**STAKEHOLDERS SUPPORT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF COMPETENCY BASED CURRICULUM IN JUNIOR SCHOOLS IN DADAAB SUB COUNTY, GARISSA COUNTY, KENYA.**

# ABSTRACT

Several educational systems worldwide have adopted the Competency-Based Curriculum in an effort to raise educational standards and get pupils ready for the challenges of the twenty-first century. Despite the potential benefits of the Competency-Based Curriculum, its implementation in Dadaab Sub County is of great concern due to its uniqueness. The area hosts large refugee camps. This study explored the state of stakeholder support in the implementation of the Competency-Based Curriculum in Junior Schools in Dadaab Sub County, Garissa County. The Stakeholder Theory guided the study. Descriptive survey design was used with a target population of 16 Public Junior Schools in Dadaab Sub County comprising of 16 head teachers, 50 teachers and 32 class Representatives of students. This research study employed census sampling technique. Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Pearson Correlation was used to establish the relationships between variables. Qualitative data was analyzed verbatim. The findings revealed that stakeholders support had p-value less than 0.05 hence significant influence with implementation of Competency-Based Curriculum. Stakeholders support correlated positively with implementation of Competency-Based Curriculum with correlation coefficient, r = 0.658. It is expected that the study fills the gaps in the engagement of stakeholders in Dadaab sub-county that will inform policy review in the implementation of Competency-Based Curriculum.

*Keywords: Competency-Based Curriculum, implementation, Public Junior Schools, Stakeholder Support*

# BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Several educational systems worldwide have adopted the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) to raise educational standards and prepare pupils for the challenges of the twenty- first century. The World Economic Forum (2018) claims that Finland has the most incredible education system in the world because it strongly focuses on giving its citizens equal chances to education, which helps most Finnish youngsters reach their full potential. Some states have modified their high school graduation requirements to incorporate deliverables that demonstrate topic mastery, the use of CBC in elementary and high school programs in the United States has grown since the turn of the twenty-first century (Evans et al., 2019). In South Korea, though CBC has not been completely included in elementary and secondary educational systems, but attempts have been made to improve its implementation (Muchira et al., 2023).

Mulenga and Kabombwe (2019) point out that CBC has been implemented in many African nations, including South Africa, Ghana, Tanzania, Mozambique, and Rwanda. They also pointed out that they all seem to have had something in common that motivated them to use CBC. Since the students left school without the necessary knowledge and skills to succeed in the workplace, it is thought that the current educational systems in these nations were failing to meet their developmental requirements. To overcome the shortcomings of the conventional curriculum and evaluation techniques, CBC was introduced into the Ugandan educational system with considerable modifications (Kitasse & Sembatya, 2024). The competency Based Curriculum, introduced in Rwanda in April 2015, has received praise for being less academic but more skill-based, practical, and suited to everyday life and the workplace (REB, 2015).

The CBC is a new educational framework introduced by the Kenyan government in 2017 to replace the traditional 8-4-4 system. Its primary goal is to equip learners with practical skills and competencies relevant to the 21st century (KICD, 2017). The Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) in Kenya aims to develop learners' skills and knowledge relevant to their environment and future careers (Imana,2020). However, Muga and Wagude (2020) points out that successful implementation of CBC in Kenya faces several challenges ranging from inadequate resources and inadequate trained teachers.

In Dadaab Sub County, the unique socio-economic and cultural context presents both challenges and opportunities for the effective implementation of CBC. Poor learning outcomes arise from teachers' inability to implement the learner-centered approaches that are essential to CBC in places like Dadaab, where schools frequently lack adequate resources (Mutisya, 2021). For this educational reform to be successful, it is imperative that all relevant parties such as parents, educators, students, and community leaders be involved. This study looked at how stakeholders are currently involved and how that affects the way CBC is being implemented in Dadaab Sub County's junior schools.

# STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The Competency-Based Curriculum has been embraced by a number of educational systems across the globe in an effort to improve academic standards and get students ready for the challenges of the twenty-first century. The CBC may have advantages, but in Kenya, putting it into practice has proven to be a significant obstacle. Several obstacles have prevented the full adoption and efficacy of the Competency-Based Curriculum in Kenyan junior schools, especially in Dadaab Sub County, Garissa County. First off, one of the main obstacles to the successful implementation of Competency-Based Curriculum is still the absence of sufficient stakeholder engagement. There has been little participation in curriculum delivery decision-making processes from key stakeholders, including teachers, parents, education officers, and local community leaders.

The implementation of Competency-Based Curriculum is made more difficult by Dadaab's limited infrastructure and resources. The region's schools are frequently overcrowded and lack sufficient teaching resources, which makes it difficult to successfully apply the competency-based approach. The curriculum cannot be delivered as intended when learning resources like textbooks, teaching aids, and technology are unavailable, particularly in rural areas. Furthermore, Dadaab Sub County parents' participation in the Competency-Based Curriculum process remains low. According to studies, a large number of parents do not actively support their children's learning at home because they are not fully aware of the Competency-Based Curriculum 's tenets and advantages. This lack of involvement further restricts the holistic development that Competency-Based Curriculum seeks to promote by establishing a divide between the home and school environments.

Given these difficulties, it is unclear how best to increase stakeholder participation in order to facilitate the adoption of Competency-Based Curriculum in Dadaab Sub County, Garissa County's junior schools. Resolving these issues is essential to guaranteeing that the curriculum produces the desired results, especially in underserved areas with distinct socioeconomic and cultural characteristics. In order to inform policy review in the implementation of Competency-Based Curriculum, this study aimed to explore the gaps in stakeholder engagement in Dadaab sub-County.

# RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

To investigate stakeholders’ support and implementation of competency-based curriculum in junior schools in Dadaab Sub County, Garissa County, Kenya.

# THEORETICAL REVIEW

Stakeholder theory, introduced by Edward Freeman in the 1980s, represents a paradigmatic shift from traditional business models that prioritized shareholder value maximization to a more inclusive approach that emphasizes the importance of considering and balancing the interests of all parties that affect or are affected by an organization's decisions and activities (Freeman, 1984). This theoretical framework emerged as a response to growing recognition that organizations operate within complex networks of relationships and dependencies, where success depends not merely on financial performance but on the ability to create value for multiple constituents simultaneously (Freeman et al., 2010). By contending that leaders must recognize and actively manage relationships with a variety of stakeholder groups, each of which has legitimate claims and interests regarding organizational resources and outcomes, the theory essentially challenges the conventional understanding of organizational purpose (Donaldson & Preston, 1995).

Given that educational institutions are by their very nature collaborative and community-centered, stakeholder theory assumes particular significance in the context of education. In addition to the main constituents of students and teachers, educational stakeholders also include parents who entrust their children's development to educational institutions, school administrators who provide leadership and strategic direction, community members who provide resources and support, local authorities who oversee regulatory compliance, policymakers who create educational frameworks and funding mechanisms, and employers who eventually profit from educated graduates (Mitchell et al., 1997). Additional stakeholders may include school board members, educational technology providers, textbook publishers, transportation services, food service providers, and even future generations who will inherit the outcomes of current educational decisions.

The application of stakeholder theory in educational leadership requires administrators to develop sophisticated understanding of stakeholder needs, expectations, and potential conflicts while fostering collaborative relationships that advance collective educational goals (Friedman & Miles, 2006). This approach recognizes that educational success emerges from the dynamic interplay between multiple stakeholder interests rather than from isolated institutional efforts. According to Freeman (1984), the main assumption of the stakeholder theory is that an organization's effectiveness is measured by its ability to satisfy not only the shareholders, but also those agents who have a stake in the organization. Stakeholder Theory posits that organizations achieve better outcomes when they engage and consider the interests of all stakeholders.

Stakeholder theory is about how to manage a business effectively, and how to create and trade value. It takes into account the wider consequences of a business's actions on the communities and societies where it operates. The theory explains that stakeholders are instrumental to the success of programs and projects as they can affect or be affected by those projects. This theory will help in understanding the dynamics of stakeholder engagement and the implementation of CBC in Dadaab Sub County.

The strength of the theory is the focus on the success of reforms in organizations, where the key players have to be involved in decision making to realize better outcomes. Engaging stakeholders is thus crucial in ensuring the success of any educational reform. However, the inability to balance the interests of the numerous, disparate stakeholder groups is one of Stakeholders Theory's drawbacks. Power, influence, and legitimacy can change over time, despite the stakeholder salience model's assumption that they are constant and objective. Since stakeholder priorities are subject to change, it's critical to keep an eye on the sociopolitical environment in the area. A project may not be well received by all stakeholders, who may act as detractors or obstacles.

Stakeholder theory's emphasis on inclusive decision-making procedures that acknowledge the connection between stakeholder engagement and organizational success is another of its main advantages (Freeman et al., 2010). This emphasis on cooperative engagement is especially helpful in educational settings for reform projects, as the active involvement of important stakeholders like teachers, parents, students, and community members significantly increases the chances of successful implementation and long-lasting results (Mitchell et al., 1997). Educational leaders can take advantage of collective expertise, increase support for initiatives, and make sure that reforms take into account practical needs and limitations by involving a variety of stakeholders in planning and decision-making processes.

Stakeholder theory does, however, have a number of important drawbacks that make it difficult to use in practice. The primary shortcoming is the intrinsic challenge of balancing the frequently conflicting and incongruous interests of various stakeholder groups (Donaldson & Preston, 1995). Educational leaders often find themselves in situations where community desires deviate from policy mandates, teacher preferences clash with administrative priorities, or student needs conflict with parental expectations. Furthermore, it is problematic for the stakeholder salience model to assume that qualities like legitimacy, power, and influence are constant and objective because they change over time in response to shifting relationships and situations (Mitchell et al., 1997) Additionally, stakeholder expectations and priorities change over time, requiring adaptive management techniques and ongoing observation of the local sociopolitical environment (Friedman & Miles, 2006). The fact that some stakeholders may actively oppose or resist educational initiatives, acting as critics or roadblocks who can seriously impede progress despite sincere attempts at cooperation and engagement, is perhaps the most difficult aspect of the situation.

Effective stakeholder engagement in the CBC implementation is crucial in the particular case of Dadaab Sub-County, Garissa County, Kenya, a region characterized by distinct socio-economic challenges. The goal of the CBC is to support students' overall development by giving them the knowledge, skills, and values necessary for lifelong learning. Teachers, parents, government agencies, and community leaders are among the stakeholders who must be involved in the implementation of CBC.

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# EMPIRICAL LITERATURE

Sholars have contributed significantly in investigating CBC implementation. They have established that effective stakeholder engagement is critical as it fosters collaboration, ensures the alignment of educational goals, and promotes shared responsibility (Bryson, 2004). Savio1 and Nelson (2024) investigated the opinions of stakeholders and the application of the Competence-Based Curriculum (CBC) in Uganda's Ordinary Level Secondary Schools in the Isingiro District. The results showed that stakeholder perceptions and the successful implementation of CBC were significantly predicted by administrative support, resource availability, and teacher training. Mwarari, Githui, and Mwenje (2022) sought to determine the challenges parents faced when working with schools and the strategies they thought would enhance effective parental involvement for their children's normal social, emotional, and academic development. The results demonstrated that parents recognized the importance of collaboration between the home and the school. Based on the findings, specific strategies to boost parental involvement in the CBC were suggested.

In their study, Nkya and Huang's (2018) explored community awareness of competency-based curricula in public secondary schools in Arusha, Tanzania. The findings showed that the community was aware of what competency-based curricula were. Despite knowing that their children had to go to school and receive instruction from teachers, parents were ignorant of the objectives of the competency-based curriculum. Koo's (2020) research was about implementing the competence-based curriculum, schools and higher education authorities. The study found that stakeholders should provide multifaceted support for the successful implementation of CBC. According to Koo (2020), the core tenets of CBC are undermined when educators turn to traditional pedagogies that prioritize memorization in the absence of institutional guidance and collaboration. These results in research by Kim and Park (2019) pointed out that many educators in South Korea believed CBC was a top-down reform that was implemented without sufficient professional development or feedback systems. These findings underscore the importance of holistic institutional support including ongoing training, collaborative planning, and shared responsibility if CBC is to succeed as a transformative educational model not only in South Korea but globally.

According to Patrick and Bristow (2014), instructors in the New Zealand CBC have been granted autonomy in teaching and evaluating students. Additionally, senior staff members observe lessons, teachers peer-review lesson plans and assessment materials, and each school reports student statistics to the national standards office. Research by Enyiazu's (2022) reviewed literature on Nigeria's education policy and implementation. The study found that the country's inability to meet desirable educational standards, goals, and objectives even in the twenty-first century is mainly due to the country's poor education policy implementation. This had significant effects, impacting on work environment, job satisfaction and effectiveness, Amunga, Were, and Ashioya (2020) assessed whether CBC activities need parental participation, how parents feel about this expectation, and how teachers see CBC and the difficulties they encounter while implementing it in Kenya. The research included 56 persons as a sample. The results showed that parents were hesitant to contribute learning materials for practical sessions and to collaborate with instructors as co-educators. Anyango, Odhiambo, and Janet (2020) found that the stakeholder consultation process affected execution of the competency-based education program in public primary schools in Kisumu East Sub- County, Kenya. Nyamwange (2020) examined Kenya's implementation of competency-based curricula from 2018 to 2020. The results showed that stakeholders were generally not involved in the CBC rollout. For instance, successful implementation was hampered by a lack of public involvement and parental sensitization.

# RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study employed a descriptive survey design. According to Kothari (2017), the design aims to provide explanations for data which is important to the existence and occurrence of events. Descriptive surveys allow researchers to gather comprehensive information about a specific population. This method helps to describe characteristics, behaviors, attitudes, opinions or perception of people. The researcher used descriptive surveys to identify patterns, correlations, and trends in a population. These trends can be used to predict future behavior or inform decision- making processes. The study targeted 16 Public Junior Schools in Dadaab Sub County comprising of the following respondents: 16 Head teachers, 50 teachers, 32 students being class representatives from grade 8 and 9 as they have better experience than grade 7 in Junior school.

To select the desired sample, the study employed census sampling technique to the head teachers, teachers and students’ leaders. Census method involves collecting information from every unit within the population, providing a complete picture. The method is particularly useful when the population is easily accessible and manageable in size (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2013). Quantitative data was analyzed descriptively using mean and standard deviation and inferentially using Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation Analysis with the help of Statistical Packages for Social Science (SPSS Version 27) and presented using frequency tables and charts. Qualitative data was analyzed verbatim.

# RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The researcher circulated 50 questionnaires to the teachers out of which, 42 were filled. This gives a response rate of 84% which was considered good. Mugenda and Mugenda (2013) offers that a response rate of at least 70% is good. The assistance of stakeholders in the process of CBC Implementation was investigated in this study. It explored the components of stakeholders support local community support for the implementation of CBC in schools, parents understanding and valuing the goals of CBC, stakeholders including parents and community leaders being actively involved in CBC implementation and the Ministry of Education providing adequate resources and guidance for CBC implementation.

**Descriptive Statistics**

 Descriptive statistics on the components of stakeholders’ support was done and findings are as presented in the Table 1.

**Table 1: Components of Stakeholders Support**

|  |
| --- |
|  |
|  | N | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviation |
| The local community supports the implementation of CBC in schools | 42 | 1.00 | 4.00 | 2.7143 | .80504 |
| Parents understand and value the goals of CBC | 42 | 1.00 | 4.00 | 2.5714 | .85946 |
| Stakeholders, including parents and community leaders, are actively involved in CBC implementation | 42 | 1.00 | 4.00 | 2.8333 | .90841 |
| The Ministry of Education provides adequate resources and guidance for CBC implementation | 42 | 1.00 | 4.00 | 2.4524 | .73923 |
| Valid N (listwise) | 42 |  |  |  |  |

Descriptive statistics results indicate that the statement that stakeholders, including parents and community leaders, are actively involved in CBC implementation received the highest mean score of 2.83 (SD = 0.91). This suggests a generally positive view of community involvement, though the relatively high standard deviation indicates varied experiences across different schools. The item that the local community supports the implementation of CBC in schools had a mean of 2.71 (SD = 0.81), indicating moderate support from the community. While this shows a reasonable level of engagement, it also implies that some community members may not yet be fully aligned with or aware of CBC initiatives.

The statement that parents understand and value the goals of CBC scored a mean of 2.57 (SD = 0.86). This suggests that although parents may be fairly familiar with the objectives of CBC, there is a need for enhanced sensitization and communication to strengthen their appreciation and support for the curriculum. The lowest-rated component was that the Ministry of Education provides adequate resources and guidance for CBC implementation, with a mean score of 2.45 (SD = 0.74). This indicates that respondents perceive the level of support from the Ministry as insufficient, which may hinder effective implementation at the school level. The lack of adequate materials, training, and follow-up support has likely impacted the perception of stakeholders on the ground. In summary, the data reveals a generally moderate level of stakeholder support for CBC implementation in Dadaab Sub County. While there is notable involvement from parents and community leaders, the findings highlight a need for improved communication, increased community sensitization, and stronger resource support from the Ministry of Education. Strengthening these components could significantly enhance the success and sustainability of CBC in the region.

## **Correlation Analysis**

The study tested the null hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between the stakeholders’ support and implementation of CBC in Junior Schools in Dadaab Sub County using correlation analysis, the test being conducted through SPSS software at 95% confidence level. The decision criteria were that a p value >0.05 would be an indicator of evidence in support of the null hypothesis and would thus lead to acceptance of null hypothesis whereas p value <0.05 would be an indicator of lack of evidence in support of the null hypothesis and would thus lead to non- acceptance of null hypothesis.

**Table 2:Stakeholders Support and Implementation of CBC Correlation Analysis**

|  |
| --- |
|  |
|  | CBC implementation | Stakeholder support |
| CBC implementation | Pearson Correlation | 1 | .658\*\* |
| Sig. (2-tailed) |  | .000 |
| N | 42 | 42 |
| Stakeholder support | Pearson Correlation | .6580\*\* | 1 |
| Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 |  |
| N | 42 | 42 |
| \*\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). |

As presented in the Table 2, the results showed a strong positive significant association between Stakeholder support and implementation of CBC in junior schools in Dadaab Sub County, Garissa County, Kenya. This was because Pearson correlation coefficient (r = 0.658) was greater than 0.6 and probability value (p-value = 0.000) was less than 0.5. Since the p-value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected. This finding implies that there is a statistically significant relationship between stakeholders’ support and the level of CBC implementation in the Junior Schools sampled.

# DISCUSSIONS

The findings of the study conducted in junior schools in Dadaab Sub County, Garissa County, Kenya, revealed that there is a statistically significant relationship between stakeholder support and the implementation of the CBC. Pearson correlation coefficient (r = 0.658) and p-value of 0.000 indicated a positive strong relationship, verifying that higher levels of stakeholder involvement mean higher levels of implementation of CBC. The rejection of the null hypothesis confirms that the participation of key stakeholders such as parents, community leaders, and government agencies has a substantial influence on the degree to which the CBC is actualized in the schools. The findings in this study agrees with the earlier empirical research emphasizing the importance of stakeholders' participation in education reforms. Bryson (2004) asserts that effective stakeholder involvement leads to coordination responsibility, mutual alignment of educational priorities, and collaboration, all of which are vital for the effective implementation of the curriculum. Increased active participation of stakeholders in schools in Dadaab has led to easier implementation of CBC. For instance, the headteachers reported that collaboration with the stakeholders led to increased support, such as the provision of resources and school function attendance. This is in line with the study by Savio1 and Nelson (2024), which identified that a study conducted in Uganda revealed that administrative support, resource availability, and teacher training correlated to the successful application of CBC. The study reveals, however, that stakeholder support in Dadaab varies. While there are active and supportive parents, there are also passive parents, primarily due to the limited awareness of the CBC. This imbalanced involvement is congruent with Nkya and Huang (2018) findings in Tanzania, whereby communities were aware of CBC but not what it aimed to achieve. Therefore, in the Dadaab context, some parents perceive CBC as too strenuous or fail to grasp its significance, thus low rates of participation in meaningful activities such as assisting students in finishing projects or visiting meetings at school.

The study also revealed that headteacher leadership is a predictor for constructing stakeholder support. In places where headteachers engage students, teachers, and parents through active interaction, CBC implementation is reported to be effective. However, student focus group interviews showed that while there are headteachers who appear at student activities and motivate learners, there are others who do not interact with parents frequently enough. This difference indicates the need for even stronger, even more structured communication and participation methods at the school level. Evidence by Amunga, Were, and Ashioya (2020) also supports this evidence, confirming that Kenyan parents are not willing to provide learning materials or partner with teachers since they are not informed about their role in CBC. Similarly, Mwarari, Githui, and Mwenje (2022) stipulated different challenges parents face in interacting with schools and prescribed the best ways of maximizing their participation, citing the need for proactive involvement of schools involving parents in CBC-related tasks. The world over, Kim and Park (2019) set the fact that South Korean educators saw CBC as a top-down reform process instituted without proper professional development or stakeholder participation. This is similar to the Kenyan case where studies like Nyamwange (2020) and Anyango, Odhiambo, and Janet (2020) quoted insufficient public engagement and inadequate sensitization of parents during the initial introduction of CBC. These loopholes have led to inadequate stakeholder engagement and have lowered the effectiveness of the implementation of the curriculum. Koo (2020) also points out that successful CBC implementation relies on multilateral stakeholder support. Without institutional support and coordination, teachers will simply fall back on traditional methods that contradict the very essence of CBC. This once more reaffirms the need for comprehensive stakeholder capacity development, not only for policy making but for day-to-day implementation support as well.

The findings of the Dadaab reaffirm that stakeholder acceptance is a critical component in the successful implementation of CBC. The findings show that when stakeholders are sensitized, involved, and committed, the curriculum is better implemented for both teachers' and students' advantage. Ensuring CBC sustainability requires that stakeholder involvement is boosted through awareness programs, resource mobilization, and participatory leadership practices. These reforms, informed by local and foreign research, can ensure that CBC achieves its role of remodelling the education system in Kenya..

# CONCLUSION

The findings revealed a strong effect of stakeholder support on CBC in junior schools in Dadaab Sub County, Garissa County, Kenya. A statistically significant moderate positive correlation (r = 0.658, p < 0.05) was found between stakeholder support and the level of CBC implementation, indicating that higher stakeholder engagement is associated with better implementation outcomes. Thus, the study concludes that there is strong positive significant association between Stakeholder support and implementation of CBC in junior schools in Dadaab Sub County, Garissa County, Kenya. With active involvement from parents and community leaders receiving relatively higher ratings, while support from the Ministry of Education especially in terms of resource provision and guidance was rated lowest.

However, the study also uncovered variability in stakeholder involvement, with some schools enjoying active support from parents and community leaders, while others reported low engagement, particularly due to limited awareness and understanding of CBC among parents. Focus group discussions with students echoed this inconsistency, noting that while headteachers were sometimes supportive and engaged, parental involvement in school activities remained occasional and limited.

# RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings regarding stakeholder support for CBC implementation, the recommendations are that the Ministry of Education, in collaboration with school administrations, should conduct regular community outreach and sensitization programs to educate parents and other stakeholders on the objectives, structure, and benefits of CBC. Clear communication will help dispel misconceptions and build stronger community ownership of the curriculum.
Schools should also create structured opportunities for parents to participate in CBC-related activities, including open days, curriculum workshops, and learner exhibitions. Encouraging such involvement can help bridge the gap between home and school, fostering a supportive learning environment for students.

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