



An Examination of Teaching and Learning Resources and Their Role in Kiswahili Instruction in Public Junior Secondary Schools in Uasin Gishu County, Kenya

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Abstract: *The introduction of Competency-Based Education (CBE) model in Kenya is one of the key efforts by the Kenya government to prepare learners to be competitive in the job market after graduation by providing a practical based skill other than theoretical based knowledge. The teaching of Kiswahili under CBE focuses on learner-centered, interactive, and hands-on pedagogy. However, limited access to relevant resources undermines the successful rollout of this curriculum. The purpose of this study was to evaluate the adequacy of instructional materials, their effect on lesson planning, student participation, and the extent of variation between urban and rural schools. An integrated-method strategy was employed, incorporating numerical questionnaires and descriptive discussions. The sample consisted of 90 Kiswahili teachers, 20 school managers, and 10 Curriculum Support Officers from urban and rural schools. Data were gathered through Organized survey forms, discussion guides, and resource lists were used. Numerical information was examined through summary statistics, whereas non-numerical data was subjected to pattern-based evaluation using NVivo software. The results indicated severe shortages of CBE-aligned textbooks, digital content, and teachers' guides, especially in rural schools. These shortages had an adverse impact on lesson delivery and student involvement. The study concludes that insufficient resources are a significant hindrance to the equitable teaching of Kiswahili. It recommends fair resource allocation, investment in ICT, development of multimedia content, and support for teachers to improve CBE implementation and language education quality.*

Keywords: *Kiswahili, Competency-Based Education, Teaching resources, Education Equity, Digital infrastructure, Uasin Gishu County.*

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1. Introduction

Globally, education systems are shifting toward more learner-centered approaches that emphasize competencies over rote knowledge. Competency-Based Education (CBE) has developed as a learning model that encourages analytical reasoning, innovation, and the practical use of understanding in everyday situations (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2023).

Numerous countries, including Finland, Canada, and Singapore, have adopted competency-based systems to align student learning outcomes with 21st-century skills. In sub-Saharan Africa, Kenya has led this charge with the execution of the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC). While the CBE and CBC monikers are used somewhat interchangeably, CBE is an educational philosophy encompassing curriculum, pedagogy, and methods of assessment, all revolving around demonstrated learner competencies (Inyega et al., 2021).

Kenya's CBE strategy aims to develop well-rounded learners with competencies in communication, collaboration, and problem-solving. The key to achieving CBE goals is the access of sufficient and appropriate teaching and learning materials. These encompass textbooks aligned with new competencies, audio-visual aids, online tools, and teacher guides that enhance experiential learning and student participation. The limited availability of these materials hinders the implementation of the curriculum and can lead to unevenness in instructional delivery, particularly in practical subjects such as languages. Kiswahili holds a central position in Kenya's educational system, serving as both a national and official language. It is mandatory at all levels of basic education, and not only does it function as a tool for interaction but also as a means of national integration and cultural expression (Whiteley, 2023). In CBE, the teaching of Kiswahili needs to move beyond the traditional focus on grammar to include performance-based activities—such as role-plays, oral presentations, listening comprehension, and computer-assisted exercises—that require diversified teaching materials to facilitate language learning.

Despite government attempts to distribute core textbooks via capitation grants, stark disparities persist, particularly between rural and urban schools. Schools in marginalized regions often lack updated Kiswahili materials, operational ICT infrastructure, and even rudimentary classroom facilities. Such imbalances raise questions about the equity and efficacy of CBE rollout (Gakii et al., 2022). Uasin Gishu County, with its mixed urban and rural public junior secondary schools, is a case in point. While some urban schools have been privileged with ICT pilot projects and digital literacy training, most rural schools still grapple with acute shortages, undermining the provision of CBE-aligned Kiswahili teaching.

While existing research exists on the implementation of CBE at a national level, there is a need for localized and subject-specific research. Empirical studies have not adequately addressed the impact of the presence or absence of instructional and educational resources concerning the teaching of Kiswahili, particularly in public junior secondary institutions in Uasin Gishu County (Ogembo, 2025). The lack of such data restricts informed policy and school-level decision-making. This research is framed by the Resource-Based Learning Theory, which argues that substantive knowledge acquisition takes place when learners and teachers have access to diverse educational resources that facilitate inquiry, exploration, and independent thinking. In this sense, access to course materials is not merely logistical, it is also pedagogical and at the heart of educational equity. Although Kenya's CBE policy foresees inclusive and interactive language teaching, there are considerable inequalities in access to

teaching and learning materials for Kiswahili across regions and types of schools. The degree to which these inequalities shape teaching practices and learner participation—particularly in Uasin Gishu County—is unexamined, posing urgent questions regarding the equity and viability of CBE implementation in Kiswahili teaching.

1.1 Research questions

1. What types of teaching and learning resources are available, and to what extent are they adequate, for the effective teaching of Kiswahili in public junior secondary schools in Uasin Gishu County?
2. How does the availability of teaching and learning resources influence instructional methods and learner engagement in Kiswahili classrooms?
3. What are the notable differences in the allocation and accessibility of Kiswahili teaching resources between urban and rural public junior secondary schools in Uasin Gishu County?

2. Literature Review

Success in any education reform is mainly dependent on the presence and proper utilization of teaching and learning resources. With the recent introduction of Competency-Based Education (CBE) in Kenya, such resources have become increasingly fundamental to the implementation of educational programs, particularly in instructing languages. Kiswahili, being a core and mandatory subject in Kenya's education system, heavily relies on multi-sensory learning resources to attain communicative competence. This aligns with the Resource-Based Learning Theory, which posits that exposure to diverse and relevant materials promotes learner autonomy, exploration, and improved cognitive achievement (Nsamenang & Tchombe, 2012). This literature review explores empirical and theoretical research on resource availability and its impact on the teaching of Kiswahili under CBE, thematically.

Textbooks and teachers' guides are core instructional materials. Kenya has a textbook policy adopted by the Ministry of Education through the capitation programs to supply core subject textbooks to public schools. However, implementation is not uniform. A Kenya Yearbook Editorial Board (2022) national survey identified that most schools continued to maintain a 1:3 textbook-to-pupil ratio, which is significantly lower than the desired 1:1 ratio. For Kiswahili, which encompasses skills such as listening and speaking, outdated and mismatched textbooks hinder the curriculum's communicative objectives. Isaboke, Wambiri,

and Mweru (2021) noted that even when books exist, they tend to be based on the old 8-4-4 system's organization without CBE-aligned evaluation tools, competency maps, and practical activities. This mismatch compels teachers to improvise content or recycle non-aligned materials, which demotivates learners. Lack of teacher guides that are CBE-oriented also adds to the complexity of delivery. These guides are essential for organizing competency-based lesson plans, implementing learner-centered strategies, and conducting formative assessments. Without them, teachers tend to resort to conventional teaching methods, which contradict the intentions of the CBE. The reality is worse in rural schools, where whole departments have been reported to lack revised syllabi or organized lesson plans (Akala, 2021).

The CBE model is focused on leveraging digital resources to facilitate interactive, flexible, and inquiry-based learning. Projectors, tablets, e-content platforms, video libraries, and recorded language models are perfect for facilitating Kiswahili understanding. These facilities, however, are rare in the majority of public schools in Kenya. Gakii et al. (2022) established that, despite digital literacy being prioritized in curriculum policy, infrastructural and budgetary limitations hinder the integration of ICT in practice. Msambwa, Daniel, and Lianyu (2024) meta-analyzed the incorporation of ICT in Kenyan secondary education and established that merely 22% had functional computer laboratories, and fewer than 10% utilized digital resources habitually in teaching. Most schools in counties such as Uasin Gishu are located in areas with unstable electricity and poor internet connectivity, making even the simple use of audio devices challenging. This constraint detracts from Kiswahili teaching, which is significantly enhanced by audio-visual support, such as pronunciation models, voice modulation drills, and interactive dialogue forums. In Yu et al. (2024), it was shown that teachers from rural counties expressed frustration at being trained on digital pedagogy during workshops, only to return to schools without even the most basic ICT tools. The mismatch between training and operational context often leads to disillusionment and passive compliance with CBE directives.

Resource adequacy for teaching is directly related to teacher readiness. CBE calls for a change in pedagogical practice—teachers need to be facilitators, not deliverers of content, and encourage learners to construct their knowledge. This cannot happen without focused, ongoing professional development and access to appropriate support materials. Inyega et al. (2021) contend that although Kenya has made progress in preparing teachers on CBE concepts, much of the training has been fragmented, theoretical, and disconnected from actual classroom needs. Teachers frequently leave workshops

without practical resources, such as sample lesson plans, aligned evaluation instruments, or resource lists.

Additionally, teachers in rural areas report fewer opportunities for in-service training compared to their urban counterparts (Wangare, 2022). The absence of Kiswahili-specific resource bundles, e.g., oral storytelling audio recordings, role-play scaffolds, and multimedia folktales—compels educators to develop their materials, thereby increasing their workload and potentially lowering the quality of instruction. Sele and Mukundi (2024) argue that insufficient institutional support leads to burnout and discourages teacher motivation, particularly in schools serving disadvantaged communities.

The successful delivery and utilization of learning materials are not solely dependent on teacher initiative but also require systemic support from stakeholders in education, including school boards, county governments, and national policymakers. Several studies have highlighted that structural inefficiencies and unclear accountability systems have led to an unequal distribution of resources. A task force report by the government of the Republic of Kenya, Ministry of Education (2012), recognized logistical problems in textbook distribution, weak monitoring mechanisms, and political influence in resource allocation. Schools in rural areas are particularly vulnerable to delays in funding and procurement. In Ogembo's study (2025), headteachers in North Rift Valley counties identified delayed release of funds and limited procurement autonomy as significant obstacles to resource procurement. Community engagement can close some of these gaps. Parent-teacher associations, NGOs, and religious organizations have stepped in to provide learning materials, digital equipment, or even construct resource centers in communities where government support is weak. However, such initiatives are still ad hoc and uncoordinated. Maiyuria et al. (2024) suggest institutionalizing community-school collaborations for increased localized resource mobilization and ownership.

Several researchers have observed the persistence of educational inequality in Kenya. The urban-rural dichotomy remains one of the strongest predictors of access to resources. In Nairobi and other urban centers, schools benefit from improved infrastructure, donor funding, and access to modern equipment. On the contrary, schools in rural regions, such as some areas in Uasin Gishu, lack even the simplest teaching aids. This imbalance is not only logistical but mirrors general socio-economic inequalities that entrench educational exclusion, argue Sele and Mukundi (2024). Schools in poorer areas are likely to report rundown libraries, a lack of digital infrastructure, and congested classrooms. Such systemic variables have a direct impact on Kiswahili teaching, particularly when teachers must juggle large classes with minimal support

and a lack of materials. Such unevenness undermines the spirit of CBE, whose purpose is inclusive, equitable, and learner-centered education. Unless such inequalities are addressed, the implementation of CBE is in danger of reproducing, rather than alleviating, academic disadvantage.

Despite the extensive study of the issues confronting the execution of CBE, there remains a notable scarcity of empirical research, considering the availability of localized resources. The majority of the literature adopts either a national or regional outlook, which tends to overlook the specific conditions of particular counties, such as Uasin Gishu. This dearth of county-level examination restricts the capacity to design educational interventions effectively and leaves essential differences in resource distribution unreported. Additionally, although Kiswahili is a core and compulsory subject in the Kenyan curriculum, there have been limited direct investigations of how the presence or lack of instructional and learning materials influences its teaching under the CBE design. Much of the literature generalizes Kiswahili as belonging to a general category of language subjects or addresses it marginally within the context of literacy and curriculum implementation. This generalization neglects the unique pedagogical requirements of Kiswahili, particularly its oral and interactive aspects, which need specialized materials.

A second significant gap is the scarce application of theoretical models to inform research on the impact of teaching resources on curriculum implementation. Resource-Based Learning Theory, which emphasizes the potential of various instructional materials to promote learner autonomy and inquiry, has been infrequently applied in the Kenyan context to investigate the impact of resource inequalities on instructional quality. The present research uses this model to provide a more organized and theoretically informed analysis. Lastly, although literature frequently highlights problems such as teacher unpreparedness and systemic procurement issues, it gives little detail about how the availability of various types of resources—such as digital tools, revised textbooks, and detailed teacher guides—influences the quality of Kiswahili instruction in the classroom. By investigating these considerations in a targeted and empirical manner, this study helps fill these essential knowledge gaps. It informs the development of more equitable resource distribution policies within Kenya's public school system.

1.1 Theoretical Underpinning

Resource-Based Learning Theory (RBLT) encourages learners to engage with a variety of instructional materials beyond traditional teacher-centered instruction. This theory, as discussed by Hill and Hannafin (2001), favors

the creation of environments in which resources (texts, images, multimedia, manipulatives) scaffold inquiry and learner independence. Students in CBE are supposed to build knowledge through experience, conversation, and experimentation. This change in pedagogy demands materials that facilitate collaborative, performance-based, and technologically supported learning (Maiyuria et al., 2024). The theory is especially applicable in language teaching, where students must hear, see, speak, and engage with material in a contextualized setting. In the case of Kiswahili, utilizing audio recordings, visual cues, interactive conversations, and culturally relevant texts can improve fluency and recall. However, the extent to which such theoretical ideals are achieved in the Kenyan public school system is contingent upon resource levels and the educators' abilities.

3. Methodology

This research employed a convergent mixed-methods research design to explore the availability and pedagogical effects of instructional resources on the teaching of Kiswahili in public junior secondary schools in Uasin Gishu County, Kenya. By combining quantitative survey data and qualitative interviews, the study sought to develop an exhaustive understanding of how learning materials' adequacy and distribution affect instructional practice in Competency-Based Education (CBE) contexts (Creswell & Clark, 2017). The sampling frame consisted of Kiswahili teachers, school administrators (principals and deputy principals), and Curriculum Support Officers (CSOs) directly concerned with curriculum implementation, resource management, and instruction supervision. A multi-stage sampling process was used, starting with stratifying schools in terms of location (urban or rural), followed by simple random sampling of schools and teachers, and purposive sampling of administrators and CSOs due to their strategic positions. The final sample size was 120 respondents: 90 Kiswahili teachers, 20 school administrators, and 10 CSOs. Data was collected over six weeks using structured questionnaires, semi-structured interview guides, and resource inventory checklists.

Questionnaires recorded quantitative information on the availability, condition, and adequacy of instructional resources such as textbooks, teacher guides, audio-visual materials, and digital resources. Administrative and CSO interviews yielded qualitative data on how resource limitations influence lesson planning, delivery, and learner engagement, while checklists were completed during school visits to confirm the presence and condition of key Kiswahili materials. Quantitative data were analyzed in SPSS version 26 using descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages, and means) and chi-square tests to investigate associations between school location, resource adequacy,

and instructional practice. Qualitative data were transcribed, coded, and thematically analyzed using NVivo 14 software, and both strands' findings were triangulated to support validity. Instrument validity was secured through piloting and expert opinion, and the questionnaire achieved a Cronbach's alpha of 0.84. Ethical clearance was sought from NACOSTI, and all the participants gave informed consent, with confidentiality and voluntary response rigorously observed.

4. Results and Discussion

The data collected using questionnaires, interviews, and stock checklists were synthesized and analyzed to provide insight into the state of “learning and teaching resources” utilized for the instruction of Kiswahili and the implications of these on teaching effectiveness and learner engagement in “public junior secondary schools in Uasin Gishu County”. Findings are organized thematically to reflect significant areas of research: (1) adequacy and availability of fundamental teaching materials, (2) access to audio and audio-visual equipment, (3) rural-urban dichotomies, (4) impact of the resources on lesson planning

and delivery, and (5) pupil engagement and attainment in Kiswahili.

The survey findings revealed that central textbooks for Kiswahili, in the form of textbooks, were present in most schools; however, they were often in insufficient quantities or were not compatible with the CBE curriculum. Out of the 90 surveyed Kiswahili teachers, 78% confirmed the availability of approved Kiswahili textbooks. However, 63% of the teachers revealed that the books were either not current or only partially compatible with the CBE competencies. A mere 45% of the respondents indicated that they had Kiswahili teacher guides suitable for the CBE, and a mere 36% stated that they had schemes of work or lesson exemplars based on CBE learning outcomes. A review of the checklists of the inventory also corroborated with these limitations. In one rural school, there were only five textbooks of Kiswahili for a class of 47 students, resulting in a 1:9 book-to-student ratio. Urban schools were better off, with a norm of 1:3. Still, no school attained the policy standard of 1:1. Most schools lacked additional texts, such as Kiswahili storybooks, magazines, or dictionaries, all of which are vital in developing language fluency and contextual understanding. The findings are as shown on table 1.

Table 1: Adequacy and Availability of Core Teaching Materials in Public Junior Secondary Schools

Resource Type	Availability (from survey)	Adequacy Issues and Observations
Kiswahili Textbooks (approved)	78% of teachers reported availability	63% said textbooks were outdated or only partially compatible with CBE; rural book-to-student ratio 1:9 vs urban 1:3; no school met the 1:1 policy.
Kiswahili Teacher Guides (CBE-aligned)	45% of teachers reported availability	Many are still using 8-4-4 guides; there is a shortage of CBE lesson exemplars.
Schemes of Work / Lesson Exemplars	36% of teachers reported availability	Few CBE-aligned documents; teachers often improvise lessons.
Supplementary Materials (storybooks, magazines, dictionaries)	Rarely available	Shortage limits language fluency and contextual learning, which is missing in most rural and urban schools.

Qualitative data reinforced these sentiments. A teacher from one of the peri-urban schools provided the following observation:

"We are required to teach by competencies, but we only have the old books of the 8-4-4 system. They are not compatible with what CBE requires us to cover."

This dissonance between curriculum aims and materials has created frustration among teachers, many of whom are forced to improvise teaching materials or use personal devices to access digital resources. Access to digital

materials for teaching Kiswahili was minimal. Only 28% of the teachers had access to some form of digital pedagogy tool such as projectors, desktop computers, or tablets within their institutions. Substantially fewer (17%) reported access to Kiswahili-specific digital materials in terms of recorded audio samples, language learning software, or video-based pedagogy materials. Of the schools surveyed, 81% did not have an internet connection, and only 12% had functioning ICT laboratories. These figures imply that the technological component of CBE implementation remains a dream across most government-funded schools. See the table below:

Table 2: Access to Digital Materials and ICT Infrastructure for Teaching Kiswahili

Resource	Availability (from survey)	Key Challenges
Digital Pedagogy Tools (projectors, desktop computers, tablets)	28% of teachers reported access	Devices are few, underutilized due to poor maintenance, lack of training, and electricity issues
Kiswahili-Specific Digital Materials (audio samples, language software, videos)	17% of teachers reported access	Materials are often outdated, not CBE-aligned, and very limited in rural schools
Internet Connection	81% of schools had no internet access	Lack of reliable connectivity makes digital resource use nearly impossible
ICT Laboratories	Only 12% of schools had functional ICT labs	Labs are often inoperable as a result of poor maintenance and lack of adequate technical assistance

The lack of infrastructure renders it virtually impossible to incorporate audio-visual materials into language teaching, a central aspect of Kiswahili pedagogy, particularly in developing oral language skills. One of the Curriculum Support Officer (CSO) informants commented: "Many schools do not even have electricity consistently. Talking of digital resources is great on paper, but it is far from a reality for our rural schools." It reflects policy intent versus school realities. Field observations revealed that even schools with computers often had these facilities remain underutilized due to inadequate training or inoperability. At a six-computer laboratory in a city school, only one could be used due to maintenance issues. Additionally, a few schools that owned audio-visual materials reported that these rarely came with CBE specifications or a Kiswahili language syllabus.

One of the most significant discoveries of this research is the dramatic difference between rural schools and urban schools in terms of resource availability. Although urban schools were not well-endowed by global standards, they uniformly beat rural schools in access to teaching materials. Among the 45 rural schools surveyed, 31% had only CBE-compliant Kiswahili textbooks, compared to 66% in urban schools. Similarly, no rural schools reported having digital Kiswahili resources; however, 22% of the urban schools had some form of digital support, albeit limited. The rural schools also lacked essential infrastructure, including libraries, resource rooms, and reliable electricity. This disparity extended to professional development activities and teacher support materials. Urban teachers were more likely to have attended CBE-specific workshops and had greater access to CBE syllabi and lesson plan materials. "I only learned of the new Kiswahili teacher guide at a seminar last year. We have yet to receive any hard copies here," as reported by one rural teacher. This suggests systemic issues in distributing resources and training in an even manner.

Quantitative feedback from educators indicated that 72% of respondents believed a lack of resources affected the quality of their lesson planning and delivery. Educators reported struggling to prepare CBE-compliant lesson plans using outdated textbooks, formatted guides, or model lesson outlines. Most reported that they spent considerable personal time and money finding or printing these materials regularly, which was unsustainable—the lack of audio-visual materials particularly disadvantaged the teaching of Kiswahili speaking and listening components of the curriculum. Teachers admitted to leaving them out altogether or substituting them with reading exercises due to the unavailability of resources. In interviews, some teachers described how the unavailability of basic equipment limited their ability to be creative. One teacher complained, "How can I teach oral skills using a blackboard and a textbook? CBE encourages role-playing, dialogue, and listening drills, yet we lack even a basic radio. Second, instructors also noted declining levels of learner participation, particularly in interactive sessions. When resources such as storybooks, flashcards, or conversation recordings were lacking, learners were less engaged and dedicated. This aligns with the theoretical perspective that resources serve as stimuli for active learning, as outlined in the Resource-Based Learning Theory.

The consequences of a lack of resources extended to learner performance. Administrators and teachers observed a significant difference in Kiswahili performance between schools with limited resources and those with no resources at all. Schools with some availability of CBE-aligned resources observed greater student interest and enhanced assessment performance. On the other hand, schools with few resources experienced mass disinterest in Kiswahili classes. In the opinion of one rural administrator, "Our students perform well in classes like math and science, where we have more concrete materials. For Kiswahili, there is merely talk and chalk." This suggests that the perceived character of language learning in poorly

resourced schools harms learners' motivation. Besides, rural school students got limited opportunities for speaking or peer-to-peer practice, which are central features of CBE language instruction. Teachers complained that congested classrooms and insufficient teaching materials hindered the use of group discussions, language games, and presentations. These findings emphasize the linear relationship between access to resources and learner-centered pedagogy, as promoted by CBE values.

The study finds that while there is some initial learning and teaching material for Kiswahili in public junior secondary schools across Uasin Gishu County, it is mostly lacking, outdated, or unsuitable for CBE requirements. Audio-visual and digital materials are hardly present, especially in rural institutions, and constitute a significant barrier to effective language education. Rural-urban disparities increase inequality, not only in the quality of instruction but also in learner engagement and performance. Teachers, despite their commitment to the CBE vision, are constrained by institutional deficits in access to resources and pedagogical guidance. The lack of adequate materials severely undermines their capacity to provide innovative, interactive, and competency-based Kiswahili lessons. The evidence suggests that bridging these resource deficits is not only a logistical necessity but also a pedagogical imperative for the effective implementation of CBE.

One of the key findings of this research is that although core Kiswahili textbooks were available in the majority of schools, their quality and numbers fell far short of what was needed to sustain CBE implementation. A high percentage of teachers reported using out-of-date or misaligned texts, and fewer than half had access to teacher guides aligned with the CBE goals. This aligns with Isaboke et al. (2021) and Ogembo (2025), who reported that most Kenyan schools continue to use content created for the 8-4-4 system, despite policy shifts toward competency-based education. Relying on non-aligned materials undermines the very ethos of CBE, where activity-based learning, constant tests, and experiential skill acquisition are prescribed. The lack of study materials specifically impacts Kiswahili, as it emphasizes oral and interactive skills. As Pale and Amukowa (2020) note, communicative language instruction relies on diversity—encompassing textual, auditory, and visual inputs—which most public schools lack. The lack of varied and CBE-aligned resources compels teachers to resort to improvisation, resulting in inconsistencies in lessons and assessments. This shortage is especially troublesome when compared to the Resource-Based Learning Theory, which posits that access to a vast repertoire of learning resources is essential for student motivation and the development of rich knowledge (Nsamenang & Tchombe, 2012). Insufficient resources mean that Kiswahili teachers are unable to meet the CBE

requirement of nurturing creativity, teamwork, and critical thinking.

One of the most significant findings revealed in the study is the near absence of digital and audio-visual materials in both rural and urban schools, particularly in rural schools. This finding confirms that of Gakii et al. (2022) and Msambwa et al. (2024), whose reports document the shortage of ICT tools in government schools, particularly in underserved counties. However, the success of CBE hinges on incorporating technology to provide interactive, flexible, and context-responsive instruction. For Kiswahili, electronic materials such as audio, language games, and video-based oral tales are not merely supplements—they are essential to developing pronunciation, listening, and oral fluency. The absence of such materials in the majority of study schools renders CBE's vision almost unattainable. Teachers in digitally impoverished environments often struggle to model spoken language accurately or provide students with multi-sensory interactions, which can facilitate language acquisition. A teacher's complaint that "we only have chalk and a blackboard" highlights how policy ambitions often fail at the classroom level due to structural limitations. The Resource-Based Learning Theory comes into play once again here: it is based on the idea that the quality of learning in students depends mainly on the diversity and appropriateness of learning resources. Without ICT tools and audio-visual materials, the learning environment remains stagnant and teacher-centric, diverging from CBE's learner-focused philosophy.

Another important finding of this study is the existence of a significant rural-urban divide in terms of access to resources, professional development, and teaching support. Rural schools consistently demonstrated having fewer CBE-scaffolded materials, less access to training, and no digital content. These findings complement previous studies by Sele and Mukundi (2024) and Wangare (2022), which highlight the reality that geographical disparities have deep roots in Kenya's school system and continue to undermine national ideals of equity and inclusion. The implication of this division is significant. Rural school students in low-resource districts are exposed not only to fewer teaching moments but also to teachers themselves who are disempowered, demotivated, and overwhelmed. Rural school teachers reported having to create their instructional materials or skip entire modules due to a lack of resources, practices that compromise the quality of instruction and widen learning gaps. This situation contradicts the CBE's overall mission of providing equal opportunities for learning that are best tailored to the needs of all learners, regardless of their location. The Resource-Based Learning Theory reminds us that equitable access to learning resources is not a luxury but an educational requirement. Schools in low-income communities require targeted policy interventions to address these imbalances.

Otherwise, the practice of CBE will risk becoming another layer of reform that perpetuates rather than subverts systemic disadvantage.

The study found that the lack of resources has a direct effect on teachers' ability to prepare and deliver CBE-conformant lessons. Teachers reported difficulty in preparing lesson plans due to inadequate manuals and frequently skipped interactive learning activities because of a lack of materials. The results correspond with Inyega et al. (2021), who asserts that the implementation of CBE has outgrown access to instructional materials and professional development for educators in most parts of Kenya. When tutors are unable to access appropriate tools, they default to conventional, teacher-centered instruction. The study found evidence of this through classroom observations and interviews with teachers. Tasks that require listening, speaking, role-playing, and group collaboration were often omitted, particularly in resource-scarce environments. Such omissions deprive learners of the opportunity to develop communicative competence, one of Kiswahili's core goals under CBE. The impact on students was evident. Teachers consistently reported low rates of student participation, particularly in oral language instruction. This is not surprising; Resource-Based Learning Theory predicts that varied stimulus and practical work foster high levels of student participation, both of which are limited in under-resourced classrooms. Student motivation, engagement, and success are all diminished in classrooms where resources are lacking.

More generally, this study's findings support a body of research that underscores the importance of resources for successful curriculum implementation. This study contributes a subject-led, context-dependent analysis, developed against a real-world Kenyan county backdrop. Although previous studies have identified typical resource constraints under CBE, few have investigated their impact on Kiswahili instruction at the junior secondary level, and even fewer have employed theoretical analysis to interpret these findings. The use of Resource-Based Learning Theory allows for a more systematic consideration of how inputs (or lack thereof) of materials affect pedagogic processes and learning outcomes.

One of the interesting findings of the research was the extent to which some teachers were willing to fund resources from their resources—such as home-printed materials, personal laptops, and their smartphones—to compensate for the lack of resources provided by the institution. While this is a commendable dedication, it also raises some ethical questions regarding sustainability, equity, and professional standards. Not all teachers are in a position to offset institutional shortfalls, and this may lead to inequities even within similar school environments. Another new issue was the psychological burden that

inadequate resources impose on teachers. A few interview respondents felt powerless, demotivated, and fatigued due to pressure to perform on CBE without being equipped. This aligns with the statement by Pale and Amukowa (2020), who posit that stress caused by resource scarcity contributes to teacher burnout and attrition. Future studies can investigate emotional labor during CBE implementation under conditions of scarcity.

The outcomes present important considerations for education practice and guidelines. Firstly, the Ministry of Education and county governments must accelerate the provision of CBE-harmonized materials, with special priority given to rural and marginalized schools. Secondly, material provision must go beyond print to online and audio-visual materials specially developed for Kiswahili instruction. Third, teacher professional development must be supported by access to actual teaching materials, so that training is effectively translated into classroom practice. Finally, monitoring mechanisms must be established to measure not only the availability but also the usage and suitability of the materials. Investment in CBE cannot be limited to policy papers and workshops; it must also include genuine classroom-level facilitation, so that teachers can apply the curriculum meaningfully and fairly.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusion

The study identified pronounced disparities in the distribution, accessibility, and use of educational materials between urban and rural school contexts. The findings unequivocally show that while a few schools had access to the fundamental materials, e.g., CBE Bemba textbooks and instructors' guides, these were either scarce in number or incompatible with CBE pedagogical requirements. The majority of these teachers reported critical shortages of electronic and audio-visual materials, which are essential in honing the oral and interactive skills crucial in Kiswahili instruction. Rural schools were particularly disadvantaged, having even the bare minimum CBE resources, such as scheduled lesson planning, multimedia resources, and frequent access to electricity or internet connections. Such resource distribution imbalance has real implications for teaching quality and student achievement. Educators in under-resourced environments were found to be overwhelmed by planning and delivering lessons, regularly defaulting to traditional methods that sabotaged CBE's learner-centered orientation. Additionally, student performance and engagement in Kiswahili were negatively impacted, particularly in subjects where language training lacked the necessary oral and visual components. In some cases, teachers avoided or replaced CBE-created exercises due to material unavailability, further marginalizing

learners and widening the learning gap in both rural and urban areas.

The study also revealed broader systemic issues, including delayed government funding releases, inefficient procurement systems, and a lack of support for teachers' professional development. These institutional flaws diminish the emancipatory potential of the CBE and risk replicating existing educational inequalities. The results support the application of the Resource-Based Learning Theory, which emphasizes the pivotal nature of diverse and accessible instructional resources in broadening students' learning experiences and outcomes. These will require multi-level, coordinated, and strategic action, ranging from national policy reform and targeted funding disbursement to institutional capacity building and localized resource generation. The following recommendations aim to provide a framework for adaptive and sustainable interventions in support of Kiswahili education and CBE in general.

5. 2 Recommendations

Based on the findings, this paper suggested the following recommendations:

1. Ministry of Education and County Education Boards should prioritize equitable resource allocation by conducting annual resource audits and using data to distribute materials fairly, with a special focus on under-resourced rural schools.
2. Government, KICD, private sector, and NGOs should invest in digital infrastructure and multimedia resource development by funding internet connectivity, projectors, tablets, and developing CBE-aligned digital Kiswahili content.
3. Teachers Service Commission (TSC) should develop teacher capacity through mandatory, ongoing professional development on how to use instructional materials and digital tools effectively in the classroom.
4. School Boards of Management (BOMs) should strengthen school-community linkages by engaging parents, alums, and local community groups in resource mobilization initiatives such as fundraising drives and partnerships.
5. The Ministry of Education should institutionalize monitoring and evaluation frameworks for resource

utilization by creating a standardized tool to track the availability, distribution, and use of teaching and learning resources in all schools.

6. KNEC and Curriculum Developers should include resource access as a CBE success indicator by ensuring that resource adequacy and usage are part of the evaluation criteria for school performance under the CBE framework.

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