

Strategies employed by the head teachers in the implementation of competence-based curriculum in public primary schools in Bagamoyo, Tanzania

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Abstract. This study examined strategies employed by the head teachers in implementing a competence-based curriculum (CBC) in public primary schools in Bagamoyo District, Tanzania. The study adopted a qualitative research approach, with a case study research design, for the purpose of determining in-depth information regarding the implementation of CBC. The study involved 10 participants, thus head teachers. Interviews, observation and documentary reports were used to collect field data. The data were analysed thematically. The findings reported that the head teachers employed various strategies to support teachers in adapting to CBC in public primary schools, namely improving in-service teacher training, teaching and learning materials, the teaching and learning environment, teaching and learning resources, as well as facilitating the relationship between school and community. However, some challenges were noted to hinder the effective implementation of CBC, including a lack of resources, a large number of students in the classroom, and a lack of competent teachers to implement CBC effectively. The study concludes that it is important for the head teachers to devise numerous strategies that could be used for effectively implementing CBC in primary schools. The study recommends that the government, private sectors, and non-governmental organisations ensure the availability of teaching and learning resources, enough teachers, and a good learning environment, as well as training about implementing CBC for all primary school teachers.

Keywords: strategies, head teachers, competence-based curriculum, primary school, Tanzania

1. Introduction

The competence-based curriculum (CBC) represents a shift in educational paradigms from 1996 to 2005, focusing on the development of skills, competencies, and critical thinking abilities among students. The successful implementation of CBC relies not only on the curriculum design but also on effective supervision and leadership within schools. The CBC is gaining widespread recognition as a transformative educational approach that allows students to progress at their own pace, demonstrating proficiency in key skills relevant to their chosen areas of study. This innovative framework shifts the focus from traditional rote memorisation to active and meaningful engagement with learning materials. One of the main advantages of CBC is its ability to significantly enhance student engagement, as learners are encouraged to take ownership of their educational experiences, fostering a deeper connection to the content being taught [4]. Additionally, CBC emphasises the development of practical skills, bridging the gap

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*Educational
Dimension*



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between theoretical knowledge and the practical requirements of the workforce. By focusing on the application of knowledge, skills, beliefs, and attitudes in real-world scenarios, CBC aims to prepare students not only for academic success but also for their future careers [13]. This highlights the pressing need for effective CBC implementation in educational settings, as it is crucial for improving student learning outcomes and ensuring readiness for modern societal challenges.

Head teachers are central to the successful implementation of CBC, as they oversee all aspects of school operations to meet educational objectives [9]. Their leadership extends beyond daily management; it involves creating an environment conducive to embracing the CBC principles among both teachers and students. By offering guidance and support, head teachers can help educators adapt their teaching methods to align with the competence-based approach, which prioritises active learning and student involvement. A study done by Okeyo, Areba and Obuba [21] emphasises that head teachers possess the authority to plan, implement, supervise, and evaluate school activities, granting them significant influence over how CBC is integrated into the curriculum. This authority enables them to make informed decisions that enhance teaching practices and improve student outcomes. Moreover, effective collaboration among staff, fostered by head teachers, can lead to a shared vision for CBC implementation. Therefore, it is vital to explore the specific strategies head teachers employ to facilitate teachers' adoption of CBC, as understanding these methods can uncover best practices that enhance the educational experience and student achievement.

Head teachers play a crucial role in establishing a clear vision for CBC implementation by employing several strategies. A study conducted by Fios et al. [7] reported that vision and successful leadership articulate the goals and objectives of the curriculum, thus ensuring that all stakeholders, including teachers, parents, and students, understand its significance. Furthermore, a study done by Njagi [20] reported that head teachers prioritise the continuous professional development of their teaching staff by organising workshops, seminars, and training sessions focused on innovative teaching strategies and the use of formative assessments that focus on students' progress and competencies rather than traditional summative assessments are effective strategies in implementing CBC. In addition, uses of technology, including digital resources and platforms in the teaching and learning process and proper resource allocation to ensure classrooms are equipped with the necessary materials and tools that support hands-on learning, are another strategy employed by head teachers [5].

Despite the recognition of CBC's benefits, numerous challenges hinder its effective implementation in primary schools. Many countries, including Tanzania, have adopted CBC to foster diverse competencies among students [6]. However, issues such as budget constraints for teacher training, insufficient instructional materials, and a lack of teacher confidence identified in studies from Rwanda [18] and Kenya [22] persistently obstruct the successful execution of CBC. These challenges can lead to subpar student performance, emphasising the urgent need to assess the effectiveness of head teachers' roles in facilitating CBC implementation. The connection between effective CBC implementation and improved student performance highlights the critical importance of understanding how head teachers can overcome these barriers to create a more conducive learning environment for the effective implementation of CBC.

In Tanzania, the government has prioritised the implementation of CBC through educational policies established in 2023, underscoring its significance for achieving quality education [25]. However, several obstacles impede effective CBC implementation, including weak school management, inadequate teaching and learning resources, and unsupportive learning environments. These challenges prevent schools from fully realising the potential benefits of CBC, resulting in gaps in student learning and engagement. This study aims to highlight the crucial strategies employed by head

teachers and the major challenges in implementing CBC in public primary schools in Tanzania, particularly in Bagamoyo District. It posits that a comprehensive understanding of their responsibilities, along with robust government support, is essential for overcoming these challenges. By addressing these issues, head teachers can play a vital role in achieving the objectives set forth in the Sustainable Development Vision 2025, ultimately enhancing educational outcomes for students across the nation.

2. Methodology

2.1. Research approach and design

This study utilised a qualitative research methodology with a case study design to explore how head teachers support the implementation of the CBC in specific primary schools and to identify factors that hinder its execution. The qualitative research method was particularly suited for this study as it emphasises the collection of descriptive data rather than numerical data, thus allowing for a deeper understanding of the participants' experiences and perspectives [12]. Making it suitable for understanding the strategies and challenges of head teachers in Bagamoyo district in implementing CBC. A purposive sampling method selected thirty participants. Ten primary schools were selected, and we recruited five schools from rural areas and five schools from urban areas to remove bias and ensure proportional representation. Ten head teachers from the selected school were included in the study; furthermore, twenty teachers, two teachers from each school who had attended CBC training, were recruited in the study since they were implementers of the CBC in the real setting. Data were collected through interviews, observations, and document reviews. Thematic analysis was conducted following six stages, which are familiarising with the data, generating codes, creating themes, reviewing the themes, defining the themes and report writing [8]. Prior to data collection, the researcher obtained the necessary permissions and a research clearance letter from the University of Dodoma, which facilitated access to the study area and aided the data collection process. Participants who provided consent to participate in the study were included. Furthermore, the anonymity and confidentiality of both the participants and the institutions were adhered to by using label names throughout the study.

3. Results and discussions

3.1. Demographic characteristics of the respondents

This study involved 30 respondents: ten (10) head teachers and twenty (20) teachers from two selected schools (table 1).

3.2. Strategies employed by head teachers in implementing CBC in primary school

This objective was informed by the research question: "What strategies do head teachers use to assist teachers in adapting to the implementation of the competence-based curriculum (CBC) in public primary schools?" This question is crucial as it seeks to uncover the specific methods head teachers employ to facilitate teachers' adjustment to the new curriculum. The analysis of the data revealed five distinct sub-themes, each highlighting key aspects of the strategies identified. These sub-themes not only provide a structured framework for the discussion but also enhance understanding of the various ways head teachers support their staff in effectively implementing CBC. The subsequent sections elaborate on these findings, offering insights into the challenges and successes encountered in this educational transition.

Table 1

Demographic characteristics of the respondents involved in the study.

Category	Teachers	Head teachers	Total
Sex			
Male	16 (80%)	4 (40%)	20 (66.7%)
Female	8 (20%)	2 (20%)	10 (33.3%)
Total	20 (100%)	10 (100%)	30 (100%)
Age			
20-30	5 (20.8%)	–	5 (16.6%)
31-40	11 (45.8%)	–	11 (36.7%)
41-50	8 (33.3%)	5 (83.3%)	13 (43.3%)
51 and above	–	1 (16.7%)	1 (3.3%)
Total	24 (100%)	6 (100%)	30 (100%)
Teaching experience			
1-10	14 (58.3%)	1 (16.7%)	15 (50%)
11-20	8 (33.3%)	3 (30%)	11 (36.7%)
21-30	1 (4.1%)	2 (33.3%)	3 (10%)
31 and above	1 (4.1%)	–	1 (3.3%)
Total	24 (100%)	6 (100%)	30 (100%)

3.2.1. Ensuring in-service training in primary schools

The results of the interviews with the respondents revealed various strategies that head teachers in primary schools had adopted to implement the CBC. Respondents emphasised that in-service training was a crucial strategy aimed at enhancing the quality of education. They highlighted that initiatives such as seminars, workshops, and school-based training sessions were playing a vital role in equipping teachers with the necessary skills and knowledge to implement CBC effectively. These training opportunities not only provided teachers with updated pedagogical approaches but also fostered collaboration among educators, thus enabling them to share best practices and address challenges collectively. Overall, the insights gathered indicate that head teachers were actively engaging themselves in professional development initiatives to support their staff and improve the overall educational experience in primary schools. This was proved by the comments of one of the head teachers who said:

Teacher Continuous Professional Development (TCPD) is among the in-service training programs that teachers attend. Normally, I encourage teachers to attend the TCPD programme, which is conducted every Wednesday. Through this seminar, teachers share knowledge and experiences of emerging teaching approaches through this programme. As a result, the knowledge and skills gained are used to improve students' learning abilities. (Interview with the head teacher 1 of school A on 2nd of May, 2024)

In the same regard, another head teacher added:

In-service training for teachers increases their ability to implement CBC in primary school. Through school-based in-service training, we gain knowledge and skills on how to implement CBC to improve learners' learning. (Interview with head teacher 2 of school B/on 2nd of May, 2024)

The above quotes indicate that head teachers were given the opportunity for teachers to attend in-service training on the CBC. These findings show that head teachers recognised the significance of in-service training to teachers in enhancing the effective

implementation of CBC. It should be noted that in-service training exposes teachers to new content and pedagogical knowledge included in the new curriculum. Hence, this improves teachers' practice during curriculum implementation in primary schools. These findings are in line with the study conducted by Yirci et al. [26] who found that in-service training influenced head teachers in the implementation of CBC in primary schools. Furthermore, the study conducted in Kenya by Chepkonga [3] observed that head teachers needed training in the implementation of CBC in primary schools. Also, these findings support the Tanzania Educational Policy of 2023, which emphasises in-service training for teachers in order to make them cope with the curriculum reform [25]. This implies that in-service training on how to implement a competence-based curriculum is important.

3.2.2. Soliciting the support of teaching and learning materials

Teaching and learning materials are essential during the implementation of the curriculum. This is because they simplify the teaching and learning process. This study revealed that head teachers in the investigated schools ensured the availability of teaching and learning materials/infrastructures such as textbooks, encyclopaedia, dictionaries, and other supplementary materials that supported the implementation of CBC in primary schools. The availability of materials was found to encourage students' creativity, thus evoking prior knowledge and encouraging understanding. In this regard, one of the head teachers gave his views:

In our school, the head teacher ensures that the government and other educational stakeholders support us in getting textbooks for standards one through seven. For instance, CAMFED Limited has been supporting our schools by providing them with textbooks and supplementary materials used for the teaching and learning process. (Interview with head teacher 3 of school C on 2nd of May, 2024)

Regarding the same issue, another head teacher added:

In our school, the teaching and learning materials we get from the government help in teaching and learning. They support students when studying and encourage students' creativity and understanding of subjects. So, we encourage the government and education stakeholders to continue supporting the schools to ensure the availability of teaching and learning materials that support both teachers and students. (Interview with the head teacher 4 of school D, 3rd of May, 2024)

Similarly, another head teacher from school J reported:

In my school, we received teaching and learning materials to ensure CBC implementation, such as computers and fruit seedlings from education stakeholders, such as STANDARD CHARTERED, which helped the learners acquire practical skills. (Interview with head teacher 10 of school J on 10th of May, 2024)

The above quotes show that the availability of teaching and learning materials is important because it encourages students' creativity and permanent understanding. The data also show that the availability of teaching and learning materials supports both teachers and students during the teaching and learning process. The findings of this study align with the research conducted by Cherotich, Kaptingei and Rotumoi [4], which demonstrated that effective teaching and learning materials play a significant role in capturing learners' attention and enhancing their understanding of the

subject matter. Similarly, Benson and Njuguna [2] noted that high-quality teaching materials greatly influence students' comprehension during the educational process. These studies collectively underscore the critical importance of teaching and learning materials in primary education, thus highlighting that well-designed resources not only engage students but also facilitate deeper learning and retention of knowledge. Consequently, the availability and effective use of such materials are essential for improving educational outcomes in primary schools, as they directly impact the quality of instruction and the overall learning experience for students.

This study generally summarises that effective teaching and learning materials are needed during the implementation of CBC in primary schools. Therefore, the government and other educational stakeholders should ensure the availability of effective teaching and learning materials to achieve quality education in these schools. The current study concludes that head teachers should emphasise the availability of teaching and learning materials in their respective primary schools to implement the CBC and achieve quality education in our country.

3.2.3. Ensuring conducive teaching and learning environment

Conducive teaching and learning environments are vital towards competence-based curriculum implementation. This provides a broader room for teachers to exchange knowledge and skills with students, which in turn improves students' ability to learn. The interview findings from the respondents show that some primary schools' teaching and learning environments were improved by having established library services and other physical resources such as new classrooms, desks, tables and chairs. On this issue, one of the head teachers gave the following comment:

The availability of physical resources such as libraries and classrooms supports the implementation of CBC in primary schools. These reduce the number of students per classroom. Also, the availability of school furniture, such as desks and chairs, supports teachers and students during the teaching and learning process. As a head teacher, I normally make sure all the resources available are well handled and cared for future use. If found damaged, I collaborate with parents to fix the problem. (Interview with head teacher 5 of school E on 3rd May, 2024)

In connection with the same issue, another head teacher commented:

In fact, our government built many classrooms after COVID-19. The Tanzania president (Dr. Samia Suluhu Hassan) has supported our school by building four classrooms and a library, which students and teachers use to enhance their knowledge and skills in learning and teaching. Currently, the challenge of congested learners in one room has been reduced. (Interview with the head teacher 6 of school F on 4th of May, 2024)

In the same line of argument, a head teacher from school G reported:

We aimed to improve the student's performance in our school. We achieved our target with the support of our education stakeholder (EP4R), who built our classrooms. (Interview with head teacher 7 of school G on 4th of May, 2024)

The remarks above indicate that the availability of conducive teaching and learning environment supports the implementation of CBC in primary schools. This means that the availability of teaching and learning environments should be given priority

by supporting head teachers and teachers in implementing CBC at the primary school level. The current findings are in line with the findings by Muchira et al. [17], who found that a positive classroom environment promotes learning. Again, the study conducted by Kibwebwe and Mutilu [11] found that head teachers had the responsibility for preparing teaching and learning environments that facilitate the implementation of CBC in primary schools. This means that the teaching and learning environment is important for enhancing the implementation of CBC in primary schools. Therefore, there is a need for head teachers to improve the teaching and learning environment by supporting teachers and students in implementing CBC in primary schools.

3.2.4. Ensuring promoting of academic performance in the school

The interview findings show that good supervision from head teachers encourages all teachers and students to be responsible for improving the academic performance of the learners. In connection to this, one of the head teachers from school D had the following to say:

In short, good supervision by the head teacher motivates us to implement CBC effectively. Our head teacher directs us in our responsibilities and supervises us on how we implement CBC to improve the academic performance of learners. Also, I think the implementation of CBC in primary schools needs the seriousness of head teachers to supervise the teachers well. (Interview with the head teacher 2 of school D on 9th of May, 2024)

On the same matter, another head teacher reported:

Adequate supervision by the head teacher inspires us to implement the competence-based curriculum successfully. Our head teacher guides us in playing our roles and monitors the application of CBC to enhance students' academic performance in primary school. (Interview with the head teacher 6 of school F on 9th of May, 2024)

The above comments show that good supervision from the head teachers for implementing CBC may improve the academic performance among learners in primary schools. Also, it is important to note that the implementation of CBC is not an easy task. It should be noted that CBC encourages learners to be creative and, therefore, improve their ability to understand the lesson. Moreover, this opportunity increases students' creative and problem-solving abilities. The current findings concur with the findings generated by the study conducted in Uganda by Tumuheise et al. [24], which revealed that good supervision by the head teachers was affecting the implementation of CBC in primary schools. The study conducted in Kenya by Otieno, Aringo and Okemasisi [23] highlighted the influence of head teachers' managerial strategies on primary school teacher's performance in the implementation of CBC. This indicates that the head teacher is responsible for improving the academic performance of learners in primary schools. The current study suggests that head teachers and other education leaders in primary schools should emphasise supervision regarding the implementation of CBC in primary schools to improve academic performance in particular and quality education in general.

3.2.5. Enhancing the relationship between school and community

Through the interviews, the participants revealed that enhancing the relationship between school and community was one of the strategies that were found to support the implementation of CBC in primary schools. This is because collaboration between

head teachers, teachers, parents and community members encourages good teamwork, which supports the implementation of CBC in primary schools. Moreover, through collaboration/teamwork, every member gets the opportunity to share one's view that may support the implementation of CBC in their area. On this, one of the head teachers revealed:

I think, collaboration between head teachers, teachers, parents and community members is important because through it we get the chance to share our views. Also, on my side, collaboration should be emphasised to support the head teachers and teachers' implementation of CBC in primary schools. (Interview with the head teacher 2 of school B on 7th of May, 2024)

On the same matter, a similar view was given:

Generally, mutual cooperation among staff members and communities is important for the effective implementation of CBC in schools. Thus, communities may provide important material support. (Interview with head teacher 4 of school D on 7th of May 2024)

The quotes above underscore the essential role of school-parent and community partnerships in enhancing the implementation of the CBC in primary schools. Such collaboration not only fosters a supportive environment for students but also ensures that educational strategies are aligned with the needs and values of the community. This partnership implies that teamwork is crucial during the CBC implementation process, as it brings together diverse stakeholders—teachers, parents, and community members—to share resources, knowledge, and expertise. By working collaboratively, these groups can address challenges more effectively, create a cohesive support system for students, and ultimately improve educational outcomes. The active involvement of parents and the community can lead to a more holistic approach to education, where the insights and contributions of all parties are recognised and valued, thereby strengthening the overall impact of CBC in primary education.

The current findings align with the research conducted by Ngobeni [19], which observed that community-school partnerships foster effective management and positive impacts within schools. Additionally, a study by Malatji [15] reported that collaboration between parents and teachers enhances students' academic performance. Furthermore, the research by Merryness and Rupia [16] found that parental involvement significantly improves the management of primary schools. These findings suggest that school-parent partnerships may be a key strategy for helping teachers adapt to the implementation of the CBC in primary schools. Therefore, this study emphasises the importance of head teachers leveraging school-parent and community partnerships as a vital strategy for effectively implementing CBC in primary education.

3.3. Challenges encountered in implementing CBC in primary schools

The results of the interviews with the respondents, as well as the observation and documentary, highlighted the challenges that head teachers face during the implementation of CBC in primary schools, such as the following:

3.3.1. Low level of professional development for teachers

Interviews and documentary reviews of seminars and workshops report assessed this. The respondents argued that the low level of professional development of head teachers was affecting the implementation of CBC in primary schools. This is because the respondents revealed that they have been attending seminars and workshops only once or twice per year. They argued that due to insufficient exposure to in-service

training, their knowledge and skills were too low to implement CBC effectively in primary schools. Reacting to this, the head teacher of school B commented:

I attend seminars once or twice per year. One seminar involves many items and lasts three or four days. I think we have a low level of competence to implement CBC. Also, there is no regular training schedule. (Interview with head teacher 2 of school B on 10th of May, 2024)

On the same matter, another head teacher added:

I graduated more than ten years ago and have eight years of experience in teaching, but I attended only once a seminar about integrating ICT into education. Thus, I have little knowledge and skills in implementing CBC training. (Interview with head teacher D 4 school D on 10th of May, 2024)

The quotes above indicate that some head teachers possessed limited knowledge and skills due to a lack of in-service training. Additionally, the findings revealed that there was no regular timetable for workshops or seminars related to the implementation of the CBC in primary schools within this district. This absence of in-service training was found to have made teachers rely on local teaching approaches, such as the content-based method, rather than fully implementing CBC in their classrooms.

These findings align with a study conducted in Tanzania by Kalinga and Ndibalema [10], which found that a lack of teacher competence negatively affects teaching and learning activities. This suggests that insufficient teacher competence may result in poor implementation of CBC in primary schools. Therefore, the current study recommends the need for training programmes aimed at improving teachers' competence in implementing CBC to enhance students' academic performance. Furthermore, the study concludes that there is a direct relationship between teachers' teaching competence and students' performance. In that regard, the government and other educational stakeholders should prioritise in-service training for all primary school teachers to make them achieve quality education.

3.3.2. Lack of adequate teaching and learning materials in primary schools

This was assessed by observation and interviews; with connection to this sub-theme, the respondents emphasised that the lack of adequate and relevant teaching and learning materials in primary schools significantly hampers the effective implementation of the CBC. They noted that well-designed materials are essential for motivating students and capturing their attention during lessons, which is crucial for fostering an engaging learning environment. The presence of appropriate resources not only enhances students' immediate understanding of the subjects being taught but also contributes to their long-term memory retention, thus ensuring that knowledge is not just transient. However, it was reported that many educators were frustrated by the inadequacy of current teaching materials, such as textbooks, manila sheets, and supplementary resources, which are vital for delivering the curriculum effectively. This shortage was found to limit head teachers' ability to implement CBC principles fully, thus ultimately affecting students learning outcomes and hindering the overall educational experience in primary schools. In relation to this, the head teacher of school E said:

In our school, we have textbooks but one book per ten students ratio. We lack supplementary current materials that would support teaching and learning. I think teachers use more energy to encourage students to understand. As a result, our students get low understanding. (Interview with head teacher 5 of school E on 6th of May, 2024)

Another head teacher from school F added:

In fact, our schools have few teaching and learning materials that support a competence-based approach. We have many textbooks and supplementary materials, but they focus on content-based issues. Now, we have the new curriculum, but we lack enough teaching and learning materials, such as textbooks and supplementary materials, to accompany it. I think this affects the implementation of CBC in primary schools. (Interview with head teacher 7 of school F on 10th May, 2024)

The above comments show that poor or lack of teaching and learning materials have been affecting the implementation of CBC in primary schools. These findings also show that some materials were available, but they were irrelevant and inappropriate to the new curriculum [25]. This indicates that the availability of current and relevant materials is important for encouraging effective implementation of CBC. These findings concur with the study conducted in Kenya by Omondi and Achieng [22], which found that poor or lack of teaching and learning materials affects the effective implementation of CBC in primary schools. Also, the study conducted by Lyimo and Mpatani [14] found that inadequate teaching and learning materials were among the challenges that were hindering the implementation of CBC. This implies that teaching and learning materials are important for supporting the implementation of CBC in primary schools. Therefore, there is a need for the government and other educational stakeholders to ensure the availability of relevant teaching and learning materials to support head teachers and teachers in implementing CBC in primary schools.

3.3.3. Overcrowded classrooms

Interviews and observation assessed this. During the interview, some respondents pointed out the large number of students in the classrooms because one classroom was said to contain more than one hundred learners. However, the policy insists that one class should have 35-45 learners. Hence, this brought great challenges to teachers' management in the classroom, and also, through those challenges, it was difficult for teachers to make assessments of learners' awareness. On this, the head teacher of school H was of the following views:

The government has been supporting the construction of many classrooms in various primary schools, but we still need more classrooms because the number of students in standard one and two is too large. This makes it difficult for teachers to use a learner-centred approach. The new curriculum emphasises CBC through group discussion and individual participation to encourage learners' learning ability and problem-solving in schools. (Interview with head teacher 8 of school H on 8th of May, 2024)

Another head teacher added about the large number of learners in the classroom by saying:

The number of learners is too large compared to the number of teachers and classrooms. STD I, II, and III have 120 learners in one classroom, respectively. This situation makes it challenging for teachers to implement a learner-centred approach in schools. (Interview with head teacher 5 of school E on 8th of May, 2024)

The remarks above reveal that the government was taking the initiative by building classrooms in different schools, but the large number of learners in the classroom was still a challenge. This may affect the implementation of CBC in primary schools.

The current findings on this subtheme are in line with the findings of the study conducted by Adongo, Opiyo and Ouda [1], who observed that public primary schools had large numbers of learners in their classrooms. As a result, this affected the effective implementation of CBC in primary schools, thus affecting the learners' academic performance. However, the Tanzania Education Policy of 2014 emphasises that the number of learners per classroom should be 35-45 [25]. This means that a small number of learners in the classroom is important because it encourages teachers to implement teaching and learning effectively. Therefore, the current study concludes that there is a need to consider our educational policy practically rather than theoretically to reach the 2025 educational goals.

3.3.4. Lack of enough teachers

An insufficient number of teachers was assessed by observation and interviews. During the interview, some respondents pointed out the lack of teachers in primary schools. They said that an insufficient number of teachers in primary schools was hindering the effective implementation of CBC in primary schools. Also, they added that the availability of enough teachers gives teachers opportunities to prepare and implement CBC well during teaching and learning in primary schools. In this regard, the head teacher commented:

In our school, some teachers have more than 30 periods per week, which makes it difficult for them to prepare for implementing CBC in primary schools. Also, some teachers lack the necessary skills for implementation due to low levels of knowledge and skills. (Interview with head teacher 3 of school C on 6th of May, 2024)

Regarding the matter at hand, another head teacher said:

In our school, we have 15 teachers, and this number is not enough given the number of learners per class. I think the implementation of CBC depends on the number of teachers per student, as instructed in our policy. (Interview with the head teacher 7 of school G on 6th of May, 2024)

The above comments show that poor or lack of enough teachers has been affecting the implementation of CBC in primary schools. The findings also show that some schools were rationing the number of teachers as they were not enough to meet the number of students in primary schools, as identified in the new curriculum, 2023. It was found that the materials were available, but they were irrelevant and inappropriate to the new curriculum for 2023. This indicates that the availability of current and relevant materials is important for encouraging effective implementation of CBC.

The findings indicate that a shortage of teachers severely hinders the effective implementation of the CBC in primary schools, as shown by studies in Kenya and Tanzania. A low teacher-to-student ratio limits individual attention for students, negatively impacting educational quality; for example, Omondi and Achieng [22] noted that large class sizes make it difficult for teachers to provide personalised instruction. The United Republic of Tanzania (URT) [25] also highlighted the teacher shortage as a significant barrier to achieving the curriculum's goals. Additionally, the lack of relevant teaching materials further complicates implementation, as many existing resources do not align with the CBC's requirements, leading to confusion among educators and students. To effectively realise the CBC's objectives—such as fostering critical thinking and practical skills it is essential to increase the number of qualified teachers and ensure access to appropriate instructional materials, thereby enhancing the overall learning experience.

4. Conclusions and recommendations

The findings of this study revealed that respondents employed various strategies to support teachers in adapting to the CBC in public primary schools. These strategies included enhancing in-service teacher training, improving teaching and learning materials and infrastructure, and creating a conducive teaching and learning environment. Additionally, efforts were made to strengthen the relationship between schools and the community to facilitate the implementation of CBC. These findings align with the Education and Training Policy of 2014 [25], which emphasises the need for CBC in the teaching and learning process.

The study concludes that in-service training should prioritise head teachers and subject teachers in primary schools to enhance the quality of education at this level. It recommends conducting various seminars focused on CBC implementation to improve teachers' attitudes, knowledge, and skills. Furthermore, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, along with other educational stakeholders, should emphasise the distribution of teaching and learning materials relevant to the new curriculum to align with contemporary educational goals for both public and private secondary schools. This support will boost teachers' confidence in applying CBC in their daily activities. Moreover, head teachers should collaborate with teachers and parents to guide students in implementing a learner-centred approach. This collaboration will motivate students and support subject teachers during their teaching and learning activities. While this study focused on primary schools, further research is recommended to explore similar themes in secondary schools across the country.

The study acknowledges some limitations, such as the specific focus on public primary schools in Bagamoyo District, which may limit the generalizability of the findings. Additionally, the reliance on self-reported data through interviews could introduce bias. To address these limitations, future research could consider a larger, more diverse sample and incorporate quantitative methods to triangulate the data and provide a more comprehensive understanding of CBC implementation.

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