



The Influence of Inclusive Education Planning on the Implementation of Competency-Based Education (CBE) in Senior Schools in Kenya

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Abstract: Competency based education was introduced to promote equity, creativity, and practical skill acquisition. However, the inclusion of learners with special needs remained limited due to gaps in planning and preparedness. The purpose of this paper was to examine the influence of inclusive education planning on the implementation of the Competency-Based Education (CBE) in senior schools in Kenya. The study adopted a qualitative approach using secondary data from recent reports, policy documents, and academic literature. Findings revealed that despite the existence of supportive policies, implementation was constrained by insufficient teacher training, inadequate infrastructure, lack of assistive technologies, and weak stakeholder collaboration. The study found that most schools lacked the necessary planning frameworks to accommodate diverse learners, particularly those with disabilities. Furthermore, it was established that inclusive education was often treated as a peripheral concern rather than being embedded into mainstream planning processes. Teachers reported feeling unprepared and unsupported in handling inclusive classrooms under CBE, leading to disparities in learner outcomes. The study also noted that financial limitations and unclear policy coordination impeded the success of inclusive strategies. Based on these findings, the study concluded that the success of CBE in promoting inclusive education required deliberate and well-funded planning, continuous professional development for teachers, and coordinated stakeholder efforts. The study recommended enhanced teacher training, improved infrastructure, inclusive policy integration, and effective monitoring systems to support inclusive education. This research seeks to fill a notable gap in educational studies and contributes valuable input into policy and practice reforms needed to ensure equitable learning opportunities under CBE.

Keywords: Inclusive education, Competency-Based Education, Teacher Preparedness, Policy Coordination, Infrastructure, Special Needs Education, Kenya.

How to cite this work (APA):

Jeptepkeny, A & Keter, J. (2025). The Influence of inclusive education planning on the implementation of Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) in senior schools in Kenya. *Journal of Research Innovation and Implications in Education*, 9(2), 916 – 928. <https://doi.org/10.59765/mge946pf>.

1. Introduction

Inclusive education refers to a pedagogical approach that seeks to address the diverse learning needs of all students by reducing barriers to participation and learning,

regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic, or other conditions (UNESCO, 2021). It encompasses all learners with or without disabilities and is guided by principles of equity and social justice in education (Ainscow, 2020). Inclusive education planning involves systematic design and implementation of policies,

curricula, teacher training, infrastructure, and assessments that ensure equal access to education for every learner (Florian & Black-Hawkins, 2022). Competency-Based Education (CBE), on the other hand, focuses on the acquisition of competencies such as critical thinking, communication, and problem-solving rather than rote learning, aligning with global education reforms (UNICEF, 2022).

Globally, inclusive education has been recognized as a right and a foundation for achieving Sustainable Development Goal 4 on quality education (United Nations, 2023). In the United States, inclusive education planning is supported through legislation like the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), which mandates individualized education programs and inclusive classroom environments (Turnbull & Wehmeyer, 2021). U.S. schools have embraced Universal Design for Learning (UDL) to address diverse needs in competency-based environments (CAST, 2022). In France, inclusive education is embedded in national law and supported through local pedagogical networks that promote inclusion through differentiated instruction and inclusive curriculum design (Plaisance, 2022).

In Canada, provinces such as Ontario and British Columbia have made inclusive education a central component of educational planning, with policies emphasizing collaborative teaching, inclusive assessments, and parent involvement in CBE-style reforms (Hutchinson & McMillan, 2023). Finland, is often cited for its high-performing education system, integrates inclusive education principles through national teacher training programs that equip educators to handle diverse classrooms in competency-based settings (Sahlberg, 2021). In Singapore, the Ministry of Education integrates inclusive practices in its national curriculum framework, ensuring learners with special needs are provided with individual learning plans within the Competency Based Curriculum (CBC) approach (Tan, 2022).

Across Africa, the movement toward inclusive education is gaining momentum, though challenges remain due to limited resources, teacher training gaps, and infrastructural deficits (Kuyini & Desai, 2023). In Zambia, the Ministry of General Education has introduced inclusive education guidelines that align with its CBC reform, but implementation remains uneven due to budgetary constraints (Chilala & Sani, 2022). South Africa has a robust policy framework for inclusive education through its Education White Paper 6, although the effective alignment with CBC approaches is constrained by disparities in teacher preparedness and school resources (Engelbrecht & Green, 2021). In Mozambique, inclusive education policies have been integrated into broader curriculum reforms, with a focus on mother-tongue instruction and learner-centered pedagogy as components

of CBC (Pereira et al., 2022). Ghana has rolled out inclusive education policies supported by the Inclusive Education Policy (2015), which incorporates competency-based learning, though practical challenges such as large class sizes persist (Anum & Nyarko, 2023). Zimbabwe's approach to inclusive education in CBE emphasizes infrastructural modifications and differentiated instruction, yet it faces hurdles related to political instability and inadequate funding (Muzangwa & Sibanda, 2022).

In Cameroon, inclusive education planning has been integrated into national education policy, but the implementation of CBC is affected by regional conflicts and lack of trained personnel (Ngalim & Tamajong, 2021). Tanzania is transitioning toward CBC through curriculum reviews that emphasize learner engagement, yet inclusive education remains limited by socio-cultural beliefs and inadequate policy enforcement (Ngussa & Makewa, 2023). Rwanda, in its post-genocide rebuilding process, has made significant strides in inclusive education planning, particularly in CBC implementation with support from global partners (Rutayisire & Kabera, 2022). Uganda's education sector is progressively implementing CBE with inclusive elements through policy alignment, but infrastructural and human resource gaps continue to hinder widespread success (Nambi & Okot, 2023).

In Kenya, inclusive education planning has been mainstreamed in the Basic Education Act (2013) and Sessional Paper No. 1 of 2019, emphasizing integration of learners with special needs into mainstream CBE classrooms (MOE, 2019). The CBE in Kenya is designed to provide flexible learning pathways for all students, including those with disabilities, by incorporating the principles of inclusion into curriculum design, assessment, and teaching methodologies (KICD, 2023). Despite these efforts, the implementation of CBE in senior schools in Kenya faces challenges such as inadequate teacher training in inclusive pedagogy, lack of assistive technologies, and minimal community awareness (Wanjohi, 2022). Teachers often lack the requisite skills to modify instruction for learners with different abilities within the CBE framework (Mwangi & Kimeu, 2023). Infrastructure in many senior schools in Kenya is not adequately inclusive, lacking ramps, adaptive furniture, and accessible learning materials (Ong'era & Gitari, 2023). Moreover, policy-practice gaps persist as some schools still operate under exam-oriented cultures that contradict CBE and inclusion ideals (Njiru & Muthee, 2023). The lack of disaggregated data on learners with disabilities further complicates inclusive education planning under CBE (Owino & Obare, 2022). Stakeholder engagement, particularly involving parents and local communities, remains low in CBE implementation, especially in inclusive education setups (Chege & Mburu, 2022).

The Kenya Teachers Service Commission initiated in-service training for teachers on CBE and inclusive practices, but the reach and intensity of these trainings are inadequate for national transformation (TSC, 2023). Non-governmental organizations play a critical role in bridging inclusion gaps by offering teacher training, assistive devices, and awareness campaigns, though their efforts are not always aligned with national CBE goals (KISE, 2023). Further, the transition from primary to senior school under CBE has revealed policy inconsistencies in placement and curriculum access for learners with disabilities (Nyaigoti & Matoke, 2023). Therefore, inclusive education planning is vital for the successful implementation of CBE in senior schools, requiring coordinated efforts in policy, training, resources, and community engagement (Kigotho & Muthoni, 2022). The realization of CBE goals in Kenya will depend largely on how inclusively the education system accommodates all learners, especially those with special needs (Mbugua & Omwenga, 2023). This study is therefore crucial in examining the influence of inclusive education planning on CBE implementation in senior schools in Kenya.

2. Literature Review

Inclusive education planning has become a central element in achieving equitable access to quality education globally (Ainscow & Messiou, 2022). The growing diversity in classrooms has intensified the need for deliberate strategies that accommodate all learners, including those with disabilities and from marginalized groups (UNESCO, 2021). As countries adopt Competency-Based Curricula (CBC), inclusive planning ensures no learner is left behind during educational reforms (Florian & Black-Hawkins, 2023). In Kenya, CBE implementation in senior schools faces numerous challenges, some of which relate to the absence of structured inclusion frameworks (Githae & Wanjala, 2023). Therefore, it is important to analyze how inclusive education planning impacts CBE implementation in various global setups. Inclusive education planning refers to deliberate strategies, policies, and practices aimed at ensuring all learners, regardless of ability, ethnicity, or socio-economic background, access and benefit from education (Booth & Ainscow, 2022). It involves identifying barriers to learning, adapting curricula, preparing inclusive pedagogies, and allocating appropriate resources (Miles & Singal, 2023). In contrast, the Competency-Based Education emphasizes skills, values, and attitudes over rote memorization and seeks to promote learner-centered and inclusive teaching methods (MoE Kenya, 2023). The interface between CBE and inclusive education planning is critical, especially in ensuring senior school learners develop competencies in environments that support diverse learning needs (Njoroge & Mwangi, 2022).

Globally, inclusive education is recognized as a right under the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and many nations have integrated inclusive education policies into national frameworks (UNESCO, 2021). A global study by Forlin and Loreman (2022) used qualitative analysis across 30 countries and revealed that inclusion planning increased education accessibility and teacher responsiveness to learner needs. The World Bank (2021) documented that inclusive strategies led to increased CBC uptake in countries piloting competency-based models, including Bhutan and Peru. Another global meta-analysis by Avramidis et al. (2022) covering 95 studies concluded that inclusive planning was positively correlated with learner achievement in flexible curricula settings. Florian and Spratt (2021) emphasized that globally, inclusive planning required strong policy alignment, teacher training, and inclusive materials to support CBC. These global insights demonstrate that inclusive education planning acts as a foundational pillar in effective CBC rollout.

In the United States, inclusive education planning has been closely tied to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), which mandates inclusive practices (Smith & Tyler, 2023). A longitudinal study by Wexler et al. (2022) used mixed methods to examine inclusive CBC-like approaches in secondary schools and found improved learner autonomy and assessment performance. Another study by Johnson et al. (2021) used survey research among 500 senior school teachers and highlighted that inclusive lesson planning improved learner participation rates. A third study by Garcia and Taylor (2022) used case study methodology and found that inclusive strategies helped align teaching to diverse competencies in urban districts. The fourth study by White and Schilling (2023) used experimental designs to show that co-teaching models enhanced inclusion in CBC classrooms. Lastly, a policy evaluation by Hodge et al. (2021) concluded that U.S. reforms integrating CBC elements only succeeded in schools that had inclusive infrastructure and planning.

In France, inclusion in CBC frameworks has emerged as a strategic focus, particularly in multicultural urban schools (Dubois & Roussel, 2022). A national study by Lefevre et al. (2021) used quantitative surveys to assess CBC-style education implementation, finding that inclusive planning improved learner competencies in language and civic education. Another study by Maret and Bonnet (2023) employed ethnography in four senior schools and concluded that inclusive planning allowed educators to differentiate CBC content. Thirdly, Rousseau et al. (2022) applied document analysis on education reforms, noting that inclusive frameworks were integrated into France's CBC reforms for students with special needs. A fourth study by Martin and Chauvet (2021) used action research and highlighted that inclusive lesson planning increased teacher adaptability in CBC. Lastly, a comparative study

by Dufour and Clement (2023) found that French senior schools with stronger inclusion policies performed better in CBC implementation metrics.

In Canada, inclusive education planning is governed by provincial policies and has been instrumental in CBC implementation across territories (Mitchell & Jenkins, 2021). A mixed-methods study by Clarke et al. (2022) involving 40 schools showed that inclusive planning enhanced learner engagement and personalized learning in CBC classrooms. Another study by Whitehead and Jones (2023) used qualitative interviews and revealed that inclusive pedagogical training improved competency acquisition among diverse learners. A third study by Cameron et al. (2021) focused on First Nations learners and found inclusive education planning enabled cultural relevance in CBC delivery. In Alberta, a study by MacDonald and Lee (2022) used quasi-experimental design and concluded that inclusive teaching methods raised CBC assessment scores. Lastly, Blackmore and Thomas (2023) showed through policy analysis that Canadian CBC reforms integrated universal design principles to support inclusive learning.

Finland, known for its inclusive education success, integrates CBC in all basic and secondary education systems (Saari & Kauppinen, 2022). A study by Niemi et al. (2021) used case study approaches and concluded that inclusive planning in Finnish schools fostered innovation in CBC learning environments. Another study by Virtanen and Ranta (2022) employed surveys among 300 teachers and reported a strong correlation between inclusive planning and learner agency under CBC. A third study by Koskela et al. (2023) used longitudinal designs and found that inclusive curricula enhanced cross-disciplinary learning in senior schools. A fourth study by Lahtinen and Salmi (2021) showed that inclusion planning was supported by resource allocation and teacher collaboration, essential for CBC success. Finally, a comparative study by Heinonen and Salonen (2022) highlighted how Finland's inclusive teacher education prepared educators for CBC environments.

In middle-income countries such as South Africa, Zambia, Mozambique, Ghana, and Zimbabwe, inclusive planning is emerging as a critical factor in CBC implementation. In South Africa, a study by Mokoena and Sibanda (2022) used qualitative designs and found that inclusive planning improved teaching of life skills in CBC setup. Another study by Van Wyk et al. (2021) employed focus group discussions and reported that schools with inclusive management had higher CBC adoption rates. A third study by Tambo and Ndlovu (2023) used a case study approach to highlight that inadequate inclusion policies hindered curriculum effectiveness. Fourth, Mahlangu (2022) used document analysis and found disparities in inclusive education implementation across provinces affecting CBC

outcomes. Lastly, Dube and Khumalo (2021) concluded that inclusive training for teachers led to better CBC curriculum adaptation in under-resourced schools.

In Zambia, Simukonda and Phiri (2022) conducted interviews with teachers and reported that inclusive lesson planning helped accommodate learners with disabilities in CBC. Another study by Chomba et al. (2023) used classroom observations and found that inclusive environments improved learner-centered approaches. Thirdly, Banda and Mwale (2021) employed surveys and noted that inclusive resource planning enhanced CBC engagement. A fourth study by Tembo and Zulu (2022) applied action research and demonstrated that inclusive practices reduced dropout rates in senior CBC classes. Finally, Mulenga and Kapata (2023) found that inclusive professional development correlated positively with teacher performance under CBC. In Mozambique, a study by Alberto and Machava (2022) used interviews and found that inclusive policy frameworks enhanced the implementation of competency-based teacher training. Another by Matusse et al. (2021) observed that CBC planning lacked inclusivity in rural schools, contributing to learning gaps. A third study by Salomao and Dique (2022) applied surveys to show that inclusive resource allocation improved curriculum coverage. A fourth study by Mahumane and Fumo (2023) revealed that inclusive assessment practices led to higher learner participation. Lastly, Muthemba and Nhantumbo (2022) found that community involvement was essential for inclusive CBC implementation.

In Ghana, Owusu and Boateng (2022) used mixed methods to show that inclusive planning reduced inequality in CBC delivery among urban and rural senior schools. Another study by Mensah et al. (2023) revealed that schools with inclusive leadership performed better in CBC learner competencies. Thirdly, Aboagye and Yeboah (2021) used interviews and noted that inclusive infrastructure led to improved classroom experiences. A fourth study by Darko and Ntim (2022) identified barriers in inclusive assessment tools hindering CBC outcomes. Finally, Adjei and Owusu (2023) concluded that inclusive stakeholder involvement improved teacher confidence in implementing CBC.

In Zimbabwe, Mashingaidze and Mpofu (2022) found through qualitative research that inclusive curriculum reviews were crucial in adapting CBC to local setups. Another study by Moyo and Nyoni (2021) noted that inclusive school cultures were positively linked to learner success in CBC. A third study by Gondo and Chikowero (2023) revealed that inclusive education policies enhanced teacher commitment in competency-focused schools. Fourth, Banda and Dzingirai (2022) showed that inclusive budgeting led to adequate CBC materials for learners with disabilities. Lastly, Ncube and Sibanda (2021) highlighted

the role of inclusive school leadership in mitigating CBC resistance among teachers.

In developing countries, inclusive planning faces greater challenges, often related to inadequate funding and teacher training. In Uganda, Kato and Namusoke (2022) found that inclusive education planning was essential in implementing learner-centered CBC approaches. Another study by Luwaga et al. (2021) showed that inclusive policy gaps slowed CBC adoption in rural schools. A third study by Mugisha and Kintu (2023) employed interviews and found that inclusive assessment models supported competency mastery. Fourth, Nankanja and Mubiru (2022) identified that teacher preparation in inclusion was linked to CBC success. Lastly, Ssenyonga and Odoi (2023) concluded that inclusive infrastructure was a determinant of CBC learner outcomes.

In Tanzania, Omari and Mwakyusa (2022) used classroom observations and found that inclusive teaching strategies enhanced student engagement in CBC. Another study by Chacha et al. (2021) reported that inclusive curriculum adaptation improved CBC responsiveness to diverse learners. A third study by Kimaro and Lema (2023) identified inclusive planning gaps in rural districts that hindered CBC success. Fourth, Mnyampala and John (2022) used qualitative data to show that inclusive language policies promoted CBC equity. Lastly, Msuya and Ndagala (2023) showed that inclusive school management facilitated collaborative CBC implementation. In Rwanda, a study by Uwimana and Habineza (2022) revealed that inclusive education frameworks were key in scaling up CBC reforms. Another by Musoni and Rwibasira (2023) found that inclusive teacher training helped educators differentiate CBC content. A third study by Nyirahabimana et al. (2021) used survey designs and found that inclusive planning increased teacher innovation. Fourth, Nsengiyumva and Mugisha (2022) identified inclusive school culture as a success factor in CBC. Lastly, a longitudinal study by Kabera and Nkurunziza (2023) linked inclusive stakeholder participation to sustained CBC reforms.

In Kenya, the implementation of the Competency-Based Education (CBE) marks a significant shift towards learner-centered education aimed at equipping students with practical skills and competencies for the 21st century. Despite its nationwide rollout, there remains a notable paucity of research focusing specifically on how inclusive education planning influences the successful implementation of CBE in senior schools. Inclusive education, which ensures that all learners—regardless of their diverse needs—have equitable access to education, is a critical component for the realization of CBC's goals. Yet, existing studies predominantly address general CBC implementation challenges or focus on primary education,

leaving a gap in understanding how inclusive planning shapes curriculum delivery at the senior school level.

The limited attention to inclusive education planning in senior schools is concerning because this phase of education involves preparing learners for higher education, employment, and societal participation. Without deliberate and effective planning for inclusion, learners with disabilities or special needs may be marginalized, undermining the curriculum's intention to cater to diverse learner abilities and backgrounds. Furthermore, senior school teachers and administrators face unique challenges, such as adapting instructional strategies, assessment methods, and learning resources to meet inclusive education requirements within the CBC framework. These challenges highlight the urgent need for empirical studies that explore the extent and nature of inclusive education planning and its direct impact on CBC implementation outcomes. This study, therefore, sought to fill the existing gap by investigating the influence of inclusive education planning on the implementation of the Competency-Based Education in senior schools in Kenya.

3. Methodology

The study adopted a qualitative research design that relied on secondary data to explore the influence of inclusive education planning on the implementation of the Competency-Based Education (CBC) in senior schools in Kenya. The study employed purposive sampling to identify and select relevant documents and sources published between 2018 and 2024. These included official documents from the Ministry of Education, Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD), peer-reviewed journal articles, and reports by international organizations such as UNESCO and UNICEF. The sample size consisted of 40 credible documents that directly addressed themes related to inclusive education, CBC implementation, teacher preparedness, infrastructural readiness, and curriculum adaptation in Kenyan secondary education.

Data collection was carried out through a structured document review checklist that helped identify key themes, gaps, and findings across the sampled literature. The data collection procedure involved systematic search, selection, and review of the documents from reputable academic databases and institutional repositories, ensuring that the materials met the inclusion criteria of relevance, credibility, and recency. Thematic analysis was used to analyze the data, allowing the researcher to identify recurring patterns and insights related to inclusive planning and CBC implementation. The findings were synthesized and organized around major thematic categories to support interpretation and discussion. Ethical considerations were observed by ensuring proper citation and acknowledgment of all secondary sources to avoid plagiarism and uphold

academic integrity. No personal data was collected, and all information used was publicly available, thus minimizing ethical risks.

4. Results and Discussion

The analysis of secondary data reveals that inclusive education planning is a crucial determinant of the success of the Competency-Based Education (CBC) implementation in senior schools in Kenya. Policy frameworks such as Kenya's Basic Education Act (2013) and the Kenya National Special Needs Education Policy Framework (2018) emphasize the importance of inclusion but reveal gaps in practical operationalization at the senior school level. Many documents acknowledge inclusive education as a national priority but lack clear guidelines on adapting CBC curricula to diverse learner needs, creating challenges for effective implementation (MoE, 2018; KICD, 2020). Further examination of curriculum guidelines indicates that while CBC was designed with inclusivity principles, actual planning processes have been uneven across counties and schools. Secondary sources highlight disparities in resource allocation, teacher preparedness, and infrastructural adaptations necessary to support learners with disabilities and special needs (Wambua & Ochieng, 2023; Onyango & Ouma, 2021). These disparities hinder the full realization of CBC objectives, as schools with limited inclusive planning struggle to implement learner-centered, competency-based approaches effectively.

Teacher training emerged as a significant factor influencing inclusive CBC implementation. Reports show that although the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD) incorporated inclusive education in teacher training modules, the depth and frequency of such training remain insufficient, especially for senior school educators (Rukundo & Nyiramana, 2022; Oduor & Mboya, 2023). This inadequacy affects teachers' ability to differentiate instruction and assessment to cater to diverse learners, limiting CBC's potential to enhance learning outcomes for all students. Moreover, secondary data indicates that inclusive education planning has often been reactive rather than proactive. Studies highlight that many schools respond to learner needs only after challenges arise, rather than embedding inclusion into the CBC planning process from the outset (Patel & Naidoo, 2023; Sibanda & Moyo, 2023). This reactive approach leads to inconsistent implementation and reduces the effectiveness of competency development for learners with special educational needs.

The infrastructural limitations identified in policy reports and academic literature are substantial barriers to inclusive CBC implementation. Many senior schools lack ramps, adapted learning materials, and assistive technologies

required to support learners with physical or sensory impairments (Yeboah & Aboagye, 2022; Wangari & Njeri, 2021). These infrastructural gaps hinder learner participation and limit the scope of competencies that learners can develop, undermining the inclusivity principles of CBC. Community involvement and stakeholder engagement are also identified as key elements in successful inclusive education planning. Secondary sources from Zambia and Rwanda illustrate that active community participation enhances resource mobilization and supports learner inclusion (Zimba & Phiri, 2023; Habimana & Habimana, 2023). In Kenya, however, community engagement in CBC planning remains limited, affecting the sustainability and responsiveness of inclusive education initiatives at the senior school level.

The analysis of teacher attitudes towards inclusion reveals mixed findings. Some reports highlight positive teacher perceptions of inclusive CBC, recognizing its benefits for all learners (Pillay & Maharaj, 2021; Taylor & Johnson, 2023). However, others show resistance due to perceived increased workload, inadequate support, and lack of confidence in managing diverse classrooms (Onyango & Ouma, 2021; Talib & Ahmed, 2023). These attitudes significantly influence the quality of inclusive education planning and implementation. Assessment practices under CBC present another area where inclusive planning is critical yet underdeveloped. Findings suggest that while formative and continuous assessments are central to CBC, inclusive assessment strategies that accommodate learner diversity are not fully integrated (Patel & Naidoo, 2023; Smith & Brown, 2022). This gap leads to inequitable evaluation and potentially inaccurate reflections of learner competencies.

Policy coordination between different government agencies and education stakeholders is found to be weak, affecting inclusive education planning. Rwanda's experience indicates that coordinated policy efforts enhance CBC implementation (Habimana & Habimana, 2023). In contrast, policy documents and studies point to fragmented efforts, where ministries, curriculum developers, and schools operate in silos, impeding holistic inclusion strategies (Wambua & Ochieng, 2023). In terms of funding, the secondary data shows that budgetary allocations for inclusive education within CBC implementation are inadequate. Many reports highlight underfunding as a major barrier to procuring necessary resources, teacher training, and infrastructural improvements (Uys & Botha, 2022; Wambua & Ochieng, 2023). This financial constraint limits the capacity of senior schools to effectively plan for and accommodate all learners.

Comparative analysis with middle-income countries like South Africa and Zambia reveals that strategic investment in inclusive education planning leads to better CBC

outcomes. For example, Zambia's community involvement model and South Africa's inclusive assessment reforms have resulted in improved learner participation and competency achievement (Zimba & Phiri, 2023; Patel & Naidoo, 2023). Kenya's slow progress in these areas underscores the need for systemic reforms. Data also reveals that learner participation in inclusive education planning is minimal. Studies in Kenya indicate that students, especially those with disabilities, have little voice in curriculum adaptation or decision-making processes, leading to curricula that may not fully reflect their learning needs (Oketch & Mutua, 2022; Wangari & Njeri, 2021). Inclusive CBC implementation requires mechanisms to incorporate learner perspectives actively.

Findings also emphasize the role of leadership in schools as a determinant of successful inclusive education planning. Effective principals and management teams who prioritize inclusion tend to foster better CBC implementation outcomes (Onyango & Ouma, 2021; Rukundo & Nyiramana, 2022). Leadership development programs that incorporate inclusive education principles are therefore crucial for enhancing CBC delivery. The findings also highlight the importance of continuous monitoring and evaluation to support inclusive CBC implementation. Few studies report comprehensive systems for tracking inclusion progress within schools, leading to gaps in identifying challenges and best practices (Wambua & Ochieng, 2023; Whitehead & Clarke, 2022). Strengthening M&E frameworks can inform responsive planning and policy adjustments. Teacher collaboration is identified as a positive factor that can enhance inclusive CBC practices. Research from Pakistan and the UK demonstrates that collaborative teacher teams share resources, strategies, and support for inclusion, resulting in improved learner outcomes (Talib & Ahmed, 2023; Taylor & Johnson, 2023). However, schools in Kenya have yet to fully institutionalize such collaborative models.

Findings further indicate that technology integration in inclusive education planning is still emerging. Although assistive technologies have the potential to support learners with disabilities, their availability and use in senior schools in Kenya remain limited (Yeboah & Aboagye, 2022; Wangari & Njeri, 2021). Expanding technological access is essential for fulfilling CBC's competency goals for all learners. Cultural attitudes towards disability and inclusion also influence the effectiveness of inclusive education planning. Some studies reveal persistent stigma and misconceptions among educators and communities, which hinder learner inclusion and participation in CBC activities (Sibanda & Moyo, 2023; Patel & Naidoo, 2023). Addressing these cultural barriers is key to fostering an inclusive learning environment. The findings suggest that curriculum content itself requires adaptation to better align with inclusive education principles. While CBC promotes competencies beyond academic knowledge, such as life

skills and values, secondary data show that content often remains rigid and standardized, limiting its responsiveness to diverse learner needs (Smith & Brown, 2022; Wambua & Ochieng, 2023).

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusion

The study concludes that inclusive education planning significantly impacts the effective implementation of the Competency-Based Education in senior schools across Kenya. Despite the existence of policy frameworks supporting inclusion, practical gaps in resource allocation, teacher training, and infrastructural readiness hinder the realization of CBC's full potential for all learners. The lack of proactive and systematic inclusion strategies leads to inconsistencies in curriculum delivery, especially for learners with special educational needs. Furthermore, the success of inclusive CBC implementation depends heavily on the capacity of teachers, supportive school leadership, and active stakeholder involvement, including learners and communities. Without adequate funding and coordinated policy efforts, schools struggle to create learning environments that accommodate diverse learner needs, undermining the goals of competency development and equitable education. To advance inclusive education within the CBC framework, there is an urgent need for enhanced teacher professional development, improved infrastructure, and stronger collaboration among government agencies, educators, and communities. Embracing these measures will foster a more inclusive, responsive, and effective educational system that empowers every learner to achieve their full competencies and contributes to national development goals.

5.2 Recommendations

Based on the findings, this study makes the following recommendations:

1. There is a need to enhance teacher training programs, specifically focused on inclusive education strategies to equip educators with the skills required to effectively implement the Competency-Based Education for diverse learners.
2. There is a need to increase investment in school infrastructure and learning resources, including assistive technologies, to create accessible and supportive learning environments for all students.
3. There is a need to strengthen policy coordination and collaboration among education stakeholders, including government bodies, schools, parents, and communities, to ensure cohesive and

sustained support for inclusive education within the CBE framework.

4. There is a need to establish robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to track the progress of inclusive education implementation and inform continuous improvements in policy and practice.
5. There is a need to promote the integration and use of Kenyan Sign Language (KSL) in senior schools by training teachers and learners in basic sign language skills and incorporating KSL into the curriculum. This will enhance not only teaching and learning for students with hearing impairments but also foster inclusive communication and social interaction among peers, thereby promoting a supportive and collaborative school environment.

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