

Research Article

A Historical Study of Policy Implementation at Lugulu Girls' High School Following Gachathi Report (1976)

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Abstract: This paper presents a historical account on secondary school curriculum implemented at Lugulu Girls' High School between 1976 and 1985. The study adopted a historical research design. Documentary analysis and interview guides were used to collect data. Snowball sampling was adopted to select participants for the study. Analysis and interpretation were done through historical criticism. The study used Historical Thinking Conceptual Framework, postulated by Peter Seixas in 2006. The Ministry of Education played a leading role in implementing curriculum, and teachers used professional documents in preparation of lessons. However, there were pedagogical challenges cited like poor preparation, lack of schemes and lesson plans, dictation of notes in classrooms. The findings of the study proved that the formative year of LGHS, there was heavy reliance on foreign teachers from FAM Missions, TEA, BEA, Peace Corps in the implementation of the curriculum. Teacher effort was complemented by curriculum materials originated from the KIE and MOE's administrative activities through its inspectorate division. Key challenges in the curriculum implementation were: teacher shortages, political interference, and inadequate infrastructure, non-involvement of key stakeholders, unqualified teachers and problems of expatriate teachers. The centralization of policy denied critical stakeholders a chance, voice, and perspectives to take root at the initiation, adoption and implementation of the curriculum in schools. Since teachers implement policies in schools, their voice and input should be considered when planning any curriculum reform. **Keywords:** Education, curriculum, curriculum implementation, commission.

1.1 Introduction

This paper discusses secondary school curriculum implemented in secondary school at Lugulu Girls High School between 1976 and 1985. These reforms were championed by the Gachathi Education Commission (GEC) of 1976.

The change to the new education system was informed by the limitations that were identified in the preceding education system. The literature alluded to the pedagogical practices since the Ominde commission to 1985, as authoritarian, rigid, and teacher-centered (Jepkemei, 2017). Consequently, learning activities were limited to rote memorization of facts and reciting them to the teacher or regurgitating the knowledge during examinations (Jepkemei, 2017).

The learner assessment practices, the existing literature was critical of the over-emphasis on examinations (GOK, 1972; Eshiwani, 1993; Ojiambo, 2009; Amukoa, 2013; Jepkemei, 2017; Waiganjo, 2017).

The paper argues that whether or not the Curriculum reform process in Kenya since independence will address a myriad of systemic problems bedeviling the education sector is a matter that is yet to be determined.

LGHS was purposely selected for the study because it was started during the colonial period and designed within colonial mindset. Again, LGHS was one of the leading schools in Bungoma County in terms of performance. Therefore, assessing curriculum implementation at LGHS within the time when Gachathi Education Commission was implemented in Kenya was necessary so that tenets and weaknesses of the colonial curriculum could be revealed. This would help Kenya as a country in finding better ways to initiate curriculum reforms and to avoid possible loopholes that might trench curriculum reforms into unnecessary uncertainties.

1.2 Conceptual and Methodological Considerations

The study adopted historical thinking conceptual framework, postulated by Seixas, (2006) because our study is historical. The concepts provide a means of analyzing and interpreting historical data derived from primary sources which entails historical interpretation, moral dimension, modernity, and change (Seixas, 2006). The historical significance of phenomenon is what makes people care about certain events, trends and issues today. This makes it prudent for the researcher to use the same conceptual argument to address the implementation of secondary education curriculum at LGHS, 1976-1985.

The concept of historical thinking also emphasizes the use of primary sources in establishing historical occurrences and truths. This helps in the corroboration of evidence with secondary sources in a bid to contextualize historical truths. It also assesses what has changed and what has remained the same.

Moreover, the framework highlights the importance of recognizing and responding to continuities between the past and the present. Such continuities result from macro and micro-level influences of curriculum reforms. That is, from a modernist perspective/top-down process, individual institutions reveal the interconnectedness of history. For these reasons, historical concepts provided a basis for shaping, interpreting, and analyzing the existing curriculum implementation in Lugulu Girls' High School, 1976-1985.

This study adopted the historical research method since it aims at unearthing and classifying historical facts and realities of the phenomenon in question.

Borg and Gall (1989) define the historical method as a systematic search for documents and other sources which contain facts relating to the historians' questions about the past. Similarly, Sutter (2006) defines historical research as the collection of documents and artifacts related to past events, often including a description of patterns or trends in an attempt to explain a phenomenon. Historical research method can be described as the systematic collection and evaluation of data to describe and explain events that occurred sometime in the past.

Historical research provides insights into educational issues that cannot be gained by any other technique (Collingwood, 2010).

Historical research is the systematic and objective location, evaluation of evidence to establish facts and draw conclusions about past events. Historical research uses data from personal experiences, observations of others, analysis of documents, records, and artefacts. It leads to a new understanding of the past and its relevance to the present and the future and enables solutions to contemporary problems.

Despite the merits above, it remains probably the most difficult type of educational research (Sifuna, 1995).

The study depended much on both primary and secondary sources of data because it focused its inquiry into the past. Primary sources refer to those who have had some direct physical contact with

the events being reconstructed and eyewitness accounts of an event (Gottschalk, 1969; Sifuna, 1995). These included: eye-witnesses, Reports, educational reports, KIE papers/reports, and syllabuses, schemes of work, exam records, school records, letters, memos and school Inspections Reports for LGHS.

The historical documents were found in the Kenya National Archives (KNA), Kenya Institute of Education (KIE), school archives/libraries, education institutions like County and sub county offices in Bungoma, Kakamega and, Sub-counties of Bungoma East and Bungoma North. Some of these primary records were obtained at Lugulu Girls' High School: examination records, admissions, lists of teachers, BOG & staff meeting minutes, and student lists. They included oral testimonies or interviews.

The study also sourced information from secondary sources which did not bear a direct physical relationship to the events that was investigated. They included textbooks, articles, journals, magazines, newspapers and electronically stored material on the internet. Secondary sources are not only inaccurate sometimes, but they also tend to dispute some facts (Gottschalk, 1969). Hence used to supplement and check on any errors reported in oral interviews. The researcher purposively selected Lugulu Girls' High School as an institution to participate in the study. The participants, who were selected to be interviewed, interacted with the curriculum that was being provided in the school, 1976-1985.

Snowball sampling approach was used to select the sample for the study (Creswell, 2007). This helped in identifying informants such as head teachers, teachers, and former students of Lugulu Girls' High School.

The study sampled 2 head teachers, 4 teachers, and 6 former students of Lugulu Girls' High School, making a total of 12 participants. They were selected based on their interaction with the curriculum between 1976 and 1985. The researcher visited the respondents in their homes and places of businesses and work. Data collection procedures adopted were documentary reviews, interviews, videotaping, and email interviewing. In regard to this, the researcher recruited participants via phone calls to book the informants for availability, and then held face-to-face meetings with them at the workplace, homes, business premises, and places where they would be comfortable.

For data analysis, historians accept a primary obligation to check their assertions against data. This is largely based on evidence that is open to public scrutiny and criticism by re-examination of their respective records (Golder, 2000). In this study, the researcher compared data from oral interview data of the informants and concluded the findings in each question based on the objective that this paper has explored. Data was organized chronologically from 1976 to 1985. Information obtained from the archives were analyzed and interpreted within the context of the study. The evidence and conclusions of the research findings were presented.

The researcher faced certain limitations in this study. These were: necessary information could not be accessed because they were either thrown away destroyed or were sent to Education Offices. Others may have been burnt during the facelift of buildings. However, the researcher endeavoured to access as much information as possible from the available sources. Again, the aforementioned limitations compelled the researcher to elicit more information from the participants. This implied intensive interview and engaging the participants in probing questions.

1.3 Previous studies on the implementation of Gachathi Commission Report 1976

The Gachathi Commission was set up in 1975 in Kenya to address the challenges emanating from the high expansion of secondary education after independence and school leavers' unemployment (Gachathi, 1976). Its establishment was informed by the ILO and Bessey Reports of 1972 which had observed that education reforms in Kenya had not achieved their intended objectives recommended

by the Ominde commission in 1964. The Gachathi Commission accomplished its operations in 1985 when the recommendations of Mackay Commission, 1985 were implemented to introduce the 8-4-4 System of Education.

A study by Ojiambo (2009) found out that the Gachathi Report reiterated the objectives of the Ominde Commission and sought to enhance the use of Kenyan educational goals. This would shape its national character and development. The report recommended for vocational, technical, and practical education. The Government realized that education was not doing much to achieve its objectives because the curriculum was examination-centered (GOK, 1980).

According to Muya (2000), the Gachathi Report was partially implemented, i.e. nine years of education (pre-primary and primary) and the integration of technical and vocational subjects in the secondary school curriculum such as Electricity, Woodwork, Power, Mechanic, Art and Design, Commerce, Tailoring and Design, Office Practice and Typewriting as a way of addressing the unemployment of school leavers. Some of these subjects were either left out during implementation or were only implemented in few schools. This brought about imbalance and favoritism hence compromising national universal implementation.

Eshiwani (1993) appears to be dissatisfied with the Gachathi Education Commission and retorts that it did not satisfy the Kenyans' aspirations and needs. Main concern was that, it did not provide solutions to the problems facing the graduates of the system. These problems were: the school leaver unemployment, education was still elitist in approach, and examination- oriented, preparing learners to pass in exams and for managerial jobs.

Lelei and Weildman (2012) point out that Gachathi Commission was established due to the mismatch between the labour market demands and education being provided. Other factors included: relevance of education to rural development, increase in the cost of education, and high level of unemployment. Terms of Reference of the Committee were: 1) evaluate the education system; 2) define a new set of educational goals for the second decade of independence; and (3) formulate a specific program of action to achieve these goals.

Bigstein (1984) reflectively explains that the academic education created by Ominde Commission encouraged the myth that formal education automatically led to high-wage employment in the modern westernized sector of the economy. Secondly, Ominde Report was criticized for creating expansion of the education sector at the expense of education quality in both primary and secondary schools. The Ominde recommendation also neglected skills needed for rural development.

A new approach was needed to make education more relevant to a modernizing economy's current and future needs. Application of technical skills was required leading to the inception of Gachathi Education Commission to address these pressing demands.

With the preceding assertions, it can rightly be argued that the Gachathi Commission was entrusted to provide for the way forward in tackling school leaver unemployment of secondary school graduates. It had mandate to provide the government with a policy document that would serve as a framework for reforming the education system to meet the needs of the majority of Kenyans living in rural areas.

The GEC identified two problems with the education system in Kenya: First, economic development after independence concentrated in the modern formal sector. Thus, a few people who completed secondary and tertiary education found jobs. The majority of Kenyans were left with low cadre jobs that secured low payments. Second, the objectives, structure, and content of the education system were highly selective. The aim was to produce a few individuals who were well-equipped to take their places in the modern formal sector of the economy (GOK, 1976).

From the foregoing, most of these studies examined the general analysis of recommendations by Gachathi Report 1976.

1.4 Lugulu Girls High School Enacting Curriculum recommended by Gachathi Report, 1976

1.4.1 Subjects and Courses Taught at LGHS

Both Ordinary (“O”) and Advance (“A”) Levels curriculum were implemented at LGHS. The “O” level course offered the following subjects: English Language, Literature, General Science, History; Swahili, Mathematics, Domestic Science, Religious Instruction (R.I), Physical Education (P.E), Current Affairs. For “A” level courses, the following subjects were offered: Science, Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, and Biology. Arts included Literature, English, Geography, History and General paper. Biology was the only science subject that was popular at the study school during this period. Humanity subjects were more popular than science subjects with English and History, respectively attracting the interest of majority of students, followed by Swahili. The subjects enacted at LGHS are shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1. KJSE Subjects at LGHS 1967

	Subjects	No. of Students	Percentages
1	English	66	14.28
2	Swahili	66	14.28
3	Maths	66	14.28
4	General Science	66	14.28
5	Biology	66	14.28
6	Geography	66	14.28
7	History	66	14.28
	Total	462	100

Source: HT’s letter to the PIS, about KJSE 1967 results analysis, STU006LGHS)

Table 2. Curriculum of (LGHS) From 1973-1979

Subjects of “A” and “O” Level, 1973			
S. No.	Subjects	S. No.	Subjects
1	English Language	10	Biology
2	History	11	Physics
3	Swahili	12	Chemistry
4	Geography	13	Domestic science
5	Current Affairs	14	Physical Education (P.E)
6	General paper	15	Health science
7	Mathematics	16	Art and Craft
8	General Science	17	Music
9	Physical science	Source: CIS, Inspection Report, 1981.	

From the findings, subjects offered for “O” level included: English, History, Geography, Chemistry, General Science, Physical Science, Domestic Science, Health Science, P.E, Swahili, Health Science Art and Craft and Music. The findings were also in line with Inspection Report (MOE Development Plan 1974-1978).

Lillis, (1985), Woolman, (2001) claimed that colonialism has influenced the African education curriculum from independence to date. Western values had been perpetuated in the neo-colonial education system where the curriculum was used as a vehicle for transferring a particular conception of knowledge. The study’s findings revealed that several subjects in the secondary school curriculum were added after the Gachathi Report of 1976 as a panacea to school leaver unemployment in Kenya. However, the former colonial subjects remained the same and unchanged to suit the academic taste of Africans.

1.4.2 Professional Culture

These are the dynamics of context (the how) that shapes policy enactment which relate together to the *interpretative material* and the contextual *dimensions* of the policy process (Ball, Maguire & Braun, 2012). Professional culture in this regard refer to values, teachers' commitment, experience and policy management in schools); Material contexts refer to staffing, budget and infrastructure. These are the dynamics that shape policy enactment at school context. The study's findings revealed that there were entrenched values that teachers were committed to impart on the students at LGHS. These values eventually enabled the students to develop moral standing in society even after completing their studies. However, the professional culture exhibited at LGHS negated the implementation of the curriculum recommended by GEC in the initial years as shown by Inspection Report of 1965 due to unqualified and untrained teachers.

In secondary school curriculum implementation process, classroom teachers' professionalism was reduced by the state. The state decided what goes on in the curriculum and how it should be presented to the learners. This dispossessed the teacher of any power of creativity and improvisation. This could be seen in their strict guidelines and timetabling which eroded the teacher's professional status. In considering this, Gale (2007) observed that the teacher was reduced to a recipient of change rather than a decision-maker in curriculum implementation. Such attitude of the state towards the teacher should not be encouraged if the objectives of curriculum implementation must be realized.

1.4.3 Strategies of Policy enactment at LGHS, 1976-1985.

Teachers followed instructions from the MOE, curriculum guides and syllabus in teaching subjects allocated to them. The guide and the syllabus consisted approaches in methodology as follows:

- a) Assignments/remedial
- b) Student-based learning
- c) Group discussions and testing
- d) Practical/fieldwork/lab lessons/school garden practical's
- e) Testing/evaluation and marking/CATS/Exams
- f) Discovery and experiments/research in the library
- g) Question and answer
- h) student participation in class
- i) preparation of schemes of work
- j) internal supervision
- k) Lesson plans 40 minutes.

The other strategy was the use of songs and choruses to impart knowledge in the process of curriculum implementation. The finding shows that songs that were used highly motivated Biology students making the subject enjoyable. This also made students to change the negative attitude to a positive one because everybody liked music and so the contents of Biology in music were easy to grasp and master.

1.4.4 Role of Ministry of Education

Data from teacher interviews indicated that the Ministry of Education (MOE) was a key player in facilitation which enabled teachers and schools to implement the curriculum in secondary schools from 1976 to 1985. That MOE was very important in the provision of necessary teaching resources such as textbooks, equipment, manuals, and other materials for teaching subjects in secondary schools.

The study's findings revealed that MOE held seminars, workshops, conferences, and induction courses for the teachers on how to implement the curriculum in secondary schools. However, a few teachers claimed that after the Gachathi Commission Report of 1976, the MOE never mounted seminars, workshops, or conferences to explain the curriculum reforms. The MOE should re-organize curriculum reform implementation programmes to assist teachers to understand their role as

implementers. Teachers were not prepared very well by MOE to implement Gachathi recommendations on the curriculum. It was established that curriculum reforms in the country had been pushed on teachers as a government project hence; it was a must to implement without question.

However, the MOE ensured that the supply of teachers in secondary schools was adequate through hiring and posting teachers to schools directly or through the Teachers Service Commission (TSC). MOE also provided funds for schools to purchase books, equipment and carried out the actual supervision of the teaching subjects in classrooms. MOE also vetted books and other players to enable them to support curriculum implementation in secondary schools. It facilitated teachers in curriculum implementation at LGHS. It held seminars, released circulars, and supervised teaching through inspection. This greatly enhanced curriculum implementation.

1.4.5 Pedagogical Limitations of Teachers Implementing Policy at LGHS, 1976-1985.

Inspection Report of 1980 at LGHS revealed that the schemes of work made by teachers had certain limitations. They were prepared haphazardly without a clear pattern of who/which teacher should teach what, where, when and the work covered was not filled properly. Also, there was no consistency in the preparation of schemes of work. For instance, in 1981 inspection of the English language, all classes from Forms 1, 2, 3, 4, and 6 had schemes whereas F5 had no schemes. But F1-F5 schemes did not have dates (Inspection Report, 1981). Consequently, this negatively affected the implementation of the curriculum at LGHS.

Again, majority of teachers lacked professional records such as lesson plans, well-prepared syllabuses, schemes of work, lesson notes, but rather taught using textbooks at LGHS. The teachers mainly used lecture method without learner participation or discovery method. Learning was primarily teacher-centered and learners conspicuously remained passive listeners. This led to lack or no voice from the learners as teachers transmitted ideas, knowledge, skills, and attitudes. It was also evident that there was no teamwork as science teachers taught independently of each other. They did not share, consult and prepare professional documents. This study noted that between 1979 and 1985, the assessed lessons showed the ineffectiveness of the teaching staff. As well, there were no departmental meetings held. This meant that there was no teamwork going on in the school. This led to poor results in science subjects.

The Inspection Report of 1981 pointed out the challenges teachers faced in classroom teaching. For instance, the blackboard had Mathematics information from the previous lesson which remained until the end of the lesson in English. The learners in class could be involved to develop critical thinking. Also, the report indicated that teachers used an approach of dictating notes to which hardly inspired learners according to the inspection teams. In class, learners were passive and seemed not to have their ideas (*tabula rasa*) rather than depend on teachers' ideas. Thus, learners waited for teachers to dish out ideas in class (Inspection Report, 1981).

1.4.6 Challenges in Curriculum Implementation

The study established some challenges in the implementation of curriculum at LGHS. They included: Shortage of teachers which had a profound impact on curriculum implementation. Due to this shortage, teachers who specialized in Domestic Science, health sciences, Art & Craft were hard to come by. These subjects were eventually abolished in LGHS in 1966. This forced the government to bring in foreign teachers who were referred to as expatriates had questionable academic qualifications. They negatively influenced the implementation of curriculum reforms in ways such as the mode of pronunciation. This ended up confusing many students leading to a negative influence on curriculum implementation.

Again, the implementation of GEC was hasty and rushed. This has been common in the country when a new curriculum has to be developed, rolled out and implemented. This indicates that

curriculum reform in Kenya is short of proper policy guidelines in development and framework of implementation. Inadequate infrastructure, equipment, inadequate teaching and learning materials also plagued effective curriculum implementation.

Politics was a drawback menace in the curriculum reforms and implementation between 1976 and 1985. Towards the end of GEC curriculum implementation, the government again, due to political pressure, rushed to change the education system recommended by Gachathi (7-4-2-3) to 8-4-4 education system. It sounded pretty absurd that politics was a driving force to change the education system, as early as 1981 when the government engaged Professor Mackay in 1981 to chair education commission (Amutabi, 2003). This hindered curriculum implementation because it brought confusion to the teachers as two policies were implemented at the same time in the school contexts of LGHS, 1976 to 1985. Centralization of the Ministry of Education (MOE) process was a key challenge. The centralization of policy denied critical stakeholders a chance, voice, and perspectives to take root at the initiation, adoption and implementation of the curriculum in schools. The top-down/centralized process left out implementers who were critical to the process as expressed below:

“Curriculum reforms in secondary education in Kenya were pushed down on teachers’ throats as MOE stated that the new 8-4-4 education system must succeed. The Ministry claimed that it was a presidential directive and the former 7-4-2-3 system had to give way. Teachers were neither informed nor involved in the process of curriculum reform. There was no public participation” HT 002(LGHS).

Consequently, there was haste in the implementation of the 8-4-4 Education System in 1985. The findings further show that there was no sufficient time allocated for piloting, teacher training, and the final roll-out. This finding was consistent with Fullan (1989) who pointed out that a hasty implementation predicted poor performance. He suggested that curriculum should be implemented in phases that are not linear but somehow sequential to each other.

There was inadequate infrastructure such as dormitories, classrooms, water, and electric power between 1962 and 1970. These challenges affected admission and enrolments at LGHS. This concurred with KICD (2014) Report that quality and adequacy of resources and physical facilities directly impacted the effectiveness of curriculum implementation. Also, KICD, (2014) reported that the use of teaching aids significantly contributed to the learner’s achievement and that there was need to enhance teaching and learning resources. This would help the school administration to encourage and support teachers in their quest to develop such resources.

There was also the problem of expatriate teachers at LGHS. Some expatriate teachers had a problem of “accent” when they could not effectively teach and transmit ideas, skills, and attitudes to students in classrooms. A physics teacher of LGHS between 1977 and 1983 wasted some bright science students. European teachers did not assist bright students of LGHS, especially, a Physics teacher with her “Travelling Physics courses” in Western Kenya from 1979 to 1981. The course did not benefit girls of LGHS, but those from other schools where she travelled to with her team. This situation led to poor performance in the related subjects and almost caused friction between head teachers, African teachers and education officers (Memo dated, 1980).

1.5 Discussions

Based on the study’s findings, the subjects taught at LGHS during the implementation of GEC, were not relevant to the Kenyan needs after independence, 1976-1985. For example, the African critical scholars (Nyerere, 1967, 1974; Ngugi Wa Thiong’o, 1986; Woolman, 2001; Ngara, 2007; Kapona and Namusike, 2011) argued that a relevant curriculum is expected to i) provide the students with meaningful experiences that engenders deep and significant learning and in response to the current time; ii) fit with personalized learning needs of the learners and develop the skills and confidence to be active and be informed citizens in a rapidly changing world; iii) include practical skills and

integrate existing societal problems; iv) It is also expected to be flexible so as to change with time; v) Related to the culture of the people and localize the content; and vi) be offered in a common language understood by the learners.

From the study's findings and explanation of relevance as discussed by critical scholars, the curriculum reforms enacted at LGHS; 1976-1985 does not meet the criterion. Hence, the need to design subjects which are in line with the needs of society. Care should be taken when coming up with subjects taught in a school curriculum, must be well-thought. The ministry of education should be thorough in doing this, so that areas that need to be taught are well addressed within the dynamics of life and society in general.

Curriculum implementation in the past has been riddled with many challenges. The most critical one has been the number of teachers in the workforce. Boosting numbers of well qualified, and motivated, teachers will remain high on the agenda for improving learning outcomes. The situation was worsened by expansion of the harambee secondary schools in Kenya in the period. Is history repeating itself now with the policy of 100% transition from primary to secondary school level?

Teachers' capacity to handle labour demanding and time-consuming practical lessons remains an ever-present challenge given many of the teachers are themselves products of theory-based and teacher-centered teacher training programs. Additionally, implementation of a learner-centered pedagogy is an almost insurmountable task within a resource-poor context led by poorly remunerated and often demotivated teachers.

Curriculum change requires teacher re-tooling, including training on novel assessment techniques, diversification and adaptation of the curriculum to local needs (Balarin & Benavides, 2010), accommodation of indigenous knowledge in the classroom, and use of gender-sensitive pedagogies and instructional materials that provide a more positive image of women and girls and their role in society (Naseem, 2010). Ample evidence indicates that children are more motivated and better positioned to learn if their background knowledge and experiences are incorporated into their learning environments. Indigenization of the curriculum (Chisholm & Leyendecker, 2008) will thus be imperative, but failed in Kenya, 1972-74 in indigenization of literature by Ngugi Wa Thion'go's group in secondary schools.

Past curriculum reforms have been demoralizing because of their failure to meaningfully address systemic issues dogging the education system and minimize wastage of time, energy, and resources. A case in point is the mismatch between student qualifications and current market demand needs. Also, the structural challenges provided an opportunity for system-wide reforms and an overhaul of the whole education system, especially in the governance, leadership, accountability, ownership, funding architecture, institutional capacity, monitoring and evaluation domains (Psacharopoulos, 1988), hence the current Post-Independence Basic Education in Kenya reform currently (2017) underway. Otherwise, and in Jepkemei's (2017) words: We can get the structure we want, but what does it mean if our children remain "unbuilt"? What is the point of setting a beautiful dinner table if the food is not nourishing? We need to focus on what matters. Let's get the curriculum and accountability right. The structure will fall in place. So, is reform cheap? No, it isn't. Neither is an ineffective, unaccountable education system since independence to date?

Politics have always marred education sector in Kenya and most parts of the globe. It is prudent that politics are totally divorced from issues of academics. As much as politics are healthy and is always part of societal concerns, it should not find room to develop curriculum and final implementation. The influence of politics is majorly what sidelines the key stakeholders such as teachers from being involved in the curriculum reforms in Kenya. The moment politicians want to lobby their ideas and enhance quick success, they will ignore the participation of experts whom they see as drawbacks to their set agendas. In addition, there are beckoning questions in the newly-rolled out curriculum, the

Competency-Based Curriculum in Kenya. How much were teachers and other key stakeholders involved? When the CBC was rolled out in 2017, how many teachers had been trained to this effect? Now that the government of Kenya has phased out P1 teacher Training and to be replaced by Diploma, how much are the tutors trained to handle the teacher trainees on the new curriculum? Lastly, how much are the secondary school principals and teachers inducted on the new curriculum that has been climbing from primary to secondary schools in the next two years? The Ministry of Education should be candid to answer these questions if at all the country is out to achieve competency in skills and knowledge in the CBC curriculum. There is a feeling in the public domain that this new curriculum was rushed possibly due to political influence. Why do we allow politics, therefore to tilt uncertain bearing in the education sector?

This paper argues that curriculum implementation at LGHS followed a “Top-down” process, which is in agreement with (Gale, 2007) who opined that policy formulation is the state/government domain and the implementers domain, is implementation, as implementers read off from policy documents” (Gale, 2007). On the other hand, Shihundu and Omulando (2009), posit that in Kenya curriculum policy process is Top-down design; hence teachers are mere recipients of policy. This is in tandem with Kirk and McDonald (2001) who posited that, “Teachers in such a situation were not partners in process and hence had no authority to speak/raise anything about it” (Kirk and McDonald, 2001). This shows how the government through M.O.E. excluded teachers in deciding what curriculum and how the subjects were taught in secondary schools in Kenya after the recommendations of Gachathi Report, 1976, made them to be detached, and fail to reflect or make critical decisions in their classrooms on the subjects and how they were enacted at LGHS, 1976-1985. Hence this study argues that Curriculum implementers should participate in curriculum review by almost 100% from initiation to implementation phase.

It is not enough to give teachers instructions through MOE/KIE circulars, curriculum guides, memos and letters. In the entire process of curriculum implementation, teachers play a key role. Teachers’ voices at LGHS had been excluded. There is need to seek the mind and perspectives of teachers during pioneering stages of curriculum reforms in Kenya. Like other stakeholders, teachers were just considered as recipients of the policy and were required to implement it without questioning the content and approach.

Fullan (1989) has supported this sentiment by pointing out that success in curriculum reforms depended on informed teachers. Information engaged teachers to be responsible for the ultimate implementation of the new syllabus, assessment practices, and standards of students’ performance. Teachers should be seen as partners in the curriculum reforms and implementation (Carl, 2005). The findings revealed that teachers were not even allowed to deliberate or comment on what they were teaching and how they did it. Teachers should be allowed to present their views without fear of victimization.

1.6 Conclusions

The study concludes that education system recommended by Gachathi Education Commission 1976 was implemented at LGHS in particular and Kenya at large. Its implementation considered weaknesses of the preceding education commission proposed by Ominde Education Commission that was in operation from 1964 to 1975. The development and implementation strategy was directed by MOE centralized-top-down policy that did not involve teachers and parents. This situation inhibited its sustainable implementation in Kenya.

Recommendations

Policy implementation should be bottom-up instead of top-down. Teachers, parents, public, and policymaker should collaborate in curriculum review and implementation to ensure proper monitoring of how the developed curriculum is implemented. Also, any reform intervention should be informed by the recommendations of empirical studies. Thus, enactors should not just be mere

practitioners but formulators of policy in the process of its enactment in secondary schools. Head teachers should involve their teachers in the formulation of objectives for their schools, in discussions and experimental lessons concerned with aims, methods, and evaluation especially in their staff meetings in schools. This step would enable teachers to produce a student-centered classroom atmosphere and activities.

Teachers should be allowed to air their views on how the new curriculum reform is implemented in schools because they enact policy in class rooms, hence their voice counts. Curriculum implementation should be subjected to intensive scrutiny/evaluation to establish reasons for success, failure and identify loopholes for further improvement.

Conflicts of interest

There is no conflict of interest of any kind.

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