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An Inquiry into the Implementation of the Competency-Based Curriculum (2017) in Primary Schools in Mombasa, Kenya

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ABSTRACT

According to Fein (2015), as cited in (Isaboke, Wambiri, & Mweru, 2021, p. 72), the competency-based medium of instruction was first implemented in teacher education in America in the1970s. Many countries developed it after that and implemented it in their education systems (Sanchez & Romero, 2015). UNESCO defines a Competency-Based Curriculum as ´an education system that puts emphasis on the many-sided results of a learning process. Other education systems focus on what learners are expected to learn, the banking model of teaching (Anderson, 2022). Kenya is now in the seventh year of implementing the competency-based curriculum. The researcher conducted a study in Mombasa town. The present study contributes to our understanding of the Competency-Based curriculum in Kenya through a comparison of two private schools with two public schools. Qualitative data was gathered using interviews, observation, and document analysis. Teachers and headteachers were interviewed to find out how they understood and implemented the curriculum. During the study, grades 4 and 6 were observed. In the document analysis, the researcher looked at teachers' professional records and analysed the Kenya Gazette Special Issue on The Presidential Working Party on Education Reform (Gazette Notice No: 11920). John Goodlad´s work on curriculum was used as the theoretical framework. Goodlad's work in 1979 contributed to the development of a comprehensive framework for understanding the curriculum field. Notably, he established a strong correlation between curriculum practice and research, as highlighted by Shen (1999, p. 41). Drawing upon this significant connection, the present study is firmly grounded in a strong theoretical lens. Goodlad's insights emphasise that curriculum implementation is influenced by multiple domains, which are the ideological, formal, perceived, operational, and experienced curriculum (Goodlad, 1979, p. 58). This thesis will focus on three main domains: formal, perceived, and operational domains. The study found that although the process of the Competency-Based Curriculum implementation at the primary level is complete, it is facing considerable amounts of challenges that need to be urgently addressed. Secondly, interview data from teachers who took part in the study reveal that most of the teachers in the primary school received some form of training through government-sponsored workshops and seminars. It was however reported that the training that was conducted was inadequate. Thirdly, it was reported that the implementation of CBC required the use of intensive resources supplied either by schools or parents. Concerns were therefore raised on how equity was assured considering schools are not endowed with equal resources.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS:

CBC: Competency-based curriculum

8-4-4: Content-based curriculum

KICD: Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development

KNUT: Kenya National Union of Teachers

MOE: Ministry of Education

TSC: Teacher Service Commission

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The term curriculum is used to include both what is taught and why it is taught. Kenya shifted from the previous knowledge-based curriculum and adopted the Competency-Based Curriculum in 2017 (Njeng'ere & Ji, 2017, p. 21). This decision was reached after a series of reviews on the previous system which came into use in 1985. The old system, the content-based curriculum, is widely referred to as the 8:4:4 system in the country, since it took learners 8 years of primary school; 4 years of secondary school; and another four years of tertiary education (Gichuhi & Kalista, 2022, p. 14). On the other hand, the new system, which is the competence-based curriculum, is widely referred to as the 2:6:6:3 system since the learners spend two years in pre-primary; 6 years in primary school; 3 years in junior high school; three years in senior high school; and another 3 years in tertiary institutions (Gichuhi & Kalista, 2022, p. 14). This new system is aimed at preparing learners who would fit more productively in the job market after school. Therefore, by senior high school, the learner should have identified a path that suits their talents and interests. The three main options for the learner include arts and sports, social sciences and science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, known as STEM (Njeng'ere & Ji, 2017, p. 21).

Many countries peg their development agenda on the kind of education system they use. Indeed, countries that have wide differences in terms of their socioeconomic status are likely to possess different educational curricula (Allais, 2014). Consequently, it is important that stakeholders scrutinise a curriculum from time to time since it will determine the aptitudes and values of individual citizens and determine a country's political, social, and economic progression into the future (Gichuhi & Kalista, 2022). Similarly, the market environments are dynamic due to technological advancements and other scientific innovations which necessitates the review of the educational curriculum to ensure that it responds to the current needs of a country (Kicd.ac.ke, 2019). Therefore, this research is valuable since it endeavours to determine whether the competency-based-curriculum in Kenya has contributed positively to how the learners interact with the syllabus.

The researcher will first determine how the teachers interpret the new curriculum. Second, the research will find out whether there were resources to enable the roll-out of the new education system in the country. Third, the research will determine the extent of use of the teachers' professional documents. This angle will be necessary since Waweru (2018) conducted research on teacher preparedness regarding the CBC and found that 53.1 percent of those interviewed confessed they needed guidance in coming up with assessment rubrics for lessons. Fourth, the

collaboration between the teachers and the heads of institutions will also come into sharp focus. Finally, this thesis will seek to evaluate the achievement of learning outcomes by the learners.

1.1. Competency-Based Curriculum in Kenya

A Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) is one where the learners can apply the knowledge and skills they acquire in the classroom to their immediate environment, currently and in the future (Owala, 2021). Therefore, a competency-based curriculum focuses on what a learner can do at the end of the instruction, rather than what they are able to know or remember (Njeng'ere & Ji, 2017, p. 2). Such an approach to education is aimed at creating educational, professional, work, and personal environments that spur holistic development (Njeng'ere & Ji, 2017).

The Kenya Institute of Curriculum development (KICD), which is mandated with reviewing and amending the Kenyan educational curriculum adopted the Competence- in 2017 after a thorough needs assessment study in 2016 (Kicd.ac.ke, 2019; Njeng'ere & Ji, 2017, p. 21). The CBC would strive to instil the following core competencies among the learners: critical thinking, creativity, problem solving, collaboration, patriotism, computer literacy, and independence (Njeng'ere & Ji, 2017, p. 5). KICD felt that these competencies would help the students to settle meaningfully in the current society and enable the country to compete favourably with others in the global scene.

There is a need to contrast the current Competence-based curriculum with the former educational system to understand why the change was necessary. Since Kenya gained its independence in 1963, the educational system has been widely dormant. There has only been one major change in the educational curriculum before the Competence Based Curriculum. However, this main change in the educational system was purely incidental. In 1981, the government, through "The Presidential Working Party on the Second University in Kenya" committee, recommended setting up the second university in the country (Njeng'ere & Ji, 2017, p. 5). Despite the committee's mandate being to establish a second university, it went ahead to suggest that the education curriculum should be restructured (Njeng'ere & Ji, 2017, p. 5). They suggested that instead of the 7:6:3 system (7 years in primary school, 6 years in secondary school, and 3 years at the university), they suggested an 8:4:4 system (8 years in primary school, 4 years in secondary school, and 4 years at the university (Gichuhi & Kalista, 2022, p. 14). This 8:4:4 system was officially adopted in 1985. Njeng'ere and Ji (2017) observe that

though there have been curriculum reviews in 1990, 1992, 1995 and 2003, the system remained widely unchanged until 2017 when the Competency Based Curriculum was adopted.

1.1.1. The Structure of Competency-Based Curriculum

Competency-Based Curriculum has four distinct stages that target learners of different ages. These stages will be shown clearly in **Table 1** and **Figure 1**. CBC can be divided into early year's education, middle school education, senior school education, and tertiary level education. Early years encompass pre-primary 1(PP1) and pre-primary 2(PP2) and Grade1 to Grade 3. Being the first stage of the curriculum, it will focus on equipping the learner with foundation skills to enable them to be independent individuals. In this regard, the syllabus will capture literacy skills, numeracy competencies, and life skills (Njeng'ere & Ji, 2017, p. 12). Consequently, by the time the child gets to Grade 3, they would have the ability to read and do simple arithmetic as well as develop values that help them relate cordially with their peers and the elders.

The next phase of CBC is middle school education which covers Grade 4 to Grade 9. These grades include the upper primary and junior secondary school levels. This phase will be the longest in the curriculum and it will be dedicated to preparing learners to choose a pathway that will enable them to pursue a particular career (Nyamai & Karashani, 2022, p. 1). Therefore, the teachers will be expected to expose the learners to activities that will enable them to know their "potential, interests and aptitudes" (Njeng'ere & Ji, 2017, p. 13). Since the focus of this research is on Grades 4 and 6, the researcher will be keen to identify how teachers, the syllabus, and the instructional materials give rise to the classroom activities that enable learners to identify their purposes in life.

The third stage of the new curriculum is the senior school education which covers Grades 10, 11, and 12 (Akala, 2021 "p. 105"). This phase enables the learners to choose a pathway and focus their attention on studying all that appertains to their selection. According to Njeng'ere and Ji (2017), there are three main pathways that each learner will be expected to choose (p.13). The first pathway is sports and art, which involves visual and performing arts. The second pathway revolves around the social sciences which have disciplines like literature, business, languages and humanities. The last pathway is the STEM cadre that has subjects like engineering, technology studies, and pure and applied sciences.

Finally, there is the tertiary level which will allow the learners to specialise on a specific idea of the pathway they chose in senior school. This level will ensure that professionals with hands-on knowledge, skills, and expertise are nurtured (Akala, 2021, p. 106). Further, Nyamai and Karashani (2022) suggest that those learners that pursue programs at this level would have been taken through a rigorous assessment process that ensures they only settle for programs they are enthusiastic about.

Table 1: *A Breakdown of the CBC*

STAGE	GRADE	AGE
PRE-PRIMARY (Stage 1)	PP1	4 Years
	PP2	5 Years
Lower Primary (also, under stage 1)	Grade 1	6 Years
	Grade 2	7 Years
	Grade 3	8 Years
Upper Primary (Stage 2)	Grade 4	9 Years
	Grade 5	10 Years
	Grade 6	11 Years
Junior Secondary (Stage 2)	Grade 7	12 Years
	Grade 8	13 Years
	Grade 9	14 Years
Senior Secondary (Stage 3)	Grade 10	15 Years
	Grade 11	16 Years
	Grade 12	17 Years
Tertiary Level (Stage 4)	Year 1	18 Years
	Year 2	19 Years
	Year 3	20 Years

Figure 1: *The Competency-based curriculum in Kenya*

ORGANISATION OF BASIC EDUCATION

Senior School

Focus on specialization within a pathway

Senior School

Middle School Education

Focus on broad-based curriculum, exploration and selection of pathway.

Junior School

Upper Primary

Early Years Education

Focus on Foundation skills

Lower primary

Pre-primary

Diagram 1: Organization of Basic Education
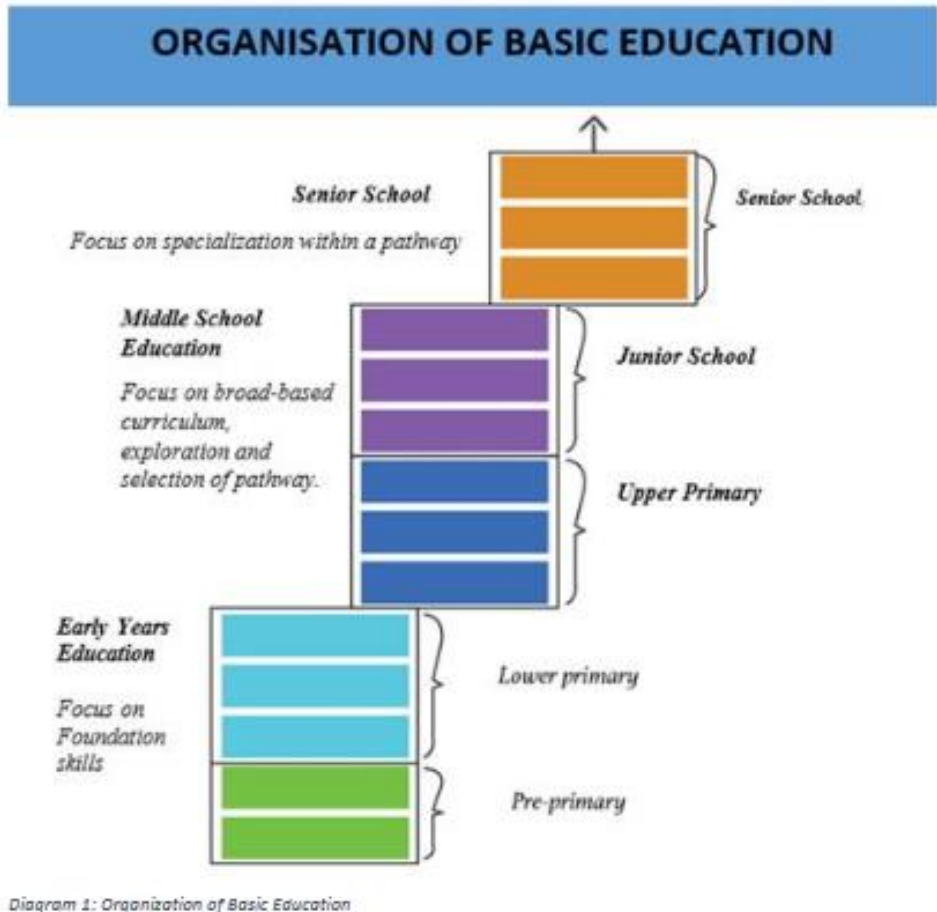
Source: (Njeng'ere & Ji, 2017 "p. 12")

1.1.2. The Current Implementation Process

The first CBC class began in January 2017 (Njeng'ere & Ji, 2017, p. 5). Since then, the class has followed the expected stages of the new education system. However, the class was disrupted a bit by the advent of Covid-19. Normal learning was disrupted in March 2020 and resumed in September of the same year (Kathula, 2020, p. 1). The government had to come up with a crash program in which the academic calendar was reduced to recover the lost time. For this reason, the first class of the CBC are currently in Grade 6, waiting to join junior high school in 2023 (Gichuhi & Kalista, 2022, p. 18). By 2023, the school will revert to the normal school calendar that spans from January to November for a full academic year. This calendar arises since the time lost to covid-19 would have been recovered by December 2022 (Gichuhi & Kalista, 2022).

The KICD projects that the three main pathways in senior high school would not be in balance. Therefore, it foresees a situation where 60 percent of the learners will pursue STEM courses, 25 percent will go to the social sciences while the remaining 15 percent will take the sports and arts pathway (Okeyo & Kanake, 2021). The body forecasts that there will be about 1.25 million learners proceeding to senior secondary schools by 2026. Currently, the Ministry of Education in Kenya has embarked on a construction of 10,000 classrooms by 2023 at the cost of $ 68.6 million (Nyamai & Karashani, 2022, p. 1). This move will be a first step towards ensuring there is enough room for junior secondary learners in the current secondary schools.

The government of Kenya has done a thorough job to ensure the effective implementation of CBC at the classroom level. Various agencies have worked collaboratively to ensure that divergent opinions from the public were discussed before rolling out the program. As Gichuhi and Kalista (2022) suggest, adopting a new curriculum is a daunting task since many stakeholders are likely to receive the news with resistance (p.26). The situation is especially worse for competency-based curricula where a lot of resources are required. Allais (2014) in her study of the Competency-Based Curriculum in South Africa, notes some gaps in implementation due to parents viewing it as an expensive system that was not sustainable. Therefore, if there is close communication with such stakeholders, the process of implementation will be smoother (Gichuhi & Kalista, 2022). The process in Kenya was multifaceted with different professionals involved at various stages as shown in **Figure 2** below.

Figure 2: The agencies involved in the Curriculum Assessment and Implementation Process
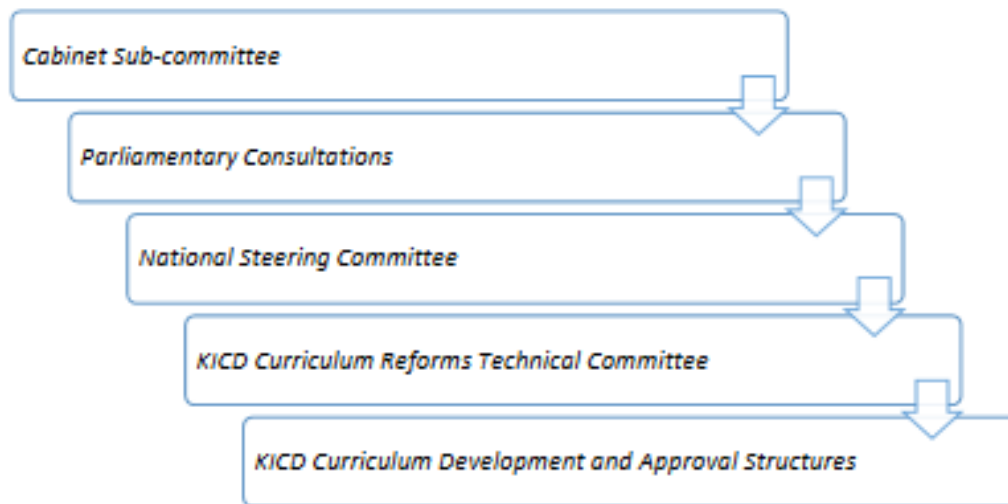
Source: (Njeng'ere & Ji, 2017 "p. 15")

The consultations between various agencies took a period of 3 years. Even after the rolling out of the CBC in 2017, further consultations are ongoing (Gichuhi & Kalista, 2022, p. 26). Notably, the election campaigns before the August 9th, 2022 elections, significantly featured the CBC debate. After the new government took over, they formed a special committee to review the curriculum and its implementation (Shatuma, 2022). The committee noted that the CBC was a good system that was likely to release more competent graduates to the market. As Bunyi (2013) notes, the implementation of a curriculum should not be hasty to avoid a situation where only shallow and easy areas of the curriculum will be implemented (p. 685).

The change in curriculum in Kenya is a response to the changing economic and environmental situation in the country. The curriculum developers were intent on finding out whether the 8:4:4 system would prepare the students adequately for a fast-moving economy and a raft of environmental challenges. The KICD discovered that Kenya's vision 2030 could not be adequately achieved with the rigid 8:4:4 system which paid more emphasis on knowing and remembering as opposed to applying concepts to the immediate contexts (Njeng'ere & Ji, 2017, p. 5). The first cohort of the CBC learners are currently in the year 2022, in grade 6 and are supposed to join junior high school in 2023. The last lot of the 8:4:4 system will be phased out in 2027. Despite apparent lack of awareness about CBC among many stakeholders including

parents and teachers, the Kenyan government is still positive that the CBC will be implemented in full (Shatuma, 2022).

1.2. Aim of the Study

The main aim of this study is to shed light on the Competency-Based Curriculum and find out how educators are implementing it. This study will engage directly with the stakeholders that are mandated to implement the curriculum (teachers and managers of institutions), to assess whether they have policies and practices that align with the expectations of the CBC (Waweru, 2018, p. 4). This approach is cognizant of the fact that an educational institution might have policies and regulations in support of the curriculum but the teachers and other stakeholders within the school may not have the right instructional and management strategies to make the curriculum a reality (Allais, 2014).

This research will focus on Grade 4 and 6 pupils in their learning environments. The study will be structured in a way that all the stakeholders around these pupils are assessed to spot any indicators of a good performing curriculum as stipulated by Goodlad (1979, p. 60). The researcher will use information gathered from one educational institution and compare it with those from other centres to get a clear picture of the areas of similarity and divergence in the way the new curriculum is being implemented in Grade 4 and Grade 6. As much as the research will be conducted within one town in Kenya, a comparison of the findings from various schools within that region will offer valuable pointers on whether the CBC has benefits or not. The gaps between the blueprint, the official documentation of the curriculum, and the reality will come out clearly after the research (Kicd.ac.ke, 2022).

The researcher will do an analysis of the policy reform as one component and seek some insight from some local actors (teachers and head teachers) about the CBC and its implementation. In this endeavour, Goodlad's research will come in handy. Goodlad notes that the ideological, formal, perceived, operational, and experienced curriculum domains determine its implementation (Goodlad, 1979, p. 58). This thesis will focus on three main domains: formal, perceived, and operational domains.

The formal domain encompasses all the official written directions about the curriculum. This domain will capture the general meaning of the curriculum and its key pillars (Goodlad, 1979).

It is the explanation of what the curriculum entails and how it should be implemented (Goodlad, 1979). Therefore, the thesis will seek to determine whether the CBC in Kenya is a reform that is supported by adequate information from the Ministry of Education and other relevant agencies. It will assess whether the basic tenets of the CBC are available in the schools in Kenya. Things such as the vision, mission, values, and key competencies of the CBC should be displayed somewhere in a school that is keen on implementing the new curriculum (Kicd.ac.ke, 2022). Therefore, this research will determine whether the presence or absence of such formal information and communication will impact how the learners benefit from this new curriculum.

On the other hand, the perceived domain entails to what level the implementers of the curriculum have understood it. The most active players here include heads of educational institutions and the teachers (Goodlad, 1979). The extent to which these stakeholders understand the curriculum will determine to what extent they will roll out its pertinent tenets. This situation implies that in a situation where training is scanty, the teachers may not play their roles fully (Mwasiaji, Kombo, Nawiri, & Iloka, 2022, p. 42). Bunyi (2013) finds that Kenya has had good curriculum innovations in the past but most of them have been ineffective due to lack of professional development of teachers. This thesis will endeavour to assess the teachers' and managers' knowledge of the CBC.

The last domain is the operational domain. This perspective focuses on the way the teachers and institutional managers will implement the expectations of the curriculum on their day-to-day operations (Goodlad, 1979). This research will be very keen to find out if the teachers implement the expectations of the curriculum as they issue their instructions (Kicd.ac.ke, 2022). One of the key issues that impedes the full implementation of a new curriculum is scepticism that sometimes may emanate from the stakeholders that are supposed to be the custodians of the same character. There is a possibility that some of the teachers and school managers may have the feeling that their country is not yet ready, especially resource-wise to effectively roll out a new curriculum (Njeng'ere & Ji, 2017, p. 22). This research will also seek to find out the teachers' and managers' opinions about their willingness and preparedness to implement the CBC during their lessons. The distinction in teaching strategies between the old curriculum and the current one should be clearly noticeable. Thus, the research will be keen to find out how much of the old curriculum still manifests in the current classroom situation.

1.3. Research Questions

Main Research Question:

In what ways does the Competency-Based Curriculum influence the quality of learning in primary schools in Kenya?

Sub-research Questions:

  a. To what extent is the Competency-Based Curriculum implemented in primary schools, in Mombasa, Kenya?
  b. Are teachers getting enough training on the curriculum, and how do they perceive it?
  c. How does the competency-based curriculum affect the horizontal equity of learners in Kenya?

1.3.1. Why Use Kenya for this Study?

The decision to use Kenya for this study was reached due to its position in East and Central Africa. The country is worth paying attention to since it is a leader in the region on various fronts. It is the economic, technology, financial, and transport hub of East and Central Africa. According to Worldbank.org (2022), the GDP of the country is projected to increase by 5.55 percent in 2022 (p. 1). However, the Russia-Ukraine war is projected to reduce the GDP growth to 5.2 percent between 2023 and 2024, since Kenya depends on the two countries for vital supplies such as fertiliser. Despite the pandemic, Kenya's economy grew by 7.5 percent in 2021 which is significantly above the Sub-Saharan growth rate of 4 percent (Worldbank.org, 2022).

Additionally, Kenya is also a technology hub of the region. The country boasts of various disruptive technological innovations such as the money sending and receiving technology "M-Pesa" and novel table banking ideas that depend on technology. In the same vein, the country is home to many notable multinational technology companies such as Google, Microsoft, and IBM (Nyamai & Karashani, 2022). Many of the human resources in these companies are Kenyan graduates. Furthermore, the government, through the ministry of education, has put in place deliberate measures to integrate ICT into the day-to-day instruction of learners in both primary and secondary schools (Murithi & Yoo, 2021, p. 11).

Kenya is also a peace crusader in the region. The country, through its heads of state, has played key roles in ensuring stability in the region. The country has sent troupes to Ethiopia as part of the African Union mission to restore peace in war-torn Somalia (Enns & Bersaglio, 2020). Similarly, Kenya's former president, Uhuru Kenyatta, was instrumental in brokering peace deals in the Tigray region of Ethiopia. Similarly, the country maintains a cordial relationship with its neighbours by diluting regional tensions through economic diplomacy.

Without a doubt, Kenya is a country of interest in the region. It thus attracts scrutiny both for criticism as well as benchmarking. With a nationwide change in the curriculum, it is essential that researchers carefully consider how these changes in the educational sector will impact the various sectors of the country (Chore, 2020). Since education is at the core of a country's culture, vision and agenda, it was necessary for this researcher to find out how the new curriculum in Kenya would influence the education of its future citizens.

The researcher believes that education is key to driving a country's development since it is people with knowledge and skills that spur various transformations. Therefore, any change in curriculum is likely to come with ripple effects that may affect Kenya's standing in the region (Enns & Bersaglio, 2020). Understanding how the stakeholders mandated with implementing the curriculum feel about the same is vital in determining whether the country will continue leading the rest especially economically.

It was also the researcher's desire to determine how countries deal with the changes in the educational sector. Kenya was an ideal candidate to explore in this regard since it just introduced the Competency-Based Curriculum in 2017 (Njeng'ere & Ji, 2017, p. 21). Therefore, the researcher understands that the debate is still heated on whether this new curriculum is good for the country or not. In consequence, this study will be an opportunity to find out the change dynamics that take place in a country as they shift from one system of education to the other (Enns & Bersaglio, 2020). Although education has many stakeholders such as employers, parents, siblings, and relatives, this thesis will focus on the stakeholders closest to the learner: teachers and heads of institutions. This choice will enable the researcher to understand first hand to what extent the new curriculum has been adopted by the implementers.

1.4. Significance of the Study

According to Njeng'ere and Ji (2017), education is one of the sectors that is of interest to everyone in a state (p.23). This situation arises since many households have children in schools in developing countries. For this reason, there are passionate debates among the public that come with any changes in education. Therefore, this study and its findings will play a modest role in giving the public and stakeholders in education some answers on what the curriculum entails and the way it is being implemented.

This research was therefore conducted in Mombasa, Kenya since it is believed that Kenya has one of the best education systems in East Africa. Neighbouring countries that share borders with Kenya, i.e., Somalia, Tanzania, and Uganda admire Kenyan education. Many parents send their children from these countries to study in Kenyan schools. As a result, the change in the curriculum is a very significant educational milestone in East Africa and has many implications for many. In a survey conducted by the research firm CPS international, Kenyan universities ranked top in East Africa in ICT (Nganga, 2012). According to the World Economic Forum in 2017 (as cited in Pattillo, 2020) Kenya´s education system was ranked the strongest in Africa. Moreover, in 2018, according to the World Bank, (as found in Pattillo, 2020), Kenya ranked the top African country for educational outcomes.

Since the research will focus more on how the teachers and heads of institutions are implementing Competency-Based Curriculum, it would be natural to get reasons for such stakeholders to be trained further to ensure top-notch quality is maintained. It is known that teacher preparation is considered incredibly significant in the effective implementation of a curriculum. As a result, continuous teacher professional programs are necessary. This suggestion is in line with Njeng'ere and Ji's (2017) observations that education should respond to the dynamic needs of the country (p.19). The economic, political, and social environment is constantly changing to a point where what was considered a priority in one decade may lose relevance in the next decade. Therefore, for instructors to fully grasp the aptitudes of their learners they must constantly be trained to ensure they tap into the motivations of the current student and the socio-economic demands of the country.

This study is significant since it will show the difference between the old and the new system of education. Such a comparison is essential to help stakeholders take stock of whether the education sector is headed towards the right direction or not. The experiences from the old

system of education will be instrumental to give direction to the players in the new curriculum (Bunyi, 2013). This process of contrasting educational systems plays a crucial role in foreshadowing the long-term outcomes of the system being introduced. Therefore, since education is a direct measure of a country's capability especially in the economic forefront, the conclusions in this study; may influence the predictions of Kenya's standing economically decades from now. As Akala (2021) observes, an honest and frequent evaluation of the education system is the sure way to assess a country's performance in the future.

It is vital to connect the curriculum to the socio-economic and political issues of the country. The researcher will be keen to conduct the study paying attention to the broad challenges that the country faces and how the new curriculum intends to give solutions to such issues. According to Hoadley (2017) policies should address the biting challenges of an organisation or else progress would stagnate. Kenya grappled with ethnic related conflicts that resulted in the 2007-2008 post-election violence that resulted in about 1000 deaths. Additionally, there are serious challenges of drug abuse and unemployment especially among the youth in Mombasa. Furthermore, corruption is still a concern for most Kenyans. The prior challenges are likely to be deep-rooted in the minds and hearts of the citizens if a radical change is not instigated. One of the ways through which a culture of a nation may be altered is through the education system (Akala, 2021, p. 103). Even as the researcher hopes to experience this perspective by Akala (2021), they will be keen enough to consider Allais's (2014) sentiments about the competency or outcome-based curriculum being useless, especially in countries with minimal resources. Therefore, this thesis will be instrumental in determining whether the CBC has any aspects that offer solutions to Kenya's current ills.

Finally, this study will be instrumental in advising researchers from other East and Central African countries on the status of the CBC in Kenya to enable them to push the debate on education reforms in the region to achieve more collaboration (Nyamai & Karashani, 2022 p. 1). There have been rife discussions among countries in the region to have free markets and more fluid movements between the borders (Enns & Bersaglio, 2020). One way of enabling such cohesion is by ensuring that the people can use their skills in whichever country they live in the region. Therefore, any positive aspects from this study can be used as a basis for reference for educational stakeholders in countries that have not adopted the CBC yet in the East and central African region. Similarly, those that have already adopted the competency-based

approach like Rwanda will get a chance to compare their model from the one practised in Kenya (Nyamai & Karashani, 2022).

1.5. Delimitations of the Study

The first limitation of this study is the limited representativeness of the sample (Harris, Holyfield, Jones, Ellis, & Neal, 2019). The study would get information from teachers and heads of institutions in Mombasa town of Kenya. Given the nature of a Competency-Based Curriculum, such a study population is unlikely to represent the general situation of the curriculum in Kenya.

The curriculum receives a huge boost from parents and the community for its success (Okeyo & Kanake, 2021). Most parents are expected to help their learners with the tasks while the community is expected to offer materials and infrastructure to support the implementation of the curriculum. Therefore, the way one community or set of parents respond will be different in the various regions of the country due to the differences in literacy levels and socioeconomic status.

The second setback is the limited resources on the topic, especially in the specific town where the research is being conducted. Given that CBC is still a new concept in Kenya and Mombasa, there are few scholarly studies that have been conducted so far. What is available are government publications, through the ministry of education, and relevant departments. This situation makes it difficult for the researcher to get multiple scholarly views, especially about how the stakeholders have taken up the issue of CBC, especially in Mombasa town (Mackatiani, Joseph, & Komo, 2017, p. 43). Hopefully, this research will offer much-needed information about how teachers and learners perceive the new curriculum. The researcher depended on credible scholarly research on the competency-based curriculum from other settings and the government publications available.

The research was also drawn back by time and cost constraints. The researcher had to travel from Norway to Kenya to conduct the interviews with teachers and heads of institutions. The air ticket costs and local travel and lodging costs in Kenya were significant. Additionally, there was a limited time within which to conduct the fieldwork and write the chapters of the thesis. Though everything was done with optimism and passion, there were numerous sacrifices that had to be made along the way.

The last constraint of this study is the methodology. The thesis employs various research methods such as document analysis, interviews, and observation. This list is long, yet the topic is narrow enough. This situation implies that each of these methods may not be as detailed as expected since the researcher will attempt to divide the research questions among the various research methods (Harris et al., 2019).

CHAPTER 2: BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The Competency-Based Curriculum is defined by UNESCO as an educational system that emphasises what learners can do rather than what they are able to remember. Similarly, Nkya, Fang, and Mwakabungu (2021) state that a Competence-Based Curriculum is a system that measures how competent a learner is in a certain subject and not the kind of grades or their scores in the yearly curriculum schedules. On their part, Ruth and Ramadas (2019) define a competence curriculum as one where the learners' unique talents and abilities are emphasised as opposed to their performance in examinations. From the definitions above, it is evident that a competency curriculum allows each learner to achieve their desired outcomes at their own pace or speed. There cannot be a one-size-fits-all approach when it comes to assessing learners' abilities.

According to Qvortrup, Wiberg, Christensen, and Hansbøl (2016), learning is the "the acquisition of information, knowledge, and skills." On the other hand, Ye and Chen (2021), define learning as a process that results in change due to a certain experience and this gives someone potential for improving their performance and learning in future. Therefore, learning should result in a change of behaviour for the better.

Additionally, Ye and Chen (2021) defined 'Quality Learning' as a type of learning where the learners are able to retain the knowledge and skills taught to them. On the other hand, Nkya et al. (2021) define quality learning as the process of helping learners become knowledgeable citizens fully equipped with problem-solving skills with proper working skills and smooth interpersonal skills. Therefore, quality learning should transform the individual to be able to thrive in their environments after they finish school.

Consequently, for an effective curriculum roll-out, the teachers must adopt the right strategies to transfer the knowledge and experience to the learners. The learners must also be in a good state physically and psychologically to ensure that they retain what the teachers teach. However, what is most important is that the teaching and learning must be of a superior quality. The curriculum design should ensure that once a learner retains whatever content the teacher teaches, the skills, information or knowledge should help them to become productive citizens. An education system would have failed if learners only excel while at school and suffer in society.

2.1. The origins of the Competency Based Curriculum.

According to Fein (2015), as cited in Isaboke et al. (2021, p. 72), the competency-based form of curriculum was first implemented in teacher education in the USA in the 1970s. Education scholars had started pushing teachers to spur learners' intellectual curiosity instead of relying more on rote learning where memorization was the fundamental means of gauging a learner's uptake of knowledge or skills. Curriculum reform in education is a phenomenon practised worldwide to work toward the best educational practices, specifically to meet the demands of the 21st-century knowledge economy (Ruth & Ramadas, 2019, "p. 46"). Many countries such as Finland, Scotland, Britain and Columbia, developed the Competence-Based Curriculum after that and implemented it in their education systems (Sanchez & Romero, 2015).

The same trend of adopting the CBC is witnessed in Africa. Ruth and Ramadas (2019) note that since the beginning of the 21st century, many countries in Africa have adopted the CBC in a view of being formidable partners in the global scene. South Africa dropped the content-based curriculum and adopted the CBC in 2010. It however failed after ten years due to lack of capacity. Other African countries such as Ghana, Rwanda, Ethiopia and Tanzania have picked up the CBC. Kenya started implementing it in 2017 (Education.go.ke, 2018).

The Competency-Based Curriculum is defined by UNESCO as "an education system that puts emphasis on the many-sided results of a learning process". Other education systems focus on what learners are anticipated to learn; thus, the learning outcomes are rigid (Anderson, 2022). On the other hand, a Competency-Based Curriculum is flexible to the changing needs of students. Grant et al. (as cited in Edwards et. al, 2009) defined competency-based education as "a form of education that derives a curriculum from an analysis of a prospective or actual role in modern society and that attempts to certify student progress on the basis of demonstrated performance in some or all aspects of that role" (Owala, 2021). Therefore, the learner is free to break the barriers set by the teacher or the educational policies and explore fields that interest them.

The official policy of competency-based education in Kenya states that it aims to achieve the following seven core competencies; communication and collaboration, critical thinking and problem solving, creativity and imagination, citizenship, digital literacy, learning to learn, and self-efficacy (Education.go.ke, 2018). Moreover, learners are expected to acquire core values

in addition to learning these competencies. These core values are love, responsibility, respect, unity, peace, patriotism, social justice, and integrity. The learners are supposed to implement these competencies and values in their everyday life (Momanyi & Rop, 2019, "p. 11").

2.2. The Implementation of CBC

Despite the strengths of a Competency-Based Curriculum there are various challenges that such a system may face. Research which was done by Momanyi and Rop (2019) on teacher preparedness for the integrated English curriculum in Kenya, concluded that the level of teacher preparedness affected the curriculum outcome. Therefore, unprepared teachers were a hindrance to the successful implementation of the curriculum. Their study made four main recommendations. Firstly, there should be in-service training of teachers with a specific focus on the Competency-Based Curriculum. Secondly, the elements of CBC are to be immediately integrated into the teacher training curriculum. Thirdly, the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD) should develop comprehensive manuals with clear instructions and information for teachers and the Curriculum Support Officers. Fourthly, the pedagogical skills of teachers in the implementation of CBC in the classroom should be enhanced.

Another barrier to the implementation of a new curriculum, particularly the CBC, is the resistance to change. According to (Atieno, 2023) the CBC is a disruptive system since it proposed many changes to the curriculum that existed before. With these changes, each stakeholder is supposed to make some sacrifices to attain the expectations of the CBC. For instance, parents will be required to give more time and attention to their children by helping them to do extended activities. These activities are expected to be given to the learners every day. Similarly, some activities require resources such as cereals, plastic containers, musical instruments, and technology gadgets that may force some of the parents to incur higher financial expenses. On the part of the teachers, many things have changed starting from the learning areas, content, and even the outlook of professional documents (Obeywa, Okoth-Oluoch, Opiyo, & Simiyu, 2022). For the administrators, there is a new demand on them to equip their institutions with more facilities such as science laboratories, games equipment, and more teachers to meet the demands of the CBC (Isaboke et al., 2021). All these changes may make stakeholders uncomfortable thus fighting tooth and nail to revise the curriculum or get rid of it and revert to the old one. This feeling has been evident as various quarters such as the

teachers' unions and parent bodies have called for the revision or reconsideration of the implementation of CBC (Nyangla, 2022).

2.3. Success of a Curriculum

As with other educational reforms, researchers have highlighted the need for CBC to involve relevant content if it is to be successful. Ruth and Ramadas (2019) say that there is a need to Africanise the Competency-Based Curriculum to meet the aspirations and vision of the African country, to attain successful implementation of the curriculum. The curriculum should be at par with the real situation in the country. One of the criticisms of the old curriculum was the fact that students would study so many subjects that may not be of any value to them at tertiary level. For instance, a typical secondary school student would sit for about 11 examinations in form 1 and 2 and this number would reduce to an average of 8 examinations in form 3 and form four (Nyangla, 2022). Despite this number, the subjects that would be considered for career choices would be 3 or 4 (Nyangla, 2022). Therefore, the learner might end up never interacting with content from the other four subjects. An analysis of such a situation will show the fact that such subject choices are not in tandem with the environment outside the school. Africanising the curriculum will ensure that learners only take subject areas that may enable them to fit comfortably in society as human, and socially responsible citizens.

The success of the educational curriculum will depend on the availability of resources to implement it. According to research conducted by the Daily Nation, 47% of the citizens interviewed felt that CBC was a remarkable system while 22% were in favour of the outcome-based curriculum (Atieno, 2023). However, 54% of those that support the CBC cited the prohibitive cost of rolling out the program as the main challenge (Atieno, 2023). The implementation of the curriculum should consider available resources so that the burden of its implementation does not adversely affect the various educational stakeholders, especially parents. For instance, if in a lesson a teacher requires colouring paints of diverse colours and the government does not provide them, the parents would be forced to buy them from their pockets.

Teachers' values and attitudes also play a crucial role in the implementation of the curriculum. This is because the final application of the system will be the teachers, so it is equally important to consider the teachers when implementing and laying out a curriculum. According to many

scholars, as found in Ruth and Ramadas, (2019, "p. 48") African teachers are not well trained. Moreover, the Kenya National Union of Teachers (KNUT) (2019) argues that policy developers in Kenya do not have a concrete understanding of the Competency-Based Curriculum. In Tanzania, a study by Makunja (2016) examined the challenges facing teachers in implementing the Competency-Based Curriculum. The study established that teachers faced a lot of challenges that hindered the effective implementation of the curriculum in teaching. The study foregrounded the lack of in-service training of teachers on CBC, lack of sufficient teaching materials, overcrowded classrooms, and low ability of children as the major challenges hindering effective implementation of the curriculum in Tanzania. The study recommended, in relation to these findings, that teachers should be allowed to participate in developing the curriculum. The study also recommended that the Ministry of Education should provide ways of providing teaching materials that are uniform with the CBC.

2.4. Challenges to the Curriculum

In other situations, teachers may be skilled in implementing the curriculum, but still other challenges arise. A study was conducted by Isaboke, Wambiri and Mwere (2021) on the challenges teachers face in the implementation of the Competency-Based Curriculum. The findings of the study were: lack of adequate school infrastructure, inadequate training of teachers on CBC, lack of adequate teaching-learning materials, large class size, an inadequate number of teachers and lack of cooperation from Parents.

Similarly, a pilot study conducted by KICD and reports by the Teachers Service Commission indicated that teachers are ill-equipped for the competency-based curriculum. The Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (2017) report indicates that only 3% of teachers feel adequately prepared for the new curriculum while 20% were prepared (Momanyi & Rop, 2019). Moreover, Kenya National Union of Teachers (2018) complained that their members, mostly primary school teachers, were not prepared adequately to teach the new curriculum. Since the above bodies, KICD, TSC, and KNUT, are central in equipping teachers, it implies that CBC may be a good system but requires more time to adequately prepare various stakeholders such as teachers.

Since CBC intends to be more hands-on and relevant to the immediate environment, the issue of the language of instruction is also critical. For long, there have been discussions on whether

the languages used for instruction in African schools are ideal for the social and economic growth that such countries need. In a 2019 interview with Ngugi wa Thiong'o on Decolonizing the mind, he argued that English is not an African language, and advocated for the use of local languages when writing. Ngugi wa Thiong'o referred to the use of English as mental colonisation and enslavement (IFRA Nairobi, 2019). English and Kiswahili are the official languages in Kenya, but most of the learners speak their native languages as their first language. Therefore, the researcher would venture to determine what the languages play in equipping learners with the necessary skills and knowledge.

Some challenges in the implementation of a curriculum may not cut across all the schools. A study was conducted by Abdullahi (2019) on school-based factors influencing the implementation of the Competency-Based Curriculum in public pre-schools in Garissa sub-county, Garissa County Kenya. The findings of the study concluded that the majority of public pre-primary teachers were female who had the appropriate academic qualification and competence to teach, although most of them had not taught for long. Crucially, both male and female Pre-primary teachers mostly had not undergone any specialised training in the Competency-Based Curriculum (Ministry of Education, 2019). Furthermore, the study concludes that despite the challenges, most of the teachers felt motivated and confident to implement the Competency-Based Curriculum. Finally, the study concludes that most of the teaching and learning materials/resources were adequately available in pre-primary schools in the Garissa sub-county except for ICT and audio-visual equipment (Ministry of Education, 2019).

In the same vein, the resource distribution varies depending on whether the school is privately owned or public in nature. It is important to note that rolling out of CBC is happening at different rates in the two types of schools (Kapkiai, 2022). Most public schools are still waiting for capitation from the government to enable them to acquire various facilities that are necessary for effective implementation of the CBC (Atieno, 2023). As this happens, the private schools, which fully rely on parent's contributions to run, have set up most of the structures. For example, Makinischools.co.ke. (2023) notes that not a single public school reported having a laboratory in junior secondary while quite a number of private schools have built those laboratories for science. Most private schools have also incorporated the use of Information Technology quite robustly in their lessons as compared to the public primary schools, some of which do not even have electricity.

2.5. The Appropriateness of CBC for Kenya

CBC is deemed as an appropriate tool to spring Kenya, and many other African nations to economic stability. According to Ruth and Ramadas (2019), the vision 2030, sustainable goals, and continental goals 2063 among African states will only be delivered if educators consider adopting CBC in the African context. The new form of education will give the learners the ability to interact with the environment in a curious manner to use their talents, skills and knowledge to solve the problems in their immediate environment. Consequently, the Ministry of Education posits that CBC will solve the unemployment challenge of African countries, increase the GDP, raise the income generation, improve knowledge development and finally improve the flow of currency in African countries (Ministry of Education, 2017). Given this importance that is attached to CBC, the teachers should be involved in the crucial stage of curriculum reform.

Education for all is the most significant aspect of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The competency-based curriculum offers three main pathways at senior secondary school: Arts and Sports Science; Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM); and Social Sciences. These options ensure every learner gets a chance to proceed with learning after secondary school. The researcher will briefly highlight SDG 4, which is to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong opportunities for all (UN, 2015). The researcher will focus on SDG 4.1 (UN, 2015) specifically, for this coincides with the standpoint of education for all. It states:
"By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable, and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes." Therefore, the researcher will examine how appropriately the CBC will lead to the achievement of SDG 4.1.

The Competency-Based Curriculum may have been an outcome of various bilateral, multilateral and regional discussions by leaders regarding where their regions are heading, especially economically. The Heads of State and Government High Representatives met at the United Nations Headquarters in New York from 25-27 September 2015 to come up with new global Sustainable Development Goals. In the New Agenda (25) they committed to giving inclusive and equitable education to all, which means for all children at all levels be it early childhood, primary, secondary and tertiary training. The main aim was to provide children with an environment that can allow them to nurture their talents and abilities. Moreover, Agenda 25

was also especially committed to giving equal access to vulnerable groups for life-long learning and opportunities (UN, 2015).

Kenya needed a new system of education since the previous one, the 8-4-4 outcome-based system had been in use since 1981 (KICD, 2017). A country's curriculum can only be relevant if it can quickly adapt to societal needs and addresses the country's current job demands and aspirations as stated in various policy documents (Isaboke, et al. 2021, "p. 72"). Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) explicitly focuses on and seeks to inculcate relevant skills and competencies among learners, as needed to deal with societal needs and expectations (Education.go.ke, 2018). It helps to measure what students can do at various levels of learning and if they can apply the same knowledge during and outside school. It emphasises the process of learning rather than the outcomes (Fein, 2015). The policies on CBC given by KICD and the Ministry of Education in Kenya are adapted to give the direction of the country's needs. In every society, social needs and expectations should be fulfilled to succeed in all areas (Meda, 2020). Therefore, various documents have been used to address various aspects of society, such as competencies, attitudes, and values. In addition, there are documents on learning areas and assessments, as well as documents concerning the aspirations of the 21st century regarding skills and sustainable development goals (Sanchez & Romero, 2015).

2.6. The Disruption of the School Structure by Introduction of CBC

The previous outcome-based curriculum (8-4-4 system) was totally different from the current CBC. Nyangla (2022) argues that the 8-4-4 system had no predefined structure but was a work in progress. He supports his assertions by any commission of inquiries that the then president, Daniel Arap Moi, put in place to review the curriculum and suggest appropriate ways of improving it (Nyangla, 2022).

The content-based curriculum (8-4-4) was rolled out in 1985 with minimal changes on the content that was offered and the way it was rendered. The only difference was that primary education was extended by one year; secondary school was reduced by two years, while tertiary education (University) was increased by one year. In 1988, the president established the Presidential Working Party on Education and Manpower Training for the Next Decade and Beyond (Asongu & Odhiambo, 2020). The commission recommended more time in primary and secondary school to cover the stipulated content. It also suggested a reduction in the

number of subjects. In 1995, there was another commission headed by Professor Wainanaina which came up with far-reaching suggestions to overhaul the 8-4-4 system (Nyangla, 2022). The president ignored the report since 8-4-4 was his legacy. In 1998, a commission of inquiry was formed called the Totally Integrated Quality Education and Training (Asongu & Odhiambo, 2020). Their report found out that KCPE (national examination for primary school) had become more focused on examinations, thus extremely competitive. The content for form 3 and 4 was also found to be too complex for the learners since the content for Form 5 and 6 had been brought back to these lower forms. The report recommended the reduction of some of the subject areas.

Further recommendations were made on the education system. When a new president took over in 2002, the process of having a new curriculum started. The manifesto of the new government stated every child should get a quality, relevant and cost-effective form of education (Nyangla, 2022). This would ensure that every citizen was engaged in productive activities for sustenance. Later, in 2008, the vision 2030 was launched (Mackatiani et al., 2017). The following year, the curriculum was reviewed, and a new constitution was promulgated in 2010. The new constitution bred the Task Force on the Re-alignment of the Education Sector to the Constitution of Kenya 2010 and Vision 2030 in 2011 (Mackatiani et al., 2017). Therefore, the idea of the CBC was born in 2003, given form in 2011, piloted in 2016 and implemented fully in 2017 (Nyangla, 2022).

2.7. The Ministry of Education and Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD) on CBC

The Ministry of education and the KICD are appropriately aligned to roll out the CBC. The vision of the Kenyan ministry of education is "A globally competitive education, training, research and innovation system for sustainable development" (Education.go.ke, 2023). This statement implies that the ministry wishes to mould learners who would fit with the dynamic environment in and outside the country. Similarly, the ministry of education in Kenya is an establishment of the constitution, thus it must abide by the relevant statutes of the law. According to the 2010 Kenya's constitution (cited in NCLR, 2012) and Kamande (2021), a child is entitled to education (Article 43); free and mandatory basic education (Article 53); and provision of affirmative action to ensure every person has access to education (Article 53). All the above articles of the Kenyan constitution clearly reveal that the Ministry of Education has the right policies to oversee the roll-out of the CBC (Right to Education Project, 2014).

On the side, KICD's vision is "A skilled and ethical society" (Kicd.ac.ke, 2023). This vision too embodies the tenets of CBC since CBC is more focused on equipping learners with skills rather than focusing on memorising information. According to KICD (2017) what is important is offering learning materials that can lead to assessment for learning rather than assessment of learning.

2.7.1. Three Pillars of CBC

The building blocks of CBC include (Ministry of Education, 2017):
• Values
• Guiding Principles
• Theoretical Approaches

Figure 1: Pillars of CBC
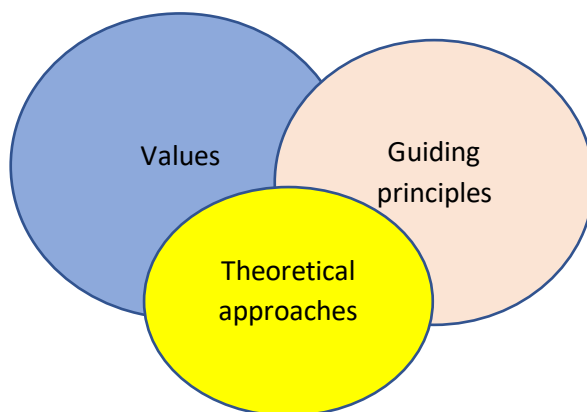
2.7.2. Values

According to the Kenyan Ministry of Education (2017), the following are values that should be integrated in all teaching areas.
• Love
• Responsibility
• Respect
• Unity
• Peace
• Patriotism
• Social Justice

• Integrity

Figure 2: *Values of CBC*
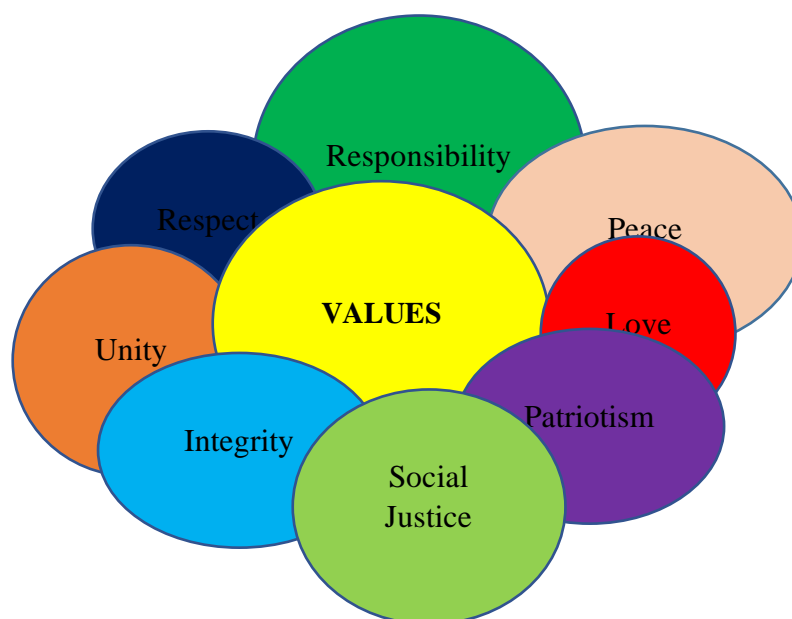
2.7.3. Guiding Principles of CBC

According to the Kenyan Ministry of Education (2017), the following principles have been integrated in the new curriculum. First, the curriculum offers opportunities to all learners. Regardless of their social or economic backgrounds or their physical or emotional states, every learner should get the opportunity to go to school and be taught. Second, excellence is key since just going to school is not profitable by itself. The learners must interact with quality learning to enable them to retain as much as possible. The third principal is diversity and inclusion which endeavour to make learning environments accommodative to every learner. Therefore, learners with various kinds of disabilities should feel at home in a normal classroom and interact normally with other learners without disability.

The fourth principle of CBC entails parental empowerment and inclusion which makes the parent part of their children's educational milestones. Parents will be expected to get awareness about the curriculum and help wherever called upon since with CBC learning will take place both at school and at home. The fifth principle is community service learning which involves the drawing of relationships between what is studied in class and what happens in the outside world. Therefore, learners will be expected to go out to the community and interact with the people outside as they engage in learning activities. For example, the learners in Grade Four

may engage in a clean-up of the market when applying concepts from environmental science. Finally, CBC is expected to have differentiated curriculum and learning which makes it possible to customise lessons to suit learners with different learning abilities.

2.8. The Kenya Vision 2030

Kenya's vision 2030 aims at achieving the following things (Ministry of Education, 2017): first, it intends to integrate early childhood education into primary education. Previously, the first stage of a learner's education would be primary school that one was supposed to begin at about 7 years. Such a situation implies that there were no curriculum designs for the early years of a child. However, with CBC the instruction begins at 4 years of age (Njeng'ere & Ji, 2017). The government will, therefore, give its input by offering resources such as teachers and teaching and learning resources to the pre-primary sections of the school. Second, vision 2030 aims at reforming secondary education so that the learners are better prepared for the real world. The secondary school learner should be able to choose subjects that are in line with their career aspirations. Therefore, specialisation would start early thus producing competent individuals into the markets.

Third, vision 2030 aims at modernising training of teachers to ensure they are up to date with the current teaching standards. As noted by Cho (2013) the banking model of education is irrelevant in the current dynamic. Therefore, teachers who were teaching that system need fresh training to enable them to lead the learner to meet the needs of the current. Fourthly, vision 2030 is serious about developing programs for learners with special needs. Since education is a basic right, no one should leave behind on the pretext of their handicap (Vincent & Chiwandire, 2019). Already many changes have taken place in the normal schools to accommodate learners living with disabilities. For instance, many schools have built rumps at their entrances to ensure every person can access them. Further, the teachers who have trained on how to deal with people with disability has been deployed to various normal schools to help cater to the needs of the disabled (Vincent & Chiwandire, 2019).

According to the Kenya Vision 2030, there should be a productive relationship between labour markets and education because it aims to make the country more responsive to the biting needs of its citizenry (Sanchez & Romero, 2015). It also emphasises the need to create entrepreneurial skills as well as competencies that lead to developing strong public and private partnership sectors. According to Ruth and Ramadas (2019), the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) is

relevant because it ensures that middle-income nations produce citizens who are well-equipped with entrepreneurial skills, be able to engage in lifelong learning and work on non-routine tasks as well as can solve complex problems. Moreover, it ensures that it brings up citizens who can make more decisions and understand what they should do with or without supervision. According to Anderson (2022), such learners can assume responsibility and develop essential skills for reading, quantitative thinking, and expository skills needed in a dynamic society. To achieve the 2030 vision goal, the country needs a relevant education and training system that delivers the required skills, attitudes, and competencies (Ministry of Education, 2017). There is a need to address facts about quality, Curriculum, teacher development and management, service delivery, as well as relevant skills required for societal needs (Anderson, 2022). Many people leave their current education to join the job market when they need more preparation, causing many challenges and dilemmas in preparation for the future citizens of the ever-changing world.

2.9. Relationship between Curriculum and Corruption

There has been a severe concern about deficient performance in the exam-oriented 8-4-4 education system, whereby many cases of cheating have been reported. According to Hannevold (2022), the compromised credibility in the 8-4-4 exams undermined the examination process once a few changes were made to minimise cheating. Several scholars posit that CBC will provide an opportunity to solve many issues such as cheating, wasting resources, students repeating classes due to low grades, and learners dropping out of school due to lack of school fees (Grant et al. as cited by Edwards et. al, 2009). Anderson (2022) argues that the Competency-Based Curriculum is relevant because it will produce a holistic learning environment where learners will be spared from the pressures which come with the examinations and bring unhealthy competition among various stakeholders. In addition, competition has led to increased corruption among the stakeholders, where many are interested in hitting the headlines. There was a need for Kenya to have a new curriculum that would replace the controversial 8-4-4 system that promotes exam dependence and promotion instead of equipping students with relevant skills they will need in the ever-changing world. The CBC relies 60% on formative assessment and 40% of the national summative examinations. This new system will reduce the pressure to outperform others but focus more on developing meaningful skills at every juncture of the learning stages since assessment would be continuous.

2.10. Projected Benefits and Downsides of CBC

In the competency-based curriculum, a learner can pursue his or her dreams on real-world competency and skill development. without societal interference, (Anderson, 2022). Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) allows the learners to take courses and program designs based on the competencies required for a given career. The result is that the learners become more knowledgeable and acquire skills relevant to the chosen fields, facilitating the transition to the next level. In addition, CBC eliminates unhealthy competition for both primary and secondary transitions because it encourages 100% transition to the next level (Owala, 2021). The curriculum also allows learners to go to the schools near their region to avoid being exploited by the private sector. The curriculum ensures equality, so parents do not flee their children to private schools for extra coaching.

On the contrary, the Competency-Based Curriculum faces massive criticism especially from the teachers' unions' leaders who argue that the country does not have the resources to roll out this type of curriculum (Nyangla, 2022). The leaders point out that the teachers' service commission has not employed adequate teachers to teach the learners to acquire the wide array of skill sets that the CBC proposes (Nyangla, 2022). Furthermore, there have been minimal infrastructural adjustments to equip schools with necessary facilities to support CDF. Finally, the CBC places a burden on parents who are already battling with a dilapidated economy (Dingili & Yungungu, n.d., n.d.)

Such critics believe that the 8-4-4 system could still solve the educational gaps that we have now. They opine that teachers could be trained better to use a wide array of teaching strategies and assessments to ensure that the learner develops hands-on skill sets (Taras, 2020). Additionally, the 8-4-4 had practical subjects such as agriculture, weaving and music which would still help learners to tap into their talents. Therefore, the 8-4-4 system should just be amended and not entirely deleted.

2.11. Fit for Purpose

According to recent studies, many scholars agree that a Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) fits the purpose because it is flexible, friendly, and inclusive for the learners (Owala, 2021). In

addition, it is aligned with the demands of lifelong learning and the development of the national qualification framework, where non-formal, formal, and informal learning experiences are acknowledged even before learning takes place (Owala, 2021). Other nations where the curriculum has already been established, such as Finland, Australia, Netherlands, South Africa, Canada, Norway, and Sweden, among others, acknowledge prior learning in the curriculum. Since somebody who has done home-schooling would want to join the formal learning after being tested and moved to the relevant class but will not be put in class one (Momanyi & Rop, 2019, p. 11). At the same time, those who have done a diploma do not need to start a degree from the first year but are tested and moved to the appropriate level through evaluations (Momanyi & Rop, 2019, p. 11). The main reason is to use the previous training experience, and training gathered in the prior learning by giving exceptions as they join new higher levels of education. Therefore, the purpose of this curriculum is not to serve the interests of the elite group but to serve the holistic needs of the country (Anderson, 2022).

A Competency-Based Curriculum can be very good because it provides holistic learning and is inclusive of the comprehensive outcomes of the learning process in formal, informal, and non-formal education contexts that focus on developing relevant skills and knowledge (Momanyi & Rop, 2019). The curriculum encourages the transmission of positive values, morals, and attitudes, which promote positive citizens who are socially, politically, and economically engaged. The Competency-Based Curriculum focuses on learner-centred, which encourages them to adjust to the changing learning environment and the needs of the teachers, students, and society.

However, some advocates of the knowledge-based system of education opine that the CBC will water down the important aspect of the acquisition of knowledge and information (Bates, 2021). According to Bates (2021) there may be a likelihood that CBC will focus too much on "doing" at the expense of knowing. In the end, the transferability of knowledge would be hindered. A case in point would be the sending of professionals to help with situations in other parts of the world. If such professionals cannot explain or teach others what they know, then their competence may not be beneficial. For instance, a mechanic may repair a car but may not be able to explain the mechanism or dynamics behind the repair. Such a situation may render the mechanic useless in case he is not physically present to attend to a repair.

2.12. The Current State of Implementation

Despite the benefits of CBC that various educational theorists posit, the curriculum has received massive setbacks in Kenya. First, the Cabinet Secretary in charge of education during the first year of the CBC's roll, Amina Mohamed, stated that CBC needed more time before it could be implemented, and that the country was not yet ready to implement it. She was transferred to the Ministry of Sports before her statements were taken into consideration.

Currently, there are many evident flaws with the curriculum from various quarters. In a parliamentary debate MP Wamaitha (2023) observed that there was minimal learning in many Junior secondary schools as they hosted their maiden candidates. The learning had stalled due to lack of teachers and resources such as the new books for grade 7. The legislators, led by Homabay Town Member of Parliament, Peter Kaluma, noted that there was chaos in the way the students were transitioning from class 6 to junior secondary. The MP said that some of the parents had decided to use corrupt means to have their children who are in grade six to skip grade seven and go straight to Class 8, to be in the same cohort as the last 8-4-4 group (NTV Kenya, 2023)

2.13. Gender Sensitivity

Competency-Based Curriculum eradicates gender inequality by promoting gender sensitivity in the learning environment. According to research, boys and girls joining schools learn a wide range of things from their families, peers, and media regarding behaviour patterns, roles, and attitudes of their gender (Ruth & Ramadas, 2019). Family socialisation permanently marks a child's life through siblings, relatives, friends, and parents. It is through this primary socialisation that gender stereotypes, inequalities as well as injustices are developed knowingly or unknowingly (Makunja, 2016). A range of societal expectations for boys and girls concerning physical behaviours, academic motivations, social interactions, and behaviours learned. The initial stages of life shape the kind of men and women children can be in the future. However, gender learning does not stop at the family level; it is enhanced even in school as the children spend a reasonable amount of time with their peers (Isaboke et al., 2021). The children also get influenced by the hidden curriculum in various ways.

In most schools' teachers have been told to create a gender-responsive learning environment. The teachers try to involve boys and girls in the learning activities equally to promote gender

learning. On the other hand, Makunja (2016) argues that gender stereotyping, injustice, and inequality are still deeply entrenched in their lives as well as the experiences of the individuals in the society. The Competency-Based Curriculum could be said to promote gender sensitivity in schools and society because it produces graduates who embrace gender equality.

2.14. Economic/Poverty Reduction

Education is an essential input for economic growth. The development of a country depends on the quality of education it provides for its citizens (Mellingen, 2015). The changing societal demands, globalisation, and increased anxiety of surviving in the 21st-century skills of digital knowledge and globalisation have affected the teaching and learning processes (Isaboke et al. 2021). The curriculum should guarantee everyone that attaining the new competencies will help personal, economic, and social development (Abdullahi, 2019). The competency-based curriculum aims to promote economic growth and reduce poverty in society by ensuring that the needs of the dynamic society are acquired. Economic growth is a solid drive to eradicate poverty in the country. There is overwhelming evidence from previous studies that rapid and sustainable growth leads to faster growth toward achieving the Millennium Development Goals (Abdullahi, 2019).

The main challenge facing Kenya is that the rise of economic growth does not incorporate a general improvement in living standards and citizens' well-being to reduce the rate of poverty. The Kenyan economic growth rate has reduced dramatically, from an average of 6.6% in the 1970s to 4.2 % in the 1980s and an average of 2.1% in the 1990s (Makunja, 2016). In another study by (Rop 2013) the results indicated that the living conditions of Kenyans are going down rapidly. There is an increased number of individuals living below the poverty line. They cannot even access clean water, shelter, clothing, education, and health services. Moreover, unemployment is a big problem in Kenya; the unemployment rate is 22%, and the youths are the majority who have dropped out of school. Abdullahi (2019) observed that in some parts of the country, essential services are not available. Hence the increased disparities in access to essential services have further undercut the living conditions of low-income earners in the country. Abdullahi 2019) noted that school enrolment, infant mortality rate, and life expectancy have significantly deteriorated.

Similarly, Rop (2013) noted that economic growth, improved resource use, and poverty eradication had remained the same since independence. The effort to attain sustainable socio-

economic development has been a great challenge, thus influencing various policy shifts. The attention centred on eradicating poverty and enhancing the inclusion of those excluded from enjoying the benefits of economic growth. In addition, it has led to the redistribution of resources and enhanced accessibility. The country has tried to change the strategies to obtain sustainable human development, improving the quality of life of the majority through free education.

Ngugi (2013) suggests that poverty eradication requires necessary steps to help individuals to improve their abilities and functioning, which enables them to take control of their affairs. For the past few decades, Kenya has developed strategies for eradicating poverty through the rapid growth of the main sectors like industries, agriculture, and service provision to improve economic performance. Kenya realised that these sectors needed skills and knowledge to grow; therefore, it introduced free education for all. Ngugi (2013) suggests that sending children to school enhances growth and employment opportunities. Therefore, parents need to invest in taking their children to school. CBC encourages the development of competencies in various sectors of life, such as entrepreneurship, which lead to improved governance. Strong economic growth enhances human development and promotes economic and sustainable growth in society (IFRA Nairobi, 2019, October 7). The competency-based curriculum seeks to equip learners with the skills and knowledge to be self-sustainable in the ever-changing world.

United Nations (2015) argue that poverty eradication can only be done through rapid, sustainable economic growth. The government must develop policies that allow the poor to participate in the opportunities available and contribute to economic growth. The policies should include equal rights to education, create good labour markets and remove gender inequalities as well as increase financial inclusion. A Competency-Based Curriculum is relevant as well as holistic that nurtures students' abilities and integrates learning and co-curriculum activities, which helps learners to develop competencies in various activities that prepare them to be responsible members of society. The main aim of CBC is to equip learners with the skills required for the 21st century. It captures the nation's aspirations and emphasises the learner's competence, patriotism, character, and ability to coexist as a responsible citizen.

2.15. Education

The dynamic societal demands, globalisation, and increased anxiety of surviving in the 21st century have forced many countries to make changes in the education sector. Kenya has

adopted a Competency-Based Curriculum to offer quality education. The new curriculum has replaced the former 8-4-4 curriculum, whose aim was a competition based on grades and not competence in various skills. The former curriculum has been condemned for producing graduates who are not competent enough to fit in the job market. Campbell. J (2010) asserts that a Competency-Based Curriculum needs students to demonstrate mastery of content acquired through an assessment where they apply the knowledge taught in school; includes the curriculum is inclusive of special needs learners, who have been provided with personalised instructions to make sure that they master the content taught in school and apply it in the outdoor life. This has called for a change in the situation and assessment methods used in the education sector. Implementing a Competency-Based Curriculum needs new assessment methods that align with the new curriculum (Campbell. J, 2010). The education sector was required to make changes to provide necessary methods to ensure well-equipped and knowledgeable alternative approaches to assess the needs of individual learners. The objectives of CBC are that at the end of the learning cycle, every learner will be equipped with the following seven core areas; digital literacy, self-efficacy, imagination, creativity, problem-solving, learning to learn, and citizenship.

Seven Core Competencies for CBC

The main Pillars of CBC include (KNEC, n.d):

1. Communication and Collaboration

2. Critical Thinking and Problem Solving

3. Imagination and Creativity

4. Citizenship

5. Digital Literacy

6. Learning to learn

7. Self-Efficacy

Ruth and Ramadas (2019) explain that a Competency-Based Curriculum emphasises developing and not acquiring knowledge. This implies that change must be done in the teaching and learning process. It must change from the traditional memorization of the content to the acquisition of skills and competency required to solve real-life problems. In this case, the teacher switches from being an expert to the learner-centred method. The teacher's work is to guide and facilitate learning. The demands in the CBC have called for comprehensive reforms in various approaches such as learning, teaching, and assessing learners. Moreover, the training

programs for teachers have changed to equip teachers with the necessary competencies that enable them to handle the challenges related to CBC application in schools. Owala (2021) emphasises that for effective curriculum implementation and delivery of quality education, educators' capacity building, teacher training, and supply of learning resources are essential.

2.16. The Status of Infrastructure

Competency-Based Curriculum requires extra facilities, infrastructure like lab, new resources like books and ICT material. The infrastructure depends on the number of students enrolled and the teachers will create a learning environment where students will share facilities equally (Ruth & Ramadas, 2019). There is a significant shortage in the ICT equipment in primary schools. This might pose many challenges in implementing the curriculum. According to study, 90% of the schools do not even have enough resources and classes for CBC. There are few classrooms since the previous classes are still occupied by the ongoing previous curriculum. The basic items like tablets and computers for ICT are a challenge in public primary schools (Sanchez & Romero, 2015). They lack digital customization in the class settings. The government is required to set and build more classes for smooth implementation of the curriculum. They should also invest in the necessary technology to meet the primary level learners requirements in CBC. The successful implementation of the curriculum-based on technology will depend on content customization. The education philosophy curriculum design should be guided by the cognitive approaches of the educator's who are supposed to teach the CBC classes (Sanchez & Romero, 2015). In addition, the teachers are not well trained on ICT literacy, yet the competence of ICT can only be achieved based on the literacy of the teachers. The government will be required to offer continuous training on the teachers. If the teacher lacks adequate training on how to use technology to incorporate in the Competency-Based Curriculum, then it will hinder successful implementation.

Strategic management needs to focus on training teachers in various areas of the curriculum. The result from recent studies shows that the teacher training done by the government is exceptionally low and more teachers need to be trained on the same. In addition, the time for training was exceedingly small for the complex work that was required in the CBC curriculum. Therefore, most teachers are not ready for the curriculum. In addition, the instruction material is not adequate for the enrollment done. The educators, government, and the stakeholders should make sure that the schools are well equipped with necessary learning resources. There is a need for investment in the school infrastructure such as building more libraries, computer

rooms, electricity, furniture, laboratories and toilets. In addition, more well equipped classrooms to be constructed and water supplied for the CBC activities.

The government should ensure equity in the supply of the resources to enhance equality and smooth transition. In the secondary and primary public schools, the teachers lack even some basic textbooks as well as other innovative gadgets which are required for CBC. Sanchez and Romero (2015) state that lack of instruction material will hinder effective implementation of the Competency-Based Curriculum. When CBC was rolled out, the ministry had supplied some designs for the curriculum and supplied in the schools already, but the learners had not yet received the necessary textbooks. In addition, the teachers had not received a clear guideline on how to implement the curriculum.

2.17. Implementation and Understanding Among Teachers

A Competency-Based Curriculum emphasises the learner's demonstration of their ability to apply knowledge, values, attitude, and skills acquired in class as they progress through their education process (Momanyi & Rop, 2019, p. 11). Even though the curriculum was received with resistance, it is now under implementation in Kenyan schools. However, successful implementation needs the combined efforts of the parents and teachers. Teachers play a significant role in providing opportunities for learners to learn and acquire their potential. Sanchez and Romero (2015), assert that teachers should conceptualise the standard shift from teaching to learning and perform formative assessments of students' progress. At the same time, Anderson (2022) adds that teachers need to know that their extended responsibilities are created between the curriculum and learners during teaching. The teachers, therefore, need to have knowledge and skills that will help them have the ability to use the required teaching methodology, develop lesson plans, and choose appropriate teaching material and assessment tools. They should choose appropriate teaching methods that accommodate all learners at their levels. Preparing relevant lesson plans is especially important for the successful implementation of CBC.

According to Owala (2021) a lesson describes an outline of the procedures, content, resources, time allocation, and learning environment that the teacher will use during teaching. Teacher training in the new curriculum influences the successful implementation of the CBC. A study conducted by Momanyi and Rop, (2019, p. 11) reports that teachers lacked the required knowledge and skills for the implementation of the curriculum, and that slowed down the

implementation process. Most of the teachers are not yet prepared and have yet to understand issues regarding CBC in primary and junior secondary schools. Those who were trained still face challenges because of a lack of enough resources to implement the curriculum successfully. Anderson (2022) asserts that the successful implementation of the new curriculum needs continuous teacher training.

CHAPTER 3: LITERATURE REVIEW & THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1 Introduction

Curricula documents are political in nature and contain ideologies which must be critically analysed and critiqued. The critique applies to Kenya as well. The country often emulates western (Anglo-American) educational systems where for instance local languages are marginalised and English valorised to the detriment of education for all (Ngugi Wa Thiong'o). This research questions reflects some of these concerns raised. The researcher will query and interrogate the prescribed curriculum, whether it is fit for purpose in a Kenyan context or if it further alienates Kenyan students. Additionally, the researcher will investigate how teachers perceive the curriculum – whether they themselves are familiar with, adhere to and confident in its implementation. John Goodlad reminds us that this may not be the case. It is important to remember that a curriculum or any other educational document cannot by itself improve standards – the politicians who often craft the document, the school leaders, teachers and other stakeholders in the chain affect the final delivery. Thus, a critical lens will be applied to the entire process. Freire (2014) and other critical perspectives will be analysed in this research to bear analysis of the reform.

According to Atieno (2023) the education curriculum change in Kenya has elicited heated debates among the public. There are varied views as to whether it was a good move to adopt the competency-based curriculum in 2017; a shift away from the knowledge-based curriculum (Nyangla, 2022). The body of content will address many relevant studies.

This literature review will explore the various angles of the old and new curriculum as guided by these research questions:

- To what extent is the Competency-Based Curriculum implemented in the primary schools in Mombasa, Kenya?
- What are the primary school teachers' perspectives about the training programs provided by key stakeholders?
- How does the Competency-based curriculum impact the issue of equity among the students?

3.1.1. CBC Advantages

According to Amutabi (2019), the introduction of a Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) marks the end of the era of ranking and cutthroat competition in Kenya's education sector. Their research examined its implications for development. Prior to the introduction of the Competency-Based Curriculum, ranking was the primary focus of education. According to Elwick (2021), this normally led to cheating in exams due to the stress that candidates and parents faced in order to perform well. One outcome of the elevated level of competition was that parents would remove their children from one school and take them to another because of the ranking (Ogada, Piliyesi, & Ochieng, 2020). On the other hand, Kabombwe and Mulenga (2019) say that the CBC focuses on life-long learning which fosters learning not just formally but also outside the classroom. The Competency-Based Curriculum does provide some hope for Kenya´s educational development. According to Ogada et al. (2020) the previous system was based on exams, but this system is fostering innovation in the country. Moreover, countries like Finland and Norway have adopted the CBC according to their people´s needs. Kenya also gained inspiration and adopted the CBC. Many of the countries that have adopted the CBC have been successful in creating more possibilities for their learner's careers. The previous system led to unhealthy competition because of the national examinations, while CBC on the other hand, focuses on the holistic development of the learner (Amutabi, 2019). He supports the replacement of 8.4.4.

Amutabi (2019) is a strong advocate for CBC since he believes that it will help to stem the pressure that comes with passing the examinations. He argues that eliminating examinations will open ways for the learner to acquire more knowledge and skills that will make them handier in their immediate environment after school. Similarly, Kabombwe and Mulenga (2019) note that the examinations under CBC can be customised to ensure that each of the learner's abilities, interests and hobbies are tested comprehensively.

3.1.2. Challenges with the Banking Model of Education

Critical pedagogy is opposed to mainstream education. The critical pedagogy field says that the curriculum of banking education is irrelevant in the current dynamic market (Cho, 2013, p. 16). The standardised tests are seen as undemocratic and discriminatory. Moreover, critical pedagogy rejects that schools are great utilizers because they believe that the idea of ´equal

opportunities ´is based on inequalities since they create unequal outcomes. They also reject the instrumental reasoning of schools, which results in oppression and dehumanisation. In addition, schools are spoken of as liberatory institutions, they are therefore made to be desirable, but people hide the fact that schools exploit and oppress (Mulcahy, 2011).

In addition, Davis (2006) as cited in Apple, 2011, p.45 we now live in a capitalist world that promotes a lot of inequalities. The Competency-Based Curriculum is said to increase the inequality gap in Kenya. In Kenya, there is a huge gap between the rich and the poor. Less than 0.1% of the population (8,300 people) own more wealth than the bottom 99.9% (more than 44 million people (Gichuhi & Kalista, 2022). Apple (2011) tells us about the tasks in which the critical analyst in education must engage if he wants to change. One of the most important ones is that; the critical analyst should demonstrate the ways in which education is related to exploitation. Moreover, while doing so, she/he must be directed to find solutions and point out the contradictions in the analysis of the problem. In addition, he needs to assess the social movements that are involved in fighting educational inequalities and also criticise them (Apple, 2011, pp. 46-48).

3.1.3. CBC Preparedness and Implementation in Kenya

A study was conducted by Isaboke, Mweru, and Wambiri (2021) on teacher preparedness and implementation of the Competency-Based Curriculum in public pre-primary schools in Nairobi, Kenya. The study found that 34.1% of the teachers were trained and 65.9 % of the teachers were not trained. The study found that most of the teachers were not involved in the training conducted by the Teacher Service Commission, Kenya National Examinations Council, Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development, and not in the Teacher Training Colleges. The results of the study showed that the training of teachers was both insufficient, and where it did take place, it was deficient, in the sense that despite the training conducted, the majority of the teachers were unable to handle the CBC tasks.

Moreover, Isaboke, Mweru, and Wambiri (2021) investigated the relationship between teacher training and the extent of CBC implementation. They found a meaningful relationship between training pre-primary schoolteachers and their level of implementation of the CBC. This study's findings imply that in order to successfully implement a curriculum program training is

paramount. Teacher training is therefore a key ingredient in the implementation of a curriculum program.

The study by Isaboke, Mweru, and Wambiri (2021) recommended the following: the minister of education should sensitise parents through educational workshops and seminars, on their function and responsibility of understanding and implementing the CBC. In addition, they argued that there is also a need for the Teachers Service Commission (TSC) to recruit more teachers, Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD) to include the stakeholders of education (teachers and parents) in the curriculum reform so that the implementation can be easy.

In addition, in a study done by Mwang´ombe (2021) on teachers' understanding of the CBC, she argues that teachers should be equipped with computer skills so that ICT and digital literacy inclusion can be facilitated in the classroom; thus, technological advancements are vital. Moreover, the study recommended that the Ministry of Education should provide seminars to sensitise teachers on the CBC so that they can be well-equipped and competent. Lastly, the study recommended that teacher training institutes should include the CBC in the educational framework so that teachers can be trained and ready for implementation before entering the field. As a result, this study and other studies like it such as Ogwora (2022) highlight that training of teachers adequately is vital for the successful implementation of the CBC in the classroom.

3.1.4. Measuring the Value of CBC

The varied viewpoints of CBC require that researchers come up with a measure to determine whether this new curriculum would help solve the educational problems that the country had. According to Barrett, Duggan, Lowe, Ukpo, and Nikel (2006) there are 5 main criteria for measuring the quality of learning, as follows:

Effectiveness

According to (Hawes and Stephens 1990; Tibi 1985) as found in (Barrett et al., 2006) effectiveness is the extent to which the goals or objectives of an education system are being achieved. There are two types of objectives: external effectiveness and internal effectiveness.

External effectiveness is the degree to which the needs of the students and society at large are met by the education system. Although educational economists link education fulfilment with an increase in personal and national income; this is so not the focus. Education is a human right, period. So, it should seek to humanise people. This is why a broader deliberation of effectiveness will involve the significance of considering personal fulfilment at the level of the individual and issues such as social cohesion, participation, and human rights with respect to nation-states (Chitty 2002; Delamonica et al 2004). On the other hand, internal effectiveness in the educational context refers to how well the institution, which is the school, is functioning (Barrett et al., 2006).

Efficiency

Efficiency refers to the ratio of outputs to inputs. Efficiency looks at the inputs required to meet the outputs. On the other hand, effectiveness is concerned with the output of education. These inputs may be measured in two ways, monetary or non-monetary terms. As a result, efficiency measures the extent to which we make the best use of inputs to achieve our educational goals (Barrett et al., 2006). Therefore, any curriculum which is efficient will have cases where many of its products contribute resolutely to nation building. For instance, if the curriculum prepares learners for opportunities that cannot be found in the country, then such graduates are likely to work and invest in foreign countries (Mlambo & Adetiba, 2019). Most of their taxes will go to benefit the country that utilises their services. However, an efficient system will take stock of the market needs and then adjust itself accordingly to ensure that the learned and the trained settle meaningfully in their outside world. A bogus curriculum may also result in more crime as the number of disillusioned graduates would be higher.

Equality

A key element in the discussion of equality in education is the identification of groups that are disadvantaged in terms of access and achievement (Barrett et al., 2006). In this criterion, we are looking at the relationship of education to development models, such as the models of human development and poverty reduction, social cohesion, social diversity, peace, etc. (Michaelowa 2001; Chapman et al 1996). When we talk about the equality of education, the most important thing that is focused on is access to education for disadvantaged groups.

Examples of these disadvantaged groups are girls and disabled people. Girls are disadvantaged since culturally and historically the boy child in Africa has been given prominence over the girl child (Asongu & Odhiambo, 2020). Many cultures valued boys more than girls. Even though the situation has started changing there are still strains of male chauvinism in various sectors. The disabled have also suffered the same fate since the mainstream education system only catered for the needs of the majority (Vincent & Chiwandire, 2019). Thus, learning experiences were never customised to meet the unique needs of each learner.

According to (Sayed 1997, UNESCO 2000) as cited in (Barrett et al., 2006) equality in education is seen as a fundamental aspect of educational quality, which stems from a position that takes a 'quality education' as a human right. Therefore, regardless of one's socio-economic status, gender, or physical appearance, they should have access to quality education.

Relevance

According to Dinh (2019), when relating the concept of relevance to a project, the questions that arise are. Does the curriculum teach Kenyan students to live in harmony? Does the language of education fit the purpose of education? Therefore, what research should determine is whether the curriculum is relevant. In this framework, this study will look at the purpose of education. Moreover, an important aspect of relevance is whether the curriculum is culturally sensitive (Kay, Muola, & Ondima, 2019). The educational literature characterises educational quality concerns of different nation-states, by the level of national development. The priority for low-income countries as illustrated in Table 5 found in (Barrett et al., 2006) is ´access, livelihoods (coping; lasting; flexibility) – primary schools´.

Table 5: Priorities in educational quality by level of national development Table 5: Priorities in educational quality by level of national development

State	Emphasis within the quality debate
Post-conflict, newly founded states	Subsistence, security, trust – school system, curriculum
Low-income countries	Access, livelihoods (coping; lasting; flexibility) – primary schools
Middle income countries	Continuation – secondary schools, disadvantaged groups

| OECD countries | Competencies, responsibility, lifelong learning; sustainability |

Synthesised from: McDowell (2002); Michaelowa (2001); Akkari (2005); Romano (2002); Kagia (2005)

Sustainability

The fifth element in the framework for educational quality that Barrett 2 et al. (2006) propose, is sustainability. According to Kabombwe and Mulenga (2019) Sustainability means that all our reflections in relation to the other elements must bring in thoughts not just of the present but of the future. The United Nations (2015) emphasised the need for sustainability in all areas of development. The translation of this into educational systems is a great challenge. From these perspectives, as cited in (Barrett 2 et al., 2006) quality education emerges in the context of 'the obligation to establish and sustain the conditions for every individual, irrespective of gender, ethnicity, race, or regional location, to achieve valued outcomes. Therefore, the quality of education, in terms of its sustainability, should be measured (as cited in Barrett 2 et al., 2006) by its ability to construct 'human capacity not only for employability but for broader lifelong learning as well as for adaptive and 'coping' livelihood strategies in a fast-moving and complicated world'.

3.1.5. The Relationship between Education and Humanity (Equity)

In Paul Freire's book (2014), *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, he talks about people's 'ontological and historical vocation of becoming fully human' (Freire, 2014, "p.84") and the ways in which education can support or work against this educational project. Paul's book is about the acknowledgment of one's humanity, positioned as the central problem of human beings' existence. Within a historical situation, the recognition of one's humanity and the dehumanising effects of the social structures, may both happen simultaneously. This is what Paulo Freire refers to when he talks about historical vocation. He says that the struggle first begins with a recognition that one's humanity has been taken away (Freire, 2014, p. 68). This act refers to dehumanisation. Dehumanisation is characterised by oppression, exploitation, and unfair treatment. The oppressor uses violence to maintain their position. It is important to note that

humanization and dehumanisation are both processes which can either make a system a success or a failure. Therefore, the oppressed fight for their humanity that was taken away by the oppressor. They fight for justice and to recover their lost humanity. This is why affirmation of the individual is incredibly significant. The people who are being oppressed need to affirm their existence, and action is required. Freire (2014) argues that the oppressed group has a desire and deep yearning for freedom. Moreover, the oppressed are alienated from their labour, which is the worst type of oppression. Freire says that it is the task of the oppressed, to liberate and restore their humanity and the oppressors´. The oppressor believes that humanity is reserved for him. Freire says dependence is transformed into independence through the praxis of reflection, critical dialogue, and action. The struggle is important because it is the 'struggle for humanization' and it comes with responsibility. The struggle is life-affirming, while oppression is death-affirming (Freire, 2014, p.68). The oppressed must begin their struggle as human beings.

Education can work for or against the broader educational project of becoming fully human. Paulo Freire (2014) says that education is suffering from a narration problem. The students are like containers and recipients of knowledge. The teacher deposits knowledge in them. The banking model of education restricts creativity and produces passive learners. It also resists dialogue. In addition, the banking model is focused on memorization. In the banking system, being obedient and a passive listener is encouraged because it serves the interest of the oppressor. Moreover, students are cultivated to become oppressed, and education indoctrinates them to fit in the world. Thus, Freire (2014) says that the banking model is dehumanising because in these ways it amounts to a practice of domination. Problem-posing education, on the other hand, supports humanization. The students and the teacher are both the subjects, as opposed to the banking system whereby the teacher is the subject, and the students are the object. To add to this, problem-posing education encourages dialogue and makes students critical thinkers. Moreover, in problem-posing education, the teacher and the student create knowledge together. This type of education is humanising because it practises freedom. Furthermore, this education system believes that dialogue is essential for unveiling the realities of this world (Freire, 2014, pp. 71-86).

In the banking system, knowledge is seen and treated as though it was a gift (Freire, 2014, p. 72) given by those who see themselves as ´knowledgeable to those whom they consider to "know nothing". Freire argues that students who are socialised into this model of banking

education come to accept this approach to knowledge, and the existence of the teacher is justified. Freire here describes the students as slaves since they are fully dependent on the teacher for direction, yet the learners may have alternative ways of reasoning that would still result in acquisition of knowledge and skills. He says "Any situation in which some individuals prevent others from engaging in the process of inquiry is one of violence" which prevents students from engaging in inquiry about the world and their place in the world (Freire, 2014, p. 21). Such a situation may prevent learners from transforming the world. It serves the interests of the oppressor to prevent the students from acquiring critical thinking and creativity. Freire says that a time does come eventually when students resist being passive learners (Freire, 2014, p. 75). It is important to note that Freire says that not all teachers deliberately attempt to dehumanise students, but they are blinded to their oppression though they have good intentions. It is also important to note that the very knowledge that is deposited by the teacher to the students, contains contradictions. Banking education also hides some facts that explain how human beings exist in the world. This is so that dehumanisation can continue as it serves the oppressor.

On the other hand, liberation education aims at bridging gaps by reconciliation between the learners' thought processes and those of the teacher. Liberation is indeed a praxis; it is the collective action of people to first reflect on their world and transform it (Freire, 2014, p. 79). Authentic reflection considers people with their authentic relations in the world. Moreover, authentic liberation involves problem-solving education. In this context, the teacher enters the class with humility and loves the students. The teacher sees the students as human beings and trusts them.

3.1.6. Theories Related to Teacher Training in a New Curriculum

According to Thompson, Bell, Andreae, and Robins (2013) a new curriculum will only offer satisfactory results if the implementers at the grassroots are fully equipped to embrace it. For the case of an educational curriculum, the teachers must be brought to a level where they accept training and drop the old ways of doing things in exchange for the new structures. Various theories underpin why training and career development is necessary for teachers. However, adopting the new system may not be easy due to its disruptive effect. According to Dimitriadis and McCarthy (Mulcahy, 2011; cited in Apple, 2011, p. 39) the task of post-colonialist scholars is to question authority and destabilise power relations. Thus, the task of critical analysis is to

question why things are the way they are, and not just accept them as reality. Apple in his article talks about Michael Burawoy who was a radical sociologist. Burawoy (2005) says that critical sociology is grounded on two things. First ´Sociology for whom? ´ and second ´Sociology for what? ´ (Apple, 2011, p. 44). When we relate this to education, we see that a lot of people are motivated to fight for equality, the rights of human beings, systems that are just, and basically for a better world for everyone. But Davis (2006) (as cited in Apple, 2011, p. 45) argues that this is difficult to achieve because we live in a capitalist world that promotes a lot of inequalities. The inequality arises from the fact that quality resources only get to those that can afford to buy them as opposed to distributing things equally to the public. Apple gives us nine tasks in which the critical analyst in education must engage if they want to achieve change. One of the most important ones is that; the critical analyst should demonstrate the ways in which education is related to exploitation. Moreover, while doing so, she must be directed to find solutions and point out the contradictions in the analysis of the problem. Furthermore, he needs to redefine what research means and assess the social 10 movements that are involved in fighting educational inequalities and also criticise them (Apple, 2011, pp. 46-48).

Ongesa (2020) argues that critical thinking is one of the core competencies in the development of 21st-century skills. He emphasises that no learner should be left behind in the acquisition of this skill. According to Lipman and Naji (2003), critical thinking entails joint criticism, careful evoking of opinions, and judgement which makes children open-minded and self-sufficient. Furthermore, Ongesa (2020) argues that the aim of education should be reviewed by the respective educational figures so that critical thinking can be realised among school children. There is also a need to match the goals of education and practice. Since critical thinking is one of the seven core competencies in the classroom, its practice is therefore vital (Ongesa, 2020). Ongesa (2020) emphasises the use of Socratic questioning to help to promote learners´ level of critical thinking. Norris and Ennis, (1989) prefer Socratic questioning as a method of assessment over objective questioning. For the successful implementation of critical thinking in the school curriculum, Ongesa (2020) emphasises teacher commitment and competency achieved through rigorous teacher training.

Similarly, Namwambah (2020) argues that education plays a revolutionary role in human aspirations. He says that the primary fundamental role of education should be a holistic approach that makes the individual develop himself and the society around him. Moreover, Namwambah (2020) argues that critical thinking is vital in creating an education that will lead

to national development. He also concludes that the qualities of value education are that it gives people the ability to accept criticism without taking offence, individuals who have the ability to differentiate between good and bad, and the ability to recognize errors. In addition, value education equips individuals with the skills of tolerance, and to become open-minded individuals. Finally, value education makes individuals to be productive, and creative, who work for development and are social change agents in their community.

3.2. Theoretical Framework

The present study is grounded on the theory of John I Goodlad's Curriculum Conceptual System. Mishra and Koehler (2006) argue that a theoretical framework plays a vital role in the research process by guiding the kind of questions asked, the nature of the evidence collected, strategies used to analyse data, and interpretations derived from data analysis. Therefore, the choice of an appropriate theoretical framework is a prerequisite for a good research study. This is the main theory that will be used in this research.

Goodlad's Conceptual System

Over several decades, Goodlad and his associates developed a conceptualization of the curriculum field (Goodlad, 1979). A curriculum conceptual system means a carefully engineered framework designed to identify and reveal relationships among complex, related, interacting phenomena; in effect, to reveal the whole where wholeness might not be thought to exist. Such a system consists of categories abstracted from existential phenomena. The system is designed to describe and classify categories that can be readily discussed and manipulated at consistent, clearly identifiable, levels of generality and which can be developed from different perspectives (Goodlad, 1979, p. 19). Goodlad's work in 1979 contributed to the development of a comprehensive framework for understanding the curriculum field. Notably, he established a strong correlation between curriculum practice and research, as highlighted by Shen (1999, p. 41).

According to Goodlad, a curriculum inquiry would be incomplete if it did not see "beyond the pieces to study the relationships among them and thus to encompass the whole" (Goodlad, 1979, p. 17). He, therefore, developed a conceptual system useful for providing a lens for carrying out studies in the curriculum field. His conceptual system tries to explain at what "level" of the decision-making process decisions are made. He envisioned a framework that could systematically identify and interrogate the central problems in the discipline of

curriculum development. (1999). Figure 3.1 below depicts a representation of Goodlad's System of Curriculum Conceptualization.

Figure 3.1: Goodlad's System of Curriculum Conceptualization
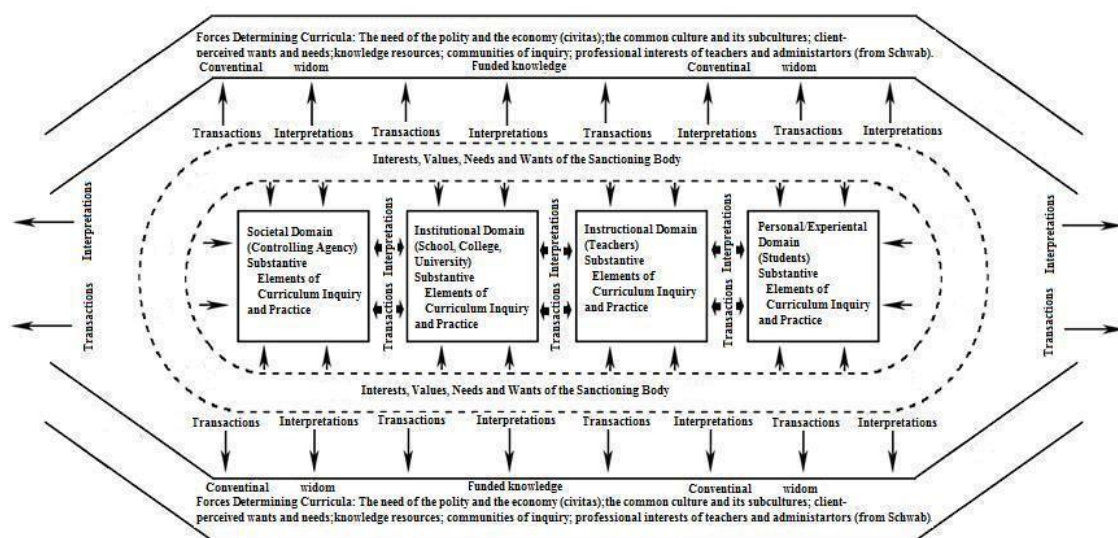
Figure 3.1: The refined conceptual system from Curriculum Inquiry adopted from The Study of Curriculum Practice (1979, pp. 348-349)

The four rectangles in the middle of the model represent Goodlad's domains of decision-making. These domains represent different settings for decisions and are where the previously mentioned substantive domains are produced. The first level is the societal domain which is the level of the decision-making process that is the most distant from whom the curriculum consumer is - the student (Goodlad, 1979, p. 33). This domain contains lawmakers and policy developers at the national, state, or federal level (Goodlad, 1979, p. 33). Goodlad points out that the decisions in the societal domain place restraints on all other domains through educational bills. However, he also explains that most of the decisions made in these remote places often have a little practical effect on the teaching (Goodlad, 1979, p. 53). In this study,

the researcher discusses some societal decision-making processes regarding the curriculum review and implementation process, particularly at the national political level.

The domain next to the societal domain is the institutional domain which entails decision-making systems in the individual schools implementing the curriculum. School heads and boards of management interrogate and incorporate the general societal decision into more concrete curriculum decisions. It is in the instructional domain that the curriculum coming from the societal domain is converted into actual practice for the learner by the teacher. Goodlad (1979) however postulates that the majority of teachers tend to use curriculum elements from other sources outside the official syllabus, such as textbooks when seeking guidelines and directions for their praxis. Furthermore, Goodlad points out that the instructional domain is the most thoroughly studied and researched domain (Goodlad, 1979, p. 361). The domain to the farthest right is the personal/experiential domain and involves the process and space in which students themselves experience the curriculum (Goodlad, 1979, p. 57).

Looking closely at this framework, it is observed that the domains are intertwined and interconnected by two-way arrows. This illustrates that the domains are in constant interaction with each other, and it also points out that the domains are not in hierarchical order. Framing the rectangles is a dotted "running track" with the Interests, Values, Needs, and Wants of the sanctioning body. This is the surrounding milieu of the conceptual system and Goodlad argues that these values affect all the domains. Outside the values are the funded knowledge and conventional wisdom as the sources of which all curriculum development proceeds. Funded knowledge refers to knowledge at "a higher level of agreement among specialists" (Shen, 1999, p. 40), and conventional wisdom refers to the" interests, wishes, beliefs and understandings of those who sanction the educational system or consume education" (Shen, 1999, p. 40). Goodlad (1979) argued that decision-making domains produce substances or products that materialise in different ways giving rise to five substantive domains as discussed here.

3.2.1. Ideological Curricula Domain

The ideological curricula are the result of idealistic planning processes and can be influenced by factors such as religious beliefs, myths, prejudices, and more (Goodlad, 1979, p. 60). They consist of a set of values and standards that outline the reasons for establishing schools and the ideal vision of how these schools should operate. However, the ideological curricula are not necessarily intended for practical implementation. In this study, the ideological curricula were

treated as being outside the realm of this investigation. The researcher focused on the formal aspects of the Competency-Based Curriculum being implemented in primary schools.

3.2.2. The Formal Curricula Domain

The formal curriculum is a concrete and tangible aspect of the Goodlad Curriculum Conceptualization. In the case of Kenya, it is documented in the Curriculum Designs. What makes the formal curriculum unique is that it is the only officially recognized and authorized set of curricula, requiring written documentation (Goodlad, 1979, p. 61). Essentially, the formal curriculum represents the societal domain and reflects the interests of the society or influential groups who determine what knowledge and skills young people should acquire (Goodlad, 1979, p. 61). The focus of this study is primarily on investigating the implementation of the formal aspects of the Competency-Based Curriculum in Kenya, which involves a significant shift in how the curriculum is delivered.

3.2.3. Perceived Curricula Domain

Goodlad argued that "what has been officially approved for instruction and learning may not necessarily be what various interested persons and groups perceive in their mind to be the curriculum" (Goodlad, 1979, pp. 61-62). According to Goodlad's observations, disparities can arise between the officially approved curricula and the way they are perceived by different groups, leading to the formation of perceived curricula. As a result, these perceived curricula are a manifestation of individuals' mental constructs (Goodlad, 1979, pp. 61-62). In the context of this study, the perceived curricula refer to the interpretations and understandings formulated by head teachers and teachers while delivering the curriculum.

3.2.4. Operational Curricula Domain

In his observations, Goodlad (1979, pp. 62-63) noted a significant disparity between what teachers perceive as the curriculum and what they actually teach. He found that teachers often get shocked when they see themselves in action through video recordings. Goodlad further highlighted that studies indicate teachers tend to develop a limited range of pedagogical approaches and often stick to those familiar methods. In investigating teacher perceptions, the study will uncover the operational domain of curriculum conceptualization.

3.2.5. Experiential Curricula Domain

According to Goodlad (1979, p.63), the learners´ experience with the curriculum is important. This data in this domain is usually difficult to obtain. In this study, this domain did not receive attention because the students views were not captured. However, some aspects of this domain were captured through observation of actual lesson sessions in which learners were observed experiencing the curriculum in real-time.

3.3. Theories related to CBC

There are various instructional design theories that go hand in hand with the Competency-Based Curriculum. Since the government of Kenya already introduced the CBC in its schools, the researcher will review some theories that support the development and implementation of this curriculum.

3.3.1. Vygotsky's Socio-Cultural Theory

The first theory is Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory which stipulates that learning occurs through social interaction. This position influenced the development of the Competency-Based Curriculum since learning revolves around the ability of the learner to apply concepts to their immediate environment (Alkhudiry, 2022). This situation implies that the learner will have to work with other stakeholders to determine the value of the concepts studied in class.

Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory has three basic tenets that are evident in the way a Competency-Based Curriculum is implemented. The first pillar is social interaction which plays a key role in enhancing learning. The second pillar is language. Language will be necessary to enhance learning. Therefore, as learners interact there must be an ideal form of communication that they must use to ensure that they pass knowledge among themselves (Kenya National Examinations Council, n.d.). Finally, the socio-cultural theory posits that learning must take place within a Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). This suggestion implies that there are stages in a person's development and each phase has particular items of learning that can occur (Alkhudiry, 2022). Therefore, one should be in a position to reach these learning areas at the expected stage of life before moving on to the next phase.

Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development can be seen in the Competency-Based Curriculum since the learning areas have been selected to fit various age groups. For example, when a child

attains age four, they will be expected to join pre-primary I and move on to Pre-primary II when they get to 5 years (KNEC, n.d; Ministry of Education, 2019). Consequently, the child will be exposed to content that is relevant to their developmental stages up to the time they are ready for college.

3.3.2. Gardner's Multiple Intelligences Theory

The multiple intelligence theory suggests that people have different ways of acquiring knowledge. A single human being will process information in diverse ways thus it is important that during instruction various channels are explored. Gardner posits that there are eight main ways through which data is processed by someone. The channels include musical-rhythmic, bodily-kinaesthetic, visual-spatial, logical-mathematical, verbal-linguistic, naturalistic, interpersonal and intrapersonal modes of learning (Cavas & Cavas, 2020).

The Competency-Based Curriculum has considered the tenets of the multiple intelligence theory by ensuring that the learner is exposed to various stimuli in and out of the classroom. The teachers are also expected to employ multiple teaching strategies to ensure that all the avenues of learning by the earner are explored. Consequently, the teacher assumes the role of a guide who takes the learner through various learning environments to make them intrigued throughout the lesson.

The multiple intelligence theory demands that a curriculum should give opportunities for learners to gain knowledge in and out of school. The curriculum should not restrict learning to school environments only. Further, the sources of knowledge for learning can also vary since the learner will perceive each of them uniquely and gain knowledge differently from them (Cavas & Cavas, 2020). Therefore, parents, teachers, the church, the media and the children themselves should play one role or the other in helping the learner acquire knowledge and skills.

3.3.3. Piaget's Theory of Cognitive Development

This theory suggests that children have an inherent ability to learn. They do not have to be influenced by society or culture for them to acquire knowledge. Piaget posits that it is wrong for adults to imagine that children are a smaller, lesser intelligent and weaker version of the

older people (Sanghvi, 2020). Instead, children in various stages process knowledge differently. Therefore, every child is capable in their own way. The difference in the qualitative and quantitative interpretation of data at various stages is something that people should try to understand to enable them to interact meaningfully with children.

Piaget's suggestions have been taken up in the frameworks of CBC since a learner is expected to attain various objectives or pillars in their own way. The pillars of CBC which include communication and collaboration; critical thinking and problem solving; digital literacy and self-efficacy are expected to be attained by children from all backgrounds. In the process the teachers will be able to differentiate their thought processes from those of the learners, thus giving the students the chance to autonomously interact with content being taught (Sanghvi, 2020). Such a situation will spur valuable learning.

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1. Introduction

This chapter deals with the general techniques, methods, and procedures of data collection. The chapter focuses on research design, location of study, target population, sample size and sampling procedures, research instruments, data collection procedures, data analysis, and logistical and ethical considerations. The choice of the prior sections of the methodology follows the suggestions offered by Carter, Andersen, Stagg, and Gaunt (2023). The researcher embraced that order of headings in the methodology since it offered a good way of breaking an otherwise bulky and tedious assignment into small manageable areas.

The researcher took keen interest in the selection of the methodology for this study since the topic under research is new and unexplored in the study's location. Consequently, it was necessary to choose methods that would enable the researcher to adjust their expectations of the subject matter as the research progressed. The new curriculum in Kenya was introduced in 2017 and it has not been experienced at all the levels of education yet (Njeng'ere & Ji, 2017, p. 21). This explanation keeps in mind that the CBC may have been fully implemented in other countries. However, the environments may not be entirely similar as those in Kenya, and Mombasa Town in particular.

The research objective is to determine in what ways the Competency-Based Curriculum has influenced the quality of learning in primary schools in Kenya. With such a topic, the researcher settled on qualitative methods of data collection since they were open to getting information from various primary sources and approximate the topic under consideration (Carter et al., 2023). The research design employed would produce findings that would give a clearer picture of the way the curriculum was being implemented in Kenya. The relationships among various variables such as the government input, the level of training of teachers, the market environment, the culture as well as the socio-economic status of the parents would come into sharp focus to determine whether such factors give support to or undermine curriculum development. With such findings, the research would offer invaluable information to researchers who would wish to delve into such fields in the future.

However, all along, the researcher was aware that the research would not be considered as representative in nature. Due to the size of the study location and the breadth and selection of the sample population, it would be misleading to say that the findings herein would be the true

picture of CBC implementation in the rest of the country or the world (Afolayan & Oniyinde, 2019). The situation arises since the study location was small while the sample consisted of a few players in the educational field. Therefore, the researcher was only driven by the intention to add some new literature to the current library.

4.2. Data Coding and analysis

When data is collected you end up with a lot of pages about what the participants said. Therefore, you should come up with a way that will enable you to draw conclusions from all that was said. One way I did this was by checking when the respondents used certain keywords or phrases. I highlighted the information with different colours, then the themes emerged from there. This helped me then draw conclusions.

4.3. Research Design

In this qualitative study, the research design adopted was explorative research. Exploratory research is used to investigate unclear research problems. In this method the researcher first had to understand the problem and whether it is a relevant field to research on. Therefore, this research design is for the purpose of producing a deeper framework to a research problem. There are two main research methods in exploratory research design. They are primary research methods and secondary research methods. For the primary research method, the researcher used observation and interviews. For the secondary research method, document analysis was used. This research design was chosen because there are limited studies and existing literature on the Competency-Based Curriculum in Kenya since it is a new curriculum.

4.4. Data Collection Procedures

First, the researcher sought permission from relevant authorities to carry out this study. The researcher sought a letter of introduction from the university to help get permission to conduct the study. Subsequently armed with the letter of introduction, the researcher sought permission to conduct the study from the Sub-County Director of Education in Mvita. Finally, the researcher visited the selected primary schools between September 27th and 1st November 2022 to brief the head teachers about the research and get their permission. The study began at the same time since all the schools were through referrals from a contact the researcher had.

4.5. Research instruments

- Observation

The researcher observed learning processes in grades 4 and 6 and went to 4 schools, 2 private schools, and 2 public. Observation was done on the lesson format, availability of learning resources, classroom size, and teaching method.

Observation method was chosen since it gave the researcher the opportunity to get raw information of how the CBC was being implemented in the primary schools in Mombasa. The observation approach enabled the researcher to get the natural feel of what the new curriculum meant to various parties such as teachers and learners without necessarily talking to them (Pope & Allen, 2020). The observation method also eliminated the fears that come with participants in a study not showing up (Pope & Allen, 2020).

However, the researcher was also aware of the disadvantages that may have arisen due to the choice of this method of research. For example, it was hard for me to use the covert observation technique due to ethical problems that may arise in concealing certain processes (Pope & Allen, 2020). Therefore, an overt observation approach was employed where participants were aware they were being observed. On the contrary, when the participants are aware they are being observed, some of them may not behave naturally. Instead, they would change their processes to suit what the researcher expects to observe.

- Interview

The researcher interviewed the teachers and the head teachers. The interview technique was appropriate for this research since there were various things about the curriculum that needed deep insights about. Because the concept of the Competency-Based Curriculum in Kenya was a new thing for the researcher, an interview would provide an opportunity to sit down with a particular stakeholder and allow them to give comprehensive information about various aspects of the Competency-Based Curriculum. The interviews were also flexible enough for me, since follow-up questions could be added to the initial questions in a bid to get all valuable information about the new system of education (Afolayan & Oniyinde, 2019).

However, the researcher was aware that there were challenges involved in the interview approach. For example, it was time-consuming since modalities had to be put in place to ensure the interviewees were available at settings and travel there physically (Afolayan & Oniyinde, 2019). Each interview took about thirty minutes. The process also required a lot of finances to pull through. It was also difficult to verify the truth in the sentiments that the participants offered (Afolayan & Oniyinde, 2019). For example, teachers and head teachers who were interviewed only represent one part of the many stakeholders involved in the education sector.

Therefore, if the teachers had decided to air information that was only convenient to them, there is no way the researcher could get counter opinions, since there were no respondents from other sectors such the government, the parents, or students.

The interview questions were divided into two parts: demographic questions, and questions about the curriculum. The demographic questions were necessary since they would give information about the grade and subjects a teacher teaches. There was the speculation that the experiences of the teachers might vary based on the Grades they teach or the subjects they teach. The duration for which they have been teaching would also inform on such issues like their depth of knowledge and their willingness to be trained on the new curriculum. Therefore, the demographic questions will help me ensure that information is acquired from diverse individuals. The interview guide for head teachers can be found in the appendix and the interview guide for teachers can also be found in the appendix.

- Document analysis

The researcher analysed schemes of work, lesson plans, and students' progress records. According to Jonyo and Jonyo (2019), the documents mentioned prior are vital professional records used widely in the Kenyan Education system and in many other parts of the world. All the records mentioned were used in the old content-based curriculum (8-4-4) and have now been retained in the new curriculum. Each one of them performs a unique purpose that aids in the implementation of the curriculum. For this reason, supervisory and quality and assurance officers normally check for the presence of such documents and the manner in which the teachers have prepared them (Obeywa et al., 2022).

The schemes of work of a particular subject are normally prepared for a term or a year. It records all the areas that the teacher intends to cover within a given period ((Jonyo & Jonyo, 2019). The scheme of work will, therefore, guide the teacher to plan to cover all the areas as stipulated in the syllabus. The document usually has a "remarks" column where the teacher indicates how successful the lesson was after they finish teaching it (Obeywa et al., 2022). The teacher has the liberty to find extra time to revise a subject in case a certain concept was not well captured by the learners.

On the other hand, a lesson plan is an explanation of how the teacher intends to teach a particular lesson. The lesson plan states the objectives of the lesson and the resources that the teacher will need to enable the learners to pick up a particular knowledge or skill (Mackatiani

et al., 2017). The teacher will determine the kind of activities that will be needed to aid in understanding the topic of the lesson. Typically, a lesson plan has three main parts: the introduction, the lesson development and conclusion (Jonyo & Jonyo, 2019). After the lesson, there is normally a section for teacher reflection and evaluation of the lesson. The comments here help the teacher to find ways of making the next lesson more productive.

Finally, a student's progress record keeps track of the performance of a learner in various assignments and assessments. The learner is usually tested on various subjects and topics. The teacher will use a scale to grade the learner in each activity. The items in the CBC scale include exceeding expectations (E.E), meeting expectations (M.E), approaching expectations (A.E), and below expectations (B.E) (Obeywa et al., 2022). Each aspect of assessment will clearly define the behaviour that the student is expected to show in order for them to be placed in any of the four scales of assessment. Therefore, the teacher will be guided by a particular rubric when defining a learner's performance. At the end of the term, the teacher can consider the performance of the learner in the various assignments and give them an overall assessment result.

Summarily, analysing these progress records offered me an opportunity to gauge the extent to which the CBC influenced the way teachers delivered the instruction and how the learners perceived it. Similarly, there were significant differences between the content of these professional documents in the old system compared to the new system. Therefore, the differences gave the researcher an opportunity to determine how impactful the new curriculum would be on the learner and the teacher.

4.6. Location of study

The study was conducted in Mvita Sub-County in Mombasa. Mombasa is a key town in Kenya since it borders the Indian Ocean. It has deep harbours such as the Kilindini harbour which makes the town a crucial business player in the entire East Africa region (African-horizons.com, 2023). Also, Mombasa has a city status which means that it attracts people from various tribes and different levels of society. Further, Mombasa has many contacts with the outside world as it has a rich history and many tourist attraction sites (African-horizons.com, 2023). Therefore, it would be interesting to find out how the new system of education would respond to such dynamic characteristics of Mombasa city. Mvita constituency is an electoral constituency in Kenya. It is one of six constituencies in Mombasa County. The constituency was established for the 1988 elections. The other sub-counties in Mombasa County are Changamwe, Jomvu, Kisauni, Nyali, and Likoni. The researcher chose to do the study in this

sub-county due to limited research on the Competency-Based Curriculum. Mvita has a population of 143,128 people. The area of the constituency in Sq.km (Approx.): is 14.80 (Kenya.hurumap.org, 2023). The Mvita Sub County wards are Mji wa Kale Ward, Tudor Ward, Tononoka Ward, Shimazi ward, and Majengo Ward. The sub-County has a total of 5 wards. The dominant tribe that lives in Mvita is the Swahili people. However, the language of instruction at school is English. Mvita constituency has a total number of 47 schools. The primary schools are 36 and the secondary schools are 11.

4.7. Target population

This study targeted primary teachers enrolled in public and private primary schools in Mvita Sub-County, Mombasa County. The study also targeted primary head teachers in the Sub-County. Both public and private primary schools in Mvita were considered for the study. This decision was reached since at the time of preparation for the research, all teachers at all levels of education were being prepared in some way for the new curriculum (Obeywa et al., 2022)

4.8. Why Use qualitative Research as a Starting Point

The issue of education reform is quite complex. The situation is made so from the fact that so many stakeholders are involved. Parents, school administrators, teachers, law makers, religious leaders, learners, among others would wish to offer their voices on whether a curriculum is good or not (Jonyo & Jonyo, 2019). Therefore, it will be challenging for a researcher to start a study in this field with an already formed expectation of how the outcomes would be. Therefore, it is vital that the researcher settles on a method of research that will pave the way for ample collection of as many views on the topic as possible. After that, the opinions found will be analysed thoroughly to determine the presence of patterns. It is at that stage that valid conclusions may be made. Consequently, the qualitative method for data collection would be the most appropriate as it allows the researcher to mould their study based on feedback gotten from the study participants.

Flick (2014) says that qualitative research is of specific relevance to the study of social relations, this is because of the development model known as the pluralization of life worlds. Thus, this pluralization expects social researchers to be sensitive to the empirical study of issues. Moreover, the limitations of quantitative research can lead someone to choose qualitative research. This development model is motivated by globalisation and migration. As a result, these social changes bring about new social environments. Consequently, the

traditional methods of collecting data are inefficient because they take the deductive approach that starts from theories and then tests them. The inductive methodology is more efficient because theories are developed from empirical studies. This approach is needed for approaching the social context being studied.

Another reason why a researcher should use qualitative research is that the research questions can be used. In fact, this is the main reason why qualitative research should be used. Doing qualitative research helps get more information, for example through using interviews and participant observation (Flick 2014, p.4). For example, in this study, research questions will be presented- the main research question as mentioned in part 1 is: In what ways does the competency-based curriculum influence the quality of learning in primary schools in Kenya? Consequently, there are 3 sub-research questions and they are as follows: I) To what extent is the Competency-Based Curriculum implemented in public primary schools, in Mombasa, Kenya? II) What are the teachers' perspectives about the training provided? III) How does the competency-based curriculum impact issues of equity for the students?

In this study, therefore, interviews, observation, and document analysis methods were used as the research methodology. This is the advantage of qualitative research; your research questions became the point of departure of your study. Moreover, with qualitative methods, you can get your target group and the issue you are researching. For example, in this study, the researcher went to schools and interviewed the teachers and head teachers on what they thought about educational reform. The plan was to find out the measures they had taken to implement the Competency-Based Curriculum. The target was to visit private and public schools and it was expected that more information will be acquired using semi-structured interviews. As it can be seen, using qualitative methods helps get more information.

Likewise, as stated before, observation was used as a research method. The researcher sat in classrooms during lessons and took notes, but without filming. So, it can be seen therefore that different research questions and methodologies lead to different answers. Flick (2014, p. 93) highlights the characteristics of a good research question. He says that research should be constructed carefully and should be understandable. He also says that good research questions should be specific, focused, and clear.

Flick (2014, p.51) summarises the features of qualitative research. He says that the methods of data collection are appropriate, and the theories are relevant. Moreover, qualitative research

constitutes a wide range of approaches and methods. Another feature of qualitative research is that it considers the viewpoints of the participants and their diversity. Therefore, in as much as the research question for this study had already been picked, the respondents would not be limited in the number, depth and types of responses they would give for questions asked. As a result, the researcher ended up with a huge chunk of data that helped to determine to what extent the CBC was being implemented.

In addition, another reason why qualitative research was used is because of the limitations that quantitative research poses. Hoffmann-Reim (1980) as found in (Flick 2014, p.11) argues that it is not possible to do justice to the objects of research in quantitative research, because it does not employ the ´principle of openness. Most of the time, the researcher in quantitative analysis would come up with hypotheses that will limit the researcher to specific questions or specific responses (for multiple choice questions, especially in questionnaires). This situation limits the chances of new dimensions being noticed during the research. In this study, the research questions used were open-ended as seen above. The researcher did not expect a specific answer and avoided any assumptions. Hence this is why Kleining (1982, p.233) as found in (Flick 2014, p.11) argues that it is significant to understand first that the object of research is ´preliminary´ this is because the ´object will present itself in true colours only at the end.

4.9. Ethical Guidelines

To establish an ethical framework, the researcher must make agreed ethical conduct of conducting the study with the participants. According to (James and Busher 2007) ´researchers need to gain participants' informed consent to take part in a research project from the time that they join it. The first ethical step is the consent of the participant's participation. Similarly, the researcher will inform the participants the form of data collection, and more importantly to let them know where the data will be stored. Moreover, the privacy of the participants was assured through hiding their identity and maintaining anonymity. The protection of the participants´ privacy is a particular issue in interviews that seek to gather personal data (James & Busher, 2017 p.16). In addition, to ensure legal and ethical considerations are met the researcher ensured that the research data was stored on the personal laptop and computer drive that is dedicated for research. This is to ensure confidentiality.

Flick (2017) quoted the definition of research ethics by Schnell and Heinritz (2006). It mentions: ´Research ethics addresses the question, which ethically relevant influences the researchers´. In addition, ethics is concerned with the procedures that should be applied to

protect those who participate in the research, if this seems necessary (Schnell and Heinritz 2006, p.17) as found in (Flick 2017 p.135). To sum it up when conducting research, the principles of research ethics were followed. The researcher first explained to the participants why this research is necessary- it is to find out how the Competency-Based Curriculum has affected the quality of learning. So, this is the justification for the research. Furthermore, the researcher did not make false statements about the usefulness of this research. It was made clear that this is small humble research that cannot be representative. Finally, the current regulations of data collection were abided by (Flick, 2017 p.135)

4.10. Maintaining Objectivity Throughout and Avoiding Bias

There are deliberate actions that the researcher took after the research to ensure that it had avoided bias as much as possible. First, the researcher compared the findings of this study with the findings from other sources. Newspapers were read widely to find out people's opinions about the CBC in the country. Some of the newspaper articles have also been cited in this work. The researcher also followed up on policy communications from various educational agencies in the country. Lastly, the researcher sought the insight of scholars who had published peer-reviewed journals. All these steps made the researcher confident that this research was a true representation of the CBC situation on the ground.

4.11. Resources Used During Data

After receiving permission to conduct the research by the university as well as the participants' schools, the researcher embarked on a journey to collect all the required items to make this research a success. The most vital resources included pens, a notebook, a phone and a means of transport. From the onset, the researcher shelved the idea of carrying recording devices such as tape-recorders. These decisions were made with the intention to form a natural connection with the interviewees. However, the phone came in handy since the researcher had to take pictures of some of the documents that were needed for analysis. Some of the teachers even shared those professional documents via social media platforms such as WhatsApp. The images taken using the phone helped to go over the resources at a convenient time. The pen and the notebook were used to quickly take down the interviewees' opinions. The researcher also had to rely on private means of transport for ease of movement from one school to another to conduct the interviews.

At the end of the data collection, the researcher felt gratefully lucky since a reasonable amount of money was used to get the raw data from stakeholders in education. The researcher was also grateful for the fact that everyone that they met in the schools was willing to go out of their way to offer any material things that were needed for the research. Most would ask whether the researcher had a place to write and such other kinds of concerns.

4.12. Analysis of the Data Collected

After taking note of all the interviewees' sentiments the researcher took the data through three levels of analysis. The analysis was kicked off by employing content analysis. In this regard the researcher paid close attention to the words used by the interviewees as well as the phrases and sentences. For example, it was noted that in some questions the participants used more words for their explanation than in other questions.

Additionally, the researcher engaged in thematic analysis. In this regard, the data was scrutinised for the presence of the subject matter in the responses that the interviews gave. The focus was on three main thematic concerns which were: the extent of the implementation of CBC, the level of teacher training for CBC and if CBC had ensured equality among learners. The researcher tailored the questions to address these particular themes and after the data collection, checked how each participant contributed to these three main themes.

Finally, it is without a doubt that culture plays a huge role in how people communicate. Therefore, the researcher employed discourse analysis to ensure the clear understanding of what some words or phrases really meant in the context of the interviewees. Most of the interviewees were Swahili speaking people, who use British English as a form of communication in schools, but there are still other local variations of the English language used. Therefore, some of the phrases would convey meanings that were not particularly like the definitions in the English dictionary. The researcher had to translate the Kiswahili words to English. Moreover, it is common in Kenya to code switch between English and Kiswahili since both languages are the national languages of the country. Since the researcher was conversant with both languages, there were no difficulties in communication. Most people in Kenya are multilingual. Apart from English and Kiswahili, people have native languages from the different tribes they come from.

4.13. Quality Research Criteria

The quality research criterion that the researcher focused on is trustworthiness. The best-known criteria in trustworthiness are ´credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability´ as defined by Lincoln and Guba [4] as cited (Irene Korstjens & Albine Moser, 2018, p. 121). The researcher was guided by this precept throughout since the goal is for this work to be impactful in the field of education.

Credibility is the confidence that can be placed in the truth of the research findings. Credibility looks at whether the research findings represent reasonable information drawn from the participants' original data and is a correct interpretation of the participants' original views (Irene Korstjens & Albine Moser, 2018, p. 121) Moreover, credibility means that the research findings are reasonable and trustworthy. If one wants to know whether their research findings are credible, there should be alignment between the research questions and results (Kajamaa & Bennett, 2020). The researcher ensured credibility in the research by being ethical and not changing the findings obtained.

Transferability looks at whether the data can be transferred to another group. There should be a detailed description of how the research was conducted and the methods used to attain the information (Kajamaa & Bennett, 2020). As mentioned, the research methods used are document analysis, interview, and observation. Transferability refers to the extent to which qualitative research results can be transferred to other contexts or situations with other respondents. The researcher guides the transferability judgement by a potential user through the thick description (Irene Korstjens & Albine Moser, 2018, p. 121). For this research, the element of transferability is possible as long as the researchers carry out a study in similar environments as in this study. However, the study location used, and the sample size makes it impossible for this study to be used as a representative for wider contexts.

The criteria of dependability look at whether the research is replicable; in the sense that it provides valuable information for other researchers in the field. Does your research contribute to any knowledge? Dependability means, therefore, that there is sufficient information provided, which another researcher could follow the same steps and yield different conclusions (Kajamaa & Bennett, 2020). Furthermore, dependability is defined as the stability of findings over time. This deals with the participant's evaluation of the findings, interpretation, and

recommendations of the study. The data is supported therefore by the data that was received (Irene Korstjens & Albine Moser, 2018).

With confirmability, the researchers show how they made their findings through detailed descriptions. Here there is a clear link between the data and the findings (Kajamaa & Bennett, 2020). To add to this, confirmability is the degree to which the findings of the research study could be confirmed by other researchers. It is the way in which the interpretation of the findings is derived clearly from the data. It is objective in that sense (Irene Korstjens & Albine Moser, 2018, p. 121).

Finally, reflexivity is also significant in quality criteria. It involves critical self-reflection of the researcher himself; this considers the predetermined beliefs we may have. It also considers the researcher´s own biases and prejudice. Lastly, it looks at how these preconceptions affect the interpretation of the participant´s answer (Irene Korstjens & Albine Moser, 2018). In reflexivity, there should be an ongoing process of engaging with making clear the position of the research and place. The study should show reflexivity and be maintained throughout and objectively. It is normal for everybody to have preconceived beliefs because of our internal paradigms. However, being aware of our subjective opinions and biases is the first starting point in being objective. In this case, the researcher wanted to assess the impact of the Competency-Based Curriculum in Kenya which is a new curriculum. Thus, when starting out the fieldwork and presenting these research questions; the researcher first decided and made the intention to go with an open mind.

Moreover, since qualitative research is used, the research questions were open-ended. This makes it somehow easier for the study to be objective. Another element within reflectivity is being humble and reserved when conducting the research. In this case, since the researcher was assessing the impact of a curriculum on learning; no assumptions were made, such as that it is known what the criteria for ´success´ are. The previous main research question was: How far has the Competency-Based Curriculum been successfully implemented in Kenya, and what is the way forward to improve the quality of teaching and learning in schools in Kenya? The researcher modified and removed the word ´successful´´ because then it implies that it is known what the criteria of successful implementation are. Moreover, another previous research question was: How far has the Competency-Based Curriculum improved the quality of learning and teaching in Kenya? The researcher realised that when the question is phrased this way, it

implies that the Competency-Based Curriculum is the golden standard of academic improvement and measurement. Therefore, the above research questions were changed to be more objective and unbiased.

4.14. Fieldwork

The researcher travelled on September 18[th,] 2022 from Oslo, Norway to Kenya, Mombasa to conduct the fieldwork. The researcher strived to be kind and friendly with everyone involved and was thus welcomed with open arms. The warm reception and assistance from the head teachers of both primary and secondary sections, the teachers, students, and staff members were overwhelmingly wonderful.

4.14.1. The participants

The researcher went to 4 schools for fieldwork; two private and two public. Two teachers of English were interviewed from each school for grades 4 and 6. However, in one of the public schools, the English teacher for grade 4 was unavailable due to exams and thus, the researcher was unable to observe her lesson. On the other hand, the researcher was able to interview the senior head teacher from this school.

In addition, the head teachers from each of the schools were interviewed. Also, in the first school visited, the researcher interviewed the grade 2 teacher and observed a Kiswahili and Maths lesson.

4.14.2. Gaining Access to the Field

According to Flick (2018), research is when someone interjects onto a social institution. It is important for the researcher to protect the data collected. Permissions must be given by the institutions for the researcher to conduct their fieldwork. The researcher can have the role of a stranger or visitor (Flick 2018). When doing the fieldwork, the researcher was able to access the schools through referrals. One of the schools was owned by a family friend. Another school was where the researcher had done their teaching practice in 2020. The other 2 schools were referrals by the head teachers at the latter schools. Before going to these schools, the researcher wrote an information letter explaining what the research was about. It was then sent to the head teachers, and they shared it with the teachers who were all of great assistance.

CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS

This study was guided by the key question: "In what ways does the Competency-Based Curriculum influence the quality of primary school education in Kenya?"

To address this research question, the researcher examined the following sub-research questions:

- To what extent is the Competency-Based Curriculum implemented in the primary schools in Mombasa, Kenya?
- What are the primary school teachers' perspectives about the training programs provided by key stakeholders?
- How does the Competency-Based Curriculum impact the issue of equity among the students?

The questions provided the themes for data analysis as follows:

5.1 The extent of Competency-Based Curriculum implementation in primary schools

The research question that was used to generate data on this theme was: To what extent is the Competency-Based Curriculum implemented in the primary schools in Mombasa, Kenya? To answer this question, the researcher collected data using interviews with teachers and head teachers, classroom observation, and document analysis.

5.1.1 Interview data

The researcher visited four primary schools and subsequently interviewed headteachers and teachers of each of the schools. The interview with the headteachers revealed that the implementation of CBC in primary school was almost complete. In Kenya, the primary education cycle is from pre-primary to grade 6. This is a departure from the old education system that ran from pre-primary to grade 8.

At the time of this study, the implementation of the CBC was in the final phase of primary education at grade six. In 2017 the CBC was implemented in pre-primary 1 and pre-primary 2. In 2018 the CBC was successfully implemented in grades 3 and 4. The year 2020 was lost as the country like the rest of the world closed schools due to the ravaging effect of Covid 19.

The year 2021 and 2022 witnessed the implementation of CBC in grades 5 and 6 respectively. With the implementation of CBC in grade 6 and subsequent administration of Kenya Primary

School Education Assessment (KPSEA) which is a summative assessment for the primary education cycle. This marked the end of the content-based curriculum under the 8.4.4 system of Education in Kenya.

The views of most head teachers interviewed indicate that the process of implementing the CBC was hurriedly done. This has resulted in the hiccups being witnessed in the implementation of the CBC currently. Many of the head teachers were of the view that if the curriculum was implemented slowly and in a proper manner, it could have been very effective. Here is what one of the headteachers had to say.

HEADTEACHER 1: "The main problem with this curriculum is that it is being implemented hurriedly. I think the government is overly rushing the implementation of the CBC. In my view, the curriculum should have been implemented slowly and progressively for effectiveness. There is an unnecessary rush in implementing the curriculum in an unhealthy way."

Some of the headteachers interviewed said that because of the rush, some facilities have not been developed yet. Further, some of the head teachers interviewed noted that the CBC is likely to plunge into a crisis of inadequate or complete lack of post-primary facilities. They noted that the transition into junior secondary would be problematic as there are no ready classrooms for grade 7, considering the double entry stemmed from the final 8.4.4 students into form one. Sports and talent facilities are yet to be put up to cater to the career pathways proposed in the curriculum framework. Here is what headteacher 2 had to say on the issue of post-primary facilities.

HEADTEACHER 2: "Comparing it with the 8.4.4, it was rushed. It needed time. For example, you are telling kids that if they want to be footballers, it is possible. But do we have the facilities to cater to this? Have you seen schools in Mombasa that have a field where children can play football? No, you won't see this. They are called pathways. The possibility of this thing being useful, I don't see it (referring to the CBC). If a child wants to be a footballer or a swimmer, which school will the child go to? No schools are catering to this. The government was supposed to take time to implement the CBC."

The headteacher was referring to whether there will be available facilities in secondary schools to cater to the various career paths that the CBC learner could pursue. He is implying that the school and the country at large do not have the resources for the practical application of the Competency-Based Curriculum.

The researcher also interviewed classroom teachers on the extent of the CBC implementation in primary schools. All the teachers agreed with the headteachers that the CBC had so far been implemented up to grade six. Considering that the primary education cycle ends at grade 6 in the CBC system, therefore the CBC is fully implemented at the primary level. The first cohort sat for their final summative assessment in November 2022. This is the Kenya Primary School Education Assessment.

Most teachers interviewed alluded to the fact that the next phase of CBC implementation in Kenya is junior secondary which runs from grade 7 through grade 9. Most teachers interviewed also reported that there was anxiety among parents about the fate of junior secondary. It was not clear where junior secondary would be domiciled. However, the teachers noted that the head of state had formed a presidential working party to seek views from all stakeholders and recommend a way forward for the issue. One of the teachers interviewed indicated the head of state had appointed a task force to investigate issues arising from the implementation of the CBC. Therefore, I checked the Gazette notice number 11920 of 30th September which spelled out the terms of reference for the working party (educationreforms.go.ke, 2022). This is explained under the data from the document analysis section.

Here is what one of the teachers had to say:

Teacher Alice:

"Competency-Based Curriculum education system has two years for pre-primary, six years for primary, three years for junior secondary, three years for senior secondary, and three years for tertiary. So far, we have implemented it up to grade six. Next is grade seven to junior secondary. Although it is not known where junior secondary will be conducted. It is not clear whether it will be in primary schools or current secondary schools."

5.1.2. Teacher Perspectives on CBC Training from the Interviews

The researcher further interviewed 5 teachers from two private schools and two public schools to get their perspectives on their implementation of the CBC. Most of the teachers were upbeat and felt that the Competency-Based Curriculum was a good curriculum for the learners.

Most of the teachers felt that the CBC was a good system, and half of them felt competent enough to teach the CBC. Moreover, they had interesting views on the curriculum. All the teachers agreed that CBC nurtured the child's development because it recognizes their talent.

What was understood was that the CBC created an equal education where everyone had a chance to prosper in life.

Here is what one of the teachers said:

"I like the CBC. I have seen that it is important. Students enjoy it. For example, I have a girl in my class who loves cooking, so her talents are nurtured. I also have a boy in my class who likes football, this talent is catered for. In this system, children are being equalised. As a result, the student's confidence is boosted, and there is more opportunity for all. The student's confidence is treasured."

On the other hand, 3 teachers did not feel competent to teach, and 2 were not content with the CBC.

Here is what one teacher had to say:

"No. I wish to quit the CBC because I am used to the 8.4.4 system. I don't want to learn new things. It is tiresome."

He further explains why he doesn't agree with the CBC and why implementing it is difficult.

"We don't have a choice when it comes to the government. How I perceive it, I take it as a plan to cause damage. This new system may not be suitable. The government should stop copycat systems from other countries. What works in another country might not work here."

The researcher then asked him if he found any positive thing about the CBC for a follow-up question, to get as much information. This is what he had to say:

"The positive thing about the CBC is that children can choose what they want."

Here is what another teacher said:

"Sometimes I don't feel competent because the MOE (Ministry of Education) is always changing the system. The training conducted on CBA assessment (Competency Based Assessment) training is challenging. The MOE keeps coming up with new ways of assessing. For example, one time it is assessing activities, and another time it is assessing competencies. I am not that impressed with the CBC. However, teachers are encouraged to assist each other whenever they encounter difficulties. It is a learning process, and I am comfortable. The CBC is a good system because it caters to both slow and fast learners. It is fair."

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Another teacher also said she didn't feel fully competent to teach the CBC, though she was content with it and said that it is a learning process. This is what she said:

"I am not so sure I feel competent to handle the curriculum as we only received training in three months which is hardly enough to grasp a new curriculum. So, I am still in the process of adaptation. I am learning."

When teachers were asked what changed in the inception of the CBC, they noted that topics and sub-topics changed to strands and substrands respectively. That the CBC focused on talents and skills development as opposed to content-based education. The teachers however noted that CBC has increased the burden as learners are expected to carry out a lot of projects which are scored and entered on a KNEC portal. Some of the teachers reported that they had to overwork to complete the tasks.

Here is what one of the teachers had to say about the increased burden:

"Yes. The implementation was too quick. We were caught unaware. It was a noticeably short period to assess. The materials are lacking in some places. E.g., banana leaves. The implementation in the lower primary was slow, but ours in the upper primary was too fast. It is difficult to handle both 8.4.4 (the old system) and CBC at the same time. There is pressure. Now I am used to 8.4.4. teaching 2 candidate classes at the same time is a lot of confusion. There are no clear testing assessment modules we were given. We don't know if the final exam will be multiple-choice or structured. We also don't know what the sitting arrangement will look like. The samples we have been given are not clear."

While interviewing the teacher, another teacher sitting in the staffroom adds:

"The sample exams given by the KNEC (Kenya National Exam Council), are blank questions that are downloaded but the students are expecting multiple-choice questions in the exam."

The former teacher continues:

"My recommendations are the following: there is a need for more time, and teachers need more in-service training, there isn't enough training. Most of them were extremely fast, so we need more time. Most teachers are implementing and asking at the same time. They must make massive changes in clustering the subjects. When there are many choices, there is no marketing. Before, 8.4.4 had these subjects, but they were removed, then reintroduced again."

The challenges faced by the teachers were a lack of parent involvement, lack of adequate teaching materials, large class sizes, lack of sufficient time, and educators being ill-equipped

in implementing CBC. One teacher elaborated on the last point in an interesting way. He said that the instructors didn't have a good understanding of what the CBC is all about, therefore lack of sufficient knowledge is a hindrance in the implementation process. He recommended that there should be an expansion of competency-based programs for faculty development. The researcher had an insightful interview with this teacher who was teaching grade 4 English. The questions were semi-structured at first, just as with all interviewees. When asked about the challenges that he faced in the implementation of the curriculum, he said that this is not something he can answer in a brief time, because there were so many challenges. Therefore, the researcher had to change the interview to become a structured interview as per his request. He said that he had so much to say, he preferred to write them down. His answers were greatly beneficial, as the researcher was able to understand how teachers felt about the curriculum and the impact it has on teaching. Thus, the structured interview method further enhanced the understanding of the CBC. He explained how classroom size was a great challenge. This is what he said:

"A higher number of learners in a classroom tends to affect the learner-teacher interactions and can also prevent peer exchanges during discussions in the classroom. Since every learner learns differently, the instructor´s pace in a high-density class may work for some students but not for others. This hinders the implementation of CBC and restricts educators from applying learner-centric interactive teaching methods."

Furthermore, all the teachers agreed that the lack of support from parents was a great barrier to the implementation of CBC.

Here is what the same teacher had to say:

"Lack of parental support is a major challenge that places a lot of hindrance to the implementation of the CBC. The majority of the parents of the learners who are currently undergoing competency-based education were products of content-based curriculum under 8-4-4 system of education). Therefore, they have very little knowledge of the new curriculum apart from the parents in the education sector and have undergone training as part of their jobs. This, therefore, makes it very difficult for parents to understand what is going on in the curriculum and not be able to assist their children with homework and other home supervision required of them. This makes the implementation of CBC difficult because of a lack of parental support and involvement, yet teachers and parents are supposed to work hand in hand as collaborators and co-educators for proper implementation to be successful."

This report implies that parent training is paramount.

Another teacher said that parental involvement was a challenge, due to illiteracy. Here is what she had to say:

"There are many challenges. One of them is parental involvement. Some parents are illiterate, so it is difficult for them to understand the system."

The teacher viewed lack of parental engagement because of the elevated level of adult illiteracy in the country. This is a fact not supported by empirical evidence.

As mentioned earlier, the researcher compared two public schools with two private schools, and the findings were that public schools had a harder time implementing the curriculum. They struggled mostly with the learning materials, ICT integration, and lack of costs. Being in the field and observing the schools, the researcher noticed how the CBC further magnified the inequality gap. They faced a greater financial burden. More on this will be discussed in the section on data generated from observation.

Teacher Fatuma said:

"We experience a lot of challenges when it comes to provision of adequate materials. For example, in Home Science, you could be teaching how to cook or do laundry, but the learning materials are not available. Furthermore, students could be learning about how to boil meat in cooking, and yet meat is not provided. So, parents are not able to afford for the costs. As a teacher, you can't improvise certain things. Therefore, low level income earned by members of this community cannot cater to these demands. As a result, there is inadequate learning resources, yet this curriculum heavily relies on resource availability for effectiveness in delivery."

On the other hand, one teacher from a private school had a more positive outlook on the CBC. He embraces the CBC well and says that people should be patient with it. He explained that when 8.4.4 was being implemented it also went through this process. He was optimistic about the CBC. Mr x said that when he was a student in 8.4.4, the school used to improvise, and 8.4.4 was also expensive for the government. Here is what he had to say:

"Being a special needs teacher, I take it positively and embrace it. It will cover the problems of dropouts i.e., students who are good at shoe polishing can make a job for themselves. The government can provide them with capital."

Teacher Kipchoge was among the teachers who said how the CBC catered to students with special needs. He elaborated that this system helps students identify their talents, just as many teachers agreed. He believed that as time goes by the system will improve. On the other hand, he spoke about the challenge of internet connectivity in schools which hinders learning and suggested that the government needs to help. He also added that refreshment courses were good but complained that they were expensive.

The researcher found this interview important because this teacher addressed the CBC about how it caters to special needs. The teacher was from a public school and supported the CBC.

5.1.3. The Impact of CBC on the Quality of Primary Education in Kenya

All the headteachers agreed that CBC was a progressive system and that it was fair, it promoted the strengths and talents of the learners. This is because the CBC makes learners creative and self-reliant. The CBC gave learners equal opportunities. The headteachers agreed that the CBC equipped learners with the necessary skills. They added that it increases access to education because it provides participation for all children. Hence, it encourages group work and activities. Likewise, the headteachers also noted that this system was learner-based and progressive. Here is what one headteacher had to say:

"CBC is the best thing that has ever occurred in the education system of the country if it is implemented and interpreted well. The reason is it equips the learners with the necessary skills for survival. This system is truly relevant. The 8.4.4 system was exam oriented, this one is practical. It is something that can easily fix the problems of the country. We are training children to embrace things like farming, sports, art, and craft. We will create big opportunities. Students are not only being trained to do white-collar jobs; they can become farmers."

All the teachers interviewed agreed with the headteachers' argument. They settled that the CBC was a skill-based training program that ensures quality learning among learners. Here is what one teacher had to say:

"CBC is much better by far than the 8.4.4 curriculum. The reason behind this is that it has enabled me to change the emphasis from the tradition of chalk-and-talk teaching to focusing

on the student, by learning in groups and not just memorising facts, but developing competencies, and understanding core values and critical issues. This is unlike the 8-4-4 system which has forever ignored learners' abilities and was an absolute disadvantage for learners with learning challenges and disabilities."

Though, the teachers added that it was a bit difficult to determine whether the new curriculum was improving the quality of education since it was in the inception stage. They said that when the exam results are out for the first cohort, they would be able to make a judgement, because the outcome of the exams will determine the quality. The headteachers said the same thing when interviewed on whether the CBC was providing quality education.

However, the challenge was that this system required a lot of resources. The public schools faced a lot of challenges. The headteachers from the public schools agreed that the Competency-Based Curriculum was costly and prohibited equal access to all learners. They argued that it was not inclusive to all. They concluded that if the government could provide sufficient funding, this system could have worked. Furthermore, they voiced that they were restricted, and they explained that sometimes they are not able to afford things that private schools can. Due to the lack of resources, the learning process also becomes prohibitive. The students attending public schools are mostly from low-income backgrounds. The already existing inequality gap in Kenya is further widened by the CBC. The reason why this system requires a lot of resources unlike 8.4.4 is that it is competency and learner based, 8.4.4 was outcome-based. Therefore, this system requires teachers to pay more attention to the individual learner, which means more time is needed.

This brings us to another obstacle which is classroom size. Public schools have a far greater classroom. Therefore, assessing each student and focusing on developing their competency is a challenge for teachers. In one public school that the researcher visited, the student-to-teacher ratio was 1:66. Be reminded that this is a public school in the town, the schools outside of town and rural reach sometimes have a 1:200 student-teacher ratio and more. In such a classroom, how can a teacher assess the individual learners' progress and analyse their competencies? It is exceedingly difficult with a big classroom size for the learning process to be learner-centred; this can work in a smaller classroom size. These are the grey areas the CBC entails. The 8.4.4 system was teacher-centred, students were the recipients of knowledge and they focused on memorization. The older system is reasonable and practical in a developing country with a large classroom size. Consequently, the educational experience for the CBC for learners in public schools is quite different from that of learners in private schools.

The teachers said that the CBC requires more from parents. The teachers, students, parents, and community are all involved in the daily homework. Some children are orphans, the teachers were saying it becomes a challenge because who will help the child with the homework? Some children live with their grandmothers who don't speak English and are uneducated. When the child is given homework and is told to do it with their parents, then what are they supposed to do? These are the challenges the teachers raised.

In addition, some students have the materials to learn, and others do not. The CBC is creating a gap, especially when it comes to technology. Not all learners have gadgets, yet these gadgets are used as learning resources. People come from different backgrounds, some from humble ones. One teacher reported that:

"The CBC requires more from parents. The teachers, students, parents, and community are all involved in the daily homework. Every day there is extended activity. Some children are not living with their parents, and they are told to do homework with their parent's help. The grandmother is living with them and so she can´t help them access the devices. It is creating a gap. Some students are having materials and others are not. There is a gap, especially between the rural and urban. Children from rural areas are having more difficulty. Moreover, sometimes the father is the only one with the phone."

5.2. Data Generated from Observation

One thing the researcher observed in all the classes attended was that the learning method was learner-centred. All the teachers facilitated group work among their students. In the 8-4-4, which was a content-based curriculum, the teaching method was teacher-centred. The naming of learning levels has changed from standard to grade. For example, grade one instead of standard one. In the private schools, there were many learning resources available in the classroom, such as charts, and pictures. Moreover, the infrastructure was sufficient for learning to take place in the private schools, the classroom size was big. However, in one of the private schools, the student-to-teacher ratio was high, although it was much higher in the public schools where the classrooms were small. This was in contrast to the private school whereby, even though the student-to-teacher ratio was high, the classroom size was okay.

In addition, all the students in the private schools had their textbooks while in the public schools, not all students had textbooks, some were sharing. In one class, in a private school, all the students had their stationery, exercise books, etc. Furthermore, the private school's

classrooms had good ventilation of air, were more conducive to learning and were much cleaner.

Similarly, it was observed that in one of the private schools, the teachers were using a projector and computer in class as a learning aid. In a grade 4 English lesson, students were learning about ´Writing Affixes´. The teacher retrieved a song explaining ´Prefixes and Suffixes´ from YouTube, and the students watched and listened to the video. These instructions are from the teacher's guidebook. This private school was well-equipped with learning aids, and they had good Wi-Fi connectivity. The school also had a garden, where students could do school projects. It was a high-income school, which was the best in the sub-county. On the contrary, the researcher did not see a projector or computer available in the other private and public schools. It is important to note that although these learning resources were not all available in the other schools, the teachers tried their best to improvise. For instance, in a grade 6 lesson in a public school, the lesson was on grammar (prepositions). The teacher used her phone as a learning aid, which was creative. The students were learning what prepositions are, and how to use them in sentences. The teacher used google to search for the definition and then gave a student the phone to read the definition out loud.

The teacher's resourcefulness helped enhance quality. The teachers were proactive. They tried to make the learning process interesting for the students by being lively and engaging the students. Furthermore, the teacher encouraged all students to participate in class. This is in accordance with the SDG which is the most significant aspect of Sustainable Development Goals ´education for all and that no learner should be left behind.' To ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong opportunities for all (UN, 2015), SGD 4 will be highlighted. SDD 4.1 (UN, 2015) relates to this: "By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable, and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes."

It is worth noting that in this system, students were involved in learning. They were not passive learners but active learners. The teachers did well to implement the CBC in class. They asked students open questions, class participation was encouraged, and as mentioned before, all the teachers employed group work and discussions. After the teachers did a recap of the previous lesson, they would introduce the lesson, and give examples. Afterward, students would be divided into groups and given a task. Then each group would assign its leader. After around 5-10 minutes of discussions and independence amongst each group, they would present their findings. The group leader will stand up or come in front of the class and summarise the

findings of the whole group. While the students are discussing, the teacher would walk around the class, check up on each group, and answer their questions. Thus, the teachers were not authoritative figures but rather guides. When students didn't understand something, the group mates had to help each other first before consulting the teacher. Judging by their engagement in class, the students were much happier learning and found it interesting. It was evident that learners were not driven by fear to learn, but rather by passion.

Being an English teacher, the researcher decided to observe English lessons. It was noted that the children were not fluent in English, and some children had challenges when it came to reading. On the other hand, all the students were fluent in Kiswahili.

The researcher occasionally observed other subjects like Kiswahili, Maths, and English for grade 2. Also, a science lesson for grade 4 and an IRE lesson (Islamic Religious Education) in grades 4 and 6. This helped widening the understanding of CBC.

As mentioned in the research methodology chapter, the researcher was also the examiner for a grade 4 oral English exam. This experience was useful in understanding how the CBC was assessed. Contrary to 8.4.4, the students were not awarded marks. They were assessed in 4 ways, according to the CBC Assessment rubrics: exceeding expectations, (E.E), meeting expectations (M.E), approaching expectations (A.E); and below expectations (B.E). The task the researcher was given as an examiner was to test the students' reading skills. Students had to read a short 1-page story in 1 minute. When the minute was over, the researcher (now examiner) would award the student up to where they reached. The paper was out of 10. Therefore, if a student completed the paper in a minute with no grammatical mistakes, it was awarded as exceeding expectations, and so on.

5.3. Data on the extent of CBC implementation through Document Analysis

Documents used in the implementation of CBC were identified, checked and analysed to generate data to answer the research questions. Professional documents help teachers to make learning efficient and effective when implementing the curriculum. These documents are supposed to help educators reflect on how learning will be facilitated, whether the learners understand the lesson, who the learner is, and what will the students learn. The following documents were analysed.

a) Scheme of work

b) Lesson plan

c) Student progress record

d) Record of work covered.

e) The Kenya Gazette special issue on the presidential working party on education reform (Gazette notice no: 11920).

5.3.1. Schemes of work

Schemes of work help teachers plan how learning will be organised throughout the term. All the teachers interviewed reported that the schemes of work were the hub of the teaching profession. The scheme of work to a teacher can be likened to a jembe or any other soil cooping tool to a farmer. The researcher collected the schemes of work from all the teachers whose lessons were observed (A sample of the scheme of work is attached in the Appendix).It helps the teacher to manage their time. It is developed from the curriculum design. All the parts that constitute the learning process are thought through early. The components of a scheme of work include week, lesson, strand, sub-strand, specific - learning outcomes, learning experience, key inquiry questions, learning resources, assessment methods, and reflection.

Further, the researcher analysed a sample of a scheme of work, and it contained the following details. It was presented on a table of nine columns. At the top of the scheme of the work template is administrative details. Administrative details entail the name of the school, learning area, term, and year. In the first column of the scheme of work, you find ´Week'. A school term in Kenya lasts for a duration of 13-14 weeks. Therefore, in the week's column of the scheme of work, the teacher denotes the week number. For example, week 1, week 2, week 3 etc

The second column of the scheme of work is ´lesson´ in which the teacher denotes the lesson number as prescribed in the curriculum design. Learning areas are allocated teaching time to be adhered to every week. For example, mathematics is allocated 7 lessons per week. Therefore, in a mathematics scheme of work numbers 1-7 are denoted in the column labelled ´lesson´.

The third and fourth columns are ´Strand´ and ´Sub-strand´ respectively. A strand is a broad area of study within a specific learning area. For example, Proper use of leisure time was a strand depicted from the grade 6 scheme of work. A sub-strand depicts a smaller concept within a strand. For example, Listening and Speaking were depicted as a sub-strand under the strand of Proper use of leisure time.

The fifth column is ´specific learning ´outcomes. ´ Every strand and sub-strand has specific learning outcomes which are geared towards achieving the general learning outcomes. The specific learning outcomes indicate the expected observable behavioural changes in the learner, after a learning experience. According to the teachers interviewed, specific learning outcomes are usually expressed through the application of knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Therefore, they are stated at three levels, which is the knowledge level (know-how), the skill level (practical), and the attitude level (feelings and values). The following is an excerpt of specific learning outcomes from the grade six English scheme of work:

a) Listen to the words with the sound containing letters h from a recording- (this is the knowledge level.)
b) Pronounce words that have the same sound with letters **h-** (the skill level.)
c) Appreciate the importance of correct pronunciation of sounds, words, and phrases (attitude level).

The sixth column of the scheme of work is ´learning experience´ which refers to activities the learner is exposed to develop the desired knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes. The teachers interviewed noted that for learners to achieve curriculum targets they must be subjected to appropriate learning experiences or learning activities. The curriculum design has made suggestions for learning experiences under every strand and sub-strand. However, the teacher is given a lot of leeway to choose appropriate learning experiences considering the needs of his or her learners and the learning environment. Here is an excerpt of the researcher's learning experience from the grade 6 English scheme of work: In pairs, learners are guided to listen to the words with the sound containing the letters **h** from a recording. Learners are guided to pronounce words that have the same sound as letter **h.**

The seventh column is ´Key inquiry questions'. These are questions that are thought-provoking and set aside for further questioning. They are meant to connect learners with learning peers and the teacher as well as promote critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Some of the teachers interviewed described the qualities of key inquiry questions as follows. A key inquiry question should:

i) Focus on the learning outcome using open-ended and non-judgmental questions.
ii) Help learners construct knowledge independently, encourage communication and collaboration amongst learners, should raise additional questions, and provoke further inquiry.

iii)   Should stimulate curiosity and interest. e.g. 'What difference have you noted in the way the words with the sound of letters **h** are said?'

The eighth column is ´Learning resources. ´ These are teaching-learning materials that aid the teacher in imparting knowledge, skills, and attitudes. The teachers interviewed reported that learning resources facilitate the teaching and learning process. Examples of learning resources used for grade 6 are the following: JKF; New Primary English Learner's book grade 6 pg.93, Dictionaries, Charts, Realia, Journals, Internet, Computing devices, Newspapers, and Magazines.

The ´Assessment´ column is the ninth column and is a process of determining the capability of learning to apply a set of related knowledge, skills, and related attitudes. In this column, the teacher is expected to indicate competency-based assessment tools used to determine the capability of the learner. The following is an excerpt of grade 6 English scheme of work indicating assessment tools employed: Oral questions, Oral Report and Observation.

The 11th column is the ´Reflections´ column which the teacher fills after teaching. It is important to note that this is the only column that is left blank during the development stage of the scheme of work. It is only filled after the lesson has been conducted. In this column, the teacher considers the successes and shortcomings of the lesson. He or she describes what the teacher and learners did well and did not do well. In this column, the teacher is expected to indicate what will be done differently in the next lesson. E.g., 'The goals of the lesson were achieved'.

5.3.2. Lesson Plan

A lesson plan is a breakdown of the scheme of work that demonstrates what is required to be accomplished and how successful learning will take place within the period assigned for the lesson. It also allows the teacher to contextualise the lesson activities at glance. The lesson plan consists of the following: strand, sub-strand, specific learning outcomes, key inquiry questions, learning resources, class organisation, introduction, lesson development (with steps); conclusion, assessment, and extended activities. The lesson plan illustrates the tasks that need to be achieved within the allocated time for the lesson. Lesson plans also help to establish the learning outcomes to be achieved during the lesson. (A sample of the lesson plan is attached in the Appendix).

5.3.3. Student progress record

The progress record for grade 6 English for Term 2 – 2022 by KNEC has the following elements: Assessment No, Learner Names, Task 1, Task 2, Task 3, Task 4, and Task 5. A learner's progress record contains important information and is composed of a learner´s school reports, expertise, and educational accomplishments. The learner's progress record registers the student's educational performance for each week, month, or term. It aids in supervising the learner's educational advancement and achievement. Furthermore, teachers need to be up to date with record keeping. This is an integral part of the teacher's task. The learner's progress record benefits both the teacher and the student to understand which areas need to be worked on. Finally, learners' progress record is relevant for teachers when formatting lesson plans since the teacher will make them according to the abilities of the learners. The end-of-term results and records of school report cards are significant and should be held by the school because it helps parents to keep track of the progress of their children, and when they want to assess and talk about the learner's previous performance.

Progress records are important for the following reasons; they contribute instruction on the authentic production of enhanced certificates, cater to the school leadership team's information on the learner's growth across the school, assist teachers to arrange learning experiences according to the learner´s necessities, provide parents with information on whether the students are meeting the set expectations, and are on the right direction to meet anticipated outcomes. It is also the origin of information for parental involvement with schools on how their children perform, used for transparency in national evaluation institutions and schools, it helps determine learners who are developing slowly so that steps can be taken to give the necessary assistance and support they require; last but not least it allows teachers to follow the progress of the students constantly.

A commendatory and successful progress record should be straightforward and uncomplicated, thus it should be easily comprehensible to internal and external users. It should connect with key measures about achievement and advancement. It should use sensitive language to those whose achievement is at present under the developmental (age-related) expectations.

Here is an excerpt of a grade 6 English learner's progress record: (A sample of it can also be found in the Appendix).

Assessment no: 212

Learner's name: Khadija

Task 1 (Listening and Speaking) – 7

In this task, the learner was expected to respond to oral questions. The task of listening and speaking was marked out of 10 and this candidate scored 7, which is equivalent to Meeting Expectations. This is because the learner had responded to the oral questions asked correctly. But if this student had responded to all the questions correctly and with ease, she could have earned exceeding expectations. Similarly, if the student had responded to some of the oral questions correctly, she could have scored the level of Approaching Expectation. However, if the candidate had difficulty responding to most of the questions correctly, she could have been labelled below expectation.

Task 2 (Reading Aloud) – 3

In this task, the learner was expected to confidently read a variety of texts. The task of reading aloud was marked out of 5 and this candidate scored 3, which is equivalent to approaching expectations. This is because if the learner sometimes reads a variety of texts for general understanding and enjoyment, she would have earned exceeding expectations. Similarly, if the student was able to read a variety of texts for general understanding and enjoyment; she could have scored meeting expectations. However, if the candidate had extreme difficulty reading a variety of texts for general understanding, she could have been labelled below expectation.

Task 3 (Reading Comprehension) – 8

In this task, the learner was supposed to retell all the key events from a text. The task of reading comprehension was out of 15 and the candidate scored 8 which correspondents with approaching expectation. This is because the learner was able to retell some of the key events from a text. However, if the student could have retold the key events from a text chronologically and with ease, she would have earned exceeding expectations. On the same hand, if the learner could retell all the key events from a text chronologically, she could have scored meeting expectations. In contrast, if the student had difficulty recalling most of the key events in a classroom, she could have attained below expectations.

Task 4 (Grammar) – 9

In this task, the learner was supposed to be able to use the relative and indefinite pronouns correctly and in a creative way. The task of grammar was out of 15 and the candidate scored 9 which correspondents with Approaching Expectation. This is because the learner was able to use some of the relative and indefinite pronouns. However, if the student could have correctly used all the relative and indefinite pronouns with creativity, she would have earned exceeding expectations. On the same hand, if the learner could have used all the relative and indefinite pronouns correctly, she could have scored meeting expectations. In contrast, if the student had difficulty using most relative and indefinite pronouns correctly, she could have attained below expectations.

Task 5 (Writing)- 5

In this task, the learner was expected to write a formal invitation letter including all components. The task of writing was marked out of 10 and this candidate scored 5, which is equivalent to Approaching Expectations. This is because the learner had created a formal invitation letter and included some components. But if this student had creatively written a formal invitation letter and included some components, she could have earned exceeding expectations. Similarly, if the student had created a formal invitation letter and included all components, she could have scored the level of Meeting Expectation. However, if the candidate created a formal invitation letter but left out the most important component, she could have been labelled below expectation.

5.3.4. Record of Work Covered

A record of work is a professional document that ensures accountability and proof of the work covered by the teacher. It entails administrative details, time frame, lesson, work done, reflection, and signature. It is a significant document because it can help new teachers to be able to continue teaching the curriculum. Furthermore, it also helps the teacher to improve

him/herself, they can ask for assistance. It is always a way of monitoring the progress of the teacher and how they plan and make decisions. The record of work covered must be prepared by the teacher daily to provide evidence of tasks or activities undertaken in the course of curriculum delivery. It documents what a teacher has accomplished over a given period and any challenges encountered during curriculum implementation. It therefore provides a mirror against which the teacher can evaluate his or her performance over a given period regarding curriculum delivery as planned in the scheme of work.

According to a sample of a record of work collected from the teachers who were interviewed (see appendix) administrative details entail the school's name, learning area for example English, the name of the teacher handling the learning area, and the grade number. The second column, which is the time frame, shows the date when the lesson was completed. The third column is Lesson. This section denotes the arrangement of the Lesson in the week when the work was completed. The fourth column is Work Done. This part amounts to the sub-strands in conformity with the learning outcomes. The fifth column is Reflection, this is a remark denoting the teacher's experiences considering the elements of the whole lesson, achievements, and challenges of the lesson as well as future recommendations for advancement. The sixth part is the signature of the teacher. This is the identification and status of the teacher who taught the class. It helps with responsibility and clarity.

5.3.5. The Kenya Gazette Special Issue on The Presidential Working Party on Education Reform. (Gazette Notice No: 11920)

According to the Gazette notice (check the sample in the appendix) the following were the terms of reference for the presidential working party on education reform for basic education. The task force was mandated to investigate all the grey areas experienced in the CBC implementation.

The task force was first to produce and conduct a summative evaluation of Kenya's Competency-Based Curriculum. Secondly, to evaluate and suggest a suitable structure to implement the Competency-Based Curriculum. Thirdly, to study all the laws governing the basic education subsector and study these legislations to communicate vagueness, duplications, effectiveness restrictiveness; and enhance linkages. Fourth, to investigate, evaluate and make a recommendation on the consideration and application of key principles guiding the competency-based approach consisting of but not restricted to parental empowerment and

commitment, social welfare, community service learning, and value-based education. In addition, to evaluate quality assurance, examinations, teacher education, technological advancements in curriculum development, and work on learning results and the administration of educational activities. Likewise, to do better in the use of public resources to advance learning outcomes, resource mobilisation in learning institutions, and improving the categorization policies of government schools and access.

Fifth, to analyse and suggest applicable budgetary framework including tax and minimum basic package grants for all ranks of basic school. Sixth, to propose and examine equal access to education, particularly for vulnerable groups. Seven, to recommend proper management of bursaries and scholarships in learning institutions for high school. Eight, to recommend the improvement of the management of government-private partnerships for the quality provision and development of infrastructure. Nine, to consider and suggest a scanning system to identify and enrol school pupils of age to ensure equitable access to all levels of education.

The analysis of the Gazette notice reveals that the Kenyan Government had recognized that the implementation of the CBC was encountering challenges. At the time of the study, the issues were still being interrogated for solutions. It was hoped that the task force appointed by the head of state would address the issues identified and ensure the successful implementation of the CBC. This would improve the quality of Education in Kenya.

5.4. Upper Primary: Grade 4-6

In 2019, the ministry of education released guidelines on the way the school will implement the Competency-Based Curriculum. It started with CBC for upper primary which is grade 4 to 6 (KNEC, n.d). All schools rolled out the program in 2020 starting with grade 4 whereby the learners proceeded to grade 5 in 2021 and then to grade 6 in 2022 (KICD, 2017; Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development, 2021).

Study subjects in GRADE 4-6

The subjects include (Ministry of Education, 2022):

1. Kiswahili Language or KSL for learners who have a hearing impairment.

2. English language

3. Other Languages

4. Science and Technology

5. Social Studies (Citizenship,

Geography, History) development.

6. Mathematics

7. Home science

8. Agriculture

9. Religious Education (CRE/IRE/

HRE/PPI)

10. Creative Arts (Art, Craft, Music)

11. Physical and Health Education

Optional Subjects

The learners are allowed to choose from foreign Languages which include Mandarin, Arabic, German and French. Other optional subjects are Kenyan Sign Language, Indigenous languages and Braille literacy (KNEC, n.d). These optional subjects have been carefully chosen with an aim of producing adaptable citizens. Learning an Indigenous language will make them aware of their origin and identity. Such a situation is likely to build self-esteem among the learners (McIvor, 2020). However, the learners will also be open to exploring the world. As global citizenry becomes popular, the Kenyan learner will have the opportunity to learn about other people' language and cultures to make socialisation with them easy.

5.4.1. Lesson Distribution

There will be six lessons per day for Grade 4 through 6. Each lesson will be covered in 35 minutes (Ministry of Education, 2022). This scenario implies that there will be considerable breaks in between the lessons. Below is the lesson distribution per subject.

LESSON DISTRIBUTION FOR GRADE 4 to 6

Table 1

S/N	LEARNING AREAS	LESSON PER WEEK
1	Numerical activities	3
2	Activities of daily life skills	5
3	Environmental activities	3
4	Communication, social and literary skills	5
5	Sensory motor integration	3
6	Religious education	2

7	Psycho-motor Activities	**5**
8	Creative Activities; Music	**2**
9	Creative Activities; Art and Craft	**2**
10	**Total Lessons Per Week**	**30**

5.5. Assessment Mode for Competency-Based Curriculum

The Competency-Based assessments are the exams administered under CBC. There are three types of assessments. They include classroom, school based and summative assessments. In all these assessments, an emphasis is placed on creating assessment rubrics to ensure that the teacher clearly understands the areas the learners should be evaluated (KNEC, 2019).

The standard assessment rubric is as follows:

Grade	Description	Percentage
E. E	Exceeds Expectations	80-100%
M.E	Meeting Expectations	65-79%
A. P	Approaching Expectations	550-64%
B. E	Below Expectations	0-49%

However, instead of giving the percentages, the teacher can come up with different criteria to determine the grade of a student. For example, in a single assignment after a lesson on verbs, students can be graded on four classes. The first class for those who Exceed Expectations, they will be able to identify verbs from a list and use them correctly in sentence construction. The second class for Meeting Expectations, will be able to appropriately identify verbs and use them in sentences though with some tense or spelling errors. The third class, which is Approaching Expectations, would be able to identify verbs from a list but fail to use them to construct sentences. While the last lot will fail to identify verbs from a list.

Classroom assessments are exams prepared by the teachers and they are assessed in the classroom setting. They are done according to the content covered by the teacher as well as the learners' ability. Such assessments are essential in helping the teacher gauge which content areas need revisiting (The Star, 2022). They should be administered from time to time as they communicate the learners' progress in a timely manner.

The other type of assessment is school based assessment which is done by students starting from grade 4 to grade 12 (Ministry of Education, 2022). The tools are prepared by the exam body KNEC but the difference with the 8-4-4 system is that the CBC one is not ranked nationally unlike the old system. In this case the teachers download the exam from the KNEC portal and administer it to students.

Finally, there is Summative assessment which will entail an exam done nationally just like KCPE and KCSE in the 8-4-4 system (Ministry of Education, 2022). These exam results are ranked, and students transition from one level to another. The national examination will account for 40% of the total score of the learner while the other 60% will arise from a sum of the continuous assessments offered by the teacher at the school (The Star, 2022). The national examination will be done at the end of Grade 6.

Table 2

S/N	AREA	REMARKS
1	Language Policy	English language will be used in teaching instruction in all areas of learning apart from Kiswahili, foreign languages or Indigenous
2	Foreign and Indigenous languages	The Ministry of Education will work in conjunction with the Teachers Service Commission and identify public primary schools which will offer foreign and indigenous languages.
3	Science and Technology	There will be single lessons and a double for practical which will be carried out in the developed laboratories
4	Physical and Health Education	Physical education will be timetabled per day for every grade and be activity oriented.
5	Values Based Education	School will make sure that the core values are also incorporated in the learning process in all study areas in Upper primary.
6	Home Science and Agriculture	There will be one theory lesson and a double lesson for practical activities.
7	Teacher Professional Development	All the schools will spare the last two lessons every Friday for teacher professional development activities. During this period learners will interact with digital devices, library work, radio and TV programs aired by KICD
8	Community Service-Learning Activities	There will be opportunities for Community Service Learning which will be mainstreamed in all study areas. Schools will be expected to make sure that all the learners take part in the community service activities through the curriculum designs.
9	Parental Empowerment and Engagement	Learning institutions must offer opportunities for information sharing and involvement of parents/guardians in the implementation of CBC.
10	Pastoral Programs of Instruction	This will be done by a responsible member of a recognized religious faith around the school community, and this should be legally registered in Kenya.
11	Co-Curricular Activities	These activities will be compulsory for the formal curriculum and will be implemented as recommended for all students

CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION

After carefully analysing the data acquired from the fieldwork, the researcher was convinced that there were patterns that would help to get a better understanding of the CBC in line with the main research question; 'In what ways does the Competency-Based Curriculum influence the quality of learning in primary schools in Kenya?'

There were also the three sub-research questions, namely:

a. To what extent is the competency-based curriculum implemented in public primary schools, in Mombasa, Kenya?
b. Are teachers getting enough training on the curriculum, and how do they perceive it?
c. How does the Competency-Based Curriculum affect the horizontal equity of learners in Kenya?

Therefore, this discussion chapter will be divided into three broad headings that will be in tandem with the three sub-research questions. These sections will be beefed up with the interpretation of the findings from the field as well as the opinions of scholars that were used in the literature review and theoretical framework.

6.1. The Extent of the Implementation of the CBC in Primary Schools in Mombasa, Kenya

Many of the teachers and administrators are not fully ready to implement the new curriculum. It came out clearly from many of the respondents that the CBC was being hurriedly implemented. This situation resulted in a case where the head teachers and the teachers appreciated the importance of the new curriculum, but they found themselves limited to a great extent to implement the curriculum. The limitation comes from the fact that they were not adequately prepared for the CBC through training and disbursement of resources by the government. Such a feeling among the implementers of the new curriculum is likely to negatively affect the manner in which they pass instruction to learners. As Goodlad (1979) opined, one aspect of decision making when it comes to a curriculum is the formal curriculum domain. This domain suggests that there should be an official interpretation of the curriculum which is a result of the society's interest and aspirations. When such a situation occurs, those who are expected to implement it will do so gladly since they were part of the curriculum

change. However, the teachers and head teachers feel left out in the curriculum change process thus most of them feel psychologically and emotionally detached from the new curriculum.

It was also evident that the implementation of CBC was derailed by minimal facilities in public schools. The ministry of education had promised that in preparation for the CBC many of the schools will have to get additional classrooms, a science laboratory, among other resources such as ICT enhancements. Just as observed by Atieno (2022), the lack of resources meant that the CBC would just be a good curriculum on paper but when it came to its implementation, there was likely to be huge barriers. For instance, the extended exercises may require the students to use the internet to get information. Similarly, some lessons, for example in Environmental science, may require the learners to carry out experiments. Without a laboratory, there will be minimal progress towards achieving competence. The situation was a bit better in private schools since they were equipped with ICT facilities which boosted the lesson delivery. For instance, in one private school the teacher used a computer and projector to teach about affixes in English which made the lesson quite engaging.

The curriculum implementation is also hampered by parental anxiety about the system. The teachers interviewed noted that many of the parents whose children attend their schools have no clear picture of where the CBC is headed to. Initially, the ministry had suggested that the Junior Secondary students would be domiciled in the current secondary schools. However, after the review by the Presidential working Party on Education Reform (Gazette Notice No: 11920), it was decided that the Junior Secondary would be domiciled in primary schools. This move also goes against Goodlad's (1979) formal curriculum domain which suggests curriculum changes should be a result of opinions of the society, to make the implementation smooth. The changing stances by the ministry or education and the government in general makes parents unsettled since they will be anticipating changes from time to time.

There was also minimal capacity among the implementers to roll out the new curriculum. Most of the participants noted that the new system has come with new changes, most of which have led to increased workloads. The learners are expected to carry out a relatively high number of projects as compared to the old system. The assessment result for these projects is supposed to be uploaded to the KNEC portal from time to time. Such work is tedious for the current staff to learner ratio which stood at 1:66 in one of the public schools visited. As Isaboke, Mweru, and Wambiri (2021) noted there is indeed a need for the teachers Service Commission (TSC) to recruit more teachers, and for the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD) to

include the stakeholders of education (teachers and parents) in the curriculum reform so that the implementation can be easy.

Additionally, a lot of pressure and confusion abounds among the teachers. Some of them noted that they are still handling the 8-4-4 classes while at the same time dealing with the CBC classes. One of them expressed frustration at the fact that he had to handle 2 candidate classes at the same time: one for the 8-4-4 system and the other for CBC. Given the differences in the two systems, the teacher felt pressured. Additionally, some processes in the CBC are still not clear. For example, some teachers did not have access to their required testing assessment modules since none of them had been handed over to the teachers. Similarly, one teacher was not aware whether the final examination offered by KNEC would have multiple-choices or whether it would be structured. They were also unaware of the sitting arrangement for the candidates during the examinations. Such a situation is what Freire (2014) described as dehumanisation since the teachers felt oppressed, exploited and unfairly treated being given the mandate to execute a curriculum with no clear guidelines.

The other issue with the implementation of the CBC is the large class sizes. It was evident that the objectives of CBC could only be achieved if there was a closer interaction between the teacher and the learners. Also, peer exchanges were important to ensure that learners acquire knowledge and skills and retain them for future application. Such sharing of ideas may be hampered in high-density classrooms. In one of the schools the researcher visited the teacher: learner ratio was 1:66. The participants opined that in schools outside the municipal area, the ratio could rise to 1:200. These big ratios are a hindrance towards critical thinking since the teacher must guide the learners closely to achieve high-level reasoning. Ongesa (2020) states that critical thinking is a crucial core competence in the 21st century dynamic society. Additionally, Lipman and Naji (2003), notes that critical thinking thrives where there is joint criticism, deliberate evoking of emotions, and careful judgement. Moulding learners into such open-minded and self-reliant people requires closer teacher attention which may be difficult to attain in such large classes.

Another hindrance to implementation of the curriculum was the lack of parental support. There was no indication that the parents had been trained about the new system. Since the CBC was introduced in 2017, it is true to argue that no parent currently went through CBC. Therefore, most of them are products of the old 8-4-4 system which implies that the tennets of CBC will be quite foreign to them. Only parents in the educational sector have shown capability in guiding their learners appropriately through the CBC activities. As Isaboke, Mweru, and

Wambiri (2021) recommend, the minister of education should sensitize parents through educational workshops and seminars, on their function and responsibility of understanding and implementing the CBC. Such an input from the ministry will help ease the burden that most teachers bear in a bid to help the learners with the extra work given for assignments.

The difference in the nature of the schools also hampered their implementation of the CBC. In Mombasa and Kenya in general, schools are either public or private. The private schools are better placed to implement CBC since unlike their counterparts that are struggling with resources, they can afford some. The private schools are funded by parents directly while the public schools wait for capitation from the government (Atieno, 2023). Most of the time, such monies form the government delays thus paralysing processes. On the other hand, private schools can share the resource burden with parents who pay up. Therefore, it was evident from the field work that the private schools had learning materials and ICT integration.

6.1.1. Inequality

In as much as CBC is supposed to eliminate inequality, the way it is being implemented is likely to breed further inequalities. The head teachers from the public schools agreed that the Competency-Based Curriculum was costly and prohibited equal access to all learners. They argued that it was not inclusive to all. Goodlad (1979) talks about the operational curriculum domain whereby the teachers are likely to keep using the same pedagogical modes that they are first introduced to in a system. Therefore, if there are minimal resources to adequately equip teachers, they are likely to deliver CBC instruction in ways that do not meet the expected outcomes. While this is happening in public schools, the teachers in private schools may get a better start at CBC and thus, they are likely to continue performing better in such environments. Therefore, the learners that go to public schools may be disadvantaged while those in private schools thrive.

There are also social inequalities. CBC expects that teachers, students, parents and the community should work together to instil particular competencies in the learner. In some societies due to the economic, cultural and social factors, the parents may not be as available for the learners as parents that live in other settings. For example, in Kenya, there are a considerable number of learners who stay with single parents (Abuya, Mutisya, Onsomu, Ngware, & Oketch, 2019). Such parents may not be readily present since the same settings have poor economic standards. Most such parents spend their time working to cater to the family needs. Such pupils may be left with grandparents who may not be able to help with the

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CBC assignments. While this is the case in informal settlements, the pupils that come from middle-income families may not experience the same challenges. Their parents can afford to buy the learning resources and even equip them with the necessary ICT gadgets to assist with extended activities. Davis (2006) as cited in Apple, 2011, p. 45 gives support to these findings by arguing that it is difficult to achieve equality because we live in a capitalist world that promotes a lot of inequalities. The inequality arises from the fact that quality resources only get to those that can afford to buy them as opposed to distributing things equally to the public.

On a positive side, the teaching methods employed by the teachers were all learner-centred. The learners were engaged in group work thus giving the learner a chance to inquire, experiment and apply concepts. This approach was unlike in the 8-4-4 system where the lecture method dominated.

Similarly, the assessment was one that gave learners room for improvement. Contrary to 8.4.4, the students were not awarded marks. They were assessed in 4 ways, according to the CBC Assessment rubrics: exceeding expectations, (E.E), meeting expectations (M.E), approaching expectations (A.E); and below expectations (B.E). The task the researcher was given as an examiner was to test the students' reading skills. Students had to read a short 1-page story in 1 minute. When the minute was over, the examiner would award the student up to where they reached. The paper was out of 10. Therefore, if a student completed the paper in a minute with no grammatical mistakes, it was awarded as exceeding expectations, and so on.

6.1.2. Teacher perspectives on CBC training

Teachers are central to any curriculum implementation. However, they must be adequately equipped with knowledge and skills in order for them to cause behavioural change among learners. From this research, it came out that some of the teachers felt they were not fully competent or rather well prepared to teach CBC. One teacher claimed that he was used to the 8-4-4 system, and he did not feel like changing. An early intervention is therefore necessary to review and improve the situation. Mwang'ombe (2021) recommended that the Ministry of Education should provide seminars to sensitise teachers on the CBC so that they can be well-equipped and competent. Also, the study recommended that teacher training institutes should include the CBC in the educational framework so that teachers can be trained and ready for implementation before entering the field. As a result, this study and other studies like it such as Ogwora (2022) highlights the importance of training teachers adequately is vital for the

successful implementation of the CBC in the classroom. Namwambah (2020) also notes that proper training equips individuals with the skills of tolerance, and to become open-minded individuals. Such value addition makes teachers productive and creative, who work for development and are social change agents in their community.

Unfortunately, in situations where training was offered, the training objectives kept shifting thus discouraging some teachers. For instance, the participants mentioned that the training on CBA (Competency Based Assessment) was inconsistent. They said that the Ministry of Education kept coming up with new ways of assessment. For instance, at one point the assessment was based on activities while at another time, the assessment was anchored on the competencies.

At other times, the training was scanty. The training offered was short. There was only three months training before the implementation of the curriculum. Teachers feel further training is needed. A study conducted by Isaboke, Mweru, and Wambiri (2021) on teacher preparedness and implementation of the competency-based curriculum in public pre-primary schools in Nairobi, Kenya, found that 34.1% of the teachers were trained and 65.9 % of the teachers were not trained. The study found that the majority of the teachers received minimal training conducted by the Teacher Service Commission, Kenya National Examinations Council, Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development, and not in the Teacher Training Colleges.

There was an issue with teacher perceptions about the new curriculum up to an extent. One of the participants quipped that the CBC is a mere copycat scheme from western countries. The teacher felt that it does not answer the pertinent issues that Kenya faces currently. Many scholars underpin the place of relevance for a curriculum to be successful. According to Kay et al. (2019) a curriculum needs to be culturally sensitive. In this regard it should appeal to the cultural, social and economic needs of a majority. In this way, the public will be able to bear it without demur. Similarly, Barrett et al. (2006) also points out that the level of national development should determine the type of curriculum that the state should adopt.

Finally, the teachers expressed that an obstacle to the implementation of a Competency-Based Curriculum is the curriculum's structure. If a student were to miss school for whatever reason, it would be quite challenging for him or her to catch up with the others who were present. This is because the curriculum structure has been created so that most of the activities occur at the same time. It is therefore quite challenging to give each learner individualised attention if the Competency-Based Curriculum focuses on each individual learner and there are numerous

learners. Teachers struggle to teach the lessons, which they sometimes handle alone, due to the high student enrolment and the lack of staffing in the institutions.

Moreover, despite regular training sessions during holidays, the instructors feel that the switch to a Competency-Based Curriculum has tripled the amount of work they do. They also have a lot of documents to keep up with. In addition to the previous records, such as schemes of work, they now have a lot of tasks to complete safeguarding academic records for each learner. The teachers are unable to provide each kid with the particular attention they require because of this additional record-keeping.

On a positive note, the professional documents analysed were detailed enough to achieve successful implementation of the CBC. The scheme of work had 9 columns that clearly stipulated activities that both the teacher and the learner could do to not only gain knowledge but also to apply it in their immediate environment. Similarly, the lesson plan allowed the teacher to use key inquiry questions as well as learner-engagement strategies which made it easier for learners of different learning abilities to retain knowledge and skills. Goodlad (1979) talks about the ideological curriculum domain. It entails a set of values and standards on why schools are established and how these schools ideally should be and are not necessarily meant for actual implementation. One of the things that shapes up a school to be a centre of behavioural transformation as stipulated by the curriculum is the availability of elaborate professional records which guide the teachers.

6.1.3. The Attainment of Horizontal and Vertical Equity

CBC caters to both slow and fast learners. The lesson designs are suitable for learners with different abilities since their competency is assessed from the way they roll out a particular activity. A learner may use whichever approach that appeals to them to solve such tasks. At the end of such activities the teacher grades them. Therefore, this system places a lot of emphasis on a learner's ability to think critically and use their talents and abilities in unique ways to achieve desired outcomes. Such a situation makes learning fun. Amutabi (2019) is a strong advocate for CBC since he believes that it will help to stem the pressure that comes with passing the examinations. He argues that eliminating examinations will open ways for the learner to acquire more knowledge and skills that will make them handier in their immediate environment after school.

It was also clear that the majority of the teachers feel that CBC is a good system, and they feel confident they can implement it if supported well. This observation implies that any learner who may access a school will have the chance to bring their competencies to the fore. The teachers' feelings about the curriculum are in line with Goodlad's (1979) institutional domain of decision making. It is in the institutional domain that the curriculum coming from the agencies such as the ministry of education of the institutes of curriculum development, is converted into actual practice for the learner by the teacher. Goodlad (1979), however, postulates that the majority of teachers tend to use curriculum elements from other sources outside the official syllabus, such as textbooks when seeking guidelines and directions for their praxis. Such teachers deviate from the expected behaviour since they lack clear guidelines, from the curriculum developer, on what should be done.

CBC also offers equal opportunities for everyone to succeed. One of the participants quipped that she had observed a surge of interest among the learners since they were given a wider latitude to whatever that made them happy. Some enjoyed cooking while others enjoyed playing football and all of them were given a chance to practise those activities. Such a situation makes the learners more interested in academics since they feel they have a chance of being like their role models, whether they be in the arts, sports, science or any other field. According to Cho (2013), the curriculum of banking education is irrelevant in the current dynamic market. The standardised tests are seen as undemocratic and discriminatory. On the other hand, CBC gives everyone an opportunity to succeed.

Additionally, learners with special needs are catered to in the CBC. One participant in the study elaborated that the CBC system helps students, even those with special needs, identify their talents, just as many teachers agreed. He believed that as time goes by, the system will improve. On the other hand, he spoke about the challenge of internet connectivity in schools which hinders learning and suggested that the government needs to help. He also added that refreshment courses were good but complained that they were expensive. A key element in the discussion of equality in education is the identification of groups that are disadvantaged in terms of access and achievement (Barrett et al., 2006).

However, inequality may come in the types of schools. In one of the private schools, the teachers were using a projector and computer in class, as a learning aid. In a grade 4 English lesson, students were learning about ´Writing Affixes´. The teacher retrieved a song explaining ´Prefixes and Suffixes´ from YouTube, and the students watched and listened to the video.

These instructions are from the teacher's guidebook. This private school was well-equipped with learning aids, and they had good Wi-Fi connectivity. On the contrary, there was no projector or computer available in the other private and public schools. According to Gichigi (2022), the Competency-Based Curriculum is said to increase the inequality gap in Kenya, where there is a huge gap between the rich and the poor. Less than 0.1% of the population (8,300 people) own more wealth than the bottom 99.9% (more than 44 million people (Gichigi, 2022).

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION

This study sought to investigate the influence of a Competency-Based Curriculum on the provision of quality primary school education in Kenya. To address the key research question, the following sub-questions were used to guide data collection.

- To what extent is the Competency-based curriculum implemented in the primary schools in Mombasa, Kenya?
- What are the primary school teachers' perspectives about the training programs provided by key stakeholders?
- How does the Competency-based curriculum impact the issue of equity among the students?

Qualitative data was gathered using interviews, observation, and document analysis. The first question to be examined was, "To what extent is the Competency-based curriculum implemented in the primary schools in Mombasa, Kenya?"

Interview data from headteachers and teachers who participated in the study reveal that the competency-based curriculum had been implemented fully at the primary school level. It was reported that although the implementation process was rushed, causing considerable anxiety among many stakeholders, the process had been completed. The study, therefore, concludes that the Competency-Based Curriculum is now in operation at Kenyan primary schools in place of the content-based curriculum that was offered under the now defunct 8-4-4 education system.

The study further concluded that although the process of CBC implementation at the primary level is complete, it is facing considerable amounts of hiccups and challenges that need to be urgently addressed. The head of State of the Republic of Kenya had already initiated a review process by use of a presidential working party whose terms of reference are carried out in a gazette notice discussed in the chapter of this report.

The study, therefore, recommends that the presidential working party and other key stakeholders involved in the curriculum implementation review the process.

The second question to be explored was, "What are the primary school teachers' perspectives about the training programs provided by key stakeholders?". Interview data from teachers who participated in the study reveal that most of the teachers in the primary school received some form of training through government-sponsored workshops and seminars. It was however

reported that the training that was conducted was inadequate. Many teachers indicated that there were still areas in the curriculum they were not conversant with. It was reported that in some cases the training was rushed and imparted truly little on the tenets of CBC. The study, therefore, concludes the training conducted for teachers on the implementation of CBC was inadequate.

The study recommends that the government through the line ministry organise and conduct comprehensive training programs for practising teachers. It is further recommended that a need-based evaluation be conducted in order to establish training gaps to be addressed in new training programs. The teachers should be involved in the planning process to help inform training needs.

The third question was "How does the Competency-Based Curriculum impact the issue of equity among the students?". The question looked at how the curriculum was promoting the issue of equity in learning. Data from interviews with headteachers and teachers revealed that there was general agreement among key stakeholders that the CBC was hoped to improve the general quality of learning in Kenya. The question of equity was however raising concern among the stakeholders owing to the resource-intensive nature of the CBC curriculum. The question was, how will equity be assured considering schools are not endowed with equal resources?

The study concludes that the Competency-Based Curriculum was expected and hoped to improve the quality of learning. However, the issue of resource distribution required consideration to assure equality across the country. The study recommends that the government should consider providing resources to all the schools that are poorly endowed with resources regardless of whether they are privately or publicly owned. Training should also be conducted in resource development and mobilisation.

7.1. Recommendations

The study recommends the following as well:

- Parents are to be given adequate training to understand the Competency-Based Curriculum. The Ministry of Education to design, formulate and organise parent training.
- A second review of the Competency-Based Curriculum.

- Teachers to be directly involved in the processes of curriculum change with the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD) since they are the implementers of the curriculum.

Suggestions for future studies

Nationwide study of the Competency-Based Curriculum

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<u>Interview Guide for Teachers</u>

Master´s Thesis 2022-2023

Title: An Inquiry into the Implementation of the Competency-Based Curriculum (2017) in Primary Schools in Mombasa, Kenya.

1. Demographic questions:

Subject:

Grade:

Years of teaching:

2. Question about the curriculum

1. What teaching methods have you used to implement the new curriculum in class?

2. Have you faced any challenges in the implementation of the curriculum?

3. Do you feel competent enough to implement the curriculum?

4. Are you content with the Competence-based curriculum and how do you perceive it?

5. How do you assess the student's progress in the new curriculum?

6. How would you compare the old curriculum (8.4.4) to the new one (CBC)?

Interview Guide for Headteacher

Master´s Thesis 2022-2023

Title: An Inquiry into the Implementation of the Competency-Based Curriculum (2017) in Primary Schools in Mombasa, Kenya.

1. Demographic questions:

Subject:

Grade:

Years of teaching:

2. Questions about the curriculum

1. What measures has the school taken to implement the competence-based curriculum in your school?

2. Was there a financial burden on your school during the implementation of the new curriculum?

3. Is the competency-based system fit for purpose in a Kenyan context?

4. How far are teachers getting enough training on the curriculum?

5. Does the competence-based curriculum provide a fairer system that increases access to good quality education?

6. Which learning resources do you use to cater to the different subjects?

SCHEME OF WORK

LONGHORN ENGLISH ACT. GRADE FOUR

SCHOOL	Teacher´s Name	Term	Year

Week	Lesson	Strand/ Theme	Sub strand	Specific learning outcomes	Key inquiry Questions	Learning experiences	Learning resources	Assessment methods	Reflections

Appendix 4

Lesson plan

SCHOOL_____

Lesson Plan

LEARNING AREA	GRADE	DATE	TIME	ROLL

Strand/Theme/Topic: _____

Sub-strand: _____

Specific Learning Outcomes:

By the end of the sub-strand, the learner should be able to:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Key Inquiry Question:

_____
_____
_____

Core Competences:

_____
_____
_____

Values:

_____
_____
_____

Pertinent & Contemporary Issues (PCIs)

_____
_____
_____

Appendix 5

The Kenya Gazette

GAZETTE NOTICE NO. 11920

PRESIDENTIAL WORKING PARTY ON EDUCATION REFORM

APPOINTMENT

IT IS notified for the general information of the public that William Samoei Ruto, President of the Republic of Kenya and Commander-in-Chief of the Defence Forces has appointed a Working Party on Education Reform.

The Working Party shall comprise of the following members:

Raphael Munavu (Prof.) – *Chairperson*,
David Some (Prof.),
Halima Saado Abdilahi (Dr.),
Ciriaka Gitonga (Dr.),
Purity Mbaabu,
Edward Katue Nzinga (Dr.),
Virginia Wahome (Ms.),
Robert Juma Wamalwa,
Charles Kyalo Mutinda,
Gitahi Kiama (Prof.),
Anthony Cheruiyot Sitienei,
Bishop Geffrey Waweru Gichoki,
Seline Chepngeno Ronoh (Rev.),
Laila Abubakar (Prof.),
Daniel Otieno Randa,
John Kamiti Munyua,
Paul Wainaina (Prof.),
Kasanga Mutheu (Ms.),
Margaret W Chege (Ms.),
James Kanya (Prof.),
Salome Eyangan (Ms.),
Wiston Akala (Prof.),
Peter Mokaya Tabichi,
Jane Kimiti (Ms.),
Kizito Wangalwa
Augusta Mwihaki Muthigani (Ms.),
Peter Barasa (Prof.),
Ahmed Yussuf (Dr.),
Jone Mose,
Hassan Mwakimako (Prof.),
Lynette Mwende Ndile (Ms.),
Wilson Kogo (Dr.),
Stephen Mbugua Ngari (Prof.),
Paul Lilan,
Richard Githinji (Dr.),
Collins Odote (Prof.).

Jane Imbunya (Dr.),
Jacinta Ngure (Ms.),
Jerono P. Rotich (Dr.),
Subira Neema (Ms.),
Bernard Kariuki Njoroge,
Peter Njenga Keiyoro (Prof.),

Secretaries:

Elyas Addi (Dr.),
Patita Tingoi (Ms.),
David Njegere (Dr.),
Jackson Too (Prof.),
Reuben Nthamburi Mugwuku (Dr.),
Richard Miano,
Eunice Gachoka (Ms.).

The terms of reference for the Working Party are:

1. On basic education –

(a) to cause and undertake summative evaluation of Kenya competency based curriculum;

(b) to assess and recommend an appropriate structure to implement the competency based curriculum;

(c) to study all laws governing the basic education subsector and make recommendations for review of these legislations with a view to addressing duplication, ambiguities, efficiency constraints and improving linkages.

(d) to study, assess and make recommendations on –

(i) the conceptualization and implementation of key tenets guiding the competency based approach including but not limited to value based education, community service learning, parental empowerment and engagement;

(ii) the assessment and examination framework;

(iii) the quality assurance and standards framework;

(iv) the teacher education and training framework for both pre-service and in-service;

(v) the teacher deployment framework;

(vi) the technology for curriculum delivery, improved learning outcomes and education management;

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(vii) the governance mechanisms of learning institutions and sharing of resources across schools and TVET institutions to ensure maximum utilization of public resources for improved learning outcomes; and

(viii) the public school categorization policies and implications on access, transition and cost.

(e) to review and recommend appropriate financing framework including capitation and minimum essential package grants for all levels of basic education;

(f) to review and recommend equitable access to education especially for those facing social, economic and geographic marginalization, vulnerable populations, children and persons with special needs,

(g) to review and recommend appropriate framework on the management and coordination of bursaries and scholarships for secondary school students;

(h) to review and recommend a framework for physical and e-infrastructure development and coordination of public private partnerships for improved access and quality provision; and

(i) to review and recommend a tracking system to capture and enroll children of school age to ensure universal access to pre-primary, primary and secondary education.

2. On tertiary and university education –

(a) to review and recommend a governance and financing framework for TVET training and development, university education, research and training;

(b) to study all laws governing the tertiary education subsector and make recommendations for review of these legislations with a view to streamlining effectiveness and efficiency in the subsector.

(c) to recommend a framework of operationalizing the National Open University of Kenya and a framework on Open, Distance and E-line learning (ODEL);

(d) to make recommendations for streamlining continuity in TVET and university education transition;

(e) to review and recommend legislation to facilitate amalgamation of HELB, TVET and University Funding Boards with a view of harmonizing and merging all tertiary education funding entities.

3. The Working Party shall have the powers and carry out such other functions necessary to undertake any matter incidental or ancillary to the foregoing.

4. The Working Party may co-opt such other persons, who possess the appropriate competencies, as it may consider necessary or expedient for the proper performance of its functions.

5. The Working Party shall –

(a) subsist for six (6) months;

(b) issue H.E the President with a progress report every two (2) months from the date hereof and a final report at the end of term;

(c) invite and consider views from sector stakeholders and members of the public;

(d) hold such number of meetings in the places and at such times as it shall consider necessary for the proper discharge of its functions;

(e) raise additional funding to defray its costs; and

(f) regulate its own procedure.

6. The Secretariat of the Working Party shall be provided by the Ministry of Education and shall be responsible to the Working Party for –

(a) providing appropriate background briefing to it;

(b) preparing the reports of the Working Party and disseminating any information deemed relevant to the Working Party; and

(c) undertaking research and liaising with the relevant Government departments and any other institution or stakeholders in the education sector in order to gather relevant information necessary for informing the Working Party.

7. The costs incurred by the Working Party shall be defrayed from the voted funds of the Ministry of Education or such grants or donations as may be secured from Development Partners.

Dated the 29th September, 2022.

WILLIAM SAMOEI RUTO,
President.

Appendix 6
Record of work covered

RECORD OF WORK COVERED

SCHOOL .... TERM .... YEAR ....

DATE	GRADE	LEARNING AREA	STRAND/ SUB-STRAND	WORK DONE	REFLECTION	SIGNATURE

Student progress record

PROGRESS RECORD BOOK - ASSESSMENT RUBRIC

(SAMPLE)

Teacher's Name: .... Term .... Year ....Grade------------

Learning Area--- Strand/Sub Strand--

S/NO	NAME OF PUPIL	RATINGS AND SKILLS Care of Teeth																Average	Comments
		Performance Area Holding the toothbrush				Performance Area Applying toothpaste				Performance Area Brushing teeth				Performance Area Assisting others					
		EE (4)	ME (3)	AE (2)	BE (1)	EE (4)	ME (3)	AE (2)	BE (1)	EE (4)	ME (3)	AE (2)	BE (1)	EE (4)	ME (3)	AE (2)	BE (1)		
1.	Clay Sidi		3				3				3						1	3	Good - To improve on values.
2.	Rehema Pendo			2					1			2		4				3	Good - To improve on use of toothpaste.
3.	Myles Newton	4					3				3			4				4	Excellent. - Skills acquired.
4.	Mathew Juma			1				2				2					1	2	Needs support
5.	Stephie Kendi		3					2				2				2		2	Needs support

KEY: E.E - Exceeds Expectation (80 - 100%) M.E - Meets Expectation (65 - 79%) A.E - Approaching Expectation (50 - 64%)
B.E - Below Expectation (0 - 49%)

Consent form

Are you interested in taking part in the research project

´´(The quality of learning and teaching in developing countries: Assessing the impact of the competency-based curriculum in Kenya)"?

This is an inquiry about participation in a research project where the main purpose is to *[shed light on the impact of the competency-based curriculum]*. In this letter, I will give you information about the purpose of the project and what your participation will involve.

Purpose of the project

This research will be conducted in Mombasa, Kenya. This will be a Master´s thesis. My objective is to find out how the new curriculum is being implemented in schools. This study obviously cannot be representative. It is based on qualitative data garnered from a few schools in one Kenyan city, Mombasa. However, it is hoped that the insights generated will contribute modestly to the already large corpus of extant literature.

Main research question

In what ways does the competency-based curriculum influence the quality of learning in primary schools in Kenya?

Sub-research questions

To what extent is the competence-based curriculum implemented in public primary schools, in Mombasa, Kenya?

How far are teachers getting enough training on the curriculum, and how do they perceive it?

How does the competency-based curriculum affect the horizontal equity of learners in Kenya?

I do not plan to use this personal data after I am done with the project, however, there might be a possibility to use it for future studies or if my research will be published.

Who is responsible for the research project?

[Oslo Metropolitan University] is the institution responsible for the project.

Why are you being asked to participate?

This sample is being selected through referrals and it was approved by the person. The selection criteria are that the person should give consent. The sample has been derived from the Mombasa region of Kenya. My focus is on both public and private schools. 8 people have been asked to participate.

What does participation involve for you?

The participation involves semi-structured interviews and classroom observation. I will have a set of questions about the competency-based curriculum. I would like to hear your input as a teacher on the training you received. I also want to find out the measures you have taken to implement the competence-based curriculum. The participants can withdraw anytime they wish to. I plan to take short notes during the interview. Last but not least, the information obtained will only be used for educational purposes.

Participation is voluntary
Participation in the project is voluntary. If you chose to participate, you can withdraw your consent at any time without giving a reason. All information about you will then be made anonymous. There will be no negative consequences for you if you chose not to participate or later decide to withdraw.

Your personal privacy – how we will store and use your personal data
We will only use your personal data for the purpose(s) specified in this information letter. We will process your personal data confidentially and in accordance with data protection legislation (the General Data Protection Regulation and Personal Data Act).

My supervisor in connection with Oslo Metropolitan university will have access to the personal data.

- *«I will replace your name and contact details with a code. The list of names, contact details, and respective codes will be stored separately from the rest of the collected data», I will lock away data after its use through the removal of identity.*

Participants will not be recognizable in publications.

What will happen to your personal data at the end of the research project?

The project is scheduled to end *[May 2023]*.

The collected personal data will be anonymized and if in case it is used for future studies then it will be kept encrypted.

Your rights
So long as you can be identified in the collected data, you have the right to:
- access the personal data that is being processed about you
- request that your personal data be deleted
- request that incorrect personal data about you be corrected/rectified
- receive a copy of your personal data (data portability), and
- send a complaint to the Data Protection Officer or The Norwegian Data Protection Authority regarding the processing of your personal data

What gives us the right to process your personal data?
We will process your personal data based on your consent.

Based on an agreement with *[Oslo Metropolitan University]*, Data Protection Services has assessed that the processing of personal data in this project is in accordance with data protection legislation.

Where can I find out more?
If you have questions about the project or want to exercise your rights, contact:
- *[Oslo Metropolitan University]* via *[Paul Thomas]*.
- *Supervisor: Paul Thomas.*
- *Supervisor: paul.thomas@usn.no*
- Our Data Protection Officer: *[Ingrid Jacobson]*
- Data protection officer: personvernombud@oslomet.no
- Data Protection Services, by email: (personvernombud@oslomet.no)

Yours sincerely,

Project Leader

Student (Sahra)

(Paul Thomas)

Consent form

I have received and understood information about the project *[*The quality of learning and teaching in developing countries: Assessing the impact of the competency-based curriculum in Kenya*]* and have been given the opportunity to ask questions. I give consent:

    ☐ to participate in *(an interview)*
    ☐ to participate in *(observation)*
    ☐ *to participate in (document analysis)*

I give consent for my personal data to be processed until the end date of the project, approx. *[May 2023]*

(Signed by participant, date)

Information letter that was sent to all schools

To whom it may concern,

My name is Sahra Mohamed. I am studying a Master in International education and development at Oslo Metropolitan University. I am in my second year and I am supposed to conduct fieldwork in Mombasa. The following are my data collection methods, interviews (teacher and headteachers), observation and document analysis. My data collection will not involve names and identifiable information. My research topic is as follows: An Inquiry into the Implementation of the Competency-Based Curriculum (2017) in Primary Schools in Mombasa, Kenya. I would like to request to conduct fieldwork in your school.

Thank you very much. I will appreciate the opportunity to be in your school.

Sincerely,

Sahra