



## Social Sciences

*Elixir Edu. Tech.*149(2020) 55073-55078

**Elixir**  
ISSN: 2229-712X

# Influence of Teachers' Readiness for Implementation of the Competency-Based Curriculum in Private Pre-Schools in Keiyo North-Sub County

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### ARTICLE INFO

#### Article history:

Received: 12 November 2020;

Received in revised form:  
10 December 2020;

Accepted: 22 December 2020;

#### Keywords

Teachers,  
Readiness,  
Implementation,  
Competence-Based,  
Curriculum,  
Pre-Schools.

### ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to investigate teachers' readiness on the implementation of the competency-based curriculum in private pre-schools in Keiyo North Sub-County, Nairobi City County. The study objective was to establish teachers' readiness on the implementation of the competence-based curriculum in public pre-schools. The study adopted curriculum implementation theory and descriptive survey design. The target population was 38 public pre-schools, 38 head teachers and 320 pre-school teachers. Simple random sampling was used to select the sample which comprised 108 respondents, 96 pre-school teachers and 12 head teachers. Data was collected using questionnaires. The quantitative data was processed and analysed with the help of the SPSS software programme using Pearson product moment correlation. There was a positive influence of teacher readiness ( $r = .431$ ) on implementation of competency-based curriculum. This implies that as the teacher readiness improved the on implementation of competency-based curriculum increased. Teachers' should be adequately prepared in readiness for implementation of a new curriculum through in-service training, seminars and workshops for effective implementation of the curriculum.

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### Introduction

Countries around the world are carrying out extensive curriculum reforms to better prepare learners for the higher education demands and job market requirements in the 21st century. Competency is defined as proven ability to apply skills, knowledge and personal abilities in different study or work situations (Nikolov, Sholkova & Kovatcheva, 2014). The achievement of learners' is directly proportional to teacher preparation and the quality of teachers. Mosha (2012), states that a competency-based curriculum is one that has specific outcome statements that outline the competencies to be developed or attained. The competency-based curriculum is education that seeks to develop in learners the ability to apply appropriate skills and knowledge to successfully perform a function (Republic of Kenya, 2016). The curriculum emphasises on the application of skills and knowledge to real life situations.

Teacher quality and learner's achievement are related than other types of investments like teacher salaries and abridged number of learners per classroom (Darling-Hammond, 2000). Teachers are the implementers of the curriculum hence they play a significant role in development and transforming a learner. As such, teachers need to be highly skilled in the application of teaching methods essential to make learners learn effectively (Kafyulilo, Rugambuka & Moses, 2012). The quality and significance of the teacher cannot be compared to any variable (Reeves, 2004).

Jadama (2014) contends that how much the teacher knows and understands the subject matter defines how well teachers can teach the curriculum content to the learners. Clarification of misconceptions of knowledge to the learners largely depends on teacher's comprehension of the subject matter

through which learning is affected. The perceptions of the teachers are critical for effective curriculum implementation. Changing the teachers' attitude has been highlighted as important for successful implementation of a curriculum (Hawes, 1979).

In Mexico, the implementation of competence-based approach curriculum began in 2009 through a number of reforms on basic education and national education policies in which competence was viewed as the application of skills, knowledge, values and attitudes (Secretaria de Education Publica, 2011). The competency-based approach aimed at stimulating students in order to attain optimum academic performance. The skills, values, attitudes and knowledge were to be applied in day to day activities and learners were expected to reflect them on their endeavours.

Rwanda shifted to the competency-based curriculum in 2015 in order to deal with scarcity in skills in the Rwandan education system with emphasis on science and technology. This was called for due to Rwanda's desire to build up a knowledgeable society in order to meet its global and local demands in the job market. This was in response to Rwanda's education philosophy of making sure that every child at all levels of learning receives quality education to develop their full potential and relevant skills, knowledge and desired attitudes that will help them fit in the society and job market (Republic of Rwanda, 2015). Rwanda's objective is to transform its state by the year 2030 into a knowledge-based society and middle-income country.

In 2005, Tanzania introduced the competency-based curriculum to curb the challenges facing preparation of learners in training institutions that compromise the quality of education.

According to Komba and Kira (2013), the graduates who were the products of the old curriculum did not exhibit the competencies and skills that wholly addressed the global job market demands locally, regionally and internationally. Thus, the competency-based curriculum was intended to raise the quality of education in Tanzania and produce learners who could demonstrate and apply the acquired skills, attitudes and knowledge in problem solving in meeting the changing needs and aspirations of the society.

Kenya, like many African countries has a high number of unemployed youths. To curb this problem, education and training in Kenya must be aligned to meet the needs and aspirations of the Kenyan populace and vocational education and training should be emphasized to help reduce the high youth unemployment problem in line with sessional paper No. 1 of 2005 on policy framework on Education, Training and Research (Republic of Kenya, 2005). The social pillar in the vision 2030 singles out education and training as the vehicle into Kenya becoming a middle-income economy. The competence-based curriculum is aimed at producing a self-reliant and creative population which will reduce the unemployment rate in Kenya among the youths.

The implementation of the competency-based curriculum in its first phase is facing quite a number of challenges. According to Kaviti (2018) the competency-based curriculum was hastily crafted and rushed through a pilot that was done in 2017. A study carried out by Kaviti (2018) on the new curriculum of education in Kenya shows that the pilot system of the new curriculum took an average of ten weeks, whereby less than 2000 teachers of the total 160000 teachers imparting basic education in Kenya were trained. Schools heads have, however insisted that teachers have been adequately trained for the CBC and are ready to implement it. Kenya Primary Heads Association (KEPSHA) chairman Ndolo said he is yet to receive any complaints regarding the new curriculum (Ndolo, 2018).

Consequently, it recommended that for effective curriculum delivery and provision of quality education, teacher capacity building, provision of learning resources and teacher training in all areas either through pre-service and in-service is fundamental. The new curriculum was aimed at creating pathways to domicile talents (Pathways to Education, 2016). Therefore, there lacks clear evidence on whether teachers have been adequately prepared for the implementation of the CBC.

#### **Statement of the problem**

Sudsomboon (2010) points out that the successful realization of competency-based curriculum relies heavily on the instructors, who are required to take up the new role of coaching and facilitating rather being transmitters of knowledge. Therefore, the preparedness of teachers for the implementation of the competency-based curriculum is very critical. Teachers are the implementers of the curriculum hence they play a significant role in development and transforming a learner. Teachers need to be highly skilled in the application of teaching methods essential to make learners learn effectively (Kafyulilo, Rugambuka & Moses, 2012). The achievement of learners' is directly proportional to teacher preparation and the quality of teachers.

The teacher is expected to act as a facilitator in the teaching learning process. All efforts for implementation of the competency-based curriculum must be comprehensive to prepare teachers adequately for effective implementation of the competency-based curriculum. For teachers to carry out

the implementation process well, they must have a positive attitude. However, since the introduction of competency-based curriculum, there is little evidence that a study has been conducted to establish the level of teacher perception on the implementation the curriculum and yet it is a crucial activity towards the implementation a curriculum. Therefore, teacher's preparedness towards the curriculum are critical because they are the implementers. This study therefore sought to establish the effect of teacher's preparedness on implementation of competency-based curriculum in public pre-schools in Keiyo North-Sub County.

#### **Literature Review**

##### **Concept of competence-based curriculum and implementation**

The competency-based curriculum lays more emphasis on what learners are expected to do rather than mainly focusing on what they are expected to know. Jallow (2011) posits that a competency-based curriculum is one that aims at developing in learners the ability to do things, to learn and learn how to learn and to know. The competency-based curriculum is considered appropriate for addressing the changing societal needs, technological socio-economic demands of the country. It is aimed at addressing issues of unemployment among the youths and graduates by emphasizing on acquisition of skills, knowledge, behaviours and attitudes significant in carrying out various errands (Maodzwa-Taruvunga & Cross, 2012). The competency-based curriculum is a shift from the traditional input driven education whose main focus was development of knowledge to competence-based education which is competence-based education (Young, 2009). Its emphases on the development of skills as combined abilities of values, attitudes, skills and knowledge essential for carrying out different tasks (Mulder, 2014).

According to Mauranaza, Mtshali & Mukamanaza (2017), the competency-based curriculum that is being implemented in the developing countries is borrowed from developed countries and therefore developing countries are facing challenges in trying to adapt it. Frenk, Chen, Bhutta, Cohen, Crisp & Evans (2010) further argues that in this situation a reform in curriculum is hard to plan and slows the process of implementation. The competency-based curriculum discourages mere acquisition of knowledge and lays more emphasizes on skill development. Therefore, there is need to change the teaching- learning approaches from rote memorization to approaches that support development of competencies and skills that can be applied in solving life.

##### **Teachers' readiness and implementation of the competency-based curriculum**

In the context of vast expansion and creation of new knowledge and an economy- based society, the teachers must be prepared adequately to adopt a complex evolutionary and responsive approach considering curriculum changes (Gatlin, 2009). The teaching career should be developed on a procedural manner on the foundation of an improved receptiveness to the training requirements determined by the changes in the socio-economic society to increase teachers' skills and knowledge in the implementing the CBC (Serdenciuc, 2013). This is linked to training to develop integrated learning experiences that allows the transfer of learning outcomes to raise individual profession success and integration of social integration.

A study by Moshi (2012), on learning materials used to deliver the competency- based curriculum revealed that many

schools did not have enough facilities and teachers had not received adequate training making classroom implementation of the competency-based curriculum difficult. It further revealed that teachers lacked requisite competencies and the textbooks and teachers' guides had not been provided. The book writers had not been trained and had limited knowledge about the competency-based curriculum. They were not well informed about the competency-based curriculum hence their ability to write quality books was limited. Teachers' were hesitant to use textbooks and other materials related to the competency-based since they required long periods for lesson preparation (Moshi, 2012).

A study by Moshi (2012) revealed that teachers had not received any training on the new curriculum although the education officials claimed the teachers had been trained. Lack of teacher preparation made it difficult for the teachers to use the competency-based curriculum materials like textbooks as they lacked competencies. Therefore, to ensure successful implementation of the competency-based curriculum teachers should be inducted and trained on the new curriculum.

A study carried out in Tanzania by Makunja (2016) on challenges facing teachers in implementing the competency-based curriculum found that teachers had not been oriented through in-service programmes or workshops to keep them abreast in readiness for implementation of the CBC. The interviewees' views showed that inadequate teacher preparation was encumbering the implementation of the CBC. The teachers who are critical players lacked knowledge, skills and understanding for effective implementation of the competency-based curriculum.

Teachers' readiness and willingness is fundamental for successful adoption and implementation of ICT into the learning and teaching activities and curriculum (Singh & Chan, 2014). Thus, if teachers are not well prepared and engaged in all phases of their integration to the curriculum, digital technology may or not be adequately implemented. A study conducted by Chege (2014) on factors influencing teachers' readiness to use ICT in teaching in public secondary schools in Gatundu North District, Kiambu County, Kenya revealed that only 13.75 percent of the teachers were very confident about their ability to use ICT in teaching in the classroom. This means that majority of the teachers do not have enough technological skills to implement ICT in classroom. The study also found that majority of the teachers recommended training to make teachers more knowledgeable on ICT.

#### **Theoretical framework**

This study is based on curriculum implementation theory by Gross (1971). Gross (1971) posit that for successful implementation of any educational programme, factors such as teacher competency, clarity and awareness of the implementer, capacity of the implementer, support from the management and attitude of the teachers, learners and stakeholders must be considered.

Gross (1971) states that the teacher who is the implementer should be competent; be aware of the content and what is to be implemented. He argues that when the implementers are not aware of the changes of the curriculum, they may not effective and sufficiently implement the curriculum. The implementer should also have a positive attitude towards the new curriculum and the changes therein. Baumert, Kunter, Blum, Bruuner, Voss, Jordan & Tsai (2010), argues that the content knowledge of the teacher has

an impact on the child's learning and affects how teachers deliver their content during classroom instruction.

Curriculum implementation theory has a link in this study in that it is about curriculum implementation. Adapting this theory, on effective competency-based curriculum implementation requires trained teachers with content knowledge of the curriculum. Therefore, the theory will help the study to establish teachers' perception on the implementation of competency-based curriculum implementation. The competency-based curriculum emphasizes that learners be formed with confident, be cooperative with others and lifelong learners through the construction of new knowledge and core competencies. The learners are the architects and active actors of the learning.

According to Gross (1971) capacity of the implementer is significant for effective curriculum implementation. The teachers executing the curriculum should have sufficient knowledge to effectively execute the curriculum. In-service of teachers is vital for equipping teachers with skills and knowledge necessary for handling a new curriculum. The pre-school teachers should therefore be trained for the competency-based curriculum through seminars, workshops and in-service training to acquire skills, knowledge and behaviours for implementing the curriculum well. Gross (1971) also points the need for changing people's attitudes for effective curriculum implementation. Hawes (1979) agrees with (Gross, 1971) by emphasizing the need for changing teachers' attitudes for effective curriculum implementation.

#### **Research methodology**

A descriptive survey design was adopted in this study because it was suitable in the primary data collection about teachers' perception and offers an opportunity in making descriptive assertions about a large population. Descriptive survey research design method is used to gather data about attitudes, opinions opinion and habits of people on any educational issues by administration of questionnaires.

The population for this study consisted of the 38 public pre-schools in Keiyo North Sub-County. The County had a population of 320 pre-school teachers. The study targeted 38 head teachers and 320 pre-school teachers. Sample sizes are small groups obtained from the assembled population. Simple random sampling was used to select a sample size of 30% of the target population. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), a sample size of 30% is adequate for descriptive survey. Therefore, in sampling the pre-school head teachers and pre-school teachers, the researcher used 30% of the target population. A total of 12 pre-schools, 12 head teachers and 96 pre-school teachers were selected for the study. The sample size was 96 pre-school teachers and 12 head teachers.

The study used questionnaires for pre-school teachers and head teachers. The researcher developed questionnaires for pre-school teachers. The questionnaire comprised both structured and unstructured questions. It was based on the objectives of the study. The instrument was deemed reliable because the head teachers have more information on teachers' perception hence will assist in acquiring more data. The teachers understanding of the implementation of the competency-based curriculum.

Validity determines whether the research truly measures that which it is intended to measure. To ascertain validity, the instruments were subjected to piloting and analysis. The study used test-retest method whereby the same test was re-administered two weeks after the first admission to the same respondents. After piloting, the validity of each question was

examined for clarity, relevance and suitability for the study purpose.

To determine the reliability of the research instruments, the study respondents were issued with questionnaires for them to fill. The same questionnaires were again subjected for retest. The two sets of score for each school were correlated using Cronbach's alpha coefficient to test the reliability of the instruments. A co-efficient of 0.7 or above is considered appropriate and hence reliable for collecting data. Data analysis was based on the research questions design at the beginning of the research. The data analysis method that used was based on quantitative and quantitative approach using descriptive and inferential statistics. The collected data was thoroughly checked and examined for completeness and comprehensibility. The data was summarized, classified, coded and entered. This ensured better and efficient analysis. The coded data was entered into the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) for analysis. Quantitative data was analysed using measures of central tendency to calculate the mean and mode.

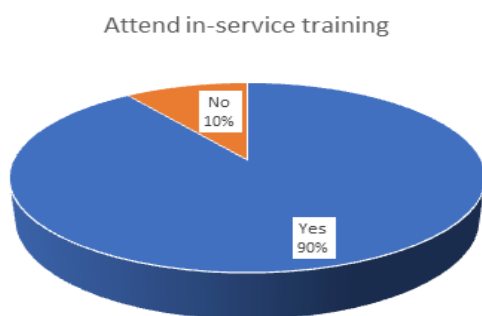
## Results

### Teachers readiness for implementation of the competency-based curriculum

The researcher sought to find out teachers' readiness for the implementation of the competency-based curriculum in private pre-schools. The researcher used indicators like attendance of in-service training, areas covered, and areas not covered to determine teachers' readiness for implementation of the competency-based curriculum.

#### In-service training

Majority of the pre-school teachers (90%) have attended in-service trainings for the competency-based curriculum and 10% have not as shown in Figure 1. Teacher induction and in-service training is vital for teacher preparedness to implement a new curriculum.

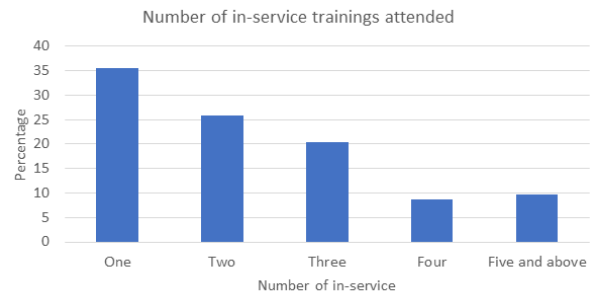


**Figure 1. Attendance of in-service training**

This implies that majority of teachers are ready for implement the competency-based curriculum. This is in line with a study by Darling-Hammond, Wei & Andree (2010) who observed that countries that support teacher in-service training in on-going professional development and involve teachers in curriculum decision making demonstrate high learners' achievements in schools. Therefore, to ensure successful implementation of the competency-based curriculum all teachers should be inducted and trained on the competency-based curriculum.

#### Number of in-service trainings attended

Table 1 indicates that majority of the pre-school teachers (35.5%) had attended only one in-service training session for the competency-based curriculum, with 25.8% attended two and 20.4% attended three trainings. Most of the pre-school teachers have attended less than five in-service trainings for the competency-based curriculum.



**Figure 2. Number of in-service trainings attended.**

This implies that majority of them may not be well versed about the competency-based curriculum. This was in concurrence with study by Moshi (2012) which revealed that teachers had received little or no training on the new curriculum. A study by Makunja (2016) on challenges facing teachers in implementing the competency-based curriculum also found that teachers had not been oriented through in-service programmes or workshops to keep them abreast in readiness for implementation of the CBC. This shows that in-service training is very fundamental in preparation of teachers for implementing a new curriculum.

#### Areas covered during the in-service training

Information in Table 1 shows that majority of pre-school teachers were trained on scheming, lesson plan and subject content. Majority of respondents (44.1%) indicated that they had been trained on scheming, lesson planning and content, (26.9%) indicated subject content and assessment and (15.1%) indicated subject content. The training majorly covered the three areas that are, schemes, lesson plan and subject content.

**Table 1. Areas covered during the in-service training.**

Areas covered	Frequency	Percentage(%)
Core competencies	3	3.2
Schemes of work and lesson plans	7	7.5
Assessment	3	3.2
Subject content	14	15.1
Subject content and assessment	25	26.9
Schemes of work, lesson plans and content	41	44.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>100.0</b>

#### Areas to be trained on for effective implementation of the CBC

Table 2 shows that majority of pre-school teachers (73.1%) wish to be trained on digital literacy. Other pre-school teachers (22.6%) wish to be trained on interpretation and teaching of core competencies, (3.2%) on evaluation and (1.1%) on teaching approaches. This is in line with a study by Chege (2014) which found that only (13.8%) of the teachers were very confident about their ability to use ICT in teaching in the classroom and therefore recommended training to make teachers more knowledgeable on ICT.

**Table 2. Areas to be trained on for effective implementation of the CBC**

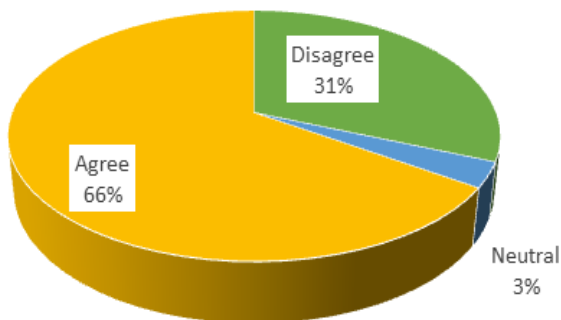
Areas to be trained on	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Evaluation	3	3.2
Digital literacy	68	73.1
Interpretation and teaching of core competencies	21	22.6
Teaching approaches	1	1.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>100.0</b>

For teachers to effectively integrate ICT in their instruction, they must be equipped with technological skills and information on usage of technological devices. In a study by Makunja (2016) on challenges facing teachers' in implanting the CBC, (27.45%) of the respondents indicated that they were not able to apply the competency-based teaching approaches due to lack of in-service training. This concurs with a study by Mosha (2012) which revealed teachers continue to use traditional teaching methods as opposed to child-centred teaching approaches. This means that teachers should be trained more on how to interpret and apply the competency- based teaching approaches for them to effectively develop the required competencies in the learners. Teachers also need to be trained on how to impart the core competencies in the learners and on how to conduct assessment for the learners. Assessment is an integral part of effective teaching and in providing reliable and valid information to the parents and learners about their progress and achievement of the competency-based curriculum objectives. Therefore, teachers must have the capacity to assess the competencies and this will only be possible if the pre-school teachers are trained through in-service programmes and workshops on competency-based teaching approaches and evaluation.

**Teachers prepared to implement the competency-based curriculum.**

Findings from Figure 3 indicate that majority of teachers agreed that they are prepared as reported by 61(65.6%) of the teachers, 29(31.2%) disagreed and 3.2% neutral. This means that majority of pre-school teachers are prepared to implement the competency-based curriculum. However, this was in contrary to findings from Moshi (2012) that in reality, a large number of teachers are not prepared to implement the competency- based curriculum in Tanzania. Thus, in Kenya most of teachers are prepared to implement the competency-based curriculum amid many challenges.

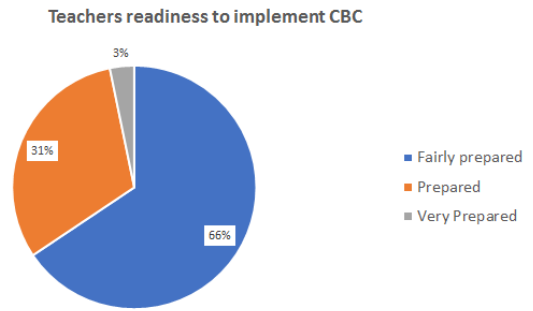
I am prepared to implement CBC



**Figure 3. Pre-school teachers' response on whether they are prepared to implement the competency-based curriculum.**

**Teachers readiness to implement CBC**

Figure 4 indicates that majority (65.6%) are fairly prepared, (31.2%) are prepared and only (3.2%) are very prepared to implement the competency-based curriculum. This implies that majority of the teachers have not been adequately prepared to implement the competency-based curriculum. This has negative diverse effects on the learners in the learning process because the quality of the teachers determines the quality of education.



**Figure 4. Teachers' readiness to implement the competency-based curriculum**

Adequate teacher preparation is critical. Sudsomboon (2010) points out that the successful realization of competency-based curriculum relies heavily on the instructors, who are required to take up the new role of coaching and facilitating rather being transmitters of knowledge. Therefore, pre-school teachers should be ready and adequately prepared for them to effectively implement the competency-based curriculum.

**Correlation Results**

Pearson product moment correlation was used to establish the influence of teacher readiness on implementation of competency-based curriculum as shown in Table 3. There was a positive influence of teacher readiness ( $r = .431$ ) on implementation of competency-based curriculum. This implies that as the teacher readiness improved the on implementation of competency-based curriculum increased.

**Table 3. Correlation Results.**

	Implementation of CBC	Teachers readiness	
Implementation of CBC	Pearson Correlation	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)		
Teachers readiness	Pearson Correlation	.431**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	

- a. \*\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
- b. Listwise N=108

In-service trainings, seminars and workshops are meant to prepare teachers for implementation of a new curriculum. Therefore, inadequate in-service training is like to compromise the quality of the teacher and the quality of education due to ineffective curriculum implementation.

Majority of the teachers agreed that they had either attended or received in-service training. They agreed that in-service training is very important and that they had gained a lot from the in-service training. Majority admitted immediately after the workshops and seminars, they organised for workshops and seminars to train the teachers in implementation of the competency-based curriculum. The head teachers revealed that the areas covered included schemes of work, lesson planning, assessment and application of core competencies. This in line with a report by KICD (2018) which indicated that majority of the head teachers (83%) were able to mentor and support teachers in the implementation of the competency-based curriculum. However, the head teachers noted that lacked some knowledge on some areas like ICT, assessment and use of book. They also observed that to some extent the in-service trainings were not effective as the facilitators lacked adequate materials and the time was limited.

This agrees with a study by Makunja (2016) which indicated that most teachers lacked knowledge about the competency-based curriculum due to limited in-service training. This implies that in-service training, seminars and workshops are very critical especially when a new curriculum is introduced. They empower teachers with skills, content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge for effective implementation of the curriculum. Teachers were ready and prepared to implement the competency-based curriculum especially those who had attended more than five in-service training sessions. They revealed most of pre-school teachers especially those who had attended many in-service trainings were more conversant with what the competency-based curriculum entailed and what is required to be implemented.

### Conclusions

It was concluded that most of the pre-school teachers in public pre-schools were prepared to implement the competency-based curriculum. The study also concluded most of the pre-schools had organized their own seminars and workshops to train teachers on the competency-based curriculum. Most of the trainings the teachers received on the competency-based curriculum had been organized by their schools. During the trainings, subject content knowledge and lesson preparations were the areas mostly covered.

### Recommendations

Teachers' should be adequately prepared in readiness for implementation of a new curriculum through in-service training, seminars and workshops for effective implementation of the curriculum. Teachers should be trained and equipped with ICT or technological skills to facilitate curriculum delivery and for them to apply them in classroom instruction.

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