

Influence Of Preparation Of Professional Documents On The Implementation Of Competency-Based Education In Public Primary Schools In Lamu West Sub-County, Kenya

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Abstract

The transition to Competency-Based Education (CBE) in Kenya has increased the importance of teacher planning and documentation in translating curriculum intentions into classroom practice. However, evidence from geographically isolated and resource-constrained regions suggests that many teachers experience difficulties in preparing professional documents aligned with CBE requirements. This study examined the influence of preparation of professional documents on the implementation of CBE in public primary schools in Lamu West Sub-County, Kenya. The study was anchored on Rogers' Diffusion of Innovation Theory and adopted a descriptive survey design. The target population comprised 592 teachers in 71 public primary schools, from which 239 teachers were sampled. Data were collected using structured questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. A total of 203 teacher questionnaires were returned, yielding an 84.9% response rate. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation analysis, and multiple regression analysis, while qualitative data were analyzed thematically. The findings established a positive and statistically significant relationship between preparation of professional documents and CBE implementation ($r = .630, p < .001$). Teachers who effectively prepared schemes of work, lesson plans, assessment records, and progress records reported higher levels of CBE implementation. Qualitative findings revealed that only a minority of teachers consistently prepared professional documents independently, while many relied on commercially prepared materials that were often poorly aligned with local learner needs. The study concludes that competence in professional document preparation is a significant predictor of effective CBE implementation. It recommends continuous teacher training in practical document preparation, establishment of school-based professional learning communities, and strengthened instructional support by curriculum support officers.

Keywords: Professional Documents, Competency-Based Education, Teacher Training, Curriculum Implementation, Public Primary Schools, Lamu West Sub-County

Date of Submission: 19-07-2026

Date of Acceptance: 29-07-2026

I. Introduction

Competency-Based Education (CBE) represents a major curriculum reform that emphasizes the development of learners' knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes through authentic learning experiences rather than memorization of content (Akala, 2021). Successful implementation of CBE requires teachers to translate curriculum competencies into structured classroom activities, assessment tasks, and learning experiences through effective professional planning (Njati, 2022). Professional documents such as schemes of work, lesson plans, assessment records, and learner progress records serve as the operational bridge between curriculum policy and classroom practice.

Globally, education systems that have successfully implemented competency-based curricula have invested heavily in teacher capacity for instructional planning and documentation. Finland and New Zealand, for example, emphasize teacher autonomy supported by rigorous professional preparation in curriculum planning and assessment design (Sahlberg, 2021; Lempinen et al., 2024). In contrast, many developing countries continue to experience implementation challenges because teachers lack adequate training in preparing CBE-aligned professional documents (Charles et al., 2023).

In Kenya, the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD) requires teachers implementing CBE to prepare learner-centered schemes of work, lesson plans, and competency-based assessment records (KICD, 2017). Nevertheless, studies have reported widespread challenges in document preparation, particularly in rural and marginalized regions where access to continuous professional development is limited (Momanyi & Rop,

2020). Lamu West Sub-County presents a particularly relevant context because schools operate under conditions of geographical isolation, limited professional support, and resource constraints.

This study therefore examined the influence of preparation of professional documents on the implementation of CBE in public primary schools in Lamu West Sub-County, Kenya.

Statement of the Problem

Effective CBE implementation depends on teachers' ability to prepare professional documents that align instructional activities, learning outcomes, and assessment practices with competency-based curriculum requirements (KICD, 2017). However, reports from curriculum support officers in Lamu West Sub-County indicate that many teachers struggle with preparation of schemes of work, lesson plans, assessment records, and learner progress documents. Some teachers reportedly rely on commercially prepared materials that may not reflect local learner needs or curriculum expectations.

Previous studies in Kenya have demonstrated that teacher training influences CBE implementation (Momanyi & Rop, 2020), but few studies have isolated preparation of professional documents as a specific predictor of implementation quality. Moreover, evidence from geographically isolated coastal regions remains limited. Without empirical evidence on the role of professional document preparation in such contexts, teacher support interventions may remain generic and ineffective.

This study was therefore necessary to determine whether preparation of professional documents significantly influences CBE implementation in public primary schools in Lamu West Sub-County, Kenya.

Objective of the Study

To assess the influence of preparation of professional documents on the implementation of Competency-Based Education in public primary schools in Lamu West Sub-County, Kenya.

Theoretical Review

The study was anchored on Rogers' Diffusion of Innovation Theory (Rogers, 2003). The theory explains how new ideas and practices are adopted within social systems and emphasizes the role of knowledge, skills, and support in successful implementation. CBE represents an educational innovation that requires teachers to adopt new planning, instructional, and assessment practices.

Preparation of professional documents can be viewed as a practical manifestation of innovation adoption. Teachers who possess adequate knowledge and skills in planning are more likely to implement CBE with fidelity, while those lacking such competence may revert to traditional content-based practices. The theory therefore provides a useful framework for explaining how teacher training in document preparation influences CBE implementation.

Empirical Literature Review

Research from high-performing education systems indicates that professional planning is strongly associated with curriculum implementation quality. Jubaedah et al. (2020) found that schools with structured planning templates and teacher training in document preparation achieved significantly higher implementation fidelity than schools without such support. Similarly, Darmann-Finck and Hülsmann (2024) reported that practical and usable planning documents were more frequently translated into effective classroom practice.

In Africa, Charles et al. (2023) found widespread misalignment between curriculum intentions and teacher planning documents across several countries, attributing the problem largely to inadequate training in professional document preparation. Within Kenya, Momanyi et al. (2022) reported that teachers who had received specialized training in document preparation produced significantly higher-quality planning documents than untrained teachers.

Despite these findings, little evidence exists from geographically isolated coastal regions such as Lamu West Sub-County. This study contributes to the literature by providing localized evidence from a resource-constrained implementation context.

II. Research Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive survey design. The target population comprised 592 teachers in 71 public primary schools in Lamu West Sub-County, Kenya. Using Yamane's formula, a sample of 239 teachers was selected through multi-stage sampling involving zonal stratification, purposive selection, and systematic random sampling.

Data were collected using structured questionnaires and semi-structured interviews with teachers, CBE champions, and curriculum support officers. A total of 203 questionnaires were returned, representing an 84.9% response rate. Quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS Version 29 through descriptive statistics, Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis, and multiple regression analysis. Qualitative data were analyzed thematically.

III. Results And Discussion

Teachers generally agreed that preparation of professional documents supports effective CBE implementation. The highest-rated practices were preparation of schemes of work and lesson plans aligned with competency outcomes. Lower ratings were reported for individualized learner progress records and authentic assessment documentation.

Statement	SA (5)	A (4)	N (3)	D (2)	SD (1)	Mean	SD
My documents are clear and aligned with CBE requirements	32 (15.8%)	85 (41.9%)	63 (31.0%)	20 (9.9%)	3 (1.5%)	3.61	0.9
My lesson plans are practical and usable for daily teaching	32 (15.8%)	83 (40.9%)	64 (31.5%)	22 (10.8%)	2 (1.0%)	3.6	0.9
My schemes of work are complete and accurate	34 (16.8%)	81 (40.1%)	64 (31.7%)	19 (9.4%)	4 (2.0%)	3.6	0.9
I can adapt documents to different learning contexts	24 (11.8%)	84 (41.4%)	73 (36.0%)	16 (7.9%)	6 (3.0%)	3.51	0.9
My documents allow flexibility in teaching approaches	33 (16.4%)	86 (42.8%)	59 (29.4%)	19 (9.5%)	4 (2.0%)	3.62	0.9
Overall Mean						3.59	0.92

Interview findings revealed that many teachers experienced challenges related to workload, inadequate training, and limited access to mentoring. Several participants reported purchasing commercial lesson plans and schemes of work, which were often not contextualized to their learners.

Correlation Analysis

The Pearson correlation analysis established a positive and statistically significant relationship between preparation of professional documents and implementation of Competency-Based Education (CBE) ($r = .630$, $p < .001$). The correlation coefficient of 0.630 indicates a strong positive association, meaning that as teachers' competence in preparing professional documents increases, the level and quality of CBE implementation also increase substantially. The probability value ($p < .001$) further shows that this relationship is highly unlikely to have occurred by chance, confirming that preparation of professional documents is an important factor in explaining variations in CBE implementation among public primary school teachers in Lamu West Sub-County.

The finding implies that teachers who are able to prepare schemes of work, lesson plans, assessment records, learner progress records, and other professional documents in accordance with CBE requirements are more likely to implement learner-centered instructional approaches, competency-based assessment practices, and systematic instructional processes. Professional documents therefore function not merely as administrative records but as practical instructional tools that guide teachers in translating curriculum competencies into classroom activities, learning experiences, and assessment tasks.

This result can be interpreted to mean that effective professional planning enhances instructional organization and curriculum alignment. In CBE, teachers are required to plan learning experiences around specific competencies rather than around content coverage. Teachers who prepare well-structured schemes of work and lesson plans are more likely to sequence learning activities appropriately, allocate time effectively, and ensure that classroom instruction remains focused on competency development. The strong correlation observed in this study suggests that weaknesses in professional document preparation may lead to fragmented instruction, inconsistent assessment practices, and reduced fidelity to the intended CBE curriculum.

The finding is consistent with Njati (2022), who argued that professional documents provide the operational link between curriculum policy and classroom practice by helping teachers translate competency statements into observable learning outcomes and instructional activities. Njati emphasized that without adequate planning competence, curriculum reforms often remain policy aspirations rather than classroom realities. Similarly, KICD (2017) identifies preparation of professional documents as a core teacher responsibility in CBE implementation because these documents ensure alignment between learning outcomes, instructional activities, and assessment strategies.

The result also agrees with Jubaedah et al. (2020), who found that schools with structured teacher training in professional document preparation achieved significantly higher curriculum implementation fidelity than schools without such training. Their study demonstrated that teachers who received practical support in preparing schemes of work and lesson plans were better able to implement competency-based instruction consistently across classrooms. The present study extends this evidence to a geographically isolated Kenyan context, suggesting that the relationship remains strong even under resource-constrained conditions.

Further support is provided by Momanyi et al. (2022), who reported that teachers with specialized training in document preparation produced higher-quality instructional plans and demonstrated stronger implementation of learner-centered pedagogies. They observed that professional planning competence was associated with greater use of group work, practical activities, project-based learning, and continuous assessment

approaches. The current finding similarly suggests that teachers who competently prepare professional documents are more likely to adopt pedagogies that actively engage learners in competency development.

The qualitative evidence from the thesis strengthens this interpretation. Teachers reported that many colleagues relied on commercially prepared schemes of work and lesson plans, which were often poorly aligned with local learner needs and classroom realities. This finding resonates with Cheruiyot (2024), who noted that dependence on commercially produced planning materials reduces teacher reflection, contextualization, and instructional responsiveness. When teachers do not participate actively in planning, they are less likely to adapt learning experiences to the cultural, linguistic, and socio-economic characteristics of their learners, thereby weakening the learner-centered orientation of CBE.

The strong association found in this study can also be explained through Rogers' Diffusion of Innovation Theory (Rogers, 2003). CBE represents an educational innovation that requires teachers to adopt new planning, instructional, and assessment practices. Teachers who possess the necessary planning skills are more likely to adopt the innovation successfully because they can operationalize its requirements in daily classroom practice. Conversely, teachers lacking planning competence may experience uncertainty and revert to familiar content-based approaches. Professional document preparation therefore serves as a mechanism through which teachers internalize and implement the innovation.

From a practical perspective, the correlation coefficient of .630 suggests that professional document preparation accounts for a substantial proportion of variation in CBE implementation. Although correlation does not imply causation, the strength of the relationship indicates that improving teachers' planning competence could yield meaningful improvements in implementation quality. This is particularly important in Lamu West Sub-County, where geographical isolation and limited access to continuous professional development may constrain teachers' opportunities to strengthen planning skills through formal training.

The finding also has implications for assessment practices. CBE requires ongoing formative assessment, learner progress monitoring, and evidence-based reporting. Teachers who maintain accurate assessment records and learner progress documents are better positioned to provide feedback, identify learning gaps, and support individualized learning pathways. The observed relationship therefore suggests that professional documentation contributes not only to instructional planning but also to the quality of competency-based assessment and learner support.

The findings support Rogers' Diffusion of Innovation Theory by demonstrating that practical planning competence facilitates adoption of CBE practices. Teachers who possess planning skills are better able to operationalize curriculum competencies into classroom activities and assessment tasks.

The results are consistent with Jubaedah et al. (2020), who found that structured planning support improves curriculum implementation fidelity, and with Momanyi et al. (2022), who reported that trained teachers produce higher-quality professional documents. The findings also align with Charles et al. (2023), who identified inadequate document preparation as a major barrier to CBE implementation in African schools.

The qualitative evidence further highlights that professional documents are not merely administrative requirements but instructional tools that shape teaching quality and learner outcomes.

IV. Conclusion

The study concludes that preparation of professional documents significantly influences the implementation of Competency-Based Education in public primary schools in Lamu West Sub-County. Teachers who competently prepare schemes of work, lesson plans, assessment records, and learner progress records are more likely to implement CBE effectively. Conversely, dependence on commercially prepared documents may weaken curriculum alignment and reduce responsiveness to local learner needs.

Strengthening teacher competence in professional document preparation is therefore essential for improving the quality and consistency of CBE implementation in resource-constrained and geographically isolated school contexts.

V. Recommendations

The study recommends that:

The Teachers Service Commission and Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development should provide continuous practical training on preparation of CBE professional documents.

School administrators should establish professional learning communities where teachers collaboratively develop and review planning documents.

Curriculum Support Officers should strengthen school-based mentorship and feedback on professional document quality.

Schools should discourage over-reliance on commercially prepared documents and promote contextualized teacher-generated materials.

Future professional development programs should emphasize practical planning skills rather than theoretical orientation alone.

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