

THE INFLUENCE OF COMPETENCY-BASED CURRICULUM PROMOTED STUDENTS' SELF-DISCOVERY IN SELECTED GOVERNMENT-AIDED SECONDARY SCHOOLS OF WAKISO DISTRICT, UGANDA. A CROSS-SECTIONAL SURVEY.

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Abstract

Background

This study aims to establish the influence of a competency-based curriculum on students' self-discovery in selected government-aided secondary schools of Wakiso District, Uganda.

Methodology

The study applied descriptive research design with qualitative and quantitative research approaches. Data was collected randomly from 10 head teachers, 30 class teachers, and 120 students using both self-administered questionnaires and key informant interview guides.

Results

Both class teacher and student respondents agreed that a competency-based curriculum has highly promoted students' competency in self-discovery in selected government-aided secondary schools of Wakiso District, Uganda. According to the class teachers, CBC students discover personal abilities, realize their life interests, discover their sports talents, and know their career choices after school. This is also supported by the responses given by the students who believe that the CBC program helps students discover their abilities, realize their life interests, or want to achieve in life, discover their sporting talents, and make their future career choices.

Findings show that there is a high positive linear relationship between competency-based curriculum and students' competency in self-discovery in selected government-aided secondary schools of Wakiso District, Uganda at a correlational coefficient $r=0.740^{**}$, P value $0.000 < 0.01$). About government-aided secondary schools in Wakiso District, the results mean that, when CBC improves, students' competency level in terms of self-discovery improves as well.

Conclusion

Based on the study findings, it was concluded that a competency-based curriculum highly promotes students' competency in self-discovery in selected government-aided secondary schools of Wakiso District, Uganda.

Recommendation

Since the CBC promotes students' self-discovery, innovativeness, and practicability government should ensure that all necessary facilities in terms of sporting equipment, Science laboratories, and computer labs are available in each school and are not only available but are well equipped with requirements including books, reagents, and other facilities.

Keywords: Competency, curriculum, student's self-discovery, government, secondary schools.

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Background of the study

This study intends to assess the association between Competency Based Curriculum and students' self-discovery. Its main focus is to reveal how students have been able to discover their abilities, talents, and interests through the use of or by studying using the new competency-based Curriculum. According to Noddings (2013), the self-discovery concept focuses on the student's active role in their learning process. It is thought that a person learns better when they are allowed to access knowledge directly instead of being subjected to instruction, which teaches them how to use these data.

In addition, Powell (2014) argued that "the central focus of curriculum integration is the search for self and social meaning" (p. 616). To fully engage in curriculum

integration, educators need to have a deep understanding of young adolescents and their position within the larger world. This first comes with addressing educators' own biases and developing their cultural competencies as educators. The reality is that the majority of teachers will not teach students who are exactly like them and will experience the world in a vastly different way than their students. These differences might come in the way of ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, ability, sexuality, religion, or family structure.

Similarly, Biesta (2014) said that the Competency Curriculum makes students learn about their subjectivity. The Competency Curriculum offers students entry into learning about themselves, what they are good at, and how to address personal challenges. Using their full

engagement, students can have their responses and give their meaning to the subject matter and to the situations in which they take part. Their responses and meanings can reflect their values, opinions, interests, and goals (Peschl, 2007). Thus, being present can be both reflexive and reflective; that is, instead of receiving the world or the other, the student has the chance to understand himself or herself first by discovering their talents and interests (Noddings, 2013).

More so, a competency-based Based Curriculum helps students discover their value (Dahlberg, & Dahlberg, 2020). Thus, what is more present in a competent-based curriculum is to allow the students to discover themselves. The vitality of the Competency-Based Curriculum has been conceived of as a value that must be nurtured within education, allowing students to become engaged with and attentive to the world (Rodgers & Raider-Roth, 2006). For example, (Dahlberg, & Dahlberg (2020) discussed the meaning of 'awakening' students to enable them to pay full attention to life and to become aware of their mode of existence, and their responsibility as individuals in a changing and problematic world.

This study aims to establish the influence of a competency-based curriculum on students' self-discovery in selected government-aided secondary schools of Wakiso District, Uganda.

Methodology

Research Design

A cross-sectional descriptive research design was applied because it involves analyzing information about a specific

population within a specific period or phenomenon (Creswell, 2015). This study also applied both quantitative and qualitative research approaches whereby quantitative

Research Population

There was a total of 27 public secondary schools in Wakiso District. However, this study sought to target a total of 10 public secondary schools in the District. The 10 schools were arrived at based on a serialization procedure, keeping in mind that they were public schools located in different areas within the District and of mixed gender of both boys and girls. The study targeted head teachers, class teachers of seniors 1, 2, and 3 as well as 12 students in each of the schools.

Study Sample size

In this study, a total of 10 schools out of 27 were considered as the unit of analysis whereby 10 head teachers (1 from each of the 10 targeted schools), 30 class teachers (specifically class teachers of Senior 1, 2, and 3 in each of the targeted schools), and 120 students (12 students from each of the targeted schools) were considered as the unit of inquiry. A snowball sampling technique was used in selecting the students and teacher respondents since it targeted respondents of similar characteristics (under CBC). Therefore, the total study, target, and sample size population was 160 respondents.

Table 1: Population of the Study

Category	Population	Sample Size	Sampling Procedure
Head Teachers	27	10	Purposive
Class Teachers	30	30	Purposive
Students	120	120	Purposive
Total	177	160	Purposive

Sampling Techniques

Based on the nature of the respondents, this research used a Purposive sampling technique in selecting the head teachers, class teachers, and student respondents.

Purposive Sampling

Amin (2005) explains that a convenience sampling technique is a procedure that allows those who are available and willing to participate in the study by answering the tools of data collection. This type of sampling does not force anyone to participate in the study and only those who were available in the targeted public secondary schools during the day of data collection, and signed the consent form were given a chance to participate in this study.

Tools Used

The research used a questionnaire as the main method and instrument of data collection to provide quantitative data from the class teacher and student respondents. In

addition, the researcher made use of a key informant interview guide to collect qualitative data from the head teachers of the 10 targeted secondary schools. According to Creswell (2015), it is appropriate to use a questionnaire for data collection because it is time and cost-effective. Creswell (2015) states that many instruments of data collection were used to collect data from the field to answer study objectives. This researcher therefore considered the use of a self-administered questionnaire to help in collecting data from the class teachers and students. The study also used a face-to-face interview to collect data from the head teachers.

Quality Control

For the quality of data achieved, the researcher subjected the questionnaire and the interview to a validity and reliability analysis.

Reliability

To ensure that the questionnaire was reliable, the researcher carried out a pilot study on some school class teachers in another working environment to ascertain the reliability of the research instrument or tool. The pilot

study questionnaires were analyzed using IBM version 26 to determine the Cronbach's Alpha confidence or reliability scale whereby the minimum recommended value is 0.7 or above. As illustrated in Table 2, the questionnaires were reliable at a reliability analysis scale of 0.802.

Table 2: Reliability Test

Cronbach's Alpha	No of Items
0.802	24

n=25, Source: Primary Data from Piloted schools in Luwero District (2023)

Validity

To ensure that the questionnaire and the interview schedule were valid, the researcher formulated the study-specific objectives. After doing so, the researcher involved the supervisors and other experts in the field of education and curriculum management to review if the items (questions) in the instruments were answering the specific study objectives. Amin (2005) states that a research instrument is determined through expert judgment, whereby the minimum recommended CVI of 0.7. Therefore, as illustrated in the workings underneath, the questionnaires were v Cf 0.17.

$$\text{Content Validity Index (CVI)} = \frac{\text{Number of items relevant}}{\text{Total number of items in the questionnaire}} \text{ Content VVI) = } \frac{22}{24} \text{ Content Validity Index (CVI) = 0.917}$$

Data Collection

After the approval of the dissertation, the researcher was availed with an introduction letter by the University introducing him as a student of TEAM UNIVERSITY. The researcher then presented the letter to the District Education Officer who authorized him to access the respondents (head teachers, class teachers, and students) in Wakiso District, who were required to provide the researcher with an acceptance letter permitting him to interact and collect data from the respondents in the targeted secondary schools. Then the researcher made appointments with the head teachers on specific days to collect data. The researcher collected data from each school on one specific day meaning that the process of data collection took a total of 10 days (one day for each school). Data from each school was collected concurrently with the interview schedule of the HM, class teachers, and

students. Thus, the researcher visited the school in the morning, interviewed the head teacher then distributed the questionnaires to the class teachers and students on the same day.

Data Analysis

The raw data from the field was analyzed using IBM statistics (SPSS Version 26) because it is suitable and has several statistical and mathematical functions. The raw data collected using a questionnaire was analyzed descriptively through descriptive statistics and presented in tables and graphs of frequencies, percentages, mean, and standard deviations. To establish the influence of the independent variable on the dependent variable, the researcher subjected the data to Pearson's correlation moments as well as multiple regression analysis.

The qualitative data collected from the key informant interview schedule was analyzed through thematic analysis or narration approach where the directors' views were presented as quotes or italics.

Ethical Considerations

Just like any other profession, researchers are required to observe research ethics which include confidentiality and privacy of the respondents. In this study, therefore, the researcher requested the respondents to consent by signing the consent form. Then the researcher treated respondents' data with uttermost privacy and confidentiality by ensuring that individual respondents' views were not disclosed and that the information was only used for academic purposes. In addition, to hide the respondents' identity, the research only used pseudonyms to represent respondents' names.

Results

Table 3: Profile of Student Respondents

		Frequency	Percent
Gender	Boys	54	45.0
	Girls	66	55.0
Age	10-15 years	61	50.8
	16-20 years	59	49.2
Students' current class	S1	40	33.3
	S2	40	33.3
	S3	40	33.3

N=120, Source; Primary data from the field by the researcher (2023)

Table 3/fig 3 presents information on student respondents' demographic information in terms of gender, age, and class.

Gender of Student Respondents

Findings indicate that the majority 66(55%) of the students who participated in this study were girls while 54(45%) were boys. This shows the dominance of girls in this study and this can be explained by the fact that most of the girls were sampled and consented more to the study than boys. However, both boys and girls were involved in the study and this eliminated the problem of gender biases in data collection.

Age of the Student Respondents

Findings in Table 4.1 indicate that 61 (51%) of the student respondents were aged between 10-15 years, while nearly half of 59(49%) were aged between 16-20 years of age. This shows the dominance of students under 20 years of age and this can be explained by the fact that this is the normal age range for secondary school students in Uganda.

Student Respondents' Current Class

Findings indicate that there was an equal representation of S1, S2, and S3 students in the study at an average representation of 40 (33.3%) in each of the targeted classes. This shows that each class targeted in the study and currently implementing CBC was represented in the study and hence there was no bias.

Table 4.: Profile of Teacher Respondents

		Frequency (f)	Percent (%)
Gender	Male	17	56.7
	Female	13	43.3
Age	18-23 years	1	3.3
	24-29 years	6	20.0
	30-35 years	19	63.3
	36 and above years	4	13.3
Job Experience	Less than 3 years	1	3.3
	3-6 years	9	30.0
	7-10 years	17	56.7
	11 and above years	3	10.0
Teacher academic level	Diploma	3	10.0
	Bachelors	25	83.3
	Masters	2	6.6

Table 4 presents empirical information on the demographic information of teacher respondents in terms of gender, age, and job experience.

Gender of the Teacher Respondents

Findings in Table 4 show that the majority of 17 (57%) of the class teachers were male while 13(43%) were female. This shows the dominance of male class teachers' involvement in this study, though a significant number of female class teachers were also involved in the study indicating that there were no gender-related biases in the data collection from the class teachers of each of the targeted secondary schools.

Age of the Teacher Respondents

Findings in Table 4 show that the majority 19 (63%) of the class teachers were aged 30-35 years, while fewer 1(3%) were aged 18-23 years. However, it was also observed that almost all age brackets were represented in this study.

Job Experience of the Teacher Respondents

Findings in Table 4 show that the majority 17(57%) of the teacher respondents had 7-10 years of experience with fewer than 1 (3%) having less than 3 years experience in

the teaching profession. This shows that most of the class teachers in the targeted secondary schools were mature enough and highly experienced and this translated to quality data for the study based on their knowledge and experience in the teaching profession.

Teacher academic level

Findings in Table 4 indicate that the majority 25(83.3%) of the teachers were bachelors holders and 3(10%) were diploma holders while the 2(6.6%) were masters holders. This means that all the teachers were professional and qualified enough to respond to the questions required for this study.

Competency-Based Curriculum and Students' Competency in Self-Discovery

Question 1 of the study was to establish how a competency-based curriculum has promoted students' competency in self-discovery in selected government-aided secondary schools of Wakiso District, Uganda. The description was assessed based on the computed 5-mean range Likert scale as follows; 1.00-1.79 (Very low), (1.80-2.59 (low), 2.60-3.39 (moderate), (3.40-4.19 (high) and, 4.20-5.00 (very high). A standard deviation of >1 indicated that the respondents were homogeneous and hence able to respond with a minimal variance.

Table 5: Competency-Based Curriculum and Students' Self-Discovery

Class Teachers' Views on CBC and Students Self-Discovery	Mean	S.D
The new curriculum has made my students discover their abilities	3.27	.868
The CBC has enabled my students to realize their life interests	3.60	.894
CBC has helped my students discover their sports talents	3.83	.699
Because of the CBC, my students now know their career choices after school	3.30	.794
Aggregate Mean and S.D	3.50	0.814
Students Views on CBC and Students Self-Discovery	Mean	Std. D
Because of the CBC program, I have discovered my abilities.	3.62	.745
Using the CBC has made me realize my life interests and what I want to achieve in life.	3.92	.904
CBC has helped me discover my sporting talents	3.71	.782
CBC has made me make my future career choice	3.73	.807
Aggregate Mean and S.D	3.75	0.810
Grand Mean and S.D	3.63	0.812

Table 5 presents empirical information on how a competency-based curriculum has promoted students' competency in self-discovery in selected government-aided secondary schools of Wakiso District, Uganda based on the views of both the class teachers and the S1, S2, and S3 students.

Class Teachers' Views on CBC and Students Self-Discovery

Findings in Table 5 indicate that the majority of the class teachers agreed with the views that the CBC has made their students discover their abilities, the CBC has enabled their students to realize their life interests, CBC has helped their students discover their sports talents, and because of the CBC, their students now know their career choice after school. These findings imply that a competency-based curriculum has highly promoted students' competency in self-discovery in selected government-aided secondary schools of Wakiso District, Uganda (Agg mean=3.50, S. D=0.814). The results, therefore, suggest that class teachers are highly satisfied with the way the CBC promotes students' competency in self-discovery in

selected government-aided secondary schools of Wakiso District, Uganda.

Students Views on CBC and Students Self-Discovery

Findings in Table 5 indicate that the majority of the students agreed with the views that because of the CBC program, they have discovered their abilities, using the CBC has made them realize their life interests or what they want to achieve in life, CBC has helped them discover their sporting talents, and CBC has made them make their future career choice. These findings imply that competency-based curriculum implementation has highly promoted students' competency in self-discovery in selected government-aided secondary schools of Wakiso District, Uganda (Agg mean=3.75, S. D=0.810). The results, therefore, suggest that students in the targeted schools are highly satisfied with the way the CBC promotes their competency in self-discovery in selected government-aided secondary schools of Wakiso District, Uganda.

Table 6: Correlation between competency-based curriculum and students' competency in self-discovery in selected government-aided secondary schools of Wakiso District, Uganda.

		Correlations	
		CBC Implementation	Students' competency in self-discovery
CBC Implementation	Pearson Correlation	1	.740**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	30	30
Students' competency in self-discovery	Pearson Correlation	.740**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	30	30

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 6 presents correlational results to determine the relationship between competency-based curriculum and students' competency in self-discovery in selected government-aided secondary schools of Wakiso District, Uganda. Findings show that there is a high positive linear relationship between competency-based curriculum and students' competency in self-discovery in selected government-aided secondary schools of Wakiso District, Uganda at a correlational coefficient $r=0.740^{**}$, P value $0.000 < 0.01$). About government-aided secondary schools in Wakiso District, the results mean that, when the CBC improves, students' competency level in terms of self-discovery improves as well, and when the CBC fails, students' competency in terms of self-discovery declines or fails as well. Therefore, since the CBC is positively achieved, students' competency in terms of self-discovery is also positively experienced and achieved in selected government-aided secondary schools of Wakiso District, Uganda.

The qualitative data derived from the key informant interview supports the quantitative findings by indicating a positive influence of competency-based curriculum implementation on students' competency in self-discovery in selected government-aided secondary schools of Wakiso District, Uganda. The interviewed head teachers felt that a competency-based curriculum has made their students discover their abilities, enabled their students to realize their life interests, helped their students discover their sports talents, and their students now know their career choices after school. This suggests that head teachers in government-aided secondary schools of Wakiso District, Uganda are satisfied with the contributions of the CBC towards promoting students' competency in self-discovery. Some of their narrations include;

"...since we started the CBC implementation in my school, I have realized a great difference between past students and the current group of students in terms of their ability to identify their abilities. Currently, students in my school have indicated their academic strength whereby those who are good in specific subjects of co-curricular activities have expressed their abilities..." (Source: KI 1).

Furthermore, another head teacher explained that; *"...the implementation of CBC has helped my students express their self-interests. Today, my students can tell you what they are interested in becoming in the future,*

what they want to achieve in the future, and what they are good at rather than concentrating on doing and becoming good in everything at school..." (Source: KI 3).

Again another head teacher had this to say; *"...my school has discovered sports talents in a significant number of our students. We are working every day towards identifying students' sporting talents and as a result, the CBC implementation process is the key factor towards the identification and nurturing of the sporting talents in my school. As a result, our performance in sports is extremely good because we have improved from the position we have been in the past five years to the top schools in sports, debates, and science projects in Wakiso District..." (Source: KI 4).*

It is also seen in the response indicated below; *"...it was hard for students to tell you conclusively what they want to be when they grow up. However, the current group of students being instructed based on the CBC are aware and have made their career choices. This has promoted the choice of their school work and where their concentration is highly placed in terms of subjects and commitments.....because of the CBC implementation, my students are aware of what they want to be and what they want to achieve in their future career development and progress..." (Source: KI 7).*

Additionally, another heartache confirms that; *"...CBC has made it easy for students to discover their talents in school. This has also promoted the sports nurturing and performance in my school..." (Source: KI 8).*

Finally, the head teacher interviewed last confirmed that; *"...as the head teacher and the key administrator in this school, I am very much satisfied with the way things are at the moment in terms of the high level at which students under the CBC program are aware of what they want, and how they can achieve it because of the high degree in self-discovery observed in them..." (Source: KI 10).*

In conclusion, results indicate a high grand mean of 3.63 and a standard deviation of 0.812 which imply that a competency-based curriculum has highly promoted or highly promotes students' competency in self-discovery in selected government-aided secondary schools of Wakiso District, Uganda. Therefore, it seems that CBC has a positive impact on student's competence in the schools

Discussion

Both class teacher and student respondents agreed that a competency-based curriculum has highly promoted students' competency in self-discovery in selected government-aided secondary schools of Wakiso District, Uganda. According to the class teachers, CBC students discover personal abilities, realize their life interests, discover their sports talents, and know their career choices after school. This is also supported by the responses given by the students who believe that the CBC program helps students discover their abilities, realize their life interests, or want to achieve in life, discover their sporting talents, and make their future career choices. Thus, is a suitable tool for making and promoting students' self-discovery. Furthermore, scholars have related Competency Based Curriculum and students' self-discovery based on two domains. The first is the domain of students' academic learning. Noddings (2013) considered the involvement of students' subjective experience through their trying, feeling, and being receptively attentive as crucial within an intuitive mode of working. A competent Curriculum is prepared such that it promotes student's self-discovery and, by working analytically and intuitively in alternation, students may gain a fuller understanding, consisting of knowing and also appreciating or valuing the subject matter. Therefore, there is a significant influence on students' competency in the CBC it's only that a lot of support should be given to schools to implement CBC more effectively.

Conclusion

Based on the study findings, it was concluded that a competency-based curriculum highly promotes students' competency in self-discovery in selected government-aided secondary schools of Wakiso District, Uganda.

Recommendation

Since the CBC promotes students' self-discovery, innovativeness, and practicability government should ensure that all necessary facilities in terms of sporting equipment, Science laboratories, and computer labs are available in each school and are not only available but are well equipped with requirements including books, reagents, and other facilities.

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List of Abbreviations

SPSS: Statistical Package for Social Sciences
CVI: Content Validity Index
CBC: Competency Based Curriculum
NCDC: National Curriculum Development Centre
BC: Before Christ
MKO: More Knowledgeable Other
ZPD: Zone of Proximal Development
BMP: Bulawayo Metropolitan Province

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Conflict of interest

The author had no conflict of interest.

Author Biography

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