

# **Fourth Community of Practice for Learner-Centred Education**

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## **Field Experience: Current Situation of the Implementation of Competence Based Curriculum In Secondary Schools.**

Prepared by;

Happiness W. Kimaro

Morogoro Teachers' College.

## Field Experience: Current Situation of ~~The~~ Implementation of Competence-Based Curriculum ~~In~~ Secondary Schools.

### Introduction

The use of learner centered methods in teaching and learning is becoming a common agenda in education since there is a shift of paradigm from ~~being~~ content based to competence based.

Competence based curriculum practice is opposed to content based practice. This new curriculum practice is intended to build knowledge, skills, the right attitudes, and competencies in the learner so that she can use them to solve problems in daily life. It is what the learner can do practically that is important and not the quantity of theoretical knowledge that the learners can memorize.

Learner's participation as a concept in the teaching and learning process is not a new phenomenon in Tanzania. According to Ndunguru in (1984) in the policy of education for ~~self-reliance~~ self-reliance which was introduced in 1967, ~~emphasized~~ emphasizing learners' participation by making the learners learn by doing. The emphasis on participatory methods is rooted in ~~the~~ constructionist learning theory, which ~~was~~ suggested that learners learn better when they actively participate in the teaching and learning process. ~~This~~ ~~which~~ also results ~~into~~ meaningful learning.

Currently thinking in teaching and learning has shifted from content based to competence based. ~~The~~ Learner is the centre of the learning process and is actively involved in the learning process. The notion of participation refers to the condition of an individual taking an active part in a given activity. In classroom's practices, participation therefore refers to the learner being actively engaged in the teaching and learning process. ~~+~~ The teacher can, therefore, enable the learners to participate in the learning process though the use of participatory teaching methods. For the purpose of this paper, participatory teaching methods refer to the teaching methods that can facilitate interaction in the teaching and learning process. Basically, learner-centered methods of teaching encourage critical thinking among ~~the~~ learners and also make the learners take responsibility ~~of~~ for their own learning.

In secondary ~~education~~ education, teachers are aware of this ~~competence based~~ competence-based curriculum but the practice is different due to ~~some~~ challenges. This paper aims ~~at~~ to identify ~~ing~~ those challenges and provide ~~some~~ possible strategies to overcome those challenges.

### The Situation in Schools of the Implementation of Competence Based Curriculum

From the observation ~~which has been done~~ in some of the secondary schools it seems that teachers are aware of the shift of ~~paradigm which is~~ paradigm that is competence based, but ~~the~~ practice is different. Teachers use traditional methods of teaching, ~~of~~ which do not build competence ~~to~~ in learners.

The following are the challenges ~~which~~ that teachers claim to face them in the implementation of competence based curriculum:

## Understanding of the concept (competence based)

It has been observed that, the concept of competence based is not well understood ~~to-by~~ teachers. Teachers think that to put students into groups during ~~the~~ teaching process is ~~whereby learners can but~~ to build competence. The issue is, what do they do in ~~to~~ those groups? Are the teachers able to prepare ~~activities which~~ activities that will make students ~~to~~ interact fully with subject matter and the learning materials? It seems that the concept is not well understood ~~to-by~~ teachers and as a result they opt for traditional methods of teaching, which do not match competence based curriculum.

## Language ability

The medium of instruction in secondary schools is English ~~language~~. This is ~~to-for~~ all subjects except ~~for~~ Kiswahili ~~subject~~. This is the challenge ~~to-for~~ both ~~sides~~ students, ~~who~~ have ~~low~~ low language ability as well as ~~for~~ their teachers. In order to build competence to students as far as learner centered methods of teaching and learning are concerned, there should be a clear interaction between students themselves , the material learned and the teacher who is the facilitator of the entire process of teaching and learning.

## Teachers Quantity and quality

Due to rapid increase of schools in Tanzania, enrolment of students has increased. Many schools have experienced the shortage of teachers, ~~and as a consequence~~, teachers have ~~a big~~ work load ~~workloads~~. For instance, in some ~~of the~~ secondary schools one can find two or three teachers to teach one subject from form one to form four and those classes ~~has~~ ~~have~~ ~~been~~ ~~had~~ ~~to~~ ~~be~~ divided into streams A to D. Due to this teachers comment that they find difficulties to teach as competence based curriculum demands.

In addition, the paradigm shift is a big challenge to them. ~~T~~ therefore they need in-service training in order for them to cope with the change. ~~In the first place~~ ~~T~~ the seminars and workshops provided on the shift of paradigm did not reach a big number of teachers and those who attended, the seminars ~~were not~~ ~~did not~~ ~~find them~~ helpful. "When teachers are actively involved and empowered in reform of their own classrooms and schools, even those teachers with minimal level of education and training are capable of changing the classroom environment and improving the achievement of their students" Craig et al(1998).

## Lack of supportive facilities and resources.

Teaching and learning resources and facilities are very important In the process of learning. Many schools do not have enough books, equipped laboratories, ICT facilities etc. This adversely affects the implementation of ~~the competence based~~ competence-based curriculum, ~~whose~~ ~~which~~ emphasizes ~~is on~~ learning by doing.

## Large number of students in classrooms

This is still a big challenge in most ~~of the~~ secondary schools. Due to ~~the~~ shortage of teachers, the teacher ~~–to–~~ student ratio is very high, which makes it difficult for teachers to implement student centered pedagogies. MOEVT (2003), ~~evaluated~~ ~~determined that~~ ~~that~~ many teachers, due ~~to the fact of having~~ big classes ~~they~~ tend to stick to traditional methods, despite the fact that the Government has introduced a new curriculum, which emphasizes learner centered methods of teaching and learning.

### Others

- Lack of motivation to teachers due to unfavourable working condition.
- Low students cooperation attitude

### Possible Solutions to Overcome the Challenges

First, is for the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training to ~~make do~~ follow up in schools to make sure that teachers are using ~~learner centered~~ learner-centered methods of teaching for meaningful learning.

Second, is for the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training to provide teaching materials that will enable teachers to implement ~~the a~~ competence based curriculum, and other learning facilities to should be supplied as well secondary schools. They ~~should also~~ supplying ~~of~~ enough teaching and learning materials, especially books. ~~Also~~ In addition, teachers should use other methods of teaching, which will ensure good participation of all learners during the entire process of teaching and learning.

Third, is for the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training to conduct in service training programs to teachers to schools ~~so as to~~ improve their knowledge, skills, and competence especially ~~on in~~ the implementation of ~~the student centered~~ student-centred approach in teaching/learning processes.

TRCs should play a big role in updating teachers' professionalism particularly when curriculum changes. ~~Also t~~ Teachers should be educated on the importance of using TRCs so as to gain new knowledge, skills, and attitude, to their profession. Haki Elimu (2006) found out that teaching as a professional like others needs to be activated from time to time, purposely to make the professionals very active ~~accordingly~~ to their work. It is suggested that there should frequently ~~go to~~ seminars and workshops in order to equip them with skills and knowledge ~~for them t~~ to improve their practice. ~~And t~~ This will bring about better teaching and learning.

Zonal Inspectorate Offices in collaboration with the Heads of schools should make ~~a~~ regular school inspections ~~so as~~ to ensure ~~that there is an~~ effective use of teaching methods ~~in based~~ on the Learner centered approach ~~which is currently applicable in teaching/learning processes~~.

The Head of schools should insist the teachers ~~to~~ improvise ~~the~~ teaching materials in their schools while waiting for the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training to offer the learning facilities in their schools.

Parents should be involved fully in the education of their children so that they can see the importance of buying learning materials for their kids.

Teachers also should be creative in order to make students participate in the learning process for meaningful learning. Furthermore, teachers' creativity will help them to come up with solutions to the problems which they face when using participatory methods during the teaching and learning process. Also, Language teachers, particularly of English, language should work on the mastery of all language skills, which are listening, speaking, writing, and reading to their students.

### Conclusion

It has been observed that teachers, who are the implementers of the curriculum, do not get in-service training which can help them to improve their professionalism. Also, Teachers did not get enough and effective training during the shift of paradigm, therefore this which made them, to some extent, to carry on with the use of traditional methods of teaching, or to stick into few learners-centered methods. This as well as hindering them to be from being creative in the implementation of a competence based curriculum. Supplying of enough teaching and learning materials especially books, involving parents and other stakeholders, good collaboration between School Inspectors, Head of schools, teachers, and the use of TRCs, just to mention few, can help in making effective implementation of a competence based curriculum. However, Moreover, the Ministry of Education should work on suggestions which that have been addressed by educational stakeholders so as to improve our education quality.

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