

THE INFLUENCE OF STRATEGIC PLANNING ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF COMPETENCY-BASED CURRICULUM IN PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN KAJIADO COUNTY

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ABSTRACT

Statement of the Problem: According to the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) framework, the primary goal is to foster holistic development in learners by equipping them with a broad range of skills, knowledge, and values. However, successful implementation of the Competency-Based Curriculum requires a supportive environment where teachers are adequately trained, resources are readily available, and the curriculum is consistently aligned with these goals.

Purpose of the Study: This study sought to establish the influence of strategic planning on the implementation of competency-based curriculum in public primary schools in Kajiado County.

Research Methodology: To achieve the above objectives, the study adopted an explanatory research design. The target population was 338 head teachers and senior teachers. A stratified random sampling method was employed to select 177 respondents. A pilot study was conducted to test the research tools. An online questionnaire was used to collect data from the respondents. Data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential methods using SPSS version 24 software.

Findings and Discussions: The study showed strategic planning received a moderate mean score of 3.57, suggesting varied perceptions and areas needing improvement, but with a significant relationship to CBC implementation ($r = 0.52$).

Conclusion: Strategic planning strongly influences CBC implementation in Kajiado's primary schools, with both successes and challenges identified.

Recommendations: Strategic planning should include clear communication of educational goals and objectives, along with robust mechanisms to manage change and improve operational efficiencies.

Keywords: *Implementation, Competency-Based Curriculum, Public Primary Schools, Kajiado County, Kenya*

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Since its introduction, Kenya's public primary schools have faced a number of challenges in implementing the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC), as the country transitions from a traditional content-based system to one that emphasises competency, skill, and value development. The CBC's goal is to provide students with the attitudes, skills, and values necessary to solve everyday problems and thrive in the competitive global economy of the twenty-first century. This shift is consistent with UNESCO's (2018) vision of providing citizens with the skills, knowledge, and values they need to thrive in the global village of rapidly evolving technology. The Basic Education Curriculum Framework provides a structure for students to develop foundational skills at various levels, allowing them to cultivate competencies required for good citizenship and the workplace (Imana, 2020).

Globally, countries such as South Korea have successfully implemented CBC, resulting in improved learning outcomes, critical thinking skills, and problem-solving abilities (Choi and Woo, 2020; Koo, 2020; Kwak, 2019). Lee and Park (2020) stress the importance of redefining educational goals, collaborating with stakeholders, and providing ongoing support and resources to educators. In the United States, successful CBC implementation has emphasised deeper learning, student-centered approaches, and personalised learning, drawing on cognitive psychology and pedagogical theory (Hernández & Darling-Hammond, 2019; Dodge, Bushway, & Long, 2023).

Several African countries have adopted CBC to meet the demand for competent personnel capable of solving global problems. South Africa, Nigeria, and Rwanda have all implemented CBC to varying degrees of success, despite challenges such as a lack of capacity, inadequate preparedness, and the need for extensive teacher training (Kabombwe & Mulenga, 2019; Osarenren-Osaghae & Irabor, 2018; Abubakar, 2020; Ndiokubwayo & Habiaremye, 2018). Rwanda's successful implementation required a systematic overhaul of its educational system, with an emphasis on skills, values, and practical knowledge that were aligned with national development goals (Smith & Johnson, 2020).

Kenya implemented CBC in 2016, piloting it in 2018 in pre-primary and primary grades under the 2-6-3-3-3 education system (Waweru, 2019). The Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD) created an ability-based education plan that prioritises what students are expected to do over what they are expected to know (Republic of Kenya, 2018). However,

challenges such as teachers' misunderstanding of the new system and insufficient preparation have hampered the successful implementation of CBC in many primary schools (Silas, 2020). Strategic planning is critical to the effective implementation of CBC. A well-defined strategic plan outlines the steps, resources, and timelines required for successful curriculum implementation (Kilonzo, 2021). Comprehensive planning allows schools to better address potential challenges and align their objectives with the CBC's overall goals. This proactive approach allows schools to adjust their practices in response to changing educational needs and expectations, bridging the gap between policy and practice. Kajiado County's 338 public primary schools spread across six sub-counties present unique challenges for CBC implementation (Ministry of Education, 2023). These challenges include a policy-practice gap, with schools struggling to align their operations and teaching methods with CBC principles (Akala, 2021). Schools in remote areas like Loitoktok and Mashuru face additional challenges, such as inadequate infrastructure, limited access to learning materials, and teacher shortages (Amutabi, 2021). Addressing these disparities through strategic planning is critical to ensuring that all Kajiado County students have equal opportunities to benefit from educational reforms aimed at improving their competencies and life skills.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The implementation of Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) in Kenya's public primary schools has piqued academic interest due to its potential to produce well-rounded learners (Amutabi, 2021). Despite its promise, effective implementation remained a significant challenge, especially in terms of strategic planning and execution. A critical issue in CBC implementation was educators' inadequate preparation. According to Momanyi and Rop (2020), many teachers felt unprepared to effectively implement CBC. This was supported by reports from the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD, 2018) and the Teachers Service Commission (TSC, 2018), which found that only 3% of educators felt confidently prepared for CBC implementation, while 20% felt unprepared at all. This lack of readiness indicated a gap in strategic planning for teacher preparation and professional development.

In addition, systemic issues within the education framework exacerbated the challenges of CBC implementation. The Kenya National Union of Teachers (KNUT, 2019) expressed concern about the rushed development of the new syllabus, citing a lack of proper design and appropriate learning materials. This hasty rollout highlighted potential flaws in national

strategic planning, which led to implementation issues at the school level. Silas (2020) stated that the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) was critical in enabling productive teaching and learning, as well as ensuring curriculum changes were implemented. However, the incorporation of ICT into CBC implementation strategies appeared to be insufficient, highlighting gaps in strategic resource allocation and infrastructure development. These challenges highlighted the need for a thorough investigation into the factors influencing CBC implementation, with a particular emphasis on strategic planning. The lack of consistent strategies for teacher preparation, resource allocation, and systemic support suggested that strategic planning could be critical to the successful implementation of CBC in public primary schools. The purpose of this study was to look into the factors that influence the implementation of competency-based curriculum in public primary schools in Kajiado County, Kenya, with a focus on the role of strategic planning in addressing identified challenges and increasing the effectiveness of CBC implementation.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the study was to determine the influence of strategic planning on the implementation of competency-based curriculum in public primary schools in Kajiado County.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

What is the influence of strategic planning influence the implementation of a competency-based curriculum in public primary schools in Kajiado County?

LITERATURE REVIEW

The section present the theoretical framework, empirical review and conceptual framework.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The study was underpinned by Swot Analysis Framework.

2.2.3 SWOT Analysis Framework

Albert Humphrey is widely credited with the development of SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) during the 1960s. His work was part of a research project conducted at the Stanford Research Institute (now SRI International), funded by leading Fortune 500 companies (Cusi et al., 2023). While there may not be a single definitive publication by Humphrey on SWOT analysis, his contribution to the field of strategic planning is

acknowledged through various writings and presentations during his time at SRI. According to Puyt, (2024), SWOT is a tool for making better business decisions report which outlines the methodology and application of SWOT analysis in strategic planning. In addition, Humprey's work laid the foundation for subsequent research and the widespread adoption of SWOT analysis in both academic and business contexts.

According to Virgana et al. (2021), learning institutions carry out SWOT analysis at the strategic planning stage, try to identify and examine the existing resources both internally and externally investigating their trends and patterns that may have either positive or negative impacts on their institutions. In the digital era, numerous changes occur in business strategies including organization policies. Organizational strategies and alignments are required for organizations to achieve set goals in a specific period. Through careful planning and proactive decision-making, institutions can navigate the complexities of CBC adoption and cultivate a culture of innovation, excellence, and student success (Smith, 2018). In conclusion, conducting a thorough SWOT analysis may result in educational institutions developing strategic plans that will capitalize on strengths, address weaknesses, seize opportunities, and mitigate threats in the implementation of a competency-based curriculum, thus fostering the success of CBC.

EMPIRICAL REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The empirical review helps in linking the current study with the existing scholarly work to ensure rigor in the research work. This study therefore reviews the various important studies concerning the current study variables.

According to Tornike (2018), who conducted a study in Georgia on the impact of strategic planning on organizational performance, found that the critical connection between an organization's strategy formulation and performance is strategy execution. The study used simple random sampling and data was analyzed using ANOVA and correlation analysis. The study findings will help managers to identify impeding factors in making decisions and overcoming difficulties arising in the process. Strategic planning processes that the organizations carry out to develop strategies that might contribute to performance lead to planned development, growth, technology acquaintance, and having the right people in place. Those in charge of the plan's execution must swear to keep their focus where it belongs and make any necessary changes only after giving careful consideration to how they will affect the whole organization.

According to Tafvelin et al. (2018), organizations need to strike a balance between tending to daily operations and developing new long-term strategies. Effective strategic planning enables schools to prioritize areas of improvement, such as curriculum development, student support services, faculty development, infrastructure enhancements, and community engagement. By aligning resources, including finances, personnel, and technology, schools can effectively support their goals and address the evolving challenges in education. To develop comprehensive and successful strategic plans, it is crucial to involve various stakeholders in the process (Superman, 2020).

A study conducted by Klein and Schwanenberg (2020) on the influence of headteachers' managerial strategies on primary school teachers performance in the implementation of CBC established that the communication strategies employed by the school principals greatly affected the schools' implementation of the curriculum in both public primary and secondary schools in Germany. Klein and Schwanenberg (2020) noted this was a result of many principals in Germany not having received any substantial formal training for management and leadership tasks. The headteachers must understand that in the presence of effective communication, teachers tend to feel safe, happy, and included, which is necessary for them to effectively perform their duties in the execution of the curriculum and promote better results for the school and the learners.

A study conducted by Wong (2020) in Hong Kong established that teachers' limited knowledge of the curriculum, attitudes, and beliefs were factors that hindered effective curriculum change implementation. Other barriers to effective curriculum implementation established by the study were insufficient teachers' understanding of the curriculum documents and limited knowledge of the use of the latest technologies. The current study built on the study by Wong to establish if similar challenges are experienced by headteachers in their leadership strategies and the implementation of CBC. Research by Obiekwe, Ikedimma, Thompson, and Ogbo (2020) in Anambra State, Nigeria, assessed stakeholders' participation in public secondary school's strategic planning process in great detail.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This study adopted a conceptual framework that included independent variable and dependent variable. The independent variable for the study is strategic planning while the dependent variable is the implementation of CBC.

Independent Variables

Dependent Variable

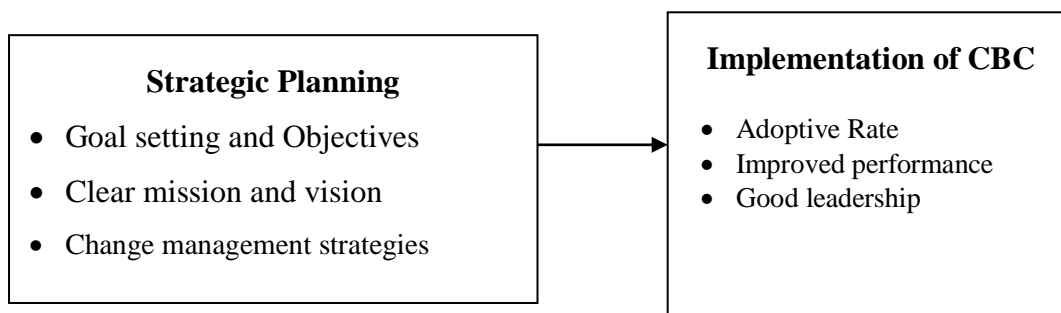


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

RESEARCH MEaTHODOLOGY

This study employed an explanatory research design to investigate the determinants of CBC implementation in public primary schools in Kajiado County, Kenya. The target population consisted of 338 public primary schools across six sub-counties, chosen for their direct involvement in CBC implementation. A stratified random sampling method was used to ensure representative sampling, with the sample size determined using Yamane's formula, resulting in 177 schools. Data was collected through structured questionnaires featuring both open and closed-ended questions, distributed via an online platform. Data analysis involved descriptive statistics (mean, median, and mode) and inferential statistics using a multiple regression equation to analyze the relationship between independent variables (human resource strategies, headteacher leadership strategies, strategic planning, and teacher training) and the dependent variable (CBC implementation).

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The study had a high response rate of 85.90%, with 152 of 177 distributed questionnaires returned. According to demographic analysis, the majority of respondents (71.0%) were male, with 30.9% serving as Head/Deputy Headteachers and 40.1% as Senior Teachers, while females made up 29.0% of the sample. The age distribution revealed a preference for younger and mid-career professionals, with 52.6% aged 25-34 years and 51.3% aged 35-44 years. In terms of education, 64.5% of respondents held a diploma and 35.5% held a bachelor's degree. In terms of work experience, 52.6% had been employed for less than 5 years and 47.4% for 6-10 years. This demographic profile suggests a relatively young, well-educated workforce with

a gender imbalance favouring males in both leadership and teaching roles, which may influence the study's findings on CBC implementation in Kajiado County's public primary schools.

DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

Strategic Planning

The study sought to show the impact of strategic planning on the implementation of the competency-based curriculum in public primary schools in Kajiado County. To gather this information, respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with various statements related to strategic planning implemented in their schools. Each statement was rated on a 5-point Likert scale, where: 5 Strongly Agree, 4 Agree, 3 Neutral, 2 Disagree, and 1 Strongly Disagree. The responses were analyzed using mean scores, standard deviations, and coefficient of variation. Higher mean scores indicated a very high extent of agreement on an item whereas lower mean scores indicated very low extent of agreement with the statements.

Table 1: Strategic Planning

No.	Statement	N	Mean	Std. Dev
Overall Mean			3.57	
No.	Statement	N	Mean	Std. Dev
1	There are clear educational goals and objectives for the implementation of CBC.	152	3.85	1.07
2	There are enough teaching and learning resources for CBC.	152	4.42	0.78
3	The teaching staff has embraced change management in the implementation of CBC.	152	3.08	0.96
4	There are clear operational efficiencies in the implementation of the CBC.	152	2.71	0.94
5	The implementation of CBC is very expensive.	152	3.81	1.12
Overall Mean			3.57	

The results from Table 1 show that the average rating across the statements is 3.57, indicating that respondents have neutral to slightly positive views on the strategic planning efforts for CBC implementation. The highest-rated statement, with a mean score of 4.42 and a low standard deviation of 0.78, indicates that respondents strongly agree that CBC has adequate

teaching and learning resources. This reflects a positive perception that the necessary materials are available to aid in the curriculum's implementation, with a relatively low variation in responses. In contrast, the statement about clear educational goals and objectives for CBC received a mean score of 3.85 and a standard deviation of 1.07. While this demonstrates widespread agreement that CBC has defined goals and objectives, the relatively higher standard deviation indicates some variation in opinions, implying that not all respondents are equally convinced of the clarity of these goals. The lowest-rated statement, with a mean of 2.71 and a standard deviation of 0.94, concerns operational efficiencies in CBC implementation. This score indicates that respondents are generally neutral or slightly disagree that operational efficiencies are effectively managed during implementation. The relatively higher coefficient of variation (34.6%) indicates that there is significant disagreement on this topic, implying that operational inefficiencies may be a problem in some schools. In addition, the statement that teaching staff has embraced change management received a mean rating of 3.08 with a standard deviation of 0.96. This suggests a relatively neutral stance, with some respondents believing that teachers are not fully committed to the changes brought about by the new curriculum, which may be a concern for successful implementation. Lastly, the perception that CBC implementation is expensive had a mean score of 3.81 and a standard deviation of 1.12.

Implementation of CBC

The researcher aimed to evaluate the competency-based curriculum (CBC) implementation in Kajiado County's public primary schools. To collect this data, respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement with various statements regarding the implementation of CBC in their schools. Each statement was evaluated on a 5-point Likert scale, with 5 strongly agreeing, 4 agreeing, 3 neutral, 2 disagreeing, and 1 strongly disagreeing. The responses were evaluated using mean scores, standard deviations, and coefficients of variation. Higher mean scores indicated a very high extent of agreement on an item, and lower mean scores indicated a very low extent of agreement with the statements.

Table 2: Implementation of CBC

Statement	N	Mean	Std. Dev
1 The adoptive rate of CBC implementation is appealing.	152	4.58	0.46
2 There has been improved performance since CBC initiation.	152	4.68	0.45
3 There is good leadership and timeliness in achieving set goals.	152	4.64	0.48
4 The availability of laboratories positively influences the implementation of CBC.	152	4.55	0.54
5 Having adequate classrooms positively influences the implementation of CBC.	152	4.63	0.51
Overall Mean		4.5	

The results in Table 2 show that "There has been improved performance since CBC initiation," with a mean score of 4.68 and a low standard deviation of 0.45. This suggests a strong consensus among respondents that CBC has contributed to enhanced performance in schools. The statement on leadership and timeliness in achieving set goals has a mean score of 4.64 and a standard deviation of 0.48. This indicates a very strong view of leadership effectiveness in the context of CBC, with most respondents agreeing that there is timely achievement of CBC-related goals. The adoptive rate of CBC implementation also scored highly, with a mean score of 4.58 and a standard deviation of 0.46. This shows that respondents find the rate of adoption of CBC to be appealing, indicating successful integration of the curriculum across schools. Regarding infrastructure, the statement about availability of laboratories positively influencing CBC implementation has a mean of 4.55 with a slightly higher standard deviation of 0.54. Though still viewed positively, the variation in responses suggests that not all schools may be equally well-equipped with laboratory facilities, which might affect the consistency of CBC implementation. Finally, the statement that having adequate classrooms positively influences CBC implementation received a mean score of 4.63 and a standard deviation of 0.51, indicating strong agreement that classroom availability is a critical factor for CBC success. The findings demonstrate a highly favorable perception of CBC implementation, especially regarding performance improvements, leadership, and infrastructure.

INFERENCE STATISTICS

This section presents and discusses the results of the inferential statistics conducted for this study. Initially, the analysis focused on examining the relationships between the study Strategic

Planning and CBC implementation. Correlation analysis using Pearson’s product-moment correlation coefficient was performed to assess the strength and direction of these relationships. Following this, regression analysis was employed to further explore the influence of these variables on the overall effectiveness and implementation of the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC).

Correlation Analysis

The correlation analysis was done to understand the relationships between the key study variables: Human Resources Strategies, Head Teacher Leadership Strategies, Strategic Planning, and Teacher Training Strategies and Implementation of CBC. Pearson’s product-moment correlation coefficient was used to determine the strength and direction of the linear relationships between these variables as shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Correlation Matrix for Strategic Planning

Variables	Implementation of CBC	Strategic Planning	Significance (p-value)
Implementation of CBC	1	0.52**	<0.001
Strategic Planning	0.52**	1	

The correlation of 0.52 indicates a moderate to strong relationship between strategic planning and the implementation of CBC, underscoring the necessity for clear goals and objectives in successful curriculum implementation.

Regression Analysis

Regression analysis was conducted to evaluate the effect of Strategic Planning on the Implementation of the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC).

The researcher adopted a linear regression model of the form:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \epsilon,$$

Where;

Y is the dependent variable representing the Implementation of CBC.

β_0 is the constant term (intercept).

β_1 represents the coefficient for Strategic Planning (X_1).

ϵ is the error term.

Using the provided coefficients the fitted regression model is shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.823 ^a	.678	.672	.345

The regression analysis reveals a robust model with an R² value is 0.678 indicating a strong positive relationship between the predictor and the Implementation of CBC. This means that about 67.2% of the differences in how well CBC is implemented can be accounted for by strategic planning. Conversely, this also indicates that about 32.8% of the variability in CBC implementation is not explained by the variables which could be attributed to other factors not included in the model or inherent variability in the implementation process itself.

Table 5: ANOVA for Regression

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	132.576	4	33.144	25.783	.000 ^b
Residual	63.879	147	0.434		
Total	196.455	151			

The ANOVA results in Table 5 show that the F-statistic is 25.783 with a significance level of 0.000. This indicates that the regression model significantly explains the variance in the implementation of CBC, as the F-statistic is well above the critical value. The ANOVA results demonstrate that the regression model effectively explains a substantial portion of the variability in the implementation of CBC.

Table 6: Regression Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	
1	(Constant)	1.214	0.321	0.467		3.78
	Strategic Planning	0.512	0.097	0.379	5.29	0.002

The regression analysis results presented in Table 6 show the influence of strategic planning on the implementation of competency-based curriculum (CBC) in public primary schools in Kajiado County. The model's constant (B) is 1.214 with a standard error of 0.321. The unstandardized coefficient (B) for strategic planning is 0.512 with a standard error of 0.097. The standardized coefficient (Beta) for strategic planning is 0.379. The t-statistic for strategic planning is 5.29, and the significance level (p-value) is 0.002, which is less than 0.05. This indicates that strategic planning has a statistically significant positive influence on CBC implementation.

The results of this study align with previous research on the importance of strategic planning in curriculum implementation. The significant positive influence of strategic planning on CBC implementation (Beta = 0.379) corroborates the findings of Tafvelin et al. (2018), who emphasized the vital role of strategic planning in identifying priority areas and ensuring efficient resource allocation to support curriculum changes. Furthermore, these results are consistent with the study by Klein and Schwanenberg (2020), which found that strategic planning and communication by school leaders significantly influence the implementation process. The positive relationship between strategic planning and CBC implementation observed in this study underlines the importance of strategic planning as a foundational element in ensuring the smooth and effective implementation of CBC, as suggested by both Tafvelin et al. (2018) and Klein and Schwanenberg (2020).

5.2 Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to determine the impact of strategic planning on the implementation of a competency-based curriculum (CBC) in public primary schools in Kajiado County. The findings revealed that strategic planning is an important determinant for the successful implementation of CBC. The study concluded that, while educational goals and objectives were generally clear, there is still room for improvement in terms of effectively

communicating these goals. Teaching and learning resources were highly rated, highlighting their critical role in CBC implementation. However, the study found significant challenges in change management through staff training and operational efficiencies, as evidenced by lower scores in these areas. This lack of trust in change management and operational inefficiencies highlights the need for stronger strategies and support mechanisms. The overall moderate mean score for strategic planning indicates that, while there is a balanced assessment of its effectiveness, there is still significant room for improvement. The study concludes that improving strategic planning efforts, particularly in areas such as change management and operational efficiencies, is critical for more successful CBC implementation in Kajiado County's public primary schools.

5.4 Recommendations

Based on the conclusions drawn from the study, the following recommendations are proposed: Developing and implementing comprehensive change management strategies is essential to address the challenges associated with adopting new curriculum approaches. Strategic planning should include clear communication of educational goals and objectives, along with robust mechanisms to manage change and improve operational efficiencies. Engaging stakeholders in the planning process and providing adequate support during transitions can help mitigate resistance and foster a smoother implementation of CBC. Regular evaluation of strategic planning efforts and their impact on CBC implementation will also be important to ensure ongoing effectiveness.

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