



Advanced Planning: Reforming Teacher Education Curriculum in Universities to Prepare CBC Compliant Secondary School Teachers for East Africa

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Abstract: Rapid socioeconomic changes around the world such as globalization, a competitive, diverse, and complicated environment, and advanced technologies have impacted global educational needs of the 21st century. This circumstance has put pressure on educators to modify curriculum in order to accommodate the changes. Curriculum reforms have been done across all levels of education, including Teacher education in East Africa. However, for decade now, teacher education programs have been under fire owing to the reality that vast majority of graduate are ill-equipped for implementing CBC in secondary schools where this curriculum is implemented like Tanzania. The specific objective of this study was to establish whether universities incorporate CBC principles in Teacher education curriculum. The study reviewed literature in this area and found that majority of higher education institutions claimed to be providing competence-based and outcomes-based programs, but the available records stated otherwise. Furthermore, the findings show that universities deploy learning methods such as lecturing method which does not actively engage students and therefore does not contribute to acquisition of CBC competencies by student teachers. For the case of subjects/courses which are practical in nature such as teaching practice and microteaching, the findings reveal that they are poorly organized, supervised and evaluated, which contribute significantly to under prepared teachers. Based on the findings, the study recommends that universities should reform their teacher education curriculum and incorporate CBC principles in order for them to produce teachers with required competencies to implement CBC in secondary schools.

Keywords: Teacher Education Curriculum, CBC, Curricular Reforms

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1. Introduction

Education has always been a powerful agent in any community, and it is widely regarded as an essential tool for bringing positive change to people's social, political, economic, and cultural lives. Any well-established educational system must include teacher education as one of its cornerstones. This is due to the fact that teacher

education prepares and produces teachers who are important resources in the teaching and learning process. Teachers are essential components of every educational system because they serve as a pillar for students' learning by turning national philosophy, educational policy, and curriculum goals into instructional objectives and new practices for student learning (Mgaiwa, 2018). They organize and guide students in their learning experiences and interaction with the content of the curriculum (URT,

1995). This is therefore to say that a primary reason for high level learning outcomes is as a result of a purposeful educational policy, curriculum and teachers' competence.

Teachers must be prepared by first comprehending what they will need to know and be able to do in the future. This, in turn, necessitates an understanding of secondary education's role and its curriculum. In this sense, schooling is described as a cyclical process whereby a successive cohort of learners go through schools, join university, and emerge as competent graduates, ready to enter the worlds of social engagement and work as skilled graduates. Teachers, for example, begin as student teachers at university and graduate as teachers who foster the next cohort through the cycle (Robinson et al., 2019). Therefore, in order to improve the quality of education in the lower levels of education, particularly in primary and secondary schools, special emphasis must be paid to teacher education, which prepares teachers as facilitators of learning (Hardman et al., 2012a). Most important is the fact that, if teacher education is to produce quality and competent teachers, the capacity of doing so lies in its curriculum, design, structure, organization, and transaction modalities, as well as the extent to which they are appropriate.

In this paper, therefore, teacher education is defined as a university program that focuses on the development of teacher proficiency and competency, enabling and empowering teachers to meet the demands and requirements of their profession.

Before discussing what encompasses Competence-based curriculum lets view the meaning of curriculum. The word curriculum is originated from Latin word "*currere*" meaning 'to run a course'. The word curriculum means a course of study or a plan that provides learning opportunities in the form of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and beliefs (Kasuga, 2019).

Competence-based curriculum has been one among many initiatives in improving the quality of education worldwide, particularly in preparing students for the 21st century economy. Given the fundamental variation in the economy, businesses, and jobs in this century, new and different skills are required. Economic and social environment compels students to acquire a new set of skills to make their way in a complex and constantly evolving future (Craig 2012). It is a requirement for a secondary school or university graduate to be able to think critically, solve problems, communicate, collaborate, find good information quickly, and use technology effectively, whether they plan to enter the workforce directly. This is to say that, CBC intends to develop not only a merely qualifications but capabilities which are perceived as pre-requisite for employability and also a link between education and labour market.

The paradigm shift of pedagogy is emphasized on by the inception of the CBC which illustrates on the need of learner-centered approach rather than teacher-centered approaches.

While in teacher-centered pedagogy (dominated in the Knowledge-Based Curriculum - KBC), a teacher assumes the roles of an expert who transfers knowledge to students, teachers in the learner-centered teaching assumes the coaching role of facilitating and guiding the learning process (Kitta & Tillya, 2010). For effective realization of learner-centered approach, the following pedagogical features, as highlighted by Mkonongwa (2018) should be employed during implementing CBC:

1. *Meaningful contexts*: The teacher will create or to look for meaningful contexts in which students will in a natural way experience the relevance and the meaning of the competences to be acquired.
2. *Multidisciplinary approach*: Competences are holistic and as a consequence the educative approach needs to be integrative and holistic too.
3. *Constructive learning*: Philosophically, competence-based teaching and learning has its roots in social constructivism. Learners engage in a process of constructing their own knowledge by interacting with their environment, rather than as a process of absorbing the knowledge that the traditional teacher might try to transfer to them.
4. *Cooperative, interactive learning (with peer, teachers)*: The central idea under Competence-based teaching and learning is to help learners to develop and construct their own knowledge and seek ways to make optimal use of other people's competence in their journey. This is what social constructivism is about. For learning outcomes aimed at developing individual and personal competences, the approach must take diversity of learner needs into consideration to meet the learner's goals and objectives. In order to achieve this strategy, there is need for an open approach where education includes expression of the expectation, needs, goals, choices between learners and educators.
5. *Discovery learning*: Discovery learning as opposed to receptive learning means making content available and accessible and that the way of acquiring this knowledge or competences, could not be just a process of providing information, but should always be embedded in a discovery-based approach. Learners themselves discover theories, rules and patterns as they interact with the environment, peers and teachers.
6. *Reflective learning*: Competency-based teaching and learning also focuses on the learning processes of the learner. Learning is

always in a spiral-fashion, that is, it requires learners to go back and fro to reflect on their learning. Learners will always develop learning competences that they regard as “learning to learn” in the process of reflection of their own needs, approaches, progress, motivations, and results.

7. *Personal learning*: In the competence oriented theories learning is conceived as a process of constructing the learner’s own personal knowledge and competences. Information, knowledge, strategies, only becomes meaningful for a person if they become an integral part of their own personal body of knowledge and competences. In education this implies that students need to be able to identify with the contexts, the persons, the situations and interests that are included in the learning domains involved (Mkonongwa, 2018)

Another aspect that is emphasized in CBC is on learning outcomes rather than content. Instead of focusing on the content that has to be covered as it is a norm in the KCB, CBC focuses on outcomes. The students’ knowledge, attitudes, and cognitive skills are the major indicators of the outcome for the programmes of the results. Lastly is on the emphasis placed upon the nature and scope of assessment. In KCB emphasis is on high academic achievement in national examinations measured through summative assessment using a paper-pen examination. This kind of assessment is sometimes known as norm-referenced assessment whereby assessment of learner’s progress or achievement is compared with the levels of achievement of his or her peer group and or by reference to norms derived from a sample of a similar population. This kind of assessment results in cut throat competitions between schools and learners where scoring of high marks or grades is emphasized at the expense acquisition of competencies. CBC on the other hand emphasizes on the use of formative assessment and using tools such as portfolios, classroom or field observation, projects, oral presentations, self-assessment, interviews, and peer assessment (Kitta & Tillya, 2010). These assessment tools provide opportunity for students to demonstrate the competences they have mastered in real life. Assessment of learner’s achievement or progress in CBC is judged against a pre-determined set of criteria. Learners are given a clearly defined task and the list of explicit criteria for assessing their performance. This is referred to as Criteria referenced assessment (Hussain & Maher 2015).

Generally, CBC emphasizes the above aspects so that a learner can acquire competences needed as a result of engaging fully in learning processes. In order to achieve CBC goals successfully, teachers need to abandon traditional instruction approaches. Thus, teaching methodology, instructional materials, assessment

approaches, and classroom organizational need to be aligned to CBC principles (Ruth & Ramadas, 2019). Therefore, the study sought to establish whether universities incorporate CBC principles in secondary Teacher education curriculum.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Curriculum Reforms in basic education and their implication in Teacher education curriculum in East Africa

Curriculum reform is any modification to the curriculum aspects including the values, philosophy, objectives, materials, organizational structure, teaching stratagem, and assessment and learning outcomes (Meena, 2009; Kasuga, 2019). Curriculum reforms may include changes in teaching culture including teaching methodologies and learning styles and the philosophy that accompany such a curriculum. For example a move away from traditional subject designs such as subject-based, knowledge-centered, teaching-focused approaches to modern subject designs such as student-based, competence-centered approaches changed the way and culture of teaching, roles of teachers and students during implementation of the reformed curriculum (Huba & Freed, 2000; Jones, 2002; Merton, Clark, Richardson and Froyd, 2001 as cited in Kasuga, 2019). The primary motivation for curriculum reform is to satisfy the changing needs of society in the twenty-first century, notably rapid socioeconomic changes around the world, such as globalization, a competitive, diversified, and complex environment, and advanced technologies. These developments have demanded and impacted the worldwide educational demands of the twenty-first century, necessitating the reformation of existing curricula into new ones that are more appropriate for such an environment. This paper will stress on the curricula reforms in Tanzania and Kenya as the representative of the countries in East Africa.

2.2 Curriculum Reforms in Tanzania

In 2005, the government of Tanzania, through Tanzania Institute of Education (TIE), changed the secondary school curricula from content-based curriculum to Competence-Based Curriculum. The change was aiming at improving the quality of education and equipping school graduates with sufficient knowledge and life skills for them to survive academically and socially in the dynamic world (Komba & Kira, 2013; Kasuga, 2019). Changes of secondary school curriculum in 2005 necessitated changes of teacher education curriculum whereby in 2007 CBC was introduced in 2007 Teacher education (Kafyulilo, Rugambuka and Moses, 2012;

Meena, 2009, as cited in Kavindi (2014). Apart from changing teaching methodologies and learning styles and the philosophy, the 2007 teacher education curriculum reforms accommodated the global technological environment by introducing ICT/Information and Computer Studies subjects (MoEVT, 2007). It was during this time when teachers were required to have Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPCK) to master the teaching of the competence based curriculum. However, Komba and Mwandaji (2015) found that there is a limited use of CBC teaching approach when they were conducting an assessment on the implementation of the CBC in Tanzania

2.3 Reform Path in the Basic Education Curriculum in Kenya

There are ongoing reforms in the Basic Education Curriculum, which have implications for reform in the Teacher Education Curriculum in Kenya. The country unveiled CBC under the 2-6-3-3 system of education in the year 2017 which has replaced 8-4-4 that has been used for over 32 year (Amutabi, 2019). Early research that lucidly targeted the implementation stages of early grade education and preparedness of the teachers to implement CBC indicate that teachers' knowledge of CBC is vague, they are ill prepared. Further training and more sessions for additional skills are suggested through the Kenya Institute for Curriculum Development. In order for the CBC system to be compatible with the current system, Kenya needs to move fast especially with focus on learner flexibility.

2.4 Effects of Curriculum Reforms on Basic Education to Teacher's Education Curriculum

Knowledge and understanding of teachers constitute an important aspect in the implementation of competence-based curriculum during the teaching and learning process. Indeed, the effectiveness and efficiency of CBC depends on teacher's ability to carry out teaching and learning activities responsibly and effectively (Mkonongwa, 2018). Thus, it is commonly recognized that, in order to improve the quality of education in primary and secondary schools, special emphasis must be paid to teacher education, including curriculum design, structure, organization, and transaction modalities, as well as the extent to which they are appropriate.

In realizing this, it is suggested that curriculum reforms in lower level of education such as secondary education should occur concurrently with curriculum reforms in higher education institution (Scheurs & Dumbraveanu, 2014). Schooling has been described as a cyclical process

during which successive cohorts of learner's progress through schools, enter university and emerge as skilled graduates into the worlds of social engagement and work (Robinson et al., 2019). In the case of teachers, they enter university as student teachers and graduate as teachers who nurture the next cohort through the cycle. That means any reform in teaching strategies and methods, for example, introduced in lower level of education have to be reflected upon their practices in Teacher education curriculum. This is due to the interdependence of these levels of education. These changes imply sustaining reforms and making them more compatible to each other. Therefore, in order to improve the quality of education in the lower levels of education, particularly in primary and secondary schools, special emphasis must be paid to teacher education, which prepares teachers as facilitators of learning (Hardman et al., 2012).

For more than a decade now, teacher education programs have been under fire owing to the reality that vast majority of graduate are ill-equipped for implementing CBC in secondary schools where this curriculum is implemented, like in Tanzania. For instance, studies in Tanzania on teachers' classroom practices in implementing the CBC in secondary schools reveal that majority of secondary school teachers are not following the formal policy documents such as the syllabus and curriculum framework in implementing the CBC (see for example, Kitta & Tillya, 2014; Komba & Mwandaji, 2015). This is because teachers have narrow understanding of CBC and its practices in the classroom. They are lacking knowledge and skills necessary for the implementation of the CBC in actual teaching and learning process (Komba & Kira, 2013) which can be attributed to the following indicators;

- Design competence-based lesson plans,
- Engage students in teaching and learning,
- Assess students' achievement by not constructing competence based tasks.

In the case of assessment of students' achievement as a case, studies show that teachers have not fully moved to the new format of assessment (Mulenga and Kabombwe, 2019 as cited in Ruth and Ramadas, 2019).

The above failures in accommodating CBC are found among graduates of teacher education programs under the adoption of CBC, as well as teachers who were teaching before to the establishment of CBC, despite having had multiple in-service training sessions on CBC implementation. The primary causes of this issue are twofold: one, the quality of in-service programs, and two the teacher education curriculum which does not comply with secondary school CBC in terms of teaching strategies and methods as well as the assessment.

2.5 Compliance of Teacher Education Curriculum to CBC Principles

The establishment of CBC demands a shift from traditional way of designing university courses into an approach that is tailored to CBC environment. In the traditional way of designing courses, teachers decide on the content that they intent to teach, and plan how to teach it and then assess it in the usual approach of organizing courses. This approach is based on the teacher's input as well as assessment of the students' understanding and ability to duplicate the content presented. These are reflected in the learning objectives which dominate the traditional course design.

In the CBC context, learning outcomes are the first components during designing of the course. Learning outcomes are clear statements of what the student is expected to achieve and how the student is expected to demonstrate this achievement as a result of engaging in the learning process (Scheurs & Dumbraveanu, 2014). By reading the listed learning outcomes, an employer or professional in the field should be able to identify what knowledge, skills, and attitudes the students will be able to offer them after taking the course (Ibid). A review of literature in this area, however, show that majority of higher education institutions claimed to providing competence-based and outcomes-based programs, but the available records stated otherwise. For example, prospectus indicates specific aims and objectives only without specifying learning outcomes that students are expected to have at the end of the course (Inter-University Council for East Africa, IUCEA, 2014). And for the universities with programmes indicating learning outcomes they are in fact stated to the course level articulating the specific learning aims and learning objectives that students are expected to realize at the end of a given course, rather than the learning outcomes that students are expected to have at the end of the course (IUCEA, 2014). Examples of universities that fall in this kind of approach include University of Dar Es salaam, Saint Augustine University of Tanzania (SAUT), Kenyatta University (KU) in Kenya and many others.

The second principle is that the curriculum should be complemented by the constructive alignment (Scheurs & Dumbraveanu, 2014). Constructive alignment means that the learner constructs his own learning through relevant learning activities. The teacher's responsibility is to create a learning environment that supports the learning activities appropriate to achieving the intended learning outcomes. The essence is that all components in the teaching system – the intended learning outcomes, the used teaching methods, the resources to support learning, the learning activities and the assessment tasks and criteria for evaluating learning – are aligned to each other and

facilitate the achievement of the intended learning outcomes. The learners are the active makers of knowledge and they are even co-responsible for knowledge creation, being presented with real life problems in collaborative and social environment in which they apply their skills and experience to solve the problems and even to construct the knowledge.

The third principle is that learning environment for CBC is not limited to the classroom, but it includes the classroom, workplace, home, etc (Scheurs & Dumbraveanu, 2014). This is designed in order to inculcate practical training and competence based training (IUCEA, 2014). Learners are encouraged to engage effectively in the organised learning environment outside of the classroom where they explore, collaborate, investigate, and solve real life problems in social learning environment. This helps them to interact with the environment (physical and social world) which is important for developing social and interpersonal skills and knowledge. Project based learning is a good example of constructivist learning. In project based learning, learners' interaction and cooperation will increase and will result in new knowledge construction and in sharing it with other learners.

In teacher education, there are courses that are integral component of teacher training for improving teaching skills of student teachers. It can therefore be argued that Teaching Practice is envisaged to prepare students for maximum practical and professional training in the field of education by offering them with the following:

1. Providing an experience through participation and observation under the auspices of the institutions to which students are attached
2. Providing professional skills which are acquired through planned programmes so as to meet and satisfy the needs of the profession as well as the environment to which the students are being prepared for.

While competence based teaching goes beyond the classroom, a study by Hardman, Abd-Kadir and Tibuhinda (2012) showed that the current teacher education curricula suffer in varying degrees from a lack of integration of theory and practice, and a failure to address the everyday realities in classroom. This limits student teachers from acquiring necessary competences needed to implement the CBC after graduating. Furthermore, a review of literature reveal that practical based programs such as teaching practice and microteaching, are poorly organised, supervised and evaluated, which contribute significantly to have under prepared teacher (Komba & Kira, 2013). Therefore, the failures to implement CBC in practice at higher learning level where teachers are prepared contribute to the failure of CBC in basic education as many studies have suggested. A study conducted by

Komba and Mwandaji (2015) to assess the implementation of competence-based teaching and learning in Tanzania have confirmed that many teachers (more than 80%) lack proper understanding of the concept of competence-based teaching and learning.

3 Methodology

The literature review approach adopted in this study was systematic literature review (SLR). Dewey and Drahota (2016) opine that SLR is a type of review that collects multiple research studies and summarizes them to answer research questions. The researchers adopted this approach as it provided very comprehensive overview of literature related to the research question. The researchers also believed that through this method they would access array of information about the study problem.

In using SLR the following stages were followed. The first stage involved coming with the research question problem which was advanced Planning: Reforming Teacher Education Curriculum in Universities to Prepare CBC Compliant Secondary School Teachers for East Africa. This enabled the researchers to determine what to include in the literature review and what to leave out. It also guided the researchers to identify the authors to consult, regions to find the literature. The second stage involved collection of data as per inclusion criteria. Search engines were used to consult online libraries. This yielded a lot of information. The yielded information was evaluated using the inclusion criteria. Only studies related to the study question was dealt with. Finally, analyzed data was evaluated and interpreted in light of the research questions. It was further synthesized to create a complete summary of answers to the research. This information was used to draw conclusions and develop study recommendations.

4. Results and Discussion

The study sought to establish whether universities incorporated CBC principles in teacher education programs. Firstly, a review of literature reveals a mismatch in the pedagogical approaches employed in training of teachers in universities and pedagogical approaches which teachers are supposed to use in implementing curricular in secondary schools. In universities, lecturing as teaching pedagogy has been embraced for many years and remains a predominant pedagogical approach. The term "lecturing" comes from Medieval Latin, which means "reading aloud," and it refers to when a lecturer, as a knowledge facilitator, provides an oral presentation on a specific learning experience while students take notes (Yazidu, 2017; Mbalamula, 2017). This pedagogical approach embraced by the universities creates a large gap between theory and actual classroom practices in secondary schools whose

curricular emphasis is on the development of competencies. This is enough evidence to show that CBC principles have not been integrated in developing university teacher education curriculum. This also suggest that some of the university lecturers lack experience and expertise on practical teaching at the lower levels of education, including secondary schools and this makes it difficult for them to impart right knowledge to the student teachers (Hardman et al., 2012a). This finding concurs with Oyugi (2015) who suggested that university level teaching should focus on obtaining competencies necessary to tackle current problems, including those found in formal programmes.

Secondly, it was found that practical courses are not properly organized and supervised. These practical courses are microteaching and teaching practice, which are practical based programs to prepare student teachers for actual teaching and learning environment. To facilitate and empower students to learn, student teachers must have teaching knowledge and have the ability to transfer their pedagogical skills into practice. In the implementation of these programs, student teachers are given guided theory and are equipped with basic teaching skills.

In the context of CBC, student teachers should be guided on how to implement each component of the teaching and learning process. During the Teaching Practice, student teachers observe subject teachers at work so as to learn about teachers' skills, strategies and classroom achievements. It is also the time when they evaluate their own teaching experiences through interactions with teachers and lecturers and, through self-reflection, implement a variety of approaches, strategies and skills with a view to bring about meaningful learning. If these practical lessons are not properly organized to give student teachers enough time to practice then there is very high likely hood that that these student teachers will be half baked.

During micro teaching, they should be given opportunity to facilitate teaching using CBC compliant teaching methods. The same should be done to assessment. This will help them to use the same methods in secondary schools once they become teachers. Many countries have adopted CBC because they believe CBC is a solution to their socio economic challenges. The countries believe that the best way to solve these challenges is through secondary education. This calls for improved training of secondary schools so that they can implement CBC effectively in schools. Universities need to put in place learning resource centres which are fully equipped with learning resources to support teacher training. There is also need to hire adequate lecturers to man teacher education departments.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusion

Based on what the literature review has revealed, teacher education programmes do not incorporate principles of CBC. The programmes do not prepare teachers to implement CBC in secondary schools due to nature of teaching strategies employed in universities. Furthermore the curriculum structures of the university programmes indicate specific aims and objectives only without specifying learning outcomes that students are expected to have at the end of the course. Thus, authors conclude that competency based teaching approaches are not well implemented in Universities, and that, if student teachers who graduate from universities do not acquire sufficient and applicable knowledge about competency based approaches, it would be a sheer dream to expect them to apply the approaches in their teaching. As a result, it will warrant advanced planning of teacher education curriculum in order to produce competent graduates with skills and capacity to teach the secondary school CBC curriculum.

5.2. Recommendations

Based on the findings of this desktop study, the following recommendations are made:

1. The universities should ensure that principles of CBC are incorporated during course design such as stating clearly learning outcomes, aligning learning activities with constructive point of view and integrating both theory and practice.
2. Universities should employ teaching strategies which are in line with the principles of CBC.
3. Practical training and competence based training such as Project based learning, teaching practice, and microteaching should be enhanced so as to empower student teachers to gain relevant skills and competences necessary for implementation of the CBC. Furthermore, these practical based programmes should be organised, supervised, managed and evaluated efficiently so that they can inculcate the intended learning outcomes and competences to student teachers.
4. Teachers should be familiar with what competence-based teaching and learning entails, therefore the government in collaboration with other education stakeholders should embrace teacher education curriculum and practices which reflect on CBC principles.
5. Generally the study recommends universities to reform their curricular which will produce competent teachers to implement CBC in secondary schools.

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