

Research Article

Exploring Schiro's (2013) Curricular Ideologies in Shaping Tanzania's Competence-Based Curriculum Policy

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Abstract

This paper investigates how Tanzania's competence-based curriculum policies were developed and put into practice in relation to global curriculum ideas. It looks at how Tanzanian curriculum design has been influenced by different foreign educational frameworks and ideologies, with a particular emphasis on the change from traditional to competence-based approaches. Through an analysis of major ideological influences, such as humanism, constructivism and critical pedagogy, the study demonstrates how these international viewpoints have been modified to fit specific educational situations. The study delves into the opportunities and problems these ideologies have for Tanzanian education, offering a glimpse into the wider ramifications for curriculum practice and policy in an increasingly interconnected world. By thoroughly examining policy papers, educational theories and case studies, this study advances a more comprehensive understanding of the dynamic interaction between educational philosophy and curriculum decision-making practices throughout the history of education and highlights the contextual importance and universal applicability of many curriculum ideas.

Keywords

Curriculum, Curriculum Ideologies, Decision-making, Competence Based Education

1. Introduction

The competence-based curriculum (CBC) has emerged as a prominent approach in Tanzania since 2005. The approach is intended to prepare students with inquiry minds who have the creative and employability skills and can perform different responsibilities. The curriculum emphasizes the development of practical skills and abilities applicable to diverse disciplines of study, creating a holistic approach to education. Secondly, inclusive Education: The CBC is intended to be more inclusive, covering a variety of learning requirements and responding to students' individual skills and abilities. Thirdly, continuous assessment: The CBC assessment methods include continuous assessment, which allows for a more

comprehensive review of students' progress throughout the learning process. Fourthly, stakeholder involvement: To promote effective curriculum implementation, the policy stresses collaboration among education stakeholders, including teachers, parents, and the community. Fifthly, flexible learning Pathways: The CBC allows students to choose disciplines and areas of specialization based on their interests and aptitudes. Lastly, Integration of Information and Communication Technology (ICT): The curriculum involves the use of technology to promote teaching and learning, preparing students for the digital age.

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2. Conceptualisation of Terms: Ideology, Curriculum, Competence Based Curriculum

2.1. Ideology

David [1] contend that; in 1796 in France, an erstwhile cavalry officer turned philosopher named Destutt de Tracy (1784-1836) coined the word *idéologie*, meaning “the science of ideas.” According to him, a concise and accurate definition for ideology today is “a powerful system of ideas.” Generally, in the context of education, ideology can be defined as a set of beliefs about what education institution should teach for what ends and for what reasons. It is a generally a vision about what a curriculum should look like in terms of the content, methods and assessment procedures.

2.2. Curriculum

The term “curriculum” comes from a Latin word meaning “course” or “path” followed. In the context of education, where learning is a central activity, the most obvious interpretation of the word curriculum is to see it as a course or “curriculum” Taba [2]. Yusof [3] defines curriculum as a set of prescribed educational experiences designed to provide an individual with the best possible education and experiences that will fit them into society or qualify them in a profession. UIBE [4] believed that curriculum is, in its simplest form, a description of what, why, how and when students should learn. Of course, the curriculum is not the end. Instead, it aims to achieve valuable and useful learning outcomes for students and implement various social demands and government policies. Important economic, political, social and cultural questions about the goals, objectives, content and processes of education are addressed in and through the curriculum. Levin [5] also defines it as a description of what, why, how well and when students should study systematically and purposefully. In general, a curriculum can be defined as a set of prescribed educational experiences, the purpose of which is to provide an individual with the best possible education and experiences that fit into society or qualify for a profession. It is a description of what, why, how well and when students should learn systematically and purposefully.

2.3. Competence Based Education

CBE emphasizes diverse learning activities, knowledge construction and reconstruction, competency-based assessment methods, content-based curricula that should not be limited by the curriculum, and content-based curriculum that should not limit teachers using students as empty vessels. According to Hatmanto and Tasriyah [6], the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) model of teaching and learning replaces the traditional curriculum or content-based approach

with an outcome-based approach. This method is rooted in educational philosophy and the idea that practical teaching is essential. A competency-based curriculum uses competency-based learning that emphasizes the acquisition of ideas, skills, and abilities. This requires changes in teaching, learning and assessment strategies, Posner [7]. The focus of instruction has changed from teacher-centered to competency-based, where the focus is on the needs of students and how they apply their knowledge in real-world situations. It is about adding qualifications and life skills to the curriculum. The program emphasizes more graduates and expertise than their knowledge. Mulder [8] agreed that a competency-based curriculum approach helps students increase their mastery of skills and knowledge and develop confidence in solving problems. Therefore, it is an approach that improves the students and academic achievements and equip them with the skills needed in the labour market.

2.4. Key Features of the CBC

- 1) Inclusive Education: The CBC addresses diverse learning needs accommodating students' individual skills and abilities.
- 2) Continuous Assessment: Assessment methods emphasize ongoing evaluation of student progress throughout the learning process.
- 3) Stakeholder Involvement: Effective curriculum implementation requires collaboration among teachers, parents and the broader community.
- 4) Flexible Learning Pathways: Students can choose disciplines and areas of specialization aligned with their interests and aptitudes.
- 5) Integration of Information and Communication Technology: Technology is utilized to enhance teaching and learning preparing students for the digital age.

3. Four Curricular Ideologies According to Schiro (2013)

Schiro [9] (2013) proposed four curriculum ideologies, each with particular beliefs about the type of knowledge to be taught, the inherent nature of children, the content of teaching, how teachers should guide children and how children should be assessed. According to him, curriculum ideologies promote very different goals of teaching and very different teaching methods to achieve the goal.

3.1. The Scholar Academic Ideology

Scholar Academics argue that our society has gathered knowledge organised into disciplines over the centuries. The purpose of education is to help youngsters learn the collected information of our culture: that of the academic fields. Understanding a subject requires mastery of its content, conceptual frameworks, and styles of thought. Teachers should be

mini-scholars who thoroughly grasp their subject and can communicate it to students in a clear and proper manner. Scholar Academics consider academic disciplines, the intellectual universe, and the realm of knowledge to be approximately equal.

3.2. The Social Efficiency Ideology

According to the Social Efficiency concept, the essence of learners is found in their competencies and activities. Youth are educated by learning to accomplish the duties required for social productivity, which prepares them to be functional future contributing members of society. Teachers direct instruction by selecting and applying educational strategies to help pupils acquire the behaviours required by their curriculum. Instruction is guided by clear behavioural targets, and learners may require a lot of practice to achieve and maintain mastery of abilities.

The primary task of a social efficiency educator is to ascertain the needs of society. The curriculum's terminal objectives are the things that will meet these needs. Educators must then choose the most efficient method of generating a product or the educated person who matches the curriculum's terminal objectives and so serves the needs of society. Social Efficiency ideologists argue that applying scientific procedural routines to curriculum development results in the most efficient achievement of a curriculum's terminal aims. The premise that change in human behavior (that is, learning) occurs in a fairly straightforward cause-effect, action-reaction, or stimulus-response context is central to Social Efficiency views of scientific technique.

According to this approach, Social Efficiency educators must foresee the causes, behaviors, and stimuli (that is, the learning experiences) that will result in the intended consequences, emotions, and responses. Thus, in the Social Efficiency ideology, the concept of learning (or change in human behavior), the creation and sequencing of learning experiences (the causes, actions, and stimuli that lead to the desired effects, reactions, and responses), and accountability to the client for whom educators work all play important roles.

3.3. Learner Centred Ideology

Learner-centered ideology is an educational strategy that places the learner at the center of learning and emphasizes his needs, interests and active participation. This worldview is based on the belief that students are unique individuals with different learning styles, experiences and preferences. Learner-centered ideology believes that schools should be pleasant places where students can naturally develop according to their innate nature. Teachers who believe in a student-centered worldview should allow their students to gain real-world experiences so that they can expand their knowledge and embrace new topics. Students have more

control over how far they take their learning by participating in research, discovery and group projects, Schiro, [9], p. 96; Marulcu and Akbiyik, [10]. According to this theory, students are agents who must continue to develop themselves. Students have more control over how far they can take their learning through research, discovery and group projects, Schiro [9] 2013, p. 96; Marulcu and Akbiyik [10]. According to this concept, students are agents who must continue to develop their skills and have the capacity for personal growth.

3.4. Social Reconstruction Ideology

The ideology of social construction is aware of the injustice done to the society and its people such as gender, economic inequality, social, racial and other issues. The ideology also believes that society is sick, hence the emphasis on civic and moral education as well as cross-cutting issues such as terrorism, religious education and transgender difficulties. The concept of social reconstruction work is based on the premise that society needs reconstruction because it is fragile. Specialists from education and training institutions are seen as active players in this restoration work. The developers of social reconstruction work with the idea that the process of social reconstruction also includes public education. These content creators rely heavily on education and the ability to help students understand society in ways that are meaningful to them. Specialists from education and training institutions are seen as active players in this restoration work. The developers of social reconstruction work with the idea that the process of social reconstruction also includes public education. These authors firmly believe in education and its ability to help students understand society in ways that enable them to envision a better society and take action to make it a reality, providing maximum satisfaction for all its members, Schiro [9].

4. Methodology

The methodology involves a comprehensive review of relevant literature, including educational policies, Curriculum designs and development, pedagogical practices, and institutional frameworks in both Tanzania and globally. The selection of the document deliberately focused on the literature that describes the concept of Competence Based Curriculum. The documents were viewed based on a publication year, with the published studies being included in this article. Interviews with educators, policymakers, and education experts provide qualitative data, offering nuanced perspectives on the challenges and opportunities associated with Curriculum development basing on ideologies. Information was gathered from a variety of relevant journals and thesis reports extracted from websites. In addition, the information collected was analyzed using descriptive methods.

5. Ideologies Seem to Underpin the Competence - Based Curriculum Policy in Tanzania

Learner-centered and social constructivist ideologies appear to underlie Tanzania's competency-based curriculum policy, as competency-based curriculum strongly emphasizes student-centered learning and strongly opposes traditional teaching techniques such as lectures and chalk and talk and the reason for the competency-based curriculum is that students are prepared to take responsibility for their own learning. Constructivists see the learner as more than just an active information processor; rather, they see the learner as a creator of knowledge who creates his own meaning for knowledge. The argument for a competency-based curriculum is that students must be prepared to take responsibility for their own learning. Constructivists see the learner as more than just an active information processor; rather, they see the learner as a creator of knowledge who creates his own meaning for knowledge, Pritchard and Woolard [11].

Here are some major elements of the learner-centered and social construction ideologies, as well as instances that may be applicable in the context of Tanzania's competence-based curriculum policy.

The first reason is that these two ideologies emphasize human capital education as an investment in human potential, viewing individuals as resources for economic development, emphasizing the development of skills and competencies according to the needs of society and the labour market, with the aim of improving national and total human capital, recognizing the importance of preparing students for life beyond academia.

Second, these two ideologies promote constructivism, which advocates learning as an active process in which people create their own understanding through experience and reflection, emphasizing practical, experiential learning and assessments that measure the practical application of knowledge rather than memorization. Exploration, critical thinking and problem solving are encouraged through learning activities. Assessment methods emphasize application of knowledge rather than mere memorization. Wu et al. [12], the relevant skills must be acquired after they have been learned, and teachers must provide students with intellectual experiences that prepare them for the challenges of lifelong learning by analyzing and synthesizing learned skills, rather than simply memorizing and describing them. In particular, it helps students become better informed researchers through the approaches, methods and tactics applied by teachers.

Thirdly, these two ideologies emphasize the importance of skills such as critical thinking, creativity, communication and collaboration in preparing people for the challenges of the modern world and finally emphasize the importance of a curriculum that is culturally relevant and sensitive to local contexts in educational systems. According to Leung [13],

constructivism aims to place real problems in realistic learning environments so that students can form their own interpretations of the external world based on their experiences and interactions with the environments.

Fourth, the two ideologies include elements that respond to the cultural and social needs of the country, such as a curriculum that emphasizes how knowledge is socially constructed and influenced by cultural, historical, and contextual factors, ensuring that education is meaningful and usable for students and focus on providing equitable educational opportunities for all students, regardless of background or ability, and accommodate diverse learning styles.

Fifth, these two ideologies recognize that students have different strengths, weaknesses, and learning rates, so they emphasize flexibility in learning paths, allowing students to progress at their own pace, and common strategies include personalized learning plans and differentiated instruction.

Sixth, these two ideologies view students as active participants in their education rather than passive receivers of information and emphasize interactive and participatory activities, discussions, projects, and real-world applications to actively engage students in learning and provide students with choices and autonomy in learning.

Seventh, both ideologies often include regular feedback methods, self-evaluation opportunities and reflection exercises that help students evaluate their progress and areas for development, identifying and adapting to the different requirements of students.

6. Conclusion

Tanzania's competency-based curriculum approach is based on carefully considered curriculum principles. Tanzania has moved from content-based to competency-based education systems in line with broader global trends that emphasize the application of knowledge in real-world settings. Tanzania's competency-based curriculum, which sets the country apart in the global education arena, reflects the country's commitment to producing adaptable and well-rounded individuals who can make meaningful contributions to society. The way the curriculum is constantly changing shows how well the connections between learning objectives and the real demands of the modern workforce are understood.

Abbreviations

CBC	Competence Based Curriculum
CBE	Competence Based Education
ICT	Information and Communication Technology

Author Contributions

Muhangwa Godfrey Michael is the sole author. The author read and approved the final manuscript.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest.

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