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Influence of the Content of Teacher Professional Development Programmes on the Implementation of Competency-Based Education in Public Junior Schools in Matungulu Sub-County, Machakos County

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate influence of the content of teacher professional development programmes on the implementation of competency-based education in public junior schools in Matungulu sub-county, Machakos county. The study was anchored on the Model of Teacher Change, by Guskey. A mixed methods research approach, specifically a convergent design, was employed. The target population comprised of 84 public junior schools, 84 heads of institutions, 350 junior school teachers, two Quality Assurance and Standards Officers (QASOs), and one Sub-County Director of Education (SCDE) in Matungulu sub-county. Sample size comprised of 10 public junior schools selected using stratified and random sampling, 10 heads of institutions through criterion sampling, 2 QASOs and 1 SCDE selected using criterion purposive sampling, 91 teachers selected using simple random sampling. Data collection instruments included questionnaires for teachers, interview guides for head of institutions, QASOs, and SCDE. Data was analysed using SPSS 28 for descriptive and inferential statistics, and NVivo for thematic analysis of qualitative interview data. Findings have been presented in tables and graphs. Research instruments have been validated through face validity, and reliability ensured using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.85. Ethical considerations were observed to protect participants' rights, privacy, and well-being. The study found that relevant and practical professional development content improved teachers' implementation of competency-based education. It concluded that programme content strongly influences teachers' classroom practices. It recommended aligning professional development content with teachers' practical needs and CBE requirements.

Key Words: Programme content; CBE implementation; Teacher competence; Pedagogical skills; Curriculum implementation; Classroom practices; and Professional learning

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Background to the Study

Teacher professional development (TPD) programmes are structured learning activities intended to improve teachers' subject knowledge, pedagogical skills, assessment literacy, and classroom practices. In this study, programme content refers to the knowledge, competencies, examples, and practical activities included in TPD sessions. Competency-Based Education (CBE) is an educational approach that emphasizes learners' ability to apply acquired knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes in real-life situations. CBE implementation refers to teachers' practical use of learner-centred instruction, inquiry, collaboration, differentiated learning, formative assessment, and authentic learning tasks. Therefore, the influence of TPD programme content concerns how the relevance, adequacy, and practical orientation of training material shape teachers' implementation of CBE in public junior schools (Chemutai, 2025; UNESCO & International Task Force on Teachers for Education 2030, 2024).

Major education stakeholders identify teachers' professional knowledge as central to successful curriculum reform. UNESCO and the International Task Force on Teachers for Education 2030 (2024) maintain that teachers require relevant professional learning to translate curriculum policies into effective classroom practices. Similarly, the World Bank (2021) recommends content-focused training that includes modelling, opportunities to practise, feedback, and supporting instructional materials. UNICEF (2022) associates effective teacher development with inclusive and learner-centred education. The British Council (2024) further observes that African TPD is more useful when its content responds to teachers' classroom needs instead of presenting abstract principles. Collectively, these stakeholders show that access to training alone is insufficient; what teachers learn during training determines whether they can implement competency-based pedagogy, assessment, and differentiated learning effectively.

Globally, education systems are increasingly emphasizing transferable competencies such as creativity, communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and problem-solving. This transition changes teachers' roles from transmitting information to facilitating active learning and assessing learners' application of knowledge. According to the OECD (2023), curriculum reforms require professional learning that connects intended competencies with subject teaching, classroom activities, and assessment. However, global experience reveals a gap between policy expectations and classroom implementation. Teachers may understand the language of competency-based education but remain uncertain about designing authentic tasks or assessing complex competencies. Consequently, TPD content should demonstrate competency-aligned lesson planning, learner-centred strategies, differentiation, digital learning, and formative assessment. Content that is practical, curriculum-aligned, and sensitive to teaching contexts is more likely to change classroom practice.

Australia and Finland demonstrate how professional learning can support competency-oriented curricula. Australia's Version 9.0 curriculum integrates capabilities such as critical and creative thinking, digital literacy, and personal and social competence across learning areas. Professional learning resources help teachers interpret achievement standards, plan inquiry activities, and connect capabilities with subject content (Australian Government Department of Education, 2025). Finland similarly embeds transversal competencies, including multiliteracy, ICT competence, participation, and learning-to-learn, across subjects. The OECD (2023) indicates that teachers need opportunities to interpret such competencies collaboratively and relate them to instruction and assessment. These countries suggest that TPD content should move beyond explaining reform principles. It should provide practical models showing how broad competencies can be taught, observed, assessed, and reported within specific subjects.

Canada and Singapore provide further examples of aligning teacher learning with competency-oriented education. Canadian curricula, particularly in Ontario, emphasize transferable skills such as communication, collaboration, critical thinking, innovation, self-directed learning, and global citizenship. Consequently, professional learning must help teachers incorporate these skills into subject lessons and authentic assessment activities (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2022). Singapore's framework combines core values, social-emotional competencies, and emerging twenty-first-century competencies. Its teacher-development content emphasizes reflective practice, purposeful technology use, collaborative learning, and pedagogical improvement (Ministry of Education, Singapore, 2023). Across both systems, curriculum documents provide direction, but teachers still require examples, modelling, and assessment guidance. Their experiences indicate that well-aligned TPD content strengthens teachers' capacity to convert broad national competencies into manageable classroom learning experiences.

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In Africa, Rwanda and Uganda have introduced competency-based reforms to promote learner participation and practical application of knowledge. In Rwanda, Nsengimana et al. (2023) found that science teachers possessed some knowledge of the competence-based curriculum but also demonstrated gaps in understanding its principles and intended competencies. The researchers recommended appropriate training and school-based communities of practice. Uganda's revised lower-secondary curriculum similarly expects teachers to use learner-centred instruction, projects, problem-solving, and formative assessment. However, recent implementation evidence indicates that teachers require clearer guidance on lesson planning, assessment, and the facilitation of active learning (African Center for Economic Transformation, 2024). These experiences show that TPD content must address teachers' specific misunderstandings and demonstrate how competency-based approaches work within actual subjects and classrooms.

Tanzania and Ghana present comparable concerns about the substance of teacher preparation. In Tanzania, Mwakyobwe and Shawa (2023) established that tutors understood prescribed competencies but rarely applied competency-based teaching and assessment methods. Ndimbo and Kessy (2023) also identified difficulties in preparing competency-aligned schemes of work and lesson plans. However, Msamba (2023) found that content-focused in-service training improved teachers' subject knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, lesson planning, and participatory teaching. Ghana's standards-based curriculum likewise requires teachers to develop learners' core competencies through active instruction and assessment. Regional evidence synthesized by Chemutai (2025) nevertheless shows that teachers often receive insufficient practical preparation for these reforms. The two contexts demonstrate that TPD content must combine curriculum interpretation, demonstrations, practice, assessment examples, and locally appropriate instructional strategies.

Evidence from Kenyan counties and sub-counties also connects teacher development with CBC implementation. In North Imenti Sub-County, Meru County, professional development was associated with teachers' use of CBC pedagogical skills, although some practices were applied inconsistently (Muthomi & Njati, 2024). Research in Kinangop Sub-County, Nyandarua County, identified continuing gaps in teachers' preparedness despite participation in CBC training (Karua, 2025). In Keiyo South Sub-County, Elgeyo-Marakwet County, emerging evidence emphasizes the importance of including digital competencies in professional development for CBE. Within Machakos County, Mutua and Waweru (2023) found that teacher competence influenced effective curriculum implementation. These county examples indicate uneven preparedness and suggest that generic national training may not adequately address subject-specific assessment, digital learning, differentiation, and local classroom realities.

Machakos County's public schools operate within the national CBC framework, but teachers' capacity to implement its expectations differs across settings. Mutua and Waweru (2023) established that competence in pedagogy, assessment, and curriculum interpretation contributed to effective CBC implementation in the county. Evidence from Mumbuni Zone also indicates that some teachers remain insufficiently prepared to translate CBC expectations into learner-centred classroom practices (Mutuku & Kaleli, 2024). These findings suggest that TPD content should not merely introduce teachers to curriculum terminology. It should provide subject-specific demonstrations, competency-aligned lesson examples, authentic assessment tools, strategies for differentiated instruction, and guidance on using locally available resources. Nevertheless, county-level studies have generally examined broad teacher competence or readiness rather than isolating how the content taught during TPD programmes influences CBE implementation in public junior schools.

Matungulu Sub-County is part of Machakos County and contains public junior schools implementing CBE under varied school conditions. Teachers are expected to facilitate active learning, integrate core competencies, conduct continuous assessment, and relate classroom activities to real-life situations. However, evidence specifically examining whether TPD content prepares Matungulu teachers for these responsibilities remains limited. Existing local research has largely considered leadership, school resources, or general CBC implementation rather than the relevance, adequacy, and practical orientation of professional-development content. Consequently, it is unclear whether teachers receive sufficient preparation in learner-centred pedagogy, competency-based assessment, differentiated learning, digital integration, and subject-specific lesson planning. This lack of localized evidence creates a need to examine teachers' experiences of TPD content and how that content influences classroom implementation in Matungulu's public junior schools.

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The reviewed literature reveals conceptual, contextual, methodological, and empirical gaps. Conceptually, many studies examine teacher preparedness, competence, training participation, or general professional development without isolating programme content as the independent variable. Contextually, evidence from developed countries and other African settings may not reflect the realities of Kenyan public junior schools. Kenyan studies have mainly focused on primary schools or counties and sub-counties outside Matungulu. Methodologically, much evidence relies on teachers' self-reports, with limited triangulation through school leaders, curriculum-support personnel, or classroom-practice indicators. Empirically, little is known about which TPD topics teachers receive and whether those topics improve CBE implementation. The current study addressed these gaps by examining the influence of TPD programme content on CBE implementation in public junior schools in Matungulu Sub-County.

Statement of the Problem

Education stakeholders are becoming increasingly concerned about how well teacher professional development (TPD) programs support adoption of competency-based education (CBE). Evidence from experience shows that many teachers who have completed TPD still struggle to implement CBE, even though the government has been funding the program for more than five years. These include challenges in implementing learner-centered teaching strategies, utilizing competency-based assessment rubrics, incorporating digital tools into the classroom, and supporting the development of anticipated learner capabilities.

Similar issues have also been raised by research, which shows inconsistent CBE implementation in the classroom and deficiencies in teacher preparation (Waweru, 2023; Onyango, 2022; Ndolo, 2023; Mutua, 2024). However, there is no evidence of a research has been done to ascertain how the implementation of competency-based education in junior secondary schools in Matungulu sub-county, has been influenced by teacher professional development, specifically with regard to its content, organization, teachers' attitudes, and instructional supervision. Therefore, this study investigated the influence of teacher professional development on the implementation of competency-based education in public junior schools, in Matungulu sub-county, Machakos county, Kenya.

Research Question

How does the content of teacher professional development programmes influence the implementation of competency-based education in public junior schools?

Theoretical Framework

The Model of Teacher Change was proposed by Thomas Guskey in 1986 and later refined through his subsequent research. The model explains that meaningful teacher change follows a sequence. Teachers first participate in professional development and apply the acquired knowledge and skills in their classrooms. Changes in classroom practices then improve learners' outcomes. After observing positive learner results, teachers gradually change their attitudes and beliefs about the new teaching practices. Unlike traditional models, Guskey's model does not assume that beliefs must change before practice. Instead, evidence of improved learner performance motivates teachers to accept and sustain instructional change. Therefore, professional development should provide practical content that teachers can apply and evaluate in real classroom situations (Guskey, 2020).

A major strength of the model is its practical and outcome-oriented explanation of teacher change. It recognizes that teachers are more likely to accept educational reforms after observing that new practices improve learners' performance. The model also connects professional development, classroom practice, learner outcomes, and teacher beliefs in a clear sequence. This makes it relevant to competency-based education, which emphasizes demonstrated learning outcomes. Darling-Hammond et al. (2021) explain that content-focused, collaborative, and practice-based professional development can strengthen teachers' instructional practices. The model further encourages teachers to use classroom evidence, formative assessment, and reflection when evaluating new approaches. Consequently, it provides school leaders and education officials with a useful framework for designing, implementing, and assessing teacher professional development programmes.

Despite its strengths, the Model of Teacher Change may oversimplify teacher development by presenting it as a mainly linear process. Teachers' beliefs, professional identities, previous experiences, and motivation may influence classroom practices before they observe improvements in learner outcomes. Avalos (2021) further explains

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that teacher learning is shaped by the professional and institutional contexts in which teachers work. The model also pays limited attention to barriers such as overcrowded classrooms, inadequate resources, heavy workloads, weak leadership support, and insufficient implementation time. Moreover, positive outcomes may take time to become visible, particularly when CBE focuses on competencies such as creativity, collaboration, values, and problem-solving. These outcomes are difficult to measure immediately. Therefore, changes in learner performance cannot be treated as the only factor influencing teachers' beliefs.

The model applies to this study because it explains how the content of teacher professional development programmes can influence CBE implementation in public junior schools. Relevant content on learner-centred teaching, competency-based assessment, lesson planning, differentiated instruction, and digital learning can improve teachers' classroom practices. When teachers apply this content successfully, learners may demonstrate greater participation and mastery of competencies. Such improvements can strengthen teachers' confidence in CBE and encourage sustained implementation. The model therefore connects the study's independent variable, TPD programme content, with its dependent variable, implementation of competency-based education. It will guide the examination of whether the training content received by teachers in Matungulu Sub-County is relevant, practical, curriculum-aligned, and sufficient to produce the classroom changes expected under CBE.

Review of Related Empirical Literature

Chemutai (2025) examined competency-based curricula in Eastern and Southern Africa and the factors influencing their classroom implementation. The regional review established that curriculum reform requires teachers who understand learner-centred pedagogy, competency development, formative assessment, and authentic learning activities. Teacher professional development and coaching were identified as important supports for curriculum implementation. However, training was often brief, theoretical, and insufficiently connected to teachers' classroom conditions. The report indicated that teachers require practical demonstrations, structured teacher guides, subject-specific examples, and opportunities to apply competency-based methods. It therefore supports the view that the relevance and practical orientation of TPD programme content determine teachers' ability to translate CBE policy into classroom practice.

Although Chemutai's (2025) review provides evidence from several Eastern and Southern African countries, it does not isolate the influence of TPD programme content in a particular school level or locality. The study also discusses several implementation factors, including textbooks, coaching, curriculum design, and teacher guides. It does not independently examine how specific training content on lesson planning, assessment, learner-centred instruction, and differentiated learning influences CBE implementation. Moreover, its regional focus limits its ability to explain the experiences of teachers in Kenyan public junior schools. The current study addresses these gaps by focusing specifically on TPD programme content and establishing how its relevance, adequacy, curriculum alignment, and practical orientation influence CBE implementation in public junior schools in Matungulu Sub-County.

In Rwanda, Nsengimana et al. (2023) examined science teachers' knowledge, understanding, and perceptions of the competence-based curriculum in three secondary schools. The qualitative multiple-case study involved 12 science teachers selected from schools with teachers of different levels of experience. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews and analysed using qualitative content analysis. The study found that teachers demonstrated some understanding of the curriculum and the competencies learners were expected to develop. Nevertheless, important gaps remained in their knowledge and interpretation of CBE principles. The researchers recommended appropriate teacher training and school-based communities of practice. These findings suggest that professional development content must clearly explain curriculum concepts, subject-specific competencies, learner-centred instruction, and appropriate assessment practices.

The Rwandan study is relevant because it demonstrates that teachers cannot effectively implement CBE when their understanding of its principles is incomplete. However, Nsengimana et al. (2023) concentrated on teachers' knowledge and perceptions rather than directly examining the content delivered through professional development programmes. The study involved only science teachers from three secondary schools and used a small qualitative sample. Therefore, its findings may not represent teachers across different subjects or public junior schools in Kenya.

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It also did not measure the relationship between particular TPD content areas and classroom implementation. The current study addresses these limitations by examining whether content on CBE pedagogy, assessment, instructional planning, differentiation, and teaching resources influences implementation among teachers in public junior schools in Matungulu Sub-County.

Msamba et al. (2023) investigated the influence of in-service education and training on English-language teachers' learning in Tanzania. The qualitative study involved 21 teachers from the Manyara and Kilimanjaro regions. Participants were purposively selected and interviewed individually, while the findings were analysed thematically using the Most Significant Change technique. The training covered curriculum interpretation, lesson planning, learner-centred teaching, assessment, and classroom management. Findings showed improvement in teachers' subject knowledge, general pedagogical knowledge, and pedagogical content knowledge. Teachers also reported greater use of participatory teaching approaches. However, limited changes were observed in some areas of grammar planning, teaching, and assessment. The study concluded that content-focused training can strengthen teachers' understanding of competency-based teaching.

Despite its relevance, the study by Msamba et al. (2023) focused exclusively on English-language teachers and evaluated a specific in-service training programme introduced in Tanzania. It primarily assessed changes in teachers' knowledge rather than the actual implementation of CBE across different learning areas. Its qualitative design and small purposive sample also limit the generalization of its findings. Furthermore, Tanzania's education system and curriculum requirements differ from Kenya's public junior-school context. The present study addresses these contextual and methodological gaps by examining teachers from different learning areas and determining how the content provided through TPD programmes influences CBE implementation. It generates localized evidence from Matungulu Sub-County and considers practical content involving pedagogy, assessment, lesson planning, differentiation, and instructional-resource use.

Mwakyobwe and Shawa (2023) investigated pedagogical and assessment practices supporting competency-based education in two teacher colleges in Tanzania. The study involved 50 curriculum practitioners and collected data through questionnaires, interviews, and focus-group discussions. Findings indicated that most tutors understood the competencies learners were expected to develop and were familiar with competency-based teaching techniques. However, they rarely applied these techniques during instruction, thereby limiting the development of the intended competencies. The researchers recommended in-service training for tutors and teacher-college managers. The findings demonstrate that knowledge of curriculum requirements does not automatically result in effective implementation. Professional-development content must therefore include practical demonstrations, teaching practice, competency-aligned assessment, reflection, and feedback to help teachers apply CBE approaches consistently.

The study by Mwakyobwe and Shawa (2023) provides useful evidence on the gap between understanding CBE and applying it in teaching. Nevertheless, it was conducted in teacher-training colleges rather than public junior schools. Its participants were mainly tutors and other curriculum practitioners, whose professional responsibilities differ from those of junior-school teachers. The study also examined general pedagogical and assessment practices without isolating the characteristics of TPD programme content that promoted or hindered implementation. The present study fills these gaps by examining teachers working directly with junior-school learners. It investigates whether TPD content is relevant, sufficient, practical, subject-sensitive, and aligned with the Kenyan CBE framework. This approach clarifies how programme content influences daily classroom implementation in Matungulu Sub-County.

In Kenya, Muthomi and Njati (2024) examined the effects of teacher professional development on the implementation of competency-based education in junior schools in North Imenti Sub-County, Meru County. The study established that professional development strengthened teachers' pedagogical skills and supported their use of competency-based approaches. Nevertheless, teachers did not apply all the acquired practices consistently. This finding suggests that participation in professional development alone does not guarantee effective CBE implementation. The training content must be sufficiently detailed, relevant to individual learning areas, and applicable to real classroom conditions. It should prepare teachers to develop competency-aligned lessons, facilitate active learning, conduct formative assessment, integrate technology, and address differences among learners. Thus, the study directly supports the relationship investigated in the current research.

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Although Muthomi and Njati's (2024) study addressed teacher professional development and CBE in junior schools, it was conducted in North Imenti Sub-County. Differences in resources, school characteristics, learner needs, and teacher support may limit the application of its findings to Matungulu Sub-County. The study also examined professional development broadly rather than concentrating exclusively on the influence of programme content. Consequently, it provides limited evidence about which content areas most strongly influence classroom implementation. The current study narrows this gap by focusing on the relevance, adequacy, depth, and practical orientation of TPD content. It also examines how content on learner-centred pedagogy, competency-based assessment, lesson planning, differentiation, and instructional tools influences CBE implementation in public junior schools in Matungulu.

Mutua and Waweru (2023) investigated teachers' competence and its influence on the effective implementation of the competency-based curriculum in public primary schools in Machakos County. The study established that teachers' pedagogical, assessment, and curriculum-interpretation competencies were important for successful implementation. Teachers who possessed stronger professional knowledge were better positioned to organize learner-centred activities and assess competency development. The findings imply that TPD programmes must provide content that develops practical teaching competence instead of merely introducing teachers to curriculum policies. Training content should help teachers interpret curriculum designs, prepare appropriate learning experiences, use formative assessment, and connect learning with everyday situations. The study provides useful county-level evidence linking teacher competence with effective implementation of competency-based education.

However, Mutua and Waweru (2023) focused on teacher competence in public primary schools across Machakos County rather than the content of professional development programmes in public junior schools. The study did not establish whether teachers' competencies resulted from particular TPD content or other factors, such as preservice preparation, teaching experience, or personal learning. County-level results may also conceal variations among individual sub-counties. The current study addresses the conceptual, contextual, and geographical gaps by isolating TPD programme content as the independent variable and concentrating on public junior schools in Matungulu Sub-County. It examines whether the content teachers receive adequately covers learner-centred pedagogy, competency-based assessment, lesson preparation, differentiated instruction, digital integration, and the use of locally available instructional resources.

Research Design and Methodology

This study adopted a mixed-methods convergent research design to investigate the influence of teacher professional development programme content on the implementation of competency-based education in public junior schools in Matungulu Sub-County. Quantitative and qualitative data were collected concurrently, analysed separately, and integrated during interpretation. The quantitative strand employed a cross-sectional survey to determine how the relevance, adequacy, curriculum alignment, and practical orientation of TPD content influenced CBE implementation. The qualitative strand explored participants' experiences and explanations concerning the training content provided to teachers. Combining the two strands enabled the researcher to establish measurable relationships while obtaining detailed contextual information. The design also strengthened triangulation and provided a comprehensive understanding of the research problem (Creswell & Creswell, 2023).

The study was conducted in Matungulu Sub-County, Machakos County, where public junior schools are implementing CBE under different socioeconomic and educational conditions. The target population comprised 350 junior-school teachers, 84 heads of institutions, two Quality Assurance and Standards Officers, and one Sub-County Director of Education, giving a total of 437 participants. Ten public junior schools were selected through stratified and simple random sampling to represent different administrative zones. The sample comprised 91 teachers, 10 heads of institutions, two QASOs, and one SCDE, producing a total sample of 104 participants. Teachers were selected through proportionate stratified random sampling based on sex, while heads, QASOs, and the SCDE were selected purposively because of their professional responsibilities and knowledge.

Data were collected using teacher questionnaires, interview guides, an observation guide, and a document-analysis guide. The questionnaire generated quantitative data on whether TPD content adequately covered learner-centred pedagogy, competency-based assessment, lesson planning, differentiated instruction, digital integration, and

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instructional-resource use. Semi-structured interviews with heads of institutions, QASOs, and the SCDE provided detailed information about the relevance and practical application of the training content. Classroom observations established whether teachers applied the knowledge and skills acquired through professional development. Document analysis examined training records, professional-development materials, lesson plans, assessment records, and curriculum-implementation reports. Using multiple instruments enabled methodological triangulation and strengthened the credibility and validity of the findings by comparing information obtained from different participants and sources (Saunders et al., 2023).

Quantitative data were analysed using SPSS Version 27. Descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations, summarized participants' responses concerning TPD content and CBE implementation. Inferential analysis, particularly Pearson's correlation and regression analysis, determined the direction, strength, and statistical significance of the relationship between programme content and CBE implementation. Qualitative data were transcribed, coded, categorized, and organized into emerging themes. The quantitative and qualitative findings were compared and integrated during interpretation to produce comprehensive conclusions. Ethical requirements included university approval, NACOSTI authorization, informed consent, voluntary participation, confidentiality, anonymity, and secure data storage. Participants were informed about the study's purpose and their right to withdraw without penalty, thereby protecting their welfare and supporting research integrity.

Presentation, Interpretation, and Discussion of Findings

This research question sought to determine if the content of what was taught to teachers during TPD seminars were relevant and detailed enough to assist them implement CBE successfully. Teachers used a five-point Likert scale (5 = Strongly Agree to 1 = Strongly Disagree) to indicate how much they agreed with the statements. The findings are displayed in Table 5.

Table 1
Teachers Responses to Content of Teacher PD and CBE Implementation (n=74)

<i>Content of Teacher PD and CBE Implementation</i>	SA	A	U	D	SD	Mean	SD
TPD programmes adequately cover competency-based teaching methods.	16 (21.6%)	26 (35.1%)	9 (12.2%)	13 (17.6%)	10 (13.5%)	3.34	1.35
Training content improves my understanding of CBE principles.	14 (18.9%)	27 (36.5%)	10 (13.5%)	12 (16.2%)	11 (14.9%)	3.28	1.34
TPD content aligns with the junior school curriculum requirements.	13 (17.6%)	25 (33.8%)	12 (16.2%)	13 (17.6%)	11 (14.9%)	3.22	1.33
The training equips me with practical classroom strategies.	19 (25.7%)	24 (32.4%)	11 (14.9%)	12 (16.2%)	8 (10.8%)	3.46	1.32
TPD content enhances my lesson planning for CBE.	15 (20.3%)	30 (40.5%)	10 (13.5%)	11 (14.9%)	6 (8.1%)	3.51	1.21
The training addresses learner-centered teaching approaches.	17 (23.0%)	28 (37.8%)	13 (17.6%)	9 (12.2%)	7 (9.5%)	3.53	1.23
TPD content is relevant to my subject area.	17 (23.0%)	26 (35.1%)	12 (16.2%)	11 (14.9%)	8 (10.8%)	3.45	1.29
The training improves my assessment of competencies.	19 (25.7%)	22 (29.7%)	10 (13.5%)	12 (16.2%)	11 (14.9%)	3.35	1.40
TPD content supports integration of skills in teaching.	14 (18.9%)	28 (37.8%)	9 (12.2%)	12 (16.2%)	11 (14.9%)	3.30	1.34
The knowledge gained from TPD is applicable in my classroom.	13 (17.6%)	32 (43.2%)	32 (43.2%)	9 (12.2%)	11 (14.9%)	3.28	1.16

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Source: Researcher (2026)

Table 1 typically suggested that educators viewed the content of teacher professional development (TPD) programs as having a favorable influence on the execution of competency-based education (CBE). For instance, 16 individuals (21.6%) expressed strong agreement and 26 individuals (35.1%) indicated agreement that TPD programs sufficiently addressed competency-based teaching methodologies, whereas 13 individuals (17.6%) disagreed and 10 individuals (13.5%) strongly disagreed. A mere 9 individuals, constituting 12.2%, exhibited neutrality. This indicated that most teachers deemed the training material pertinent to competency-based instruction, although a significant minority voiced concerns. The discovery illustrated the Teacher Change Model, which asserts that impactful professional development can lead to alterations in teachers' instructional methods when educators recognize its significance and observe beneficial results (Guskey, 2018). The discovery was documented by Darling-Hammond et al. (2020), who determined that professional development centered on content enhanced educators' teaching methodologies and curriculum execution.

The findings additionally indicated that TPD content enhanced educators' comprehension of CBE principles. In particular, 14 individuals (18.9%) expressed strong agreement and 27 individuals (36.5%) indicated agreement, resulting in a total affirmative response of 41 individuals (55.4%), while 10 individuals (13.5%) remained neutral, 12 individuals (16.2%) disagreed, and 11 individuals (14.9%) strongly disagreed. Consequently, while over fifty percent of the teachers indicated their concurrence, the feedback also uncovered a degree of ambiguity and discontent over the training material. According to Experiential Learning Theory, teachers are more inclined to assimilate professional information when training facilitates the integration of concepts with hands-on experiences and reflective practices (Kolb). The findings aligned with Voogt et al. (2021), who indicated that collaborative and hands-on TPD improved educators' ability to implement competency-based teaching methods.

Concerning curriculum alignment, 13 (17.6%) educators highly concurred and 25 (33.8%) concurred that TPD content was consistent with junior school curriculum standards. Conversely, 12 individuals (16.2%) expressed neutrality, 13 individuals (17.6%) voiced disagreement, and 11 individuals (14.9%) strongly opposed. The affirmative replies accounted for 38 (51.4%), signifying a moderate assurance in curriculum conformity, whereas the dissenting replies included 24 (32.5%). This pattern indicated that TPD material was predominantly in accordance with CBE standards, although enhancements were still required. The discovery corroborated the Teacher Change Model, as significant alterations in teaching methods are more probable when professional development addresses teachers' classroom requirements and yields proof of enhanced practices (Guskey, 2018). Adu and Ngibe (2021) likewise discovered that teacher professional development centered on pedagogy and curriculum markedly affected curriculum execution.

The discovery about effective classroom techniques was notably favorable. Nineteen participants (25.7%) highly concurred and twenty-four (32.4%) concurred that the training provided them with effective classroom tactics, whereas eleven (14.9%) remained neutral, twelve (16.2%) disagreed, and eight (10.8%) strongly disagreed. Consequently, 43 individuals (58.1%) indicated concurrence, whereas 20 individuals (27.0%) expressed dissent. The findings indicated that the pragmatic focus of TPD was beneficial for the majority of educators, however a few did not recognize its application in the classroom. According to Experiential Learning Theory, professional knowledge gains significance when teachers participate in experiences, reflection, experimentation, and application. This finding was somewhat validated by Tadesse and Melesse (2020), who discovered that TPD was less impactful when the training material was not aligned with teachers' actual classroom experiences.

Regarding lesson planning, 15 (20.3%) expressed high agreement and 30 (40.5%) concurred that TPD content improved their lesson planning for CBE. In contrast, 10 individuals (13.5%) expressed neutrality, 11 individuals (14.9%) voiced disagreement, and 6 individuals (8.1%) strongly opposed. The collective consensus of 45 (60.8%) suggested that teachers recognized significant advantages in lesson design through professional development. Nonetheless, the unfavourable feedback indicated that certain teachers still needed further assistance in converting training into successful CBE lesson plans. This discovery corresponds with the Teacher Change Model, which asserts that professional development is more apt to yield enduring change when teachers acquire confidence and observe

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enhancements in their instructional methods (Guskey, 2018). Odundo et al. (2021) likewise indicated that content-intensive CBE training enhanced educators' instructional planning and execution.

The findings further indicated that TPD focused on learner-centered pedagogical methods. Seventeen individuals (23.0%) expressed strong agreement, while twenty-eight (37.8%) indicated agreement, culminating in forty-five (60.8%) affirmative responses. In the interim, 13 individuals (17.6%) expressed neutrality, 9 (12.2%) voiced disagreement, and 7 (9.5%) strongly opposed. The findings suggested that the majority of teachers deemed the training pertinent to the transition from teacher-centered to learner-centered competency-based education methods. Nonetheless, the ratio of neutral and unfavourable replies indicated that certain educators might not have obtained sufficient practical training. The Pedagogical Content Knowledge Theory is pertinent as its successful application necessitates that teachers amalgamate subject expertise with suitable teaching methodologies tailored to specific learners and situations. The discovery supported Waweru (2022), who determined that training focused on learner-centered methodologies enhanced educators' ability to execute competency-based curricular mandates.

Concerning the pertinence of the subject matter, 17 (23.0%) expressed strong agreement and 26 (35.1%) indicated agreement that the TPD material was applicable to their disciplines, whereas 12 (16.2%) remained neutral, 11 (14.9%) disagreed, and 8 (10.8%) strongly disagreed. The aggregate affirmative feedback of 43 (58.1%) indicated that the majority of teachers deemed the professional development pertinent to their instructional duties. Nonetheless, 19 individuals (25.7%) articulated either disagreement or strong disagreement, signifying that the relevance to the subject matter continues to necessitate focus. The unearthing aligned with the Teacher Change Model, indicating that teachers are more inclined to alter their methods when they view professional development as beneficial and relevant to their professional requirements (Guskey, 2018). Darling-Hammond et al. (2020) likewise underscored the significance of professional development that is centered on specific subjects and pertinent to the setting.

The outcomes of the competency assessment were predominantly favourable. Nineteen respondents (25.7%) strongly concurred and twenty-two (29.7%) concurred that TPD enhanced their competency evaluation, whereas ten (13.5%) remained neutral, twelve (16.2%) disagreed, and eleven (14.9%) strongly disagreed. Consequently, 41 individuals (55.4%) conveyed favourable perceptions, whilst 23 individuals (31.1%) articulated unfavourable perceptions. The findings indicated that TPD enhanced instructors' understanding of competency-based evaluation, although not all teachers deemed the training sufficient. According to Experiential Learning Theory, educators enhance their assessment abilities by engaging in assessment practices, contemplating results, and implementing refined strategies in genuine classroom environments. Vogt et al. (2021) verified this perspective by illustrating that participatory professional development enhanced instructors' utilization of competency-based instructional methods.

The findings regarding the amalgamation of skills indicated that 14 (18.9%) strongly concurred and 28 (37.8%) agreed that TPD content facilitated skills integration in instruction. In contrast, 9 (12.2%) maintained a neutral stance, 12 (16.2%) expressed disagreement, and 11 (14.9%) strongly opposed. The general consensus of 42 (56.8%) indicated that the majority of teachers acknowledged the role of TPD in incorporating competencies and abilities into their teaching. Nevertheless, the unfavourable feedback suggested that certain educators continued to face difficulties in executing integrated learning methodologies. This discovery exemplified the Teacher Change Model, indicating that effective instructional transformation necessitates teachers to not only gain new insights but also to use that information in visible classroom behaviours' (Guskey, 2018). Odundo et al. (2021) likewise shown that comprehensive professional development improved instructors' application of competency-based teaching, but ongoing assistance was still essential.

The findings suggested that TPD content was seen as fairly successful in facilitating CBE adoption. In the initial nine legitimate assertions, affirmative responses predominantly surpassed negative ones, especially with lesson planning, learner-focused methodologies, practical classroom tactics, and the integration of skills. Nonetheless, the occurrence of neutral and adverse reactions indicated that the efficacy of TPD varied among teachers. The Teacher Change Model offered a valuable framework for elucidating why mere exposure to training may not ensure uniform classroom transformation; teachers also need chances to witness favourable findings and obtain subsequent assistance (Guskey, 2018). This analysis aligned with Waweru (2022), who revealed that while TPD enhanced teachers' ability to execute CBE, respondents still indicated insufficient depth and restricted classroom focus in certain training initiatives.

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Ultimately, the overarching trend indicated that the substance of TPD programs positively influenced CBE execution; yet, significant deficiencies persisted in practical application, curriculum coherence, assessment, and discipline-specific assistance. The findings are especially pertinent to Pedagogical Content Knowledge Theory, which asserts that proficient teaching necessitates teachers to convert subject information into comprehensible formats for learners via suitable pedagogical methods. Consequently, professional development must transcend theoretical knowledge and offer teachers chances to use CBE principles in their real classroom environments. This analysis was verified by Adu and Ngibe (2021), who exposed that teachers gained advantages from pedagogically oriented TPD however faced challenges in applying theoretical insights to classroom implementation. Thus, enhancing practical, discipline-specific, student-focused, and ongoing professional development would probably bolster CBE execution.

The quantitative results in Table 5 were mostly validated by the observation and document analysis. Several competency-based strategies, such as learner-centred activities, group projects, practical tasks, and competency-oriented assessment, were used by teachers who had taken part in TPD, according to observations made in the classroom. Additionally, learner activities, assessment techniques, and competency-based objectives were demonstrated in lesson plans and schemes of work. But not every classroom had the same evidence. There may be a disconnect between what is learned during TPD and how it is applied in the classroom, since some teachers showed little use of the tactics that were taught during training. This observation corroborated the quantitative findings that the majority of teachers gave TPD content high ratings, but the neutral and negative answers indicated difficulties in converting training material into regular classroom instruction.

Document analysis also showed that instructors' readiness to apply CBE was impacted by the calibre and breadth of TPD content. A number of teachers had integrated competency-based techniques into their planning and assessment procedures, according to training records, lesson plans, assessment instruments, and instructional materials. Nonetheless, certain documents demonstrated insufficient practical assessment methodologies, minimal activity differentiation, and inadequate learner competency specification. Although teachers generally believed that TPD material was pertinent and helpful, documented evidence revealed that implementation remained unequal, which both qualified and supported the quantitative findings. According to the findings, in order to apply CBE effectively, teachers needed opportunities to improve their abilities, ongoing follow-up, and practical classroom support in addition to pertinent TPD content.

Teachers' comprehension of CBE concepts, lesson preparation, learner-centred techniques, and competency-based assessment had generally increased as a result of TPD content, according to interviews with heads of institutions conducted between July 15 and 25, 2026. Teachers who had participated in relevant training, according to one institution head, felt more comfortable developing competency-based lessons and evaluating learners. The head of institution did point out, though, that some teachers found it challenging to apply their theoretical training to real-world classroom activities, especially when the training lacked examples relevant to the subject. The respondents stressed that in order to improve implementations, ongoing school-based support and follow-up were required. The heads of the institution noted that "although practical application remained inconsistent, pertinent TPD content had improved teachers' preparedness" (HOI 3 & 5). One of the heads of institutions observed:

The training has helped teachers understand CBE, particularly in lesson planning, learner-centred approaches, and competency-based assessment. However, some teachers still require practical demonstrations, classroom-based coaching, and regular follow-up support to translate the knowledge gained during TPD into effective classroom practice. Teachers viewed TPD content favourably and others remained neutral had negative perceptions (HOI 3, Personal Communication, July 25, 2027).

It implied that teachers' preparedness had been influenced by professional development, but the degree of classroom transformation relied on opportunities for practice and feedback. The findings were in line with Guskey's Teacher transformation Model, which highlights that pleasant classroom experiences and noticeable practice changes are key components of persistent teacher transformation.

According to the Sub-County Director of Education (SCDE) interview, "TPD is seen as a crucial tool for assisting junior school CBE implementation. Learner-centred pedagogy, competency-based assessment, curriculum interpretation, and instructional planning were all included in training programs" (SCDE). However, because teachers had varying degrees of exposure, experience, and access to follow-up support, the respondent admitted that there were

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differences in the depth of implementation among schools. As a result, the SCDE stressed the “importance of ongoing professional development, school-based mentoring, and classroom implementation monitoring”. The SCDE clarified that “while TPD had increased teachers' comprehension of CBE, ongoing capacity building and instructional support were necessary for sustained implementation” (SCDE). The SCDE added:

After attending professional development programmes, teachers understand the principles of CBE better and have improved their ability to implement learner-centred approaches. However, training should be continuous, practical, and supported through classroom-based demonstrations and follow-up mentorship so that teachers can confidently translate the knowledge acquired into effective classroom practice and achieve the intended competencies among learners (SCDE, personal communication, July 21, 2026).

The quantitative findings, in particular the discovery that 45 (60.8%) of teachers agreed or strongly agreed that TPD addressed learner-centred teaching approaches, were corroborated by this statement. Simultaneously, the percentage of teachers who were neutral or disagreed with multiple assertions was explained by the concern about practical application. The findings substantiated the experiential learning theory, which emphasises learning via application, reflection, and real-world experience. Continuous and practice-oriented TPD was therefore thought to be crucial for bolstering CBE implementation.

TPD has improved teachers' lesson planning, learner-centred instruction, and competency-based assessment, according to interviews with Quality Assurance and Standards Officers (QUASOs). According to the policy, observations made in the classroom revealed that teachers were using CBE concepts in their lesson plans and activities. Nonetheless, some teachers continued to use traditional teaching methods, and competency evaluations were not regularly recorded. The QUASOs ascribed these discrepancies in part to the lack of follow-up following centralised training and variability in teachers' comprehension. According to the QUASO 2, “TPD had improved classroom practice in several schools, but continued monitoring and teacher support were necessary to ensure consistent implementation.”

We have observed teachers utilising more learner-centred activities and competency-based assessment during our monitoring visits, but there are still classrooms where teachers need support to move from theoretical understanding to actual practice (QUASO 2, personal communication, July 23, 2026).

The statement corroborated the quantitative results that demonstrated generally favourable opinions on TPD content, especially with regard to lesson planning, practical tactics, and assessment. However, by showing that training did not always result in consistent classroom implementation, it also explained the neutral and negative reactions. Since effective CBE implementation necessitates teachers transforming curriculum information into suitable teaching and assessment techniques tailored to learners and their circumstances, the findings were consistent with Pedagogical Content Information Theory (Shulman, 1986).

The implementation of competency-based education in public junior schools was positively influenced by the content of teacher professional development, according to the convergence of the quantitative and qualitative findings. According to quantitative data, the majority of teachers concurred that TPD enhanced their comprehension of CBE principles, lesson preparation, learner-centred instruction, useful classroom techniques, skill integration, and competency-based assessment. These findings were supported by qualitative data from heads of institutions, the SCDE, and QUASOs, which showed discernible advancements in lesson planning and classroom practice. Nevertheless, both sets of results showed deficiencies in converting training information into regular classroom practice, especially in areas with little practical demonstrations and follow-up assistance. The findings thus showed that TPD that was pertinent, useful, ongoing, and context-specific was crucial for enhancing the successful and long-lasting implementation of CBE.

Conclusion

The study concluded that the content of teacher professional development programmes significantly influences the implementation of competency-based education in public junior schools. Relevant, adequate, and practical content strengthens teachers' understanding of learner-centred pedagogy, competency-based assessment, lesson planning, differentiated instruction, digital integration, and instructional-resource use. Teachers who receive curriculum-aligned training are better prepared to translate CBE principles into classroom activities and authentic

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assessments. However, theoretical, generalized, or insufficient content limits teachers' confidence and ability to implement CBE consistently. Therefore, effective implementation in Matungulu Sub-County depends substantially on the quality and classroom relevance of the content provided through teacher professional development programmes.

Recommendations

The study recommended that the Ministry of Education, Teachers Service Commission, and Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development regularly review TPD programme content to ensure alignment with CBE requirements. Training should emphasize practical demonstrations, subject-specific lesson planning, learner-centred methods, competency-based assessment, differentiated instruction, and appropriate technology use. Teachers should participate in identifying their professional-learning needs so that the content addresses actual classroom challenges. Public junior schools should also establish professional learning communities where teachers can practise, share, and evaluate newly acquired strategies. Curriculum-support officers and heads of institutions should provide follow-up coaching and classroom feedback to ensure that training content is consistently translated into improved CBE implementation.

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