

Effectiveness of In-Service Training Programmes in Preparing Teachers for the Implementation of Competency-Based Education in Junior Schools in Nambale Sub County, Busia County

Irene Imela Ekisa, Dr. Echaune Manase, Dr. Peter Wamalwa

Department of Educational Planning and Management, Kibabii University

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ABSTRACT

Despite the implementation of in-service training programmes aimed at preparing teachers for Competency-Based Education, many teachers in Junior Schools in Nambale Sub-County continue to experience difficulties in effectively implementing the curriculum. Evidence from existing studies and preliminary observations indicate that training programmes are often insufficiently practical, lack continuity, and do not adequately address classroom realities. As a result, teachers struggle with applying CBE principles such as competency-based assessment, learner-centred instruction, and effective use of instructional materials. This has led to inconsistent implementation of the curriculum across schools, raising concerns about the effectiveness of current professional development strategies. This article examines the effectiveness of in-service training programmes in preparing teachers for the implementation of Competency-Based Education (CBE) in Junior Schools in Nambale Sub-County, Busia County. The study was guided by the need to understand how teacher professional development influences the successful adoption of the CBE curriculum. The study was guided by Vygotsky's Social Constructivism Theory, emphasizing learning through social interaction, scaffolding, and guided support. A descriptive research design was used, targeting 117 respondents comprising Junior School teachers and school administrators. Data were collected using structured questionnaires and analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages using SPSS. The findings reveal that most teachers have participated in in-service training, mainly through MOE/TSC programmes and sub-county workshops, although a small proportion reported no training at all. The study also found that while training is generally considered effective, a significant number of teachers indicated that it is only moderately effective due to its limited practical orientation and lack of follow-up support. Additionally, major challenges affecting implementation include inadequate instructional resources, limited ICT access, insufficient training, and large class sizes. The study concludes that although in-service training programmes contribute positively to teacher preparedness, their effectiveness is limited by lack of practicality and continuity. It recommends that training programmes should be more hands-on, continuous, and supported by mentoring and adequate instructional resources to enhance effective implementation of CBE in Junior Schools.

Keywords: Competency-Based Education, in-service training, teacher preparedness, instructional resources, professional development

INTRODUCTION

Competency-Based Education (CBE) has become a major global shift in education systems, focusing on learners' ability to demonstrate skills, knowledge, and competencies rather than memorization of content. Across many countries, education reforms have emphasized the need for teachers to adapt their instructional methods to align with competency-based approaches. In-service training programmes have therefore become a key strategy in equipping teachers with the necessary skills to implement new curricula effectively. However, the success of such reforms largely depends on the preparedness of teachers and the quality of professional development they receive.

In Kenya, the introduction of the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) has required teachers to transition from traditional content-based teaching to learner-centred approaches. This shift has created a strong need for continuous in-service training to support teachers in areas such as lesson planning, competency assessment, and use of instructional resources. Despite government efforts through the Ministry of Education and Teachers Service Commission (TSC), many teachers still report challenges related to insufficient training, lack of practical support, and limited follow-up after training sessions. These challenges are more pronounced in rural areas such as Nambale Sub-County, where access to resources and professional development opportunities remains uneven.

This work is organized into key sections including the introduction, literature review, theoretical framework, research methods, findings, discussion, conclusion, and recommendations, all focusing on the effectiveness of in-service training programmes in supporting teachers' implementation of Competency-Based Education (CBE) in Junior Schools in Nambale Sub-County, Busia County.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In Canada, in-service training programmes have been instrumental in supporting the transition to Competency-Based Education (CBE). The Ministry of Education (2018) reported that these programmes significantly improved teachers' understanding and implementation of the new curriculum. However, a study by Schelling & Rubenstein (2023) found that while urban schools benefited greatly from these training programmes, rural schools often lacked access to the same quality of professional development. This disparity results in uneven implementation of CBE across different regions. Additionally, the study highlighted the need for ongoing support and follow-up training to ensure that teachers continue to develop their competencies. Addressing these gaps requires targeted efforts to provide equitable access to professional development for all teachers, regardless of their location. This study aims to fill the gap by providing recommendations for improving access to and the quality of in-service training programmes, especially in under-resourced areas.

In France, the effectiveness of in-service training programmes for implementing CBE has been a focus of educational reform. Huang, Cheung & Xuan (2023) found that structured professional development programmes significantly enhanced teachers' ability to facilitate competency-based learning. However, the study also identified challenges related to the consistency and quality of training provided to teachers. Rural schools, in particular, faced difficulties in accessing high-quality training, which affected their ability to implement CBE effectively. Additionally, there is a need for more practical, hands-on training sessions that allow teachers to experience and apply CBE methods directly. The study suggests that continuous support and follow-up training are crucial for maintaining and enhancing teachers' competencies. This study aims to address these gaps by proposing a model for continuous professional development that includes practical training and regular follow-up sessions.

In Tanzania, the introduction of competency-based education has been met with challenges related to teacher preparedness. A study by Abdala & Juma (2024) revealed that many teachers were not adequately trained to implement the new curriculum. The study found that professional development programmes were often too brief and lacked practical application. Teachers expressed a need for more comprehensive and hands-on training sessions. Additionally, there were significant disparities in access to training between urban and rural schools. The study recommends that professional development programmes should be more practical and include continuous support to ensure that teachers can effectively implement CBE. This study aims to fill the gap by providing detailed recommendations for enhancing the practical aspects of in-service training and ensuring equitable access to these programmes across different regions.

In Kisii county, Mbeche (2023) investigated the effectiveness of in-service training for CBC. These findings indicated that although some teachers had attended training sessions, many felt that the training was inadequate and lacked practical application. The study highlighted the need for more comprehensive and continuous professional development programmes that focus on practical skills and real-world applications of the CBE. Teachers also expressed a need for follow-up support to help them integrate new teaching methods into their classrooms. Addressing these needs is crucial for improving the implementation of the CBE. This study filled the gap by evaluating the current training programmes and recommending targeted improvements.

In Nakuru county, Ongere & Muchemi (2024) examined the challenges faced by teachers in implementing the CBE. The study revealed that inadequate in-service training was a significant barrier to effective implementation. Teachers reported that the training sessions they attended were often too brief and did not cover the practical aspects of the curriculum. Additionally, there was a lack of follow-up support, leaving teachers to navigate the new curriculum on their own. The study recommends that in-service training programmes should be more comprehensive and include ongoing support to help teachers implement the CBE effectively. This study filled the gap by assessing the current training programmes and proposing improvements based on empirical data.

In Busia County, including Nambale Sub-County, the challenges related to the effectiveness of in-service training programmes are particularly pronounced. Teachers in Junior Schools have reported significant gaps in their professional development, which hinder their ability to implement the CBE effectively. This lack of continuous professional development hinders their ability to keep up with curriculum changes and apply competency-based teaching methods effectively. Additionally, teachers expressed a need for more hands-on training that allows them to experience and apply CBE methods directly. The study also highlights the challenges related to the availability and quality of instructional materials.

From the existing literature, it is evident that while in-service training programmes have been effective in supporting teachers' transition to Competency-Based Education (CBE) in various countries, significant gaps remain, particularly in under-resourced areas. The effectiveness of these programmes is often hindered by limited access, brief training durations and the lack of practical, hands-on experience. Additionally, the disparity between urban and rural schools in terms of training access further exacerbates these challenges. This research aims to address these gaps by emphasizing the importance of continuous, practical and accessible professional development, ensuring that all teachers, regardless of location, are equipped with the necessary skills to successfully implement CBE in their classrooms.

Theoretical Framework

This research was based on Social Constructivism Theory. The theory was initiated by Lev Semyonovich Vygotsky in the year 1934. Social Constructivism is a theory that focuses on how people interact and the culture they live in when it comes to the acquisition of knowledge. This theory was formulated by the Soviet psychologist Lev Vygotsky in early twentieth century of which the *Thinking and Speech* published in 1934 was most prominent. According to the social constructivism theory by Vygotsky, learning takes place through interactions that are informed by the culture. In this regard, learning is naturally considered as social because people acquire new knowledge and skills by participating in social activities with other people, including teachers and peers (Harasim, 2023).

The Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) refers to the tasks a learner can perform with the help of others but cannot yet do independently. This concept is crucial for evaluating in-service training programmes, where scaffolding within the ZPD allows teachers to gradually develop independence in implementing the CBC (Sardag, Kaya, & Cakmakci, 2023). By designing training programmes that provide support within this zone, teachers can build the competence needed to apply CBE principles in the classroom effectively.

Scaffolding involves providing support to help learners accomplish tasks within their ZPD, with the support gradually removed as learners gain independence. In teacher training programmes, scaffolding can be utilized to help teachers integrate new strategies and resources into their practice, fostering their ability to teach the CBC. Over time, as teachers become more proficient, the support diminishes, allowing for independent teaching (Harasim, 2023).

Vygotsky emphasized the role of cultural tools, such as language, symbols, and artifacts, in cognitive development. These tools mediate thinking and learning processes. In the CBC context, instructional materials serve as cultural tools that facilitate learning. Understanding how these materials can be effectively integrated into teaching practices is essential for assessing their role in supporting CBC implementation (Anthony, 2024). High-quality instructional resources help teachers enhance their practices and better apply the curriculum.

Language plays a vital role in Vygotsky's theory, functioning as both a cultural tool and a medium of social interaction. It enables communication, thought organization, and the transmission of cultural knowledge. Effective communication is essential for teachers to understand and implement the CBC. Training programmes that encourage collaborative dialogue and reflective practice help teachers use language more effectively, fostering better comprehension and application of the curriculum (Mrutu & Kibga, 2023).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study was guided by descriptive research design, which was chosen to assess the preparedness of teachers for implementing Competency-Based Education (CBE) in Junior Schools in Nambale Sub-County, Busia County. The target population for this study consisted of junior school teachers and school administrators in Nambale Sub-County, Busia County.

Specifically, the study focused on teachers and administrators from 65 Junior Schools in the sub-county (MOE Nambale Sub-County, 2024). The school administrators included 65 Head of Institutions (HOI), 65 Deputy Heads of Institutions (Deputy HOI), and 65 Senior Teachers, as they play key roles in managing, guiding, and supporting the implementation of CBE in their respective schools. Teachers, on the other hand, were those actively involved in classroom teaching and directly responsible for delivering the CBE framework.

The study employed sampling techniques as proposed by Sunders (2023) where simple random sampling and purposive sampling were used where 30% of the total population was used. Simple random sampling was used to select the 20 Junior Schools from the 65 schools in Nambale Sub-County.

The total sample size for the study was 120 respondents, which included 60 Junior School teachers and 60 school administrators. This sample size was sufficient to provide reliable data while ensuring that the findings were representative of the wider population of teachers and administrators in Nambale Sub-County.

Questionnaires were used as the sole data collection instrument in this study to gather quantitative data from Junior School teachers in Nambale Sub-County, Busia County.

A pilot study was conducted before the main data collection exercise to assess the clarity, relevance, and suitability of the questionnaire. The pilot study involved five respondents from Funyula Sub-County, Busia County. Funyula Sub-County was selected because it had characteristics similar to those of Nambale Sub-County but was not included in the main study.

Data analysis for the study employed quantitative methods to ensure an all-round understanding of teacher preparedness in implementing CBC in Junior Schools in Nambale Sub-County as proposed by Oben (2021). The data collected from the questionnaires was keyed into the program-SPSS for analysis based on descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, means, standard deviations for the information regarding the teachers' knowledge, training effectiveness, resources available, and challenges.

The findings were presented using tables, displayed frequencies and percentages. These visual representations helped to highlight patterns and trends in teacher preparedness for implementing Competency-Based Education (CBE) in Nambale Sub-County.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

This section presented findings related to the effectiveness of in-service training, focusing on the types of training received, its effectiveness and the reasons for teachers' assessments of these training programs. Data for this section was gathered from 117 respondents to understand the extent to which these training programs are supporting teachers in their professional development.

Type of Training Received

When asked about the types of training they had received, a total of 58 (49.6%) of teachers indicated that they

had received MOE/TSC training. Other types of training reported by teachers included sub-county workshops 26 (22.2%), school-based training 19 (16.2%) and online/peer learning 9 (7.7%). A concerning 5 (4.3%) of teachers reported that they had received no training at all as seen in table 1 below.

Table 1: Type of Training Received

Training Type	Frequency	Percentage
MOE/TSC training	58	49.6%
Sub-county workshops	26	22.2%
School-based training	19	16.2%
Online/peer learning	9	7.7%
No training	5	4.3%
Total	117	100%

The findings from Table 1 reveal that the majority of teachers have participated in structured professional development activities, with MOE/TSC training being the most widely reported type. This suggests that there is a concerted effort at the national level to provide teachers with the foundational knowledge needed to implement CBE. Sub-county workshops and school-based training also reflect a more localized approach to professional development, likely tailored to the specific needs of schools within a sub-county or district.

However, the teachers who reported receiving no training is concerning. This group of teachers may be at a disadvantage, as they are not receiving the support they need to adapt to the new curriculum. The lack of training for this portion of the teaching force could create barriers to the successful implementation of CBE in their classrooms. Given that training is crucial for the effective delivery of the new curriculum, further attention must be given to ensuring that all teachers, regardless of their school or location, have access to the professional development they need.

The data suggests that while many teachers are receiving training, the variety and frequency of the training programs may differ. Teachers who have attended MOE/TSC training are likely receiving more formal, government-mandated content, whereas those who have attended sub-county workshops or school-based training might be benefiting from more localized or school-specific instruction. Although the diversity of training types provides teachers with opportunities to engage with different formats, it may also create inconsistencies in the content and quality of the training received.

Effectiveness of Training

When teachers were asked to evaluate the effectiveness of the training they received, the responses were varied where a total of 50.4% of respondents rated the training as effective where 21 (17.9%) very effective 38 (32.5%) rated it effective. However, a portion of teachers, 31 (26.5%), rated the training as moderately effective. Additionally, 17 (14.5%) of teachers rated the training as slightly effective 17 (14.5%) while 10 (8.5%) not effective as shown in table 2

Table 2: Effectiveness of Training

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Very effective	21	17.9%
Effective	38	32.5%
Moderately effective	31	26.5%
Slightly effective	17	14.5%
Not effective	10	8.5%
Total	117	100%

The 50.4% of teachers who rated the training as effective indicates that, for many, the training had a positive impact on their ability to implement CBE. Teachers who found the training effective may have benefited from practical sessions, interactive learning, or exposure to strategies that they could immediately apply in their

classrooms. These results suggest that when training is well-structured and targeted to teachers' specific needs, it can significantly enhance their understanding and readiness to implement new curricula such as CBE.

However, the 31 (26.5%) of teachers who rated the training as moderately effective raises concerns about the quality of the training provided. These teachers likely felt that while the training was somewhat helpful, it did not fully meet their needs or expectations. This suggests that there may be room for improvement in the depth or scope of the training programs. For example, some teachers may have required more hands-on or specialized training to fully grasp the concepts of CBE, especially if the training was too general or theoretical in nature.

The 17 (14.5%) who rated the training as slightly effective and 8.5% who found it not effective suggest that a portion of teachers did not feel that the training had a significant impact on their practice. This is concerning, as it indicates that some teachers may be struggling with the practical application of CBE in their classrooms. Factors such as lack of follow-up support, insufficient practical training, or mismatched content may have contributed to the lack of effectiveness for these teachers. It is also possible that some teachers, especially those in rural schools, faced additional barriers such as lack of access to materials or technology, which limited the effectiveness of the training they received.

While the overall feedback on the training was positive, these findings suggest that in-service training programs for CBE need to be more tailored and comprehensive. The variance in teacher ratings indicates that a one-size-fits-all approach may not be sufficient. Teachers have different levels of experience and may require different types of support to implement CBE effectively. For example, novice teachers may need more foundational training, while experienced teachers may benefit from advanced strategies and more specific tools for implementing competency-based assessments.

In light of these findings, education authorities should consider providing follow-up training or ongoing professional development opportunities to reinforce the skills and knowledge gained during initial training sessions. Continuous support, including mentorship, peer learning and resource sharing, could help teachers build their confidence and improve their implementation of CBE over time. As noted by Gichurur (2024), ongoing professional development and support are essential for ensuring that teachers can adapt to new educational frameworks and continuously improve their teaching practices.

Main Reason for Rating Training

When teachers were asked to provide the main reasons for their rating of the in-service training they received, 32 (27.4%) of teachers cited improved lesson planning as the primary reason for their positive rating, 26 (22.2%) of respondents mentioned improved assessment skills as a key outcome of the training, while 24 (20.5%) of teachers noted the practical training they received as the main reason for their positive rating. In contrast, 21 (17.9%) of respondents felt that the training was too theoretical and 14 (12.0%) noted the lack of follow-up as a major drawback as shown in table 3.

Table 3: Main Reason for Rating Training

Reason	Frequency	Percentage
Improved lesson planning	32	27.4%
Improved assessment skills	26	22.2%
Practical training	24	20.5%
Too theoretical	21	17.9%
No follow-up	14	12.0%
Total	117	100%

The highest percentage of teachers, 32 (27.4%), cited improved lesson planning as the main reason for their positive rating of the training. This reflects the importance of equipping teachers with the skills to design lessons that align with CBE's competency-focused approach. CBE emphasizes the development of specific skills and competencies, and effective lesson planning is crucial to ensure that students are given the

opportunity to develop these competencies. By focusing on lesson planning, teachers are better able to structure their teaching in a way that fosters skill development and student-centered learning.

In addition to lesson planning, 26 (22.2%) of teachers mentioned improved assessment skills as a key reason for their positive feedback. This highlights the importance of assessments in CBE, which focuses on measuring students' abilities and competencies rather than traditional content-based knowledge. Teachers who attended the training and gained enhanced assessment skills are likely better prepared to implement formative assessments, provide feedback that supports student growth, and track students' progress in a meaningful way. This is a crucial component of CBE, as it helps educators monitor and guide students toward achieving the desired competencies.

Another significant factor mentioned by 24 (20.5%) of teachers was practical training. This indicates that teachers valued hands-on, interactive components of the training, which likely provided them with the opportunity to practice and apply CBE principles in a supportive environment. Practical training allows teachers to gain experience with CBE tools and strategies, which helps build confidence in their ability to implement the curriculum effectively. This is particularly important for teachers who may have been unfamiliar with the competency-based approach and need time to familiarize themselves with new teaching methods and techniques.

On the other hand, 21 (17.9%) of teachers felt that the training was too theoretical, which suggests that the training programs may not have offered enough practical application or real-world examples. Although theoretical knowledge is essential, it needs to be accompanied by practical strategies and tools that teachers can use in the classroom. Without the ability to apply theoretical concepts to their teaching practice, teachers may struggle to translate what they've learned into effective instruction. This concern is consistent with feedback from other studies, which have highlighted that teachers often prefer training programs that provide tangible strategies and techniques they can immediately implement in their classrooms.

Additionally, 14 (12.0%) of teachers reported that the lack of follow-up was a major issue. This suggests that while the initial training may have been useful, teachers felt that they were not supported after the training ended. Follow-up support, such as refresher courses, peer mentoring, or additional resources, is essential to reinforce the training and help teachers integrate the new knowledge into their teaching practice. Without ongoing support, teachers may struggle to maintain the momentum gained from the initial training, especially when faced with challenges in implementing the new curriculum.

These findings suggest that while the training programs had some positive impact, there are areas that require improvement as suggested by Ngeiywa & Mang'ana (2024). To ensure the success of Competency-Based Education, training programs need to strike a balance between theoretical knowledge and practical application. Teachers also need continuous support, including follow-up training and mentorship, to help them refine their skills and confidently implement CBE in their classrooms.

Hence, the feedback from teachers indicates that lesson planning, assessment skills, and practical training were the most valued aspects of the in-service training programs. However, there is a clear need for more practical, hands-on training and greater follow-up support to ensure that teachers can effectively apply what they have learned. The findings emphasize the importance of designing professional development programs that are both comprehensive and sustainable, providing teachers with ongoing opportunities for learning and support.

Main Challenge in the Utilization of Instructional Materials

When asked about the major challenges teachers faced in utilizing instructional materials aligned to Competency-Based Education (CBE), the responses revealed several key issues. Some 21 (17.9%) of the respondents cited challenge was the lack of resources, insufficient training 19 (16.2%), limited access to digital tools 17 (14.5%), and poor quality of available materials 15 (12.8%). Other challenges included budgetary constraints 13 (11.1%) and large class sizes 12 (10.3%). Others 10 (8.5%) did not specify the challenges as shown in table 4 below

Table 4: Main Challenge in the Utilization of Instructional Materials

Challenge	Frequency	Percentage
Lack of resources	21	17.9%
Insufficient training	19	16.2%
Limited access to digital tools	17	14.5%
Poor quality of materials	15	12.8%
Budgetary constraints	13	11.1%
Large class sizes	12	10.3%
Other (Specify)	10	8.5%
Total	117	100%

The lack of resources 21 (17.9%) was the most frequently mentioned challenge, indicating that even though schools may have some instructional materials, there is still a significant gap in terms of quantity and quality. Teachers reported that the resources they do have are often outdated, insufficient in number, or not well-suited to the needs of the Competency-Based Education framework. This suggests that there is an urgent need for educational authorities to invest more in acquiring and distributing materials that align with CBE, ensuring that all teachers have access to high-quality, relevant teaching aids and textbooks.

Another significant challenge was insufficient training 19 (16.2%). Teachers reported that they were not adequately trained on how to effectively utilize the instructional materials they had. This is a critical issue because even if resources are available, teachers need to be equipped with the necessary skills to use them effectively in the classroom. This finding aligns with previous research by Timothy & Hollan (2024), which emphasized the importance of providing teachers with hands-on training on how to incorporate instructional materials into their teaching strategies. Without proper training, teachers may struggle to make full use of the available resources, which can limit the success of CBE implementation.

The issue of limited access to digital tools 17 (14.5%) also emerged as a major challenge. With CBE emphasizing the use of technology to support learning, the lack of access to computers, tablets, or reliable internet connections creates a significant barrier for teachers. This is particularly problematic in rural areas, where infrastructure may be lacking. As noted by Mutunga (2023), digital inequality is a widespread issue in many regions of Kenya, and it continues to hinder the ability of schools to implement modern teaching methods effectively. Teachers in schools with limited access to digital tools may find it difficult to engage students with interactive, technology-driven lessons, which are crucial for fostering the competencies required in CBE.

In addition to the lack of resources and digital tools, the poor quality of available materials 15 (12.8%) was another challenge reported by teachers. Some materials were found to be outdated, irrelevant, or not aligned with the objectives of the Competency-Based Education curriculum. This highlights the need for the development of high-quality, up-to-date instructional materials that are specifically designed to support the goals of CBE. As Gichurur (2024) noted, the quality of instructional resources is crucial for the successful implementation of any curriculum. Without well-designed materials, teachers may struggle to teach the competencies outlined in the CBE framework, which could undermine the effectiveness of the entire curriculum.

Budgetary constraints 13 (11.1%) also contributed to the challenges teachers faced in utilizing instructional materials. Many schools reported that they did not have sufficient funds to purchase the necessary resources, which further exacerbates the issue of resource scarcity. This finding underscores the need for more equitable funding mechanisms to ensure that all schools, particularly those in rural areas, have access to the materials they need to implement CBE effectively. Without adequate funding, schools will continue to face barriers in acquiring the resources necessary to support teaching and learning.

Lastly, large class sizes 12 (10.3%) were cited as a challenge to the effective utilization of instructional materials. With larger classes, it becomes more difficult for teachers to give individual attention to students and

to manage the use of instructional materials. This is especially problematic in a CBE context, where personalized learning and individualized assessments are critical. Large class sizes are a common challenge in many Kenyan schools and significantly impact the ability of teachers to deliver high-quality education. Smaller class sizes would allow teachers to better engage with students and provide more personalized instruction, which is essential for the successful implementation of CBE.

These findings align with previous research, which has highlighted the importance of improving resource availability, teacher training, and infrastructure to support the successful implementation of CBE. Ngeno (2022) discussed the critical role of resources and training in the success of CBE in Kenyan schools. Similarly, research by Tumuheise *et al.* (2023) emphasized the need for equitable distribution of resources, particularly in rural areas, to ensure that all students have access to the tools they need for competency-based learning. The challenges identified in this study underscore the need for systemic changes to address these barriers and create an environment conducive to the successful implementation of CBE.

Effectiveness of Support Systems

When asked about the effectiveness of the support systems available to them, teachers provided a range of responses. The findings show that mentorship programs were the most common support system, cited by 26 (22.2%) of respondents. This was followed by regular feedback sessions with 24 (20.5%) teachers, and supportive school leadership reported by 23 (19.7%) of respondents. Additionally, 21 (17.9%) of teachers indicated that sub-county or Quality Assurance (QA) support was available in their schools. However, 12 (10.3%) of respondents mentioned other forms of support not specified in the listed categories, while 11 (9.4%) reported that no support system was available to them, as shown in Table 5.

Table 5: Effectiveness of Support Systems

Support System	Frequency	Percentage
Mentorship programs	26	22.2%
Regular feedback sessions	24	20.5%
Supportive school leadership	23	19.7%
Sub-county/QA support	21	17.9%
No support system	11	9.4%
Other (Specify)	12	10.3%
Total	117	100%

The most common support systems, as indicated by 26 (22.2%) of respondents, were mentorship programs. This suggests that many schools are implementing programs where experienced teachers mentor newer or less experienced teachers. These programs can be highly effective in helping teachers adjust to the demands of Competency-Based Education, as they provide opportunities for one-on-one guidance and support. Mentorship allows teachers to share best practices, troubleshoot challenges, and receive personalized feedback, which can improve their confidence and competence in delivering the CBE curriculum.

Another significant support system mentioned by 24 (20.5%) of teachers was regular feedback sessions. This is important because continuous feedback helps teachers identify areas where they are excelling and areas where improvement is needed. Regular feedback fosters a culture of ongoing professional growth and helps teachers stay focused on their professional development. It also allows school leaders to provide timely interventions, ensuring that teachers receive the support they need to implement CBE effectively. The presence of regular feedback sessions indicates a commitment to improving the quality of teaching and ensuring that the CBE framework is being properly implemented.

Supportive school leadership 23 (19.7%) was also mentioned as a critical support system by a significant number of teachers. School leadership plays a vital role in creating an environment conducive to CBE implementation. When school leaders actively support teachers by providing the necessary resources, fostering a collaborative school culture, and ensuring that teachers have the time and space to plan and implement CBE, they greatly contribute to the success of the curriculum. Supportive leadership can also help mitigate the

challenges teachers face, such as heavy workloads or large class sizes, by advocating for additional resources or professional development opportunities.

Despite the positive mentions of these support systems, 11 (9.4%) of teachers reported that they did not receive any support. This lack of support is concerning, as it suggests that a portion of teachers may be struggling to implement CBE without the guidance or resources they need. Teachers who lack support may face increased frustration, which could affect their morale and the effectiveness of their teaching. This finding highlights the need for schools to ensure that all teachers have access to appropriate support, regardless of their experience or location.

The findings also suggest that sub-county/QA support 21 (17.9%) was another important support system, indicating that district-level initiatives play a role in assisting teachers. These support systems could include workshops, monitoring visits, or collaborative planning sessions with other schools in the region. These initiatives help ensure that teachers are aligned with the larger goals of CBE and are receiving the necessary support to achieve those goals. The availability of sub-county support also suggests that there is some level of coordination at the district level, which can be an important asset in implementing large-scale educational reforms.

These findings align with previous research of Ndemo & Kwaba (2023) where the importance of mentorship and school leadership in supporting teacher development was emphasized. According to them, strong school leadership is critical in creating an environment conducive to change, while mentorship programs help bridge the gap between theory and practice. Additionally, the need for continuous feedback and support is consistent with the findings from this study, underscoring the importance of ongoing professional development for teachers. By strengthening these support systems, schools can ensure that teachers are better equipped to implement CBE and achieve positive outcomes for their students.

CONCLUSION

Regarding the effectiveness of in-service training, the study found that while most teachers had participated in training programs, the content and delivery of these programs did not always meet the specific needs of the teachers. Many teachers expressed that the training they received was either too theoretical or insufficiently practical. The lack of follow-up support further hindered the ability of teachers to implement what they had learned. For CBE implementation to be successful, it is imperative that in-service training programs be improved to focus on hands-on experiences, with continuous support and follow-up sessions. This would ensure that teachers are equipped with the skills and knowledge necessary to apply the CBE framework in their classrooms effectively.

RECOMMENDATION

Based on the findings of this study, several recommendations are proposed to improve the implementation of Competency-Based Education in Junior Schools in Nambale sub county, Busia County. The Ministry of Education should make in-service training more practical by emphasizing hands-on learning, supported by mentorship and continuous follow-up coaching to enable teachers to effectively implement Competency-Based Education (CBE) in the classroom.

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