has been slow

and ineffective owing to attributed to inadequate provision of relevant and suitable books and other key curriculum support materials.

CONCLUSIONS

The study findings clearly demonstrate that the implementation of the IRE curriculum remains a difficult task in public secondary schools in Isiolo County.

Several teachers fail to complete the syllabus within the designated time, resulting in ineffective classroom teaching methods that lead to poor performance by students in IRE during the KCSE exams. This can be attributed to the insufficient availability of textbooks in many public secondary schools, which hinders the effective implementation of the IRE curriculum. Despite the collective endeavours to distribute textbooks, their availability has been insufficient, with many facing issues related to inconsistent content and redundancies.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The study recommends that principals should partner with other stakeholders such as Public Benefits Organizations and donors to ensure that public secondary schools have adequate curriculum support materials other than textbooks. These may include reference materials, lesson notes, past papers, revision books and teaching aids among others.

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