

Challenges facing teachers in Tanzania: the implementation of the paradigm shift towards a competence-based curriculum in public secondary schools in Iringa municipality

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This study assesses the challenges facing teachers in the implementation of the paradigm shift towards a competence-based curriculum in public secondary schools in Iringa municipality. The study was guided by three research objectives, namely: to investigate the teachers' understanding about the paradigm shift towards a competence-based curriculum in secondary schools; to find out the importance of the competence-based curriculum in the students' academic performance; and to examine the challenges facing teachers in the implementation of a competence-based curriculum in public secondary schools. The study adopted case study design, whereby three public secondary schools were selected. The study involved 39 respondents, namely 24 students, 3 school heads, and 12 teachers. The study employed mainly qualitative research approach. Data was collected through interviews and focus group discussions and was analyzed through content analysis in the light of the research objectives. The findings have revealed that teachers were aware of the paradigm shift towards a competence-based curriculum; however, most of them seem not to implement it due to various factors, including: lack of teaching and learning materials, and poor or low level of language proficiency on the part of some teachers and most students. It was also found out that most teachers were not provided with in-service training as a strategy to improve their teaching-learning situation; as a result, old approaches or traditional-learning-methods were still used by most teachers. The study recommends that regular in-service training for teachers be conducted and adequate teaching and learning materials be provided, so as to enable the implementation of the competence-based curriculum.

1. Introduction and background

Soon after her independence in 1961, Tanzania, like many other African countries, adopted a Content-Based Curriculum. However, in 2005 Tanzania adapted a paradigm shift which led to the development of a Competence-Based Curriculum for teaching and learning, as well as for assessment purposes in Secondary Education (Kafyulilo, Rugambuka and Moses 2012). This paradigm shift was

driven by economic, political, and cultural changes. According to Komba and Kira (2013), the old curriculum was ineffective, as the graduates failed to demonstrate skills and competences that fully addressed local, national and global market demands.

It has been acknowledged by different scholars that the competence-based approach is instrumental in helping students to increase the mastery of skills, knowledge and the development of self-confidence in problem solving. Therefore, it is seen as an approach which improves the students' academic achievement (Harris, Guthrie, Hobart and Lundberg 1995; Weddel 2006). The adoption of a Competence-Based paradigm in Tanzanian education aimed at preparing students to cope with the growing globalization and at making them competent enough for various job opportunities (Massawe 2007). However, the revised curriculum was expected to be student-friendly in terms of content and methods, producing competent, creative and innovative students (Temu 2003).

According to Massawe (2007), the Competence-Based Curriculum should make students to participate more fully in lessons by being involved in different tasks. In competence-based teaching a teacher facilitates the learning process by creating a conducive environment in which learning can occur and involve the learners actively in learning activities. The position of students during a competence-based teaching and learning is that of a critical thinker, a researcher, an analyzer and a person who critiques what is presented, and finally constructs his or her own meaning.

Whereas the paradigm shift represents a positive step in raising education standards, its implementation has not been effective. This is a challenge for the necessary improvements in the quality of education, especially since the students' performance requires an effective implementation of the paradigm. However, Kimaryo (2011) argues that the implementation of the Competence-Based paradigm in schools has been complex since its introduction because teachers have focused on developing content with the hope that the learners would then develop the intended competences automatically.

Tilya and Mafumiko (2010) contend that some teachers were not implementing the Competence-Based paradigm because there was a lack of clarity among potential implementers, since some curriculum developers and book writers had yet to grasp the meaning of the Competence-Based Curriculum and of the student-centered approach. For an effective implementation of the Competence-Based paradigm, teachers' orientation and training, appropriate teaching and learning resources, and adequate classrooms are needed.

Even if the educational system for secondary schools in Tanzania insists on the application of the Competence-Based Curriculum, there are still some teachers who do not practice it and continue instead using a Content-Based curriculum (Kimaryo 2011). This may be a lesson to the

National Curriculum Developers and innovators to look for ways to motivate teachers on the importance of using the Competence-Based Curriculum in community secondary schools. Teachers need to be aware of the paradigm shift in order to ease the teaching and learning process with an eye to the improvement of the students' performances (Muneja 2015; Makunja 2016).

2. Objectives of the study

The purpose of the study is to assess the challenges facing teachers in the implementation of a Competence-Based Curriculum in regards to the students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Iringa Municipality, Tanzania. In particular, the study is guided by the three specific objectives:

1. to investigate the teachers' understanding of the Competence-Based Curriculum in public secondary schools;
2. to find out the importance of the Competence-Based Curriculum as far as the students' academic performance is concerned;
3. to examine the challenges facing teachers in the implementation of the Competence-Based Curriculum in public secondary schools.

3. Theoretical underpinnings

The underpinnings of the paradigm shift to a Competence-Based Curriculum are provided by the constructivist theory.

Constructivism is the view that an individual constructs his or her understanding of the world in which he or she lives by reflecting on personal experiences (Brown and Green 2006). The constructivist learning theory is defined as the active construction of new knowledge on the basis of the learner's prior experience. According to constructivist perspectives, learning occurs when individuals are actively involved in the learning processes and integrate new knowledge with the existing one. Thus learning is considered an active process of constructing rather than receiving knowledge, and teaching is considered a process of supporting learners to construct ideas, rather than delivering knowledge; in other words, a teacher is a guide by the sidelines rather than the sage on the stage (Biggie and Shermis 2004).

Constructivism is often linked to the Competence-Based Curriculum, which is a recent educational reform advocating the involvement of students in meaningful learning in teaching and learning; i.e., it is meant to foster the students' intellectual competences, such as process skills,

problem solving and analytical reasoning. Learners must construct knowledge in their own minds (Gillies 2007). Teachers can only facilitate this process by using teaching methods that help in making the information meaningful and relevant to learners by giving students opportunities to discover and apply ideas themselves.

This study employed the constructivist theory because the theory supports the students and learners in constructing ideas, rather than delivering knowledge. The theory related to Competence-Based Curriculum program involves the learners to participate more fully in learning individually rather than being spoon-fed by their teachers, who in their turn are supposed to act only as facilitators. For this reason the constructivism theory and the Competence-Based Curriculum make the students more active in the learning process.

4. Empirical Studies

This section reviews the existing literature on various issues relating to the Competence-Based Curriculum in public secondary schools. The review is done with regard to the study objectives.

4.1. Teachers' understanding about the Competence-Based Curriculum

The paradigm shift program from Content-based to Competence-Based Curriculum was an attempt to improve the quality of education by enabling the learners to develop the required competences in different spheres of life (Komba and Mwandangi 2016). Teachers are the key players in implementing such a program; i.e., the successful implementation of any educational program is essentially dependent upon the teachers' readiness and understanding of the initiative. For the effective implementation of a Competence-Based Curriculum, a good choice and application of a variety of teaching and learning activities is important. As such, teachers need to be highly capable in the application of those teaching and learning activities that are necessary to make the students' learning effective (Kafyulilo, Rugambuka and Moses 2012).

Furthermore, Kliebard (2004) describes Competence-Based teaching and learning as a western approach to teaching and may not necessarily transfer to developing countries like Tanzania, where there are inadequate teachers' capacity, limited resources, different learning cultures and learner background, as well as, in some cases, lack of pedagogic knowledge, lack of students' readiness and inadequate educator support. This leads to problems due to the large number of students in most secondary schools as far as the enrolment is concerned under the Secondary Education Development Program (SEDP).

To the contrary, as noted by Tilya and Mafumiko (2010) in their study on the compatibility between teaching methods and Competence-Based paradigm in Tanzania, many secondary school teachers did not understand clearly the meaning of paradigm shift in secondary school teaching and learning, and hence find it difficult to implement the program. Similarly, Makunja (2016) found out that the majority of teachers, who are the major implementers of the competence-based paradigm in secondary schools, did not have a clear understanding of such a program. In fact, some of them had no idea at all about what Competence-Based Curriculum under the paradigm shift means, apparently because a majority of teachers had no training to orient them on the paradigm shift program.

Moreover, the findings by Komba and Mwandangi (2015) showed that the majority (86%) of the interviewed secondary school teachers did not have a proper understanding of the Competence-Based nor were they knowledgeable about the objectives of the program. These findings agree with those of Hakielimu (2012), which revealed that the paradigm shift program in schools had always been poorly implemented, as the majority of teachers do not understand the requirements of the program.

4.2. The Importance of the Competence-Based Curriculum for Students' Performance

According to Vavrus *et al.* (2011), the shift from Content-Based to Competence-Based may result in learners who can create meaningful and coherent representation of knowledge. Learning through participatory teaching and learning enables learners to link new information with the existing knowledge in a meaningful way by giving them ample time to create higher order thinking and natural curiosity, which in its turn influences the learner's motivation and interest – the emphasis of the paradigm shift program in secondary schools. There is empirical evidence to the effect that the shift from content-based to competence-based curriculum has influenced learning achievement significantly.

A study by Kang'ahi (2012) was conducted with the purpose to determine how Competence-Based Curriculum has influenced learners' achievement in secondary schools in Kenya. The study identified a positive relationship between competence-based teaching methods used and the students' academic achievement in subjects' examinations. Achievement was seen to increase with more participatory teaching methods. In view of these findings, participatory methods of teaching and learning are suitable for meeting the objectives of teaching under the paradigm shift program because they provide an effective means of increasing skills and of utilizing facts and information.

Moreover, Alder (2000) asserts that when competence-based curriculum is well implemented by teachers it enables learners to initiate and pursue knowledge, learn and work at their own pace,

develop the spirit of curiosity, enquiry and on the practice of investigative approach. This then enables learners to acquire knowledge and provide them with an opportunity to come into contact with the problems, challenges and opportunities in real life situation. Further, competence-based curriculum foster greater flexibility in teaching and stimulate intellectual engagement with teachers and among students.

Furthermore, Tilya and Mafumiko (2010) assessed the compatibility between teaching methods and Competence-Based curriculum in Tanzania. The study emphasizes that student-centered teaching and learning in a Competence-Based curriculum gives students an opportunity to work together and remember the taught materials, which in turn leads to high academic performances as well as developing confidence in dealing with social life by equipping them with skills to solve social and intellectual problems. Moreover, Msendekwa (2010), in investigating the implementation of competence-based curriculum in Tanzanian schools, discovered that there is a positive relationship between participatory teaching methods used and students' academic achievement in their final examinations because participatory methods are apt to meet the objectives of teaching by providing an effective means of increasing skills and of utilizing facts and information. Competence-Based Curriculum emphasizes the students' intrinsic motivation to learn and the growth of students' abilities to obtain suitable skills in problem solving.

4.3. Challenges facing teachers in the implementation of the Competence-Based Curriculum in public secondary schools

Several studies have investigated the challenges facing teachers in implementing the Competence-Based Curriculum in the process of teaching and learning in secondary schools. A study by Makunja (2016) found that while teachers see the need for using competence-based approaches to instruction, they fail to plan for them due to inadequate teaching and learning materials, large class sizes, and inadequate learning facilities as well as, in some cases, lack of pedagogic knowledge. The findings showed that at classroom instruction level, teachers fail to effectively involve the students to achieve the requirements of the paradigm shift program in secondary schools. Further, the findings revealed that, as a consequence, teachers fail to stimulate the learners' interest in the lessons and arouse their curiosity to learn; thus, teachers fail to promote critical thinking and problem solving activities, as the competence curriculum requires.

Moreover, a study by Mtitu (2014) found that the implementation of the paradigm shift program in teaching is constrained by challenges such as the students' incompetence in speaking English, overcrowded classes, limited funding for field and project activities, teacher's limited understanding

of a student mental cognition process, teacher's failure to utilize existing instructional opportunities such as student's prior knowledge, subject vocabulary and instructional methods and strategies. Similarly, Meena (2004) points out that the implementation of competence-based curriculum in teaching and learning is time consuming by nature. For this reason, teachers cannot cover the syllabus. By using participatory methods, teachers can only cover a small content in a long period of time; thus, most teachers prefer to use the traditional teacher centered methods so that they can cover large content in a short period of time and students can prepare for various examinations – which is contrary to the requirements of the paradigm shift program.

Furthermore, Tilya and Mafumiko (2010) identified challenges in implementing the competence-based curriculum in secondary schools: lack of time on tasks (40-80 minutes periods for all subjects, which is not sufficient), smaller rooms with fixed furniture, fully packed classes with students, less access to computer lab and misuse of classroom resources due to sharing of school building, less experienced and new teachers, and lack of support from school administration to take initiatives. In such a complex situation, only a few teachers who are highly skilful and have good expertise can manage to implement a competence-based curriculum in their classes, while a majority of teachers blame poor resources and insufficient support as challenges. This kind of situation offers teachers a chance and justification to switch to the content-based teaching mode.

5. Methodology

This study employs a qualitative approach. The qualitative approach is suitable because the study aim is to acquire the information and experiences from respondents in a natural setting about the challenges faced by teachers in the implementation of a Competence-Based Curriculum as far as academic performance in community secondary schools is concerned. This approach provides a chance of studying phenomena in depth from their natural context, whereby personal experiences and perceptions about the phenomena under study can be successfully accommodated. A case study design was used to get detailed information and full images of the challenges faced by teachers. The targeted population of this study comprised three categories of respondents, namely head of schools (HoS), secondary schools' teachers, and students.

The study employed a total of 39 respondents. The sample involved three (3) public secondary schools where the researcher selected twenty-four (24) students, twelve (12) teachers and three (3) heads of schools.

To select the participants, three sampling techniques were involved: purposive sampling, simple random sampling, and stratified random sampling. Purpose sampling technique was used in selecting

Heads of Schools. Simple random sampling was used in selecting teachers because of their responsibilities in the teaching and learning process. Stratified sampling technique was used in selecting students, who were sampled on the basis of their gender and class level because the study assumed they had potential information about the Competence-Based Curriculum from their school performance.

In this study, data was collected through interviews and focus group discussion, and was analysed using qualitative method of data analysis. The researcher synthesized the findings by grouping them in meaningful manner into categories according to the themes that emerged during the data collection.

6. Findings and discussion

6.1. Teachers' understanding about the Competence-Based Curriculum

In this theme, the researcher sought to capture information on how the teachers understand the Competence-Based Curriculum in secondary schools. To achieve this objective, the researcher used interviews with HoS and teachers, while focus group discussion was used with students. The findings were coded and sub-themes were formulated – as presented and discussed in the sub-sections below.

The researcher held interview sessions with the secondary school teachers from three secondary Schools. The findings are shown in Table 1. below.

Table 1. Teachers Understanding about the paradigm shift towards Competence-Based Curriculum

T1-T12	Frequency	Percent
Yes	11	91.7%
No	01	8.3%
Total	12	100%

The findings in Table 1. reveal that most teachers understand about the paradigm shift towards the Competence-Based Curriculum, with the exception of one teacher from school “A”, who seemed not to understand the Competence-Based Curriculum.

For example one teacher from school ‘A’ reported that

‘Paradigm shift towards Competence-Based curriculum is the shift from teacher centered to student centered and it is more participatory teaching and learning method’ (Interview, Teacher, school A, 10/7/2017).¹

Moreover the heads of the schools A, B and C also proved that they do understand the paradigm shift towards Competence-Based Curriculum.

6.2. Teachers’ Trainings on the Competence-Based Curriculum

In this second sub-theme the researcher was interested in exploring whether teachers had attended any training on the Competence-Based Curriculum. The findings from all schools A, B and C show that only four (4) interviewed teachers attended training on Competence-Based Curriculum, while eleven (11) interviewed teachers including HoS did not attend training. As one respondent from school C said:

‘No, I have never attended the Competence-Based Curriculum, and the Ministry of Education should make this into consideration’ (Interview, Teacher, school C, 12/7/2017).

However, the other respondent from school C said that:

‘Yes, there were people who came here at school and directed us on Competence-Based Curriculum in 2015. Some teachers attended the seminar of about 2 days. They taught us about participatory teaching and learning methods e.g.; tour method, project method, group discussion and presentations. Also we were told about how to prepare lesson plan and schemes of work’ (Interview, Teacher, school C, 12/7/2017).

Nevertheless, the teachers claimed not to be satisfied with how the government is providing the Competence-Based Curriculum trainings, because it seems that seminars are provided with great bias and not to all the teachers. Consequently, the program is less known to some teachers. Thus, the government should provide full trainings to all teachers in all subjects to enhance teaching and learning process. Surprisingly enough, all the heads of the schools from schools A, B and C revealed that they did not attend any training about the Competence-Based Curriculum.

¹ Here and below, the transcript of the original interviews is reported *verbatim*, notwithstanding possible stylistic, syntactic, etc. errors or inconsistencies.

These findings emphatically show that training on the paradigm shift towards a Competence-Based Curriculum is inadequately provided to teachers. Training is offered rarely and not to all teachers; therefore, many teachers fail to implement it fully, as it is supposed to be done. The implication is that many teachers do not see the relevance of the program, hence they remain with their own teaching styles and methods in their subjects and as a result they continue teaching using a Content-based curriculum.

6.3. Discussion of findings for the first objective

In this first theme, researcher was interested in assessing the teachers' understanding about the Competence-Based Curriculum. The researcher found out that there are Secondary School teachers who understand the Competence-Based Curriculum and try to implement it in teaching and learning, but there are also teachers who do not understand the program at all. This might be because of inadequate training about the Competence-Based Curriculum program or lack of teaching and learning methods.

The students also revealed that there are teachers who practice Competence-Based Curriculum during teaching and learning process and teachers who do not. This shows that there is a need for the Secondary school teachers to be provided with seminars, courses or training about the Competence-Based Curriculum, which will enable them to be aware of the program and be able to implement it in their teaching at classrooms.

The study found that some secondary school teachers are facing the problem of not being exposed to the Competence-Based Curriculum program; this is a situation which makes it difficult for them to implement it in the teaching and learning process. In its turn, this implies that there is a need for the Education stakeholders to provide enough courses about the Competence-Based Curriculum to help the public secondary school teachers to be aware of the program and be able to implement it accordingly in order to help students learn by what is called self-learning. However, even if the chances of attending training about the Competence-Based Curriculum program have some elements of bias, some teachers showed readiness and support about the implementation of the Competence-Based Curriculum. Finally, the Competence-Based Curriculum program seems to have more positive than negative effects insofar as the students become more active in learning, gain confidence, become competent, perform better in their examinations, remember what they have already learned and also increase their knowledge about the contents taught and learned.

6.4. The Importance of Competence-Based Curriculum to the students' academic performance

The second research objective sought to find out the importance of the paradigm shift towards a Competence-Based Curriculum. The Competence-Based process is associated with the evaluation of quality and the selection of appropriate teaching and learning methods and materials in schools, and classrooms in particular. The whole implementation of the Competence-Based Curriculum has to be supervised by the head of school; so, first of all the researcher wanted to know whether academic performance had any effect towards the implementation of the Competence-Based Curriculum process. To this end, the researcher employed interview and focus group discussion in collecting data.

The findings indicate that there were positive effects on academic performance as a consequence of using a Competence-Based Curriculum. The researcher wanted to know the strategies taken by head of school in enhancing the implementation of the paradigm shift. One respondent had the following to say:

'All the time I inform subject teachers. According to their experiences acquired in using participatory teaching and learning techniques they should use them accordingly and avoid using non participatory techniques because they seem to be non-profitable to the modern methodology of teaching...What we consider is the usefulness of the Competence-Based curriculum for the fact that it must contain variety of participatory methods and many exercises and can easily be understood by students' (Interview, Head of school, school A, 10/07/2017).

One respondent went further by taking the issue as a phenomenon to be investigated:

'As a head of school, I play a vital role, because I link between teachers, community and authorities as well as in the implementation of the CBC in school. Therefore, as a head I must do more research by myself than other teachers' (Interview, Head of school, school B, 11/07/2017).

In justifying the above statements, Apple (2000) asserts that teachers have a long history of mediating and transforming teaching methods when they employ them in the classroom. Teachers need to play a commendable work in the acceptance, interpretation and partial or total rejection of a teaching methodology, as well as the materials for teaching and learning. Therefore, teachers are supposed to be well informed on how they can undertake a given teaching methodology for the effective implementation of the curriculum. A head master as a school manager plays a very important role in

ensuring the effective attainment of educational determined goals. In teaching and learning process s/he is supposed to ensure that meaningful teaching methods are being used, so that they will enable effective teaching and learning. Respondents said that the use of paradigm shift in teaching and learning has positive effect on the students' academic performance in schools. One of the teachers said that

‘This is due to the fact that general student’s performance in form two and four national examination has recently improved within three consecutive years since 2013. The students are now able to interact among self, teachers and, teaching and learning materials. The use of more participatory approaches has contributed to make students aware with directed and independent learning. This creates understanding and long term memory’ (Interview, Teacher, school A, 10/07/2017).

The above findings are in line with HAKIELIMU (2011), which asserts that quality education should always be accompanied by good examination results. This is relevant to the Tanzanian economy because it would allow competition in the employment opportunities not only in Tanzania but in East Africa and globally as well.

6.4.1. Learners’ Active Participation

In attempting to answer the question concerning whether students enjoy being taught by using participatory approaches, two participants associated the use of these approaches with the active involvement of students during teaching and learning process. They said that it seems that the whole process of teaching and learning does encourage learners to be at the centre, arising interest and making them joyful. The role of the teacher is always to facilitate teaching and ensure that meaningful learning takes place. One respondent had this to say:

‘We are actually enjoying learning because instead of being given all of the learning materials it is now supposed to be done in collaboration between the teacher and students. Therefore, these methods stimulate learners and gear active participation before and during classroom presentation’ (FGD, Student, school B, 11/7/2017).

On the other hand, one of the student recognized performance of the Competence-Based Curriculum but she had her doubts on the role of students towards teaching and learning. This means that some teachers have decided to put down their hands, and all activities have to be done by the students only:

‘The teachers do a good job, but some of them have decided to put their hands down. They use to provide all activities to students even writing notes on the chalkboard instead of themselves’ (FGD, Student, school A, 10/7/2017)

6.4.2. Improvement of the National Examination Results

Through interviews with HoS and teachers it was found out that the student’s performance was higher for those students who experienced the Competence-Based Curriculum during teaching and learning process. This was clearly confirmed by the HoS’ argument about the performances of students who benefited from the Competence-Based Curriculum. One head of school had this to say:

Students who participate fully during teaching and learning, and show a mutual relationship between themselves and their teachers perform well in their examinations. Those students who fail to participate accordingly get difficulties in their examination (interview, Head of school, school C, 12/7/2017).

In order to further check the effects of the Curriculum-Based approach, the performance of students before and after its introduction was compared. Table 2. below shows the results.

Table 2. Average Percentage of the students’ performance before and after the introduction of CBC

School	Average % of performance before CBC	Average % of performance after CBC
School A	55	68
School B	65	80
School C	59	78

This actually implies that using the Competence-Based Curriculum in public secondary schools encourages students performance; in other words, Competence-Based Curriculum motivates students to learn more through cooperation among themselves and through the establishment of a long term memory.

6.4.3. Discussion of findings for the second objective

The findings indicate that there were positive effects regarding the paradigm shift towards the Competence-Based Curriculum. The researcher wanted to know the strategies undertaken by head

masters as well as teachers in enhancing the implementation of the shift towards the Competence-Based Curriculum with an eye to increase the students' academic performance. Since the implementation of the Competence-Based Curriculum has to be supervised by the head master, the researcher wanted to know whether academic performance had any effect towards the implementation of the Competence-Based Curriculum process or not.

In attempting to answer the question concerning whether students enjoy being taught by using participatory approaches, the participants associated the use of these approaches with the active involvement of students during the teaching and learning process.

Among the important aspects to be considered is the selection and evaluation of materials (Frederickson and Olson 2006). This is due to the fact that the process is supposed to be preceded by staff and school committee meetings, sometimes department meetings, catalogue analysis and the choice of the best tender or bidder, and the like.

The performance of students during examinations was heavily influenced by the Competence Based Curriculum due to the fact that the new approach is characterized by students participation, and involves much more than just listening: limited emphasis is given to the transmission of knowledge rather than to the skills development; greater value is given to the learners values and attitudes; the use of higher order thinking skills; and the enhancement of the learners independence of learning.

6.5. Challenges facing teachers in implementing Competence-Based Curriculum in Teaching

This section sought to capture informations on the challenges faced by teachers in implementing the Competence-Based Curriculum in community secondary schools in Iringa municipality.

To achieve this objective, the researcher used interview and focus group discussion. This approach was believed to be able to capture common challenges facing teachers in implementing the Competence-Based Curriculum. In the interviews, the heads of school and teachers were asked to mention these challenges. The findings were coded and themes were formulated as presented and discussed in the subsection below. The results are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3. Challenges facing teachers in implementing the Competence-Based Curriculum

Common Challenges	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Lack of T/L materials	08	40
Overcrowded Classrooms	03	15
Lack of training teachers for inclusive education	02	10
Language barrier	04	20
Negative attitudes of students towards CBC	03	15
Total	20	100

Data in Table 3. suggest that a great number of teachers face several challenges, a fact which hinders the implementation of the Competence-Based Curriculum in their secondary schools. These challenges are further elaborated below.

6.5.1. Lack of teaching and learning materials

The findings revealed that most of community secondary schools in Iringa municipality do implement the Competence-Based Curriculum, even though not all teachers were able to implement it. Almost all the teachers and Heads of Schools raised their concern about the lack of teaching and learning materials to help them implement the Competence-Based Curriculum. One of the teachers from school A claimed that:

‘Teaching materials in our school are not enough. Teachers’ books, text books, e pictures, diagrams, and students extra books are not enough. In this situation how do you think learning process will be’ (interview, Teacher, school A, 10/7/2017).

A teacher from school C said:

‘Our school has inclusive education program but there is a problem of teaching materials especially to inclusive students because they have special devices and materials which are special for teaching and learning. The government should not supply enough materials and devices which help the disability students but curenly we have [no] choice because they have settle in one classroom teachers are teach in normal way with little help to the disability students’ (interview, Teacher, school C, 12/7/2017).

A head of school commented:

‘In my school there are few teaching materials related to Competence-Based Curriculum. Most of the textbooks in the library are based on Old curriculum which gives us hard time to implement this new curriculum. Also we have laboratory which is poor and not enough equipment that students should make practices. In short we have not enough teaching and learning materials and other basic requirements for implementing CBC’ (Interview, Head of school, school B, 11/7/2017).

The findings show that the lack of teaching and learning materials is one among the challenges facing teachers in implementing the Competence-Based Curriculum in community secondary schools.

6.5.2. Lack of teachers’ training for inclusive education

The study further found out that there is a lack of teachers for inclusive education in schools. Many teachers are not aware on how to implement the Competence-Based Curriculum to students with special needs because they have not been provided a specific training. One of the teachers from school C said that:

‘In our school there are students with special needs but the problem is lack of teachers who have special training for helping these students. For that it is difficult for teachers who have no special training of inclusive education to handle these students, but we have few teachers who are special training for teaching students.’ (Interview, Teacher, school C, 12/7/2017).

Also a respondent from school B pointed out that:

‘The school has comprised both students with special needs and normal but all these stay on the same class. We have no teachers who got special training of inclusive education, but we have one facilitator who inter with teacher in the class for purpose of facilitating the lesson to those students with special needs. It is difficult to implement the CBC, how a teacher can arrange group discussion? Because in the classroom both normal and special needs students have learning in the same class and these special needs students need someone who help them to facilitate, but we have only one teacher who is facilitator, it difficult to manage all students from form one to form six.’ (Interview, Teacher, school B, 11/7/2017).

This issue was further illustrated by the head of school C, who said:

‘In my school teachers who have special training of inclusive education are very few and makes a serious problem in my school. The students with special needs have suffered a lot in teaching and learning process. Then, the government has not taken this as a serious problem. Teachers who have special training of teaching the students with special needs should be employed’ (Interview, Teacher, school C, 12/7/2017).

The findings point out that the students with special needs are not learning properly. Lack of trained teachers in inclusive education is the main cause for the deterioration of the implementation of the Competence-Based Curriculum.

6.5.3. Language barrier

Another factor which limits the effectiveness of teachers in the implementation of the Competence-Based curriculum is language barrier. A respondent from school A had this to say;

‘Teachers have tried enough to implement current curriculum but the problem is language of instruction which is English. The language is very big problem most of our students have not participate in lesson because they keep silence but when the teachers used Kiswahili they become very active to participate in lesson. It difficult to implement CBC due to response of students in learning when English language is used’ (Interview, Teacher, school A, 10/7/2017).

A similar view was expressed by one of the teachers:

‘Language of instruction is serious problem in schools. English is a language of instruction but most of the students are not familiar with this language, which makes difficult to students to participate and follow lessons.’ (Interview, Teacher, school C, 12/7/2017).

As the teachers indicated, one of the challenges faced by them teachers in implementing the Competence-Based Curriculum is language barrier, which is critical in education because it may negatively affect the learning and teaching processes within the classroom.

6.5.4. Discussion of the findings for the third objective

This section presented findings which identified the challenges faced by teachers in implementing the Competence-Based Curriculum. These findings include the lack of T/L materials, overcrowded

classrooms, lack of training teachers for inclusive education, language barrier and negative attitudes of students towards the Competence-Based Curriculum. As to the problem of overcrowded classrooms, newspaper articles and other media regularly highlight the troubles of teachers in implementing the Competence-Based Curriculum in Tanzania.

The findings also reflect the fact that most schools in Iringa municipality lack T/L materials. This is basically due to the lack of funds, which slows down the provision of teaching aids, books, chalks and others. Outdated and worn-out textbooks are shared by six or more in Tanzania. Teachers also need materials to help them prepare their lessons, share with their students and guide lessons. Limited access to textbooks and other teaching and learning materials is a great limitation towards implementing the Competence-Based Curriculum. These challenges are progressively being addressed, but without notable improvements.

It is reported, on the one hand, that the lack of training teachers for inclusive education is directly associated with the bad implementation of the Competence-Based Curriculum in schools. Teachers fail to give enough support to the students with special needs in schools due to poor training on how to teach and handle these students. Furthermore, this discourages teachers from using the Competence-Based Curriculum in classroom because some of the schools have put together “normal” students and students with special needs in one and the same class.

Language barrier in many schools as a factor limiting the implementation of the Competence-Based Curriculum has also been established by this study. Most of the public schools faced this problem; however, efforts are being made to solve this problem through an increased participation in the classroom. The problem starts from the home or the community, due to the fact that, obviously, most communities in Tanzania use natively Kiswahili or a minority language, while English is the language of instruction in secondary schools and higher learning. The Competence-Based Curriculum needs students to be more active in the classroom rather than teachers, but most of the students do not participate in the lessons due to the language barrier.

The findings also show that also the negative attitudes of students towards the Competence-Based Curriculum are limiting its implementation. A further problem is what students think about the Competence-Based Curriculum, as they keep being spoon-fed when the teachers teach. Most of the students are not asked to contribute in classroom during the lesson because they think that, due to a negative attitude towards the Competence-Based Curriculum, teachers do not like to teach. As a consequence, many students do not participate in the teaching and learning process.

The findings also revealed that many education players in the Iringa Municipality have experienced several challenges in implementing the Competence-Based Curriculum. The

government, schools and educational stakeholders should work to mitigate all these challenges. Also the government should change its policy and favour Kiswahili as a language of instruction in secondary schools in order to encourage the students to participate in classroom for the purpose of a better academic achievement.

7. Conclusion

In the view of the research findings, the following inferences are made:

Although the paradigm shift towards the Competence-Based Curriculum has been implemented for some time now, still its implementation is questionable throughout the country because the program is left to teachers whose contributions are irregular, depending on their understanding of the paradigm and their training, as well as on lack of teaching and learning materials on the Competence-Based Curriculum.

The degree of complying with the implementation of the Competence-Based Curriculum in schools by education stakeholders is very minimal. This indicates that there is a need to provide education to all stakeholders in the educational sector, particularly on the implementation of the Competence-Based Curriculum in schools.

The students at large should be informed about the importance of implementing the Competence-Based Curriculum in schools, so as to play the role of participating fully in learning following the students-centered style. Not doing so can lead to less concentration in learning, difficult in recalling the studied content thus diminishing the academic performance of students.

Teachers should also make sure that they play their teaching and guiding responsibility to their students in order to enhance their cognitive development and their learning ability. This will also help the students do better in learning different contents in different subjects.

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