



Study Report

[Abridged Version]

Exploring Best Practices in the Development and Utilisation of Lesson Plans and Schemes of Work for Effective Implementation of the Competency-Based Lower Secondary Curriculum in Uganda

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Foreword

It is with great satisfaction that I present this final study report titled "*Exploring Best Practices in the Development and Utilisation of Lesson Plans and Schemes of Work for Effective Implementation of the Competency-Based Lower Secondary Curriculum in Uganda.*" This important study responds to one of the most pressing needs in Uganda's education reform ensuring that teachers are equipped with practical, evidence-based tools to support effective implementation of the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC).

Since the launch of the CBC in 2020, the National Curriculum Development Centre has remained steadfast in its commitment to supporting teachers, learners, and all education stakeholders through research-informed curriculum design and pedagogical innovation. Lesson planning and schemes of work are the backbone of successful curriculum delivery, and this report provides valuable insights into how these tools can be harnessed to enhance student learning, promote critical thinking, and foster the development of 21st-century skills.

The findings of this study not only highlight the challenges teachers face in translating CBC principles into classroom practice but also illuminate innovative strategies and good practices that are already emerging in our schools. These lessons are instrumental in shaping future policy, teacher training initiatives, and the development of supportive teaching resources.

I commend the research team for their dedication and methodological rigor in conducting this work. The voices of teachers captured in this report reaffirm the importance of listening to those at the forefront of curriculum implementation. I trust that the recommendations and planning tools provided herein will significantly contribute to more effective teaching and learning processes.

Let this report be a stepping stone toward our shared vision of a transformed, inclusive, and competency-driven education system for Uganda.



Dr Grace K. Baguma
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November 2025

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This study would not have been possible without the valuable contributions of many individuals and institutions who gave their time, knowledge, and support throughout the research process.

I am profoundly grateful to the National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC) for providing the institutional backing and a conducive environment for undertaking this research. Thanks to the Action for Life Skills and Values in East Africa (ALiVE), Uwezo Uganda and Luigi Giussani Foundation (LGFI) who funded and provided feedback at different stages of the study. I also wish to express special appreciation to the teachers from both government and private schools in Jinja City who participated in the study. Their insights, reflections, and experiences provided the rich empirical foundation upon which this report is built.

My sincere thanks go to my research colleague, Mr. Seezi Bogere, for his unwavering commitment, intellectual collaboration, and attention to detail throughout all phases of the study. I am also grateful to the school administrators who facilitated access to classrooms and planning documents, and to the pilot participants who offered constructive feedback on the prototype tools developed.

Lastly, I acknowledge the various education stakeholders who continue to engage with and support efforts to strengthen CBC implementation across Uganda. May the findings of this report serve not only to inform but also to inspire continued collaboration, innovation, and excellence in teaching practice.



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November 2025

Executive Summary

This study explored best practices in the preparation and utilisation of lesson plans and schemes of work for the effective implementation of Uganda's Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) in lower secondary education. The research was motivated by the need to address gaps in teacher preparedness and planning quality, which have been identified as critical barriers to successful CBC delivery.

Using a qualitative research design, the study engaged 21 teachers from diverse educational settings in Jinja City through interviews, document analysis, and a pilot-testing process. The findings revealed varied levels of familiarity with the CBC among teachers, inconsistencies in lesson planning practices, and several challenges including limited training, resource constraints, and inadequate integration of key competencies and values into instructional plans.

Despite these challenges, the study identified emerging good practices, such as collaborative planning, use of digital tools, and context-sensitive adaptations of schemes of work. These strategies fostered better alignment with CBC objectives and supported learner-centred instruction. The study also developed and validated sample planning templates to guide teachers in creating effective and competency-driven lesson plans.

Key recommendations include the need for enhanced teacher training on CBC-aligned planning, integration of formative assessment strategies into schemes of work, increased access to planning resources and digital tools, and stronger institutional support for teacher collaboration.

Ultimately, this study provides actionable insights and practical tools to improve lesson planning and curriculum implementation under Uganda's CBC. It serves as a valuable resource for educators, curriculum developers, and policymakers committed to strengthening teaching and learning outcomes across the country.

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

1.1 Introduction

This study explored and documented best practices in the preparation and utilisation of schemes of work and lesson plans that align with Uganda's Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) for lower secondary education, with the aim of supporting effective instructional delivery and fostering competency acquisition among learners. This chapter presents the background, the rationale of the study, the purpose of study, the study objectives and the significance of the study.

1.2 Background

Globally, education is recognised as a cornerstone for sustainable development, as emphasised in the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4), which seeks to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all (UN, 2015). Competency-based education (CBE) has emerged as a key strategy to achieve this goal by equipping learners with practical skills and competencies required for the 21st century. Many countries have adopted reforms to shift from traditional rote learning to a more skill-oriented, learner-centred approach to education, aligning curriculum outcomes with global labour market demands. These reforms are reflected in the continental, Regional (East Africa) and National (Uganda) policy shifts towards competency-based education. For example, the African Union's Agenda 2023 prioritises education as a driver for social and economic transformation, emphasising the need for innovative pedagogical approaches that foster critical thinking, problem solving and entrepreneurship (African Union, 2025). In East Africa, countries have adopted reforms to enhance relevance of their education systems to regional development goals, with emphasis on teacher preparedness and resource adequacy in delivering competency-based education (World Bank, 2020). In Uganda, the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) for lower secondary education was introduced in 2020 as part of the government's Vision 2040 and the National Development Plan III, which prioritise human capital development (MoES, 2020).

1.2 Rationale for the study

Successful implementation of the CBC requires that teachers are adequately prepared to align their instructional strategies and materials with its demands. Specifically, the preparation of schemes of work and lesson plans is critical in supporting teachers to deliver the curriculum effectively (MoES, 2020).

Evidence from similar reforms in other countries has highlighted that poorly designed instructional materials and inadequate teacher preparation are major barriers to the successful implementation of competency-based curricula. For example, in Kenya and South Africa insufficient training and a lack of practical templates coupled with a lack of clear guidance on integrating competencies into schemes of work affected teacher delivery respectively (Kafu, 2021; Jansen & Taylor, 2020) In

Uganda, preliminary reports indicate gaps in teacher preparedness, particularly in designing and implementing lesson plans that align with the CBC and inconsistencies in how teachers interpret and apply the principles of CBC education in their instructional practices (NCDC, 2022).

To address these gaps, this study set out to leverage evidence-based strategies and insights to identify and document best practices in the creation and use of schemes of work and lesson plans that align with competence-based education. The anticipated outcomes of this research include a synthesised list of best practices, actionable recommendations for educators, and resources such as templates for schemes of work and lesson plans tailored to the CBC. These outputs will not only empower teachers but also contribute to policy development, ensuring the sustainability of curriculum reforms.

1.3 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study was to explore and document best practices in the preparation and utilisation of schemes of work and lesson plans that align with Uganda's Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) for lower secondary education, with the aim of supporting effective instructional delivery and fostering competency acquisition among learners.

1.4 Objectives of the study

- 1) To identify evidence-based strategies for developing lesson plans that effectively promote the acquisition of key competencies outlined in the CBC.
- 2) To examine the role of schemes of work in enhancing curriculum alignment, instructional coherence, and assessment practices within the competency-based framework.
- 3) To generate actionable, context-sensitive recommendations and practical tools for educators to strengthen lesson planning and improve classroom implementation of the CBC.

1.5 Significance of the study

The study is significant for addressing the challenges faced by educators during implementation of the CBC. Teachers are at the core of curriculum delivery, yet many struggle to transition effectively to the CBC due to gaps in training and resources. By identifying practical strategies and developing templates tailored to the CBC, the study enhances teacher preparedness, equipping them with the tools needed to deliver engaging and competency-focused lessons. This not only bridges current gaps but also empowers teachers to improve instructional quality, which is essential for fostering higher learning outcomes among students.

Furthermore, the study holds strategic importance for curriculum development and policy formulation. It generates evidence-based recommendations that support the refinement of the CBC implementation framework, addressing key challenges such as inconsistencies in lesson planning and resource limitations. By aligning with the Ministry of Education and Sports' objectives for education reform, the study contributes to sustainable improvements in teaching practices and curriculum delivery.

Its outputs such as templates and actionable guidelines are not only relevant for Uganda but may also inform curriculum reforms in other countries undergoing similar transitions to competency-based education.

Ultimately, the study has far-reaching benefits for students, who are the primary beneficiaries of effective curriculum implementation. By supporting teachers in delivering quality education, the study ensures learners develop critical thinking, problem-solving, and practical skills required in the 21st-century workforce. Additionally, the findings promote sustainable educational practices by equipping educators with adaptable strategies that can endure future curriculum changes. As such, this study contributes to the broader goals of enhancing education systems and preparing learners for meaningful societal contributions.

1.6 Scope of the study

The scope of the study encompasses the identification and documentation of best practices in the preparation and use of schemes of work and lesson plans tailored to the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) in Uganda's lower secondary education. It focuses on exploring teachers' experiences, challenges, and strategies in aligning instructional materials with CBC principles. The study employs a qualitative research design, including literature reviews, interviews with experienced teachers, development of sample schemes and lesson plans, pilot testing, and refinement. Data collection spans diverse school contexts, including public, private, and international institutions, ensuring broad representation. The study's outcomes include practical templates, actionable recommendations, and evidence-based guidelines to support teachers, curriculum developers, and policymakers in enhancing CBC implementation and improving teaching and learning outcomes.

CHAPTER TWO

Literature review

1. Introduction

Competency-Based Education (CBE) represents a transformative approach to teaching and learning, prioritizing the mastery of specific skills and competencies over traditional time-based educational models. Rooted in learner-centred principles, CBE emphasizes the application of knowledge in real-world contexts, fostering critical thinking, problem-solving, and adaptability to meet the demands of the 21st-century workforce and society. By fostering a culture of competency development, educational institutions can better prepare students for the challenges of the future, ensuring that they possess the necessary skills and knowledge to thrive in their chosen fields. This literature review examines the principles, practices, and challenges associated with the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC), with a focus on Uganda's 2020 education reforms. It aims to provide insights into global and local trends in lesson planning, schemes of work, and instructional alignment, identifying gaps and opportunities to enhance the effectiveness of CBC implementation. By synthesizing diverse perspectives, the review establishes a foundation for addressing these challenges through targeted research and actionable solutions.

2. Conceptual Review

Definition of Key Concepts

Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) is an educational framework that prioritises the development of specific competencies or skills that students must demonstrate to be considered proficient in their field. Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) is an educational framework emphasising specific skills over time-based learning. The shift towards competency-based education (CBE) has been particularly pronounced in health professions education, where the need for graduates to be practice-ready is paramount (Shumba, 2024; Palermo et al., 2022). CBC focuses on developing competencies to ensure graduates are practice-ready. It involves a learner-centred approach, empowering students to progress at their own pace and encourages practical application of knowledge, self-directed learning, and critical thinking skills. This is achieved by allowing learners to progress at their own pace, advancing only when they have demonstrated mastery of the required competencies (Giddens & Mansfield, 2023; Imanipour et al., 2021).

Schemes of work outline curriculum structures, competencies, teaching sequence, and assessment methods. *Lesson planning* details learning objectives, instructional strategies, and assessments aligned with the scheme of work while pedagogical alignment ensures teaching and assessments directly relate to curriculum competencies for real-world application (Gilyazova & Zamoshchansky, 2022; Palermo et al., 2022). Implementation requires clear competency frameworks defining graduate skills, and feedback mechanisms for continuous improvement.

These frameworks serve as the foundation for curriculum design, instructional strategies, and assessment methods (Masa'deh, Al-Haraizahe, Al-Akash, Bakkali, & Jarrah, 2023; Johanson, 2023). A key aspect of CBC is its *learner-centred approach*, which empowers students to take charge of their learning journey. This is achieved by allowing learners to progress at their own pace, advancing only when they have demonstrated mastery of the required competencies (Giddens & Mansfield, 2023; Imanipour et al., 2021). This model not only fosters a deeper understanding of the material but also encourages self-directed learning and critical thinking skills, which are essential in today's rapidly changing job market (Tang, 2023).

Pedagogical alignment is another critical component of CBC, ensuring that the teaching methods and assessment strategies are directly linked to the competencies outlined in the curriculum. This alignment is essential for creating a cohesive educational experience where students can see the relevance of their learning to real-world applications (Gilyazova & Zamoshchansky, 2022; Palermo et al., 2022). For instance, in health professions education, pedagogical alignment might involve using simulation-based learning to teach clinical skills, followed by assessments that require students to demonstrate those skills in practice (Oermann, 2023; Corrigan et al., 2022).

Theoretical Underpinnings

The theoretical underpinnings of CBE are deeply rooted in various educational theories, notably constructivism and Bloom's taxonomy, which provide a robust foundation for understanding how competencies can be effectively developed and assessed in learners. This synthesis explores these theoretical frameworks and their implications for CBE, drawing on a range of scholarly references.

Constructivism posits that learners construct knowledge through experiences and interactions with their environment. This theory emphasizes the active role of learners in the educational process, suggesting that knowledge is not merely transmitted from teacher to student but is built through engagement with content and collaboration with peers. Açıkgöz and Babadoğan articulate that CBE aligns well with constructivist principles, as it encourages learners to progress based on their demonstrated competencies rather than time spent in a classroom setting (Açıkgöz & Babadoğan, 2021). This shift from a time-based to a competency-based approach allows for a more personalized learning experience, where students can engage with material at their own pace and according to their individual learning needs.

Moreover, constructivism supports the idea that assessment should be formative, providing ongoing feedback that informs both teaching and learning. This is echoed in the work of Dhawo, who emphasizes the importance of formative assessments in developing competencies among nurse educators (Dhawo, 2024). By utilizing assessments that focus on real-world applications and collaborative projects, educators can foster an environment where learners are encouraged to explore, experiment, and ultimately master the competencies required in their fields.

Bloom's taxonomy complements the constructivist approach by providing a structured framework for categorizing educational goals and objectives. Originally developed to classify learning objectives, Bloom's taxonomy has been adapted to assess competencies across various domains of knowledge and skill.

The taxonomy's hierarchical structure from lower-order thinking skills such as remembering and understanding to higher-order skills like analysing and creating facilitates the design of curricula that promote deep learning and mastery of competencies (Cate & Schumacher, 2022). For instance, in the context of CBE, educators can align their instructional strategies with Bloom's taxonomy to ensure that students not only acquire knowledge but also develop the critical thinking and problem-solving skills necessary for their professional practice.

The integration of constructivist principles and Bloom's taxonomy into CBE frameworks has also been recognized in the context of medical education. Richardson highlights the necessity of learner-centred, developmental education that is responsive to the evolving needs of healthcare professionals (Richardson, 2024). This perspective underscores the importance of creating educational experiences that are not only aligned with competency standards but also foster critical thinking, collaboration, and ethical decision-making—skills that are essential in the complex landscape of healthcare.

The shift towards CBE also necessitates a re-evaluation of assessment practices. Traditional summative assessments often fail to capture the nuanced competencies required in professional practice. As articulated by Curtis, the implementation of competency-based assessments allows for a more comprehensive evaluation of learner performance, focusing on the integration of knowledge, skills, and attitudes (Curtis, 2023). This holistic approach is essential in preparing graduates who are not only knowledgeable but also capable of applying their competencies in real-world situations.

In addition to assessment, the role of educators in facilitating competency development is critical. As noted by Nagy, educators must act as facilitators of learning, creating environments that support student engagement and collaboration (Nagy, 2023). This aligns with the constructivist emphasis on the social nature of learning, where knowledge is co-constructed through interactions with peers and instructors. By fostering a collaborative learning environment, educators can enhance student motivation and promote deeper learning.

Moreover, the integration of technology in CBE can further enhance the learning experience. As highlighted by Kinnear, digital tools can facilitate personalised learning pathways, allowing students to progress at their own pace while receiving immediate feedback on their performance (Kinnear, 2023). This adaptability is particularly important in today's rapidly changing educational landscape, where learners must be equipped with the skills to navigate complex, real-world challenges.

In conclusion, the theoretical underpinnings of CBE, grounded in constructivism and Bloom's taxonomy, provide a comprehensive framework for understanding how competencies can be effectively developed and assessed in educational settings. By emphasizing learner-centred approaches, real-world applications, and holistic assessment practices, CBE prepares graduates to thrive in their professional careers. The integration of these theories into CBE frameworks not only enhances the educational experience but also ensures that learners are equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to succeed in an increasingly complex world.

3. Global good practices in CBC Implementation

Successful Models

The implementation of Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) across various countries has garnered significant attention, particularly in nations like Finland, Kenya, and Singapore. Each of these countries has adopted unique approaches to CBC, reflecting their educational philosophies and socio-economic contexts. This synthesis explores the lessons learned from these three nations, focusing on strategies that facilitate effective planning and instructional alignment.

The Finnish model is characterized by a strong emphasis on teacher autonomy and professionalism where the state recruits and rigorously trains top tier of high school graduates to deliver high-quality instruction that aligns with national educational goals (Kaburu, Mwenda & Mbaka, 2024), and the emphasis on research-teaching integration to enable teachers improve their pedagogical approaches (Cao et al., 2021) to foster continuous improvement and innovation.

The Singapore model is known for rigorous standards and high performance in international assessments. The country's approach to instructional alignment is grounded in a well-defined national curriculum that emphasizes critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills (Ojwang, 2021). Educators are provided with extensive professional development opportunities, enabling them to adapt their teaching practices to meet the diverse needs of their students.

The Kenya model emphasizes the importance of teacher training and curriculum alignment and aims to equip learners with practical skills and competencies necessary for the 21st century (Kaburu, Mwenda & Mbaka, 2024).

The commonest feature across the three jurisdictions is the integration of technology and use of digital tools to enhance learner experience. This is more advanced in Finland and Singapore but gaining traction in Kenya where the government has initiated programmes to integrate ICT into schools, recognizing the potential of technology to improve educational outcomes (Kaburu, Mwenda & Mbaka, 2024)

The other features that are common across all jurisdictions to learn from relate to the assessment practices and the importance of cultural relevance in education. The assessment practices employed in these countries play a crucial role in instructional alignment for example the formative approach in Finland allows educators to adapt their teaching strategies based on student needs, fostering a more personalized learning environment (Alava, 2023) while the continuous assessment mode in Kenya provides a more holistic view of student progress, aligning assessment practices with the competencies outlined in the curriculum while Singapore's assessment framework is similarly designed to support learning, with a focus on developing critical thinking and problem-solving skills through various assessment methods (Ojwang, 2021).

All three models anchor their education systems in the cultural context or relevance, with emphasis on promoting local language. This not only enhances student engagement but also fosters a sense of belonging and identity among learners.

4. Lesson Plans and Schemes of Work in CBC

Role in Education

The implementation of Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) in educational systems necessitates the development of structured lesson plans and schemes of work. These tools are pivotal in achieving the overarching goals of CBC, which emphasizes learner-centred education, skill acquisition, and the holistic development of students. The importance of lesson plans and schemes of work can be understood through their roles in facilitating effective teaching, enhancing student engagement, and ensuring that educational objectives are met.

Lesson plans and schemes of work are indispensable tools in the successful implementation of Competency-Based Curriculum because. They provide structure that help educators to align their teaching practices with the curriculum goals. This alignment is crucial, as it ensures that all instructional activities are purposefully designed to foster the development of the competencies outlined in the CBC framework (Maran et al., 2021).

They promote collaboration. By engaging in discussions about lesson planning and curriculum implementation, educators can reflect on their practices, share insights, and collectively address challenges, thereby improving the overall educational experience for students (Hybinette et al., 2021; Daumiller et al., 2023). They also facilitate differentiated instruction. By anticipating the diverse learning needs of students, educators can tailor their instructional strategies to accommodate varying abilities and learning styles to help learners succeed. For instance, lesson plans can include a range of activities that cater to different learning preferences to enhance learner engagement and promote a deeper understanding of the material (Chong, 2024; Cheng, 2023).

They support assessment practices. By incorporating formative and summative assessments into lesson plans, educators can monitor student progress and provide timely feedback. Schemes of work can outline assessment timelines, ensuring that evaluations are conducted systematically and that students are adequately prepared for each assessment (Goto, 2023; Keller, 2023).

They ensure accountability. Educational leaders can use documented instructional practices and learning outcomes to evaluate the effectiveness of the teaching and learning processes, identify whether curriculum goals are being met, identify areas for improvement and maintain high education standards and for fostering a culture of continuous improvement within schools (Taskin, 2023; Igbaji, 2023).

The facilitate technology integration. This technological integration not only streamlines the planning process but also enriches the learning experience for students. For example, educators can incorporate multimedia resources, online assessments, and collaborative tools that facilitate communication and engagement among students (Lai, 2024; Zhao, 2024).

Components of Effective Planning

Effective lesson planning is a critical component of successful teaching and learning processes. It encompasses various elements, including clear objectives, engaging activities, appropriate assessments, and alignment with competencies. Each of these components plays a vital role in ensuring that educational goals are met and that students are effectively engaged in their learning. This synthesis explores these components in detail, drawing on multiple scholarly references to provide a comprehensive understanding of effective planning in education.

a) Objectives in Lesson Planning

Clearly defined learning objectives are fundamental to effective lesson planning. They serve as a roadmap for both teachers and students, guiding the instructional process and providing a basis for assessment. Objectives should be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART) to facilitate clear expectations and outcomes. They should align with cognitive skills and assessment strategies, adhere to established guidelines for objective formulation (Janah, 2023), link objectives with core competencies to ensure that the educational content is appropriate for the target student population (Krisna, 2021), integrate Higher Order Skills into the objectives to foster critical thinking and problem-solving abilities among students (Wahyuningsih et al., 2023).

b) Activities and Engagement

Engaging activities are essential for maintaining student interest and facilitating active learning. For instance, the use of technology, such as Google Classroom, can enhance the delivery of lesson content and facilitate interactive learning experiences (Arsini et al., 2021). Nurtanto et al. This is in addition to the adoption of the The 5E instructional model (Engage, Explore, Explain, Elaborate, and Evaluate) framework that has been shown to enhance student engagement and learning outcomes (Vu et al., 2022). Further still, the incorporation of formative assessments during activities allows teachers to gauge student understanding in real-time and adjust instruction accordingly (Steen, 2023). Professional development for vocational teachers – that often struggle with engagement activities – is critical in enhancing their capacity to design engaging activities (Nurtanto et al., 2021).

c) Assessment Strategies

Assessment is a critical component of lesson planning, as it provides feedback on student learning and informs future instructional decisions. Identifying appropriate resources and assessment methods is essential for inspiring student learning and accurately measuring their progress (Telesphore, 2024). Furthermore, the integration of formative assessments, as discussed by van der Steen et al., is vital for enhancing teaching and learning effectiveness (Steen, 2023). Assessments should not only focus on knowledge recall but also on the application of skills and competencies. Moreover, assessments should not only focus on knowledge recall but also on the application of skills and competencies. For instance, assessments that evaluate critical thinking, creativity, and communication skills are increasingly important in preparing students for real-world challenges (Tamela & Dwi, 2021). The use of rubrics can provide clear criteria for assessment, helping both teachers and students understand expectations and areas for improvement (Giacomazzi et al., 2023).

d) Competencies Alignment

Aligning lesson plans with educational competencies is essential for ensuring that students develop the skills necessary for success in their academic and professional lives. Competencies should reflect both content knowledge and the skills required to apply that knowledge effectively. backward design, which starts with identifying desired outcomes and then planning activities and assessments to achieve those outcomes, is an effective approach for aligning lesson plans with competencies (Akbas, 2023).

Additionally, the integration of character education and values into lesson plans is increasingly recognized as important for holistic student development. As noted by Dewi, character values should be embedded within lesson plans to promote ethical and responsible behaviour among students (Dewi, 2021). This alignment not only enhances the educational experience but also prepares students to become responsible citizens in society.

Technology Integration

The integration of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) tools in the planning and delivery of Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC)-aligned lessons has become increasingly vital in contemporary educational settings.

Research indicates that the effective use of ICT tools can significantly enhance student engagement, motivation, and learning outcomes (Mariscal, 2023; Srivastava & Dangwal, 2021). For instance, the integration of multimedia technologies and digital applications in the classroom has been shown to foster a more engaging learning environment, allowing students to interact with content in diverse and meaningful ways (Sorokolit, 2024; HEBEBCI, 2023).

However, the challenges associated with technology integration in education, that hinder successful implementation must also be addressed. Many educators face barriers such as limited access to technology, inadequate training, and resistance to change (Bojukrapan, 2023; Lena et al., 2023).

5. Current Practices in Uganda

Education Reforms

The introduction of the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) in Uganda's education system in 2020 marked a significant shift from traditional content-based approaches to a more skills-oriented framework. This transition aligns with global educational trends emphasizing the importance of competencies that prepare students for real-world challenges. The CBC aims to foster critical thinking, problem-solving abilities, and practical skills among learners, thereby enhancing their employability and adaptability in a rapidly changing job market (Ssenyonga et al., 2022; Agaba et al., 2022). It is designed to promote active learning, where students engage in hands-on activities and collaborative projects, moving away from rote memorization and passive learning methods that characterized previous curricula (Ssenyonga et al., 2022; Katurebe, 2024).

Despite the potential benefits of the CBC, its implementation has faced numerous challenges including; the lack of adequate training for teachers, who often feel unprepared to deliver the new curriculum effectively leading to inconsistencies in how the curriculum is taught across different schools (Kidega, 2024; Wambi, 2024). The assessment methods required for the CBC are often not well understood by teachers, complicating the evaluation of student competencies (Thummaphan et al., 2022) while infrastructural and resource limitations pose significant challenges to the successful implementation of the CBC. The Government of Uganda has recognised these challenges and is taking steps to address them with focus on teacher professional development and the push for greater community involvement in the educational process.

Teacher Preparedness

The analysis of teacher preparedness in the context of Uganda's Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) reveals a complex interplay of training, challenges, and gaps that significantly impact educational outcomes. The CBC, which emphasizes skills and competencies over rote memorization, necessitates a paradigm shift in teacher training and instructional practices. This shift requires a deep understanding of pedagogical strategies that align with the curriculum's objectives, as well as the integration of technology in teaching practices. The need to prioritise integration of technology in teaching and learning has been identified as a critical step towards enhancing teacher preparedness (Katakara, 2024).

6. Challenges in CBC Lesson Planning

Teacher Capacity

The implementation of Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) in educational systems worldwide has brought to the forefront various challenges related to teacher capacity, particularly concerning skills gaps and professional development needs including a significant gap in their pedagogical skills and content knowledge. For instance, a study conducted in Kenya highlighted that teachers were unprepared to adjust their teaching styles to meet the demands of CBC, which necessitates a shift towards more learner-centred pedagogies (Mweru & Wambiri, 2021). There is a pressing need for teachers to develop competencies related to assessment practices within the CBC framework given that they are required to conduct formative assessments that inform instruction and provide feedback for curriculum improvement (Onyango, Indoshi & Nyangara, 2024).

The need for comprehensive teacher induction programmes that focus on assessment literacy and the practical application of CBC principles is paramount for successful implementation (Mweru & Wambiri, 2021). Funding is a significant barrier to enhancing teacher professional competencies, which can lead to inadequate training and support (Takalao, 2024). Therefore, prioritising resources to support teacher CPD becomes critical.

Resource Limitations

The implementation of a Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) in educational settings often encounters significant challenges, particularly concerning resource limitations, which manifest as shortages of materials and infrastructural support. These challenges can severely hinder the effectiveness of the curriculum, as adequate facilities and resources are essential for fostering an environment conducive to learning (Cikusin & Mistar, 2024). The literature highlights that educational infrastructure, which includes physical facilities, learning materials, and technological resources, plays a critical role in the successful execution of CBC initiatives (Sugiyono, 2021; Nova, 2023; Yahya, 2023).

The lack of sufficient educational infrastructure can lead to disparities in educational quality, particularly in underprivileged areas, exacerbated in regions where schools struggle to provide basic resources, such as textbooks and teaching aids, which are vital for implementing a competency-based approach effectively. The resource disparities not only affect the quality of education but also perpetuate cycles of inequality, as students from disadvantaged backgrounds may not receive the same level of educational support (Permana, 2023).

Other challenges relate to the integration of technology in learning environments, and the management of educational facilities (Dewi et al., 2023). Without proper management, even well-equipped schools may fail to provide the necessary support for implementing a CBC effectively. To address the challenges, there is a need for increased investment in educational infrastructure, particularly in underserved areas, foster partnerships between educational institutions and local governments or private organizations can help mobilize resources and support infrastructure development (Sismanto, 2024). Promotion of community involvement in educational initiatives can also contribute to addressing resource limitations, for instance engaging parents and local stakeholders in the educational process can help garner support for infrastructure development and resource allocation (Widayati et al., 2022). By fostering a collaborative approach, schools can create a more sustainable model for resource management that benefits all students.

Policy and Implementation Gaps

The implementation of a Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) in educational settings often encounters significant challenges, particularly due to the disconnect between curriculum design and the realities of classroom practice. This disconnect can manifest in various ways, including misalignment between the intended curriculum and the actual teaching practices employed by educators. Such discrepancies can hinder the effective delivery of educational content and the achievement of desired learning outcomes.

The contributors to the disconnect between curriculum design and realities of classroom practice include the inadequacy of curriculum materials that are designed to support teachers in their instructional practices, the context in which teaching and learning occurs such as school culture, community expectations, and the socio-economic background of students (Garzón, 2023). To bridge the gap, stakeholder involvement is key.

For example, engaging teachers, parents, and community members in discussions about curriculum goals and expectations can foster a sense of ownership and accountability, ultimately leading to more effective implementation (Garzón, 2023).

7. Emerging good Practices

Innovative Strategies

Innovative strategies in lesson planning and schemes of work are essential for enhancing educational outcomes and adapting to the evolving needs of learners. The integration of various pedagogical models, technological tools, and collaborative practices has been shown to significantly improve the quality of lesson plans and the overall teaching-learning process. This synthesis explores effective strategies and tools identified in recent literature, emphasizing their relevance and application in contemporary educational settings.

- a) Lesson study: The lesson study model in particular encourages collaborative planning and reflection among educators, fostering a culture of continuous improvement and shared learning experiences (Wu, 2023).
- b) The integration of technology into lesson planning has been advanced by (Rapanta et al., 2021). Technological integration enhances lesson planning and provides educators with tools to tailor their instruction to meet diverse student needs effectively.

Stakeholder Roles

The development of effective lesson planning and schemes of work is a multifaceted endeavor that requires the collaborative efforts of various stakeholders, including educators – responsible for designing and implementing instructional strategies that facilitate student learning, administrators – that support educators through the provision of resources, professional development opportunities, and a conducive learning environment, and policymakers – that contribute to the framework within which educators and administrators operate, and make decisions regarding curriculum standards, assessment practices, and funding allocations that significantly influence the effectiveness of lesson planning and schemes of work. They also promote best practices by establishing guidelines that encourage evidence-based approaches to education. Arguments that support collaborative efforts have been advanced by Carlson et al. (2023), Zembylas (2021) and Baba et al. (2021).

Emerging Insights from the Literature in relation to Lesson Plan Development that fosters Competency Acquisition

The literature reveals a variety of evidence-based recommendations that can guide educators in improving their lesson planning processes.

a) Aligning teaching objectives with core competencies

Lesson plan development strategies that foster competency acquisition focus on aligning teaching objectives with core competencies and learning outcomes (Krisna 2021, Pham 2023, and Omollo et al. 2024).

b) Embracing active and learner-centred teaching methods

Active and learner-centred teaching methods, including problem-based learning (PBL) and inquiry-based learning, are widely endorsed for fostering competencies such as critical thinking and problem-solving skills (Setiawati et al. 2021 and Ammenheuser 2022).

c) The integration of technology into lesson planning

Digital tools enhance interactivity and engagement, as noted by Krisna (2021) and Cheng et al. (2024). However, Njeru and Itegi (2018) caution that unequal access to ICT resources can exacerbate educational inequalities, especially in developing countries.

d) Collaborative lesson planning among educators

Collaborative lesson planning is highlighted as a strategy to improve lesson quality and foster diverse teaching perspectives. Afdal and Maaranen (2023) discuss the Norwegian model, where collaborative planning enhances efficiency and ensures alignment with national competence goals. Despite its advantages, Greenhalgh (2016) critiques the scalability of such models, noting that limited time and resources in some contexts make collaborative planning difficult to implement widely.

e) Real-world applications

Picardo (2024) and Wesselink et al. (2017) stress the importance of connecting lessons to vocational and everyday contexts, enhancing their relevance to students. However, Toro (2019) critiques the feasibility of designing real-world tasks, particularly in contexts where teachers lack the necessary training and resources.

f) Formative assessment and reflection

Darling-Hammond (2009) and Milkova (2012) highlight the importance of continuous feedback mechanisms to monitor and guide student progress. Reflection, as emphasized in the Finnish model (Picardo, 2024), benefits both students and teachers by fostering a mindset of continuous improvement.

g) Ongoing professional development

Stiawati et al. (2021) and Kabita and Ji (2017) stress the importance of teacher training programmes to address the evolving demands of competency-based curricula. However, Mulenga and Kabombwe (2019) critique many training programmes for being overly theoretical and failing to address practical challenges, leaving teachers ill-prepared to design effective lesson plans.

h) Aligning lesson plans with curriculum standards and student needs

Coşkun's research on Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) suggests that lesson planning should consider the diverse needs of learners to enhance language acquisition and content understanding (COŞKUN, 2022). This approach is particularly relevant in multilingual classrooms, where differentiated instruction can lead to better educational outcomes.

Furthermore, the integration of culturally relevant materials and practices into lesson plans can enrich the learning experience and promote inclusivity (Mauluah & Putra, 2021).

i) Interdisciplinarity

The literature suggests that integrating interdisciplinary approaches into lesson planning can enhance student engagement and learning outcomes. Evagorou's study on STEM education emphasizes the need for lesson plans that connect various subjects, thereby providing students with a more holistic understanding of the material (Evagorou, 2024).

Role of Schemes of Work in Supporting Competency-Based Curricula

Schemes of work serve as foundational tools for aligning teaching content with curriculum objectives in a competency-based framework. Oroszi (2020) emphasizes their role in structuring academic content to ensure coherence with desired competencies. Similarly, Wesselink et al. (2017) highlight schemes of work as critical for aligning learning activities and assessments with vocational competency goals. Both perspectives underscore the importance of systematic planning in competency acquisition. However, while Oroszi (2020) provides a general view, Wesselink et al. (2017) focus specifically on vocational education, demonstrating the flexibility of schemes of work to cater to diverse educational contexts.

Schemes of work play a significant role in incorporating work-related and professional competencies into curricula. They have also been credited for supporting the development of critical 21st-century skills such as collaboration, critical thinking, and communication (Gunadi et al. 2022). Where robust collaboration with industry stakeholders exists, schemes of work have the potential to integrate workplace experiences, bridging the gap between academic learning and professional readiness (García-Aracil et al. 2018 and Rambe 2018). However, comparative insights from different regions reveal variations in the use of schemes of work. These differences highlight the importance of adapting schemes to cultural and systemic contexts while maintaining their core focus on competency development (Picardo 2024 and Darling-Hammond 2009).

8. Gaps in Literature

From the reviewed literature, several key deficiencies emerge regarding the role of lesson plans and schemes of work in the implementation of the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC), highlighting areas where empirical evidence is either limited or inconsistent.

A major gap identified is the lack of teacher preparedness to design and utilize CBC-aligned lesson plans and schemes of work. Many teachers report difficulty in translating curriculum competencies into daily teaching activities due to insufficient training in learner-centred planning methods. Existing professional development programmes tend to emphasize theoretical aspects of CBC, often neglecting the practical dimensions of lesson preparation and scheme development (Mweru & Wambiri, 2021; Ajani, 2022).

While some initiatives have aimed to improve planning skills, evidence on their effectiveness in equipping teachers to create adaptive and competency-focused instructional plans remains sparse.

Moreover, the extent to which training intensity influences the quality of lesson planning in resource-constrained environments is yet to be comprehensively examined (Kim & Graham, 2022; Kaburu, Mwenda & Mbaka, 2024).

Other notable deficiencies include; the integration of formative assessment techniques within lesson plans and schemes of work; with many schemes still reflect traditional assessment formats that are inconsistent with competency-based objectives (Onyango, Indoshi & Nyangara, 2024; Tamela & Dwi, 2021) Furthermore, there is limited research on how teachers can systematically embed assessment rubrics and feedback mechanisms into their planning documents to support individualized learning and monitor competency progression.

The adaptability of schemes of work to contextual classroom realities remains underexplored especially for teachers in rural and disadvantaged areas

Finally, although ICT tools have the potential to support lesson planning and the development of schemes of work, their practical application in CBC-aligned planning remains under-researched especially in under-resourced schools.

CHAPTER THREE

Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the research design, methodology, and data collection and analysis strategies employed in this study. The study aimed to identify best practices in the development and use of lesson plans and schemes of work for effective implementation of Uganda's Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) in lower secondary schools. Given the practical and context-specific nature of this investigation, a qualitative research approach was adopted to enable in-depth exploration of teachers' experiences, practices, and perspectives.

3.2 Research Design

The study employed an exploratory, descriptive qualitative research design, grounded in the interpretivist paradigm. This design was appropriate for investigating how educators interact with curriculum materials, navigate CBC-aligned planning, and implement instructional strategies across diverse school contexts. As Creswell (2014) explains, qualitative designs are particularly suited to studies that seek to explore complex social phenomena in naturalistic settings. The interpretivist paradigm, which emphasizes the subjective meaning-making processes of individuals, enabled the researcher to gain deep insights into teachers' lived experiences, beliefs, and instructional practices (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015; Schwandt, 2011).

This design allowed for flexibility in data collection, contextual sensitivity to school environments, and the capture of rich, narrative data grounded in real-world experiences. According to Yin (2018), exploratory qualitative approaches are especially effective when the boundaries between a phenomenon and its context are not clearly evident, which is often the case in education reform settings such as CBC implementation. The design therefore aligned well with the study's aim of identifying best practices while accounting for the diversity of teacher experiences and institutional environments.

3.3 Study Phases and Methodological Framework

The research process was executed in five sequential and interlinked phases to ensure comprehensiveness and validity:

Phase 1: Literature Review

An extensive literature review was conducted to ground the study in existing theoretical and empirical insights on CBC implementation, lesson planning, and schemes of work. This phase helped identify research gaps, inform instrument design, and guide the development of indicators for best practices.

Phase 2: Field-Based Data Collection (Interviews)

Data were collected through **semi-structured interviews** with **21 secondary school teachers** purposively selected based on their experience with CBC implementation. Interviewees were drawn from both public and private schools across Jinja City to ensure diversity in teaching contexts. The inclusion criteria required that respondents had minimum of five years of teaching experience, were actively involved in lesson planning under the CBC, were willing to share planning samples and participate in in-depth interviews. The interview guide focused on lesson preparation processes, use of curriculum materials, collaboration practices, and perceived challenges and successes in implementing the CBC.

Phase 3: Development of Planning Tools

Insights from the literature and interviews were synthesized to develop prototypes of CBC-aligned schemes of work and lesson plans. These were designed to reflect best practices, ensure alignment with curriculum goals, and address observed gaps in planning templates and teacher guidance.

Phase 4: Pilot Testing and Validation

The prototype tools were piloted among a small subset of teachers in both government and private schools. Teachers used the materials for a trial period and provided structured feedback through follow-up interviews and observation notes. Pilot testing assessed the feasibility, relevance, adaptability, and usability of the tools in actual classroom settings.

Phase 5: Synthesis, Dissemination and Recommendations

Data from all phases were synthesized to produce evidence-based recommendations and implementation guidelines. A dissemination workshop was conducted to share findings with key stakeholders, including curriculum developers, teacher trainers, and school administrators, and to validate the study's outputs.

3.4 Study Population and Sampling

The study targeted lower secondary school teachers in Jinja City, Uganda, with a total of 21 teachers purposively sampled from seven schools, including both government and private institutions. Purposive sampling was employed to ensure diversity in teacher characteristics such as gender, educational qualification (ranging from Diploma to Bachelor's degree), subject taught (including English, History, and Christian Religious Education), teaching experience, and familiarity with Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) principles. This non-probability sampling method was appropriate given the study's focus on acquiring in-depth insights from information-rich participants who are directly involved in CBC implementation (Patton, 2002).

3.5 Data Collection methods and Instruments

The study employed multiple data collection methods to ensure triangulation and deepen understanding of lesson planning practices under Uganda's Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC). Semi-structured interviews were the primary method, conducted with selected teachers to explore their planning practices, use of curriculum materials, collaboration with peers, and adaptation to CBC requirements.

In addition to interviews, a document analysis checklist was used to systematically examine and evaluate samples of lesson plans and schemes of work provided by the teachers. This method offered insight into the alignment of teachers' written plans with CBC principles and standards.

To further validate and refine the study's outputs, a pilot feedback questionnaire was administered to a subset of teachers who tested prototype planning tools developed during the study. The questionnaire collected structured responses on the relevance, usability, and effectiveness of the prototypes in real classroom settings.

Finally, observation notes were recorded during the pilot phase to document teachers' actual use of the planning templates in classroom settings. These notes captured non-verbal cues, instructional flow, and student-teacher interactions, offering contextual depth and corroborating self-reported data.

By combining these instruments, the study ensured methodological triangulation and enhanced the validity and credibility of its findings.

3.6 Data Analysis

The study employed thematic analysis as the primary method for analysing qualitative data generated from interviews, observations, and open-ended questionnaire responses. This approach was appropriate for identifying, organizing, and interpreting recurring patterns and themes related to teachers' lesson planning practices, collaboration, and adaptation to the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

In addition, content analysis was used to examine and compare the structural and pedagogical components of lesson plans and schemes of work collected from the field with those developed as part of the study.

To enhance the validity and robustness of the findings, the study employed data triangulation, drawing evidence from three primary sources: existing literature, field interviews, and document reviews.

3.7 Ethical Considerations

The study adhered to internationally recognized ethical standards for conducting qualitative research involving human participants. Informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to data collection, ensuring that they were fully aware of the study's purpose, procedures, potential risks, and their rights as participants (Creswell & Poth, 2018). These measures ensured the study maintained high ethical standards, fostered trust with participants, and promoted the integrity and credibility of the research process.

3.8 Limitations of the Methodology

While the study generated rich and context-sensitive insights into CBC-aligned lesson planning practices, certain limitations were encountered. First, the qualitative nature and purposive sampling strategy inherently limit the generalizability of findings beyond the study's geographical scope in Jinja City. However, this was mitigated by ensuring a diverse sample of teachers across different school types (government and private), subject areas, qualifications, and teaching experience, thereby enhancing the transferability of insights to similar educational contexts (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Second, some respondents were unable to provide physical samples of lesson plans and schemes of work, which posed a challenge for cross-validating self-reported practices. To address this, the study placed greater emphasis on detailed narrative interviews and triangulated responses with document reviews from available participants to ensure consistency and depth in interpretation.

Lastly, time constraints limited the extent of pilot testing of the developed planning tools in some schools. This was mitigated through the use of structured feedback questionnaires and focused observation notes during shorter implementation periods, which provided actionable insights for tool refinement. Despite these limitations, the triangulated and iterative research design ensured methodological rigor, strengthened the credibility of the findings, and enhanced the study's practical relevance to CBC implementation efforts.

CHAPTER FOUR

Presentation, Interpretation and Analysis of Findings

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings from the fieldwork phase of the study, focusing on the analysis and interpretation of data collected from secondary school teachers involved in implementing the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) in Jinja City, Uganda. The chapter details the response rate and demographic characteristics, explores key thematic areas aligned with the study's objectives, and looks at challenges and innovations identified by the respondents.

4.2 Response rate

All 21 teachers, selected for the study, actively participated in interviews and research activities, ensuring a 100% response rate from the intended sample. The full engagement of participants across government and private schools provided diverse teaching contexts for a more credible exploration of the findings.

4.3 Background variables

Table 1: Background Information of Respondents (N = 21)

| Category | Sub-category | Frequency | Percent (%) |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------|-------------|
| School/Institution | Holycross Lakeview SS | 4 | 19.0 |
| | Hope Community | 3 | 14.3 |
| | Jinja Progressive | 2 | 9.5 |
| | Jinja SSS | 3 | 14.3 |
| | St Florence | 3 | 14.3 |
| | St Steven SS | 3 | 14.3 |
| | Wanyange Seed | 3 | 14.3 |
| Type of School | Government | 8 | 38.1 |
| | Private | 13 | 61.9 |
| Gender | Male | 14 | 66.7 |
| | Female | 7 | 33.3 |
| Educational Qualification | Diploma in Education | 6 | 28.6 |
| | Bachelor's Degree in Education | 15 | 71.4 |
| Subject Taught | CRE | 3 | 14.3 |
| | Business Double Main | 1 | 4.8 |
| | English | 4 | 19.0 |
| | Entrepreneurship | 1 | 4.8 |

| | | | |
|---------------------|---------------------|----|------|
| | Geography | 4 | 19.0 |
| | History | 5 | 23.8 |
| | Kiswahili | 1 | 4.8 |
| | Literature | 1 | 4.8 |
| | Political Education | 1 | 4.8 |
| Teaching Experience | 1–5 years | 11 | 52.4 |
| | 6–10 years | 6 | 28.6 |
| | 11–15 years | 3 | 14.3 |
| | 16 years and above | 1 | 4.8 |

In reference to the summary table 1, the distribution of participating teachers across schools was relatively even, with Holycross Lakeview SS slightly standing out. Private schools were prominently represented in the study, with 61.9% of the teachers from private schools and 38.1% from government schools. Private schools showed higher representation (61.9%), possibly due to willingness to participate, accessibility, or the number of private schools in the area.

In terms of gender, 66.7% of respondents were male, indicating a gender imbalance possibly reflecting a male-dominated teaching staff in the sampled schools that could point to a male dominated workforce. Despite the lower representation of female teachers, their inclusion is still valuable as it allows for gendered insights into the themes explored in the study.

The majority of respondents (71.4%) held Bachelor's degrees, indicating well-educated participants likely with extensive training and strong academic foundations. While most teachers had Bachelor's degrees, 28.6% had Diplomas, offering diverse perspectives and enriching the study findings.

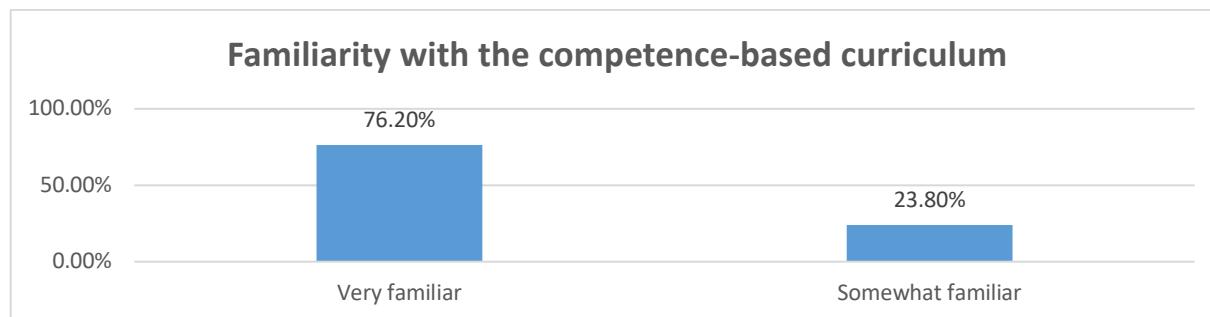
Most teachers (61.9%) had sample lesson plans, showcasing familiarity and active engagement with the competency-based curriculum. The remaining 38.1% not having sample plans may signal challenges in using the curriculum template, time constraints, or varying levels of implementation fidelity.

The subject distribution highlights a strong representation from the humanities, which may reflect the types of schools sampled or the availability of teachers in these areas. It also underscores the importance of examining how lesson planning and curriculum implementation under CBE vary across different subject areas, especially since each discipline may emphasize different competencies and instructional strategies.

Overall, the data reflects a teaching force that leans toward the younger or mid-career range, with fewer long-serving professionals. This composition is important when interpreting the study's findings, as it may influence the overall familiarity, attitudes, and responsiveness to CBE practices particularly in relation to the development and use of schemes of work and lesson plans.

4.4 Empirical findings

4.4.1 Familiarity with the competence-based curriculum by the respondents



The study reveals a high level of teacher familiarity with the CBC approach (76.2%), indicating a positive trend towards its adoption in educational settings. Teachers demonstrated a strong understanding of the CBC methodology, suggesting a promising foundation for successful implementation. Familiarity with CBC among teachers is likely to enhance the effectiveness of its use in classrooms. The findings imply that teachers are well-prepared to integrate CBC practices into their teaching strategies, potentially leading to improved student outcomes and implies the potential for scalability and sustainability of this approach within education systems. On the other hand, 5 teachers (23.8%) indicated that they were somewhat familiar with the curriculum. While this group may have some awareness of CBC concepts, they may not have fully internalized or consistently applied its methodologies in their teaching. This could reflect gaps in professional development, uneven access to training opportunities, or a lack of ongoing support in translating curriculum reforms into classroom practice.

Availability sample of the lesson plans created by teachers in the classroom

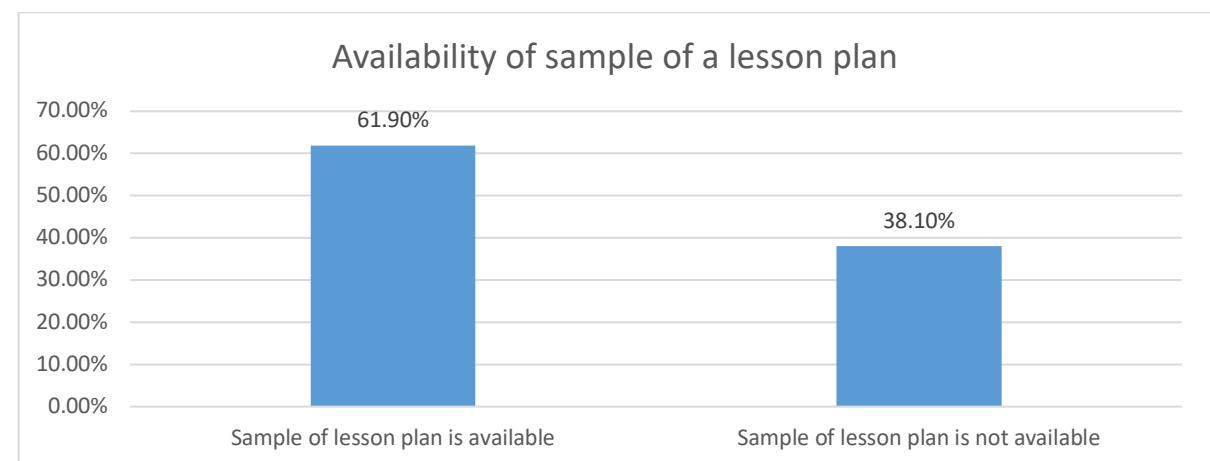


Figure:1 shows that a majority of the teachers 13 out of 21 (61.9%) indicated that a sample of their lesson plan was available, showcasing familiarity and active engagement with the competency-based curriculum. The remaining 38.1% not having sample plans may signal challenges in using the curriculum template, time constraints, or varying levels of implementation fidelity.

Ability to share a copy of a guide the teacher found helpful in lesson preparation

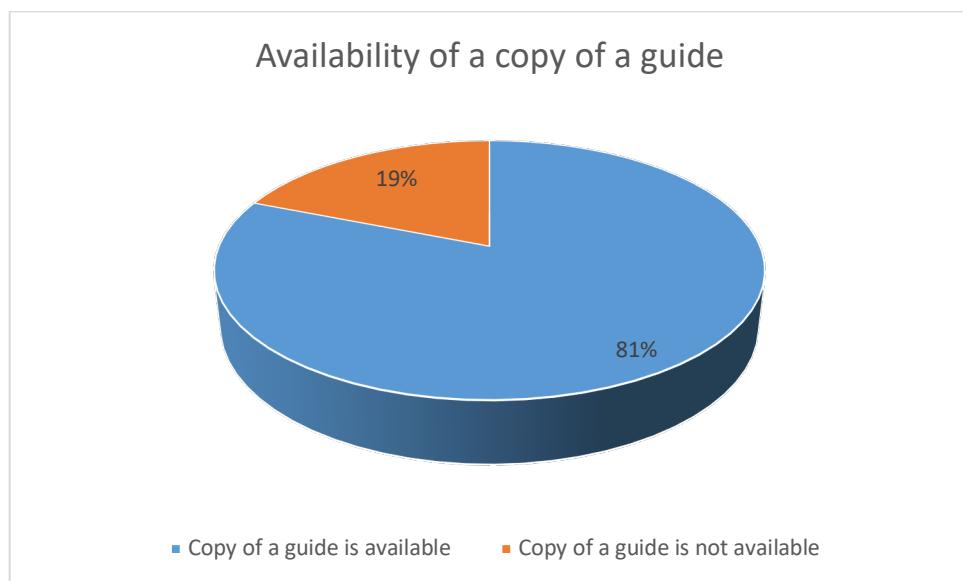


Figure 2 shows that a significant majority 17 out of 21 teachers (81.0%) reported that a copy of a guide was available. The presence of guides for teacher lesson preparation signifies institutional commitment to providing essential resources. These resources are crucial for helping teachers interpret learning outcomes, design competency-focused activities, and meet curriculum standards effectively. There is a minority (19.0%) of teachers who indicated the absence of a guide, potentially hindering effective lesson planning due to disparities in resource distribution or reliance on experiential or peer collaboration rather than formal documents.

Frequency of update or revision of lesson plans by teachers

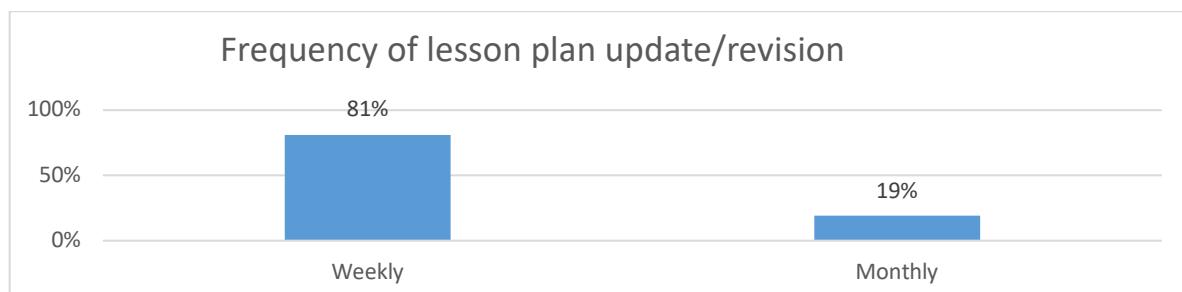
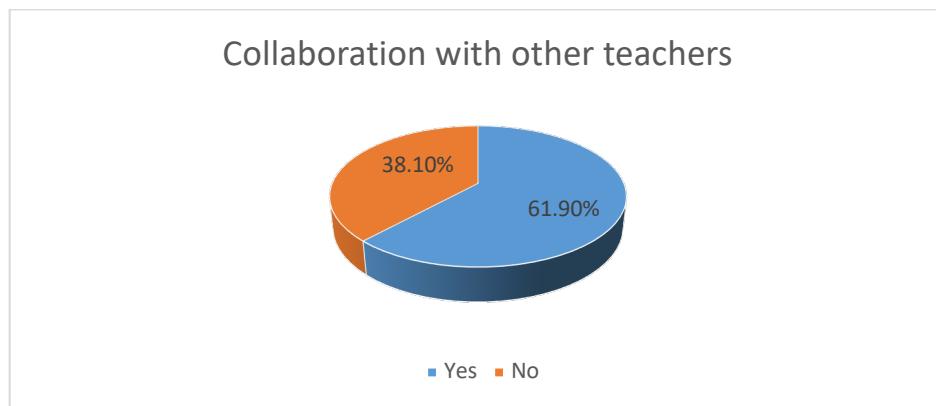


Figure 3 shows that weekly revisions of lesson plans by most teachers indicate a dynamic and learner-centered approach, aligned with Competency-Based Education (CBE) principles emphasizing adaptability and reflection.

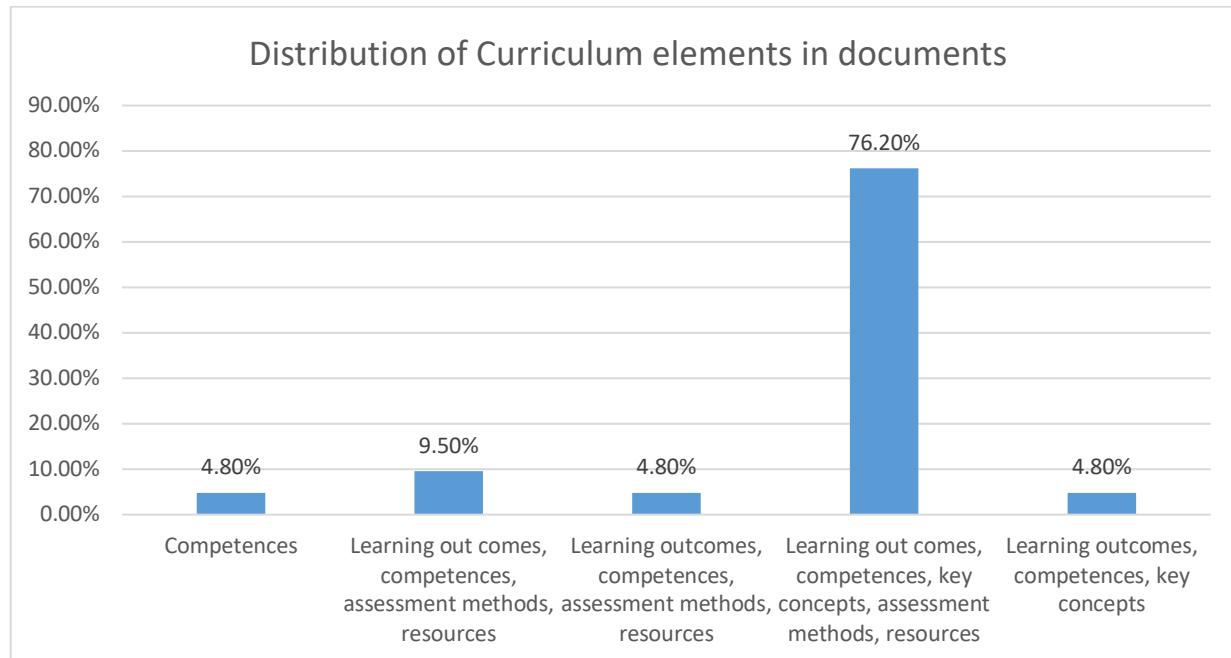
Collaboration with other teachers in lesson planning



The Figure 4 shows that out of the 21 respondents, 13 teachers (61.9%) reported that they do collaborate with other teachers when planning lessons. Collaboration and team-based planning align with CBC's emphasis on shared responsibility and teamwork.

However, 8 teachers (38.1%) indicated that they do not collaborate with others in the lesson planning process. This sizable minority suggests that, in some schools or contexts, lesson planning may still be viewed as an individual responsibility. The absence of collaboration might hinder the sharing of best practices and lead to inconsistencies in how the competency-based curriculum is interpreted and applied across classrooms.

Familiarity with curriculum elements that teachers include in their schemes of work to align with the CBC



From the Figure 5, a significant majority 16 out of 21 teachers (76.2%) reported that their schemes of work include learning outcomes, competences, key concepts, assessment methods, and resources.

Smaller portions of the respondents reported including fewer elements. These variations suggest some inconsistencies in how teachers interpret or implement CBC-aligned schemes of work, possibly due to differences in training, access to templates, or institutional expectations.

4.5 Lesson planning practices in Secondary schools in Uganda

4.5.1 Lesson preparation

Teachers intentionally integrate various curriculum documents to ensure coherence in their lesson plans, actively ensuring alignment among materials like syllabus books, teacher's guides, and learner guides. As one teacher noted, "*I also make use of the syllabus book, teacher's guide and learner guide to ensure that they reconcile,*" reflecting the analytical engagement with the official materials during planning.

It emerged that lesson planning prioritizes competency development within a holistic approach encompassing academic, spiritual, and social well-being, resonating with CBC's focus. As one teacher stated, "*Ensure the capabilities i.e. mathematical, language, spiritual, and community well-being are fulfilled,*". This was often framed within a holistic view of learner development, where academic competencies are considered alongside spiritual and social well-being.

Collaboration and team-based planning within departments are common among secondary school teachers, aligning with CBC's emphasis on shared responsibility and teamwork. As one teacher described, "*Planning with the members in my department,*" is part of their regular planning process. This collaborative model helps teachers navigate the demands of CBC while leveraging each other's strengths

Lesson planning under CBC involves dynamic engagement with diverse information sources and contextual realities, often including additional research to enrich lesson content and ensure relevance to learners' lives and environments. For instance, one respondent explained, "*Getting and researching about the themes from different sources hence teaching and learner activities,*" which points to the integration of updated and diversified content in the classroom. This ongoing research process allows teachers to tailor content, making it more meaningful and engaging for their learners. Teachers design interactive, learner-centered teaching activities with real-life applications, emphasizing engagement and practical knowledge application aligned with CBC expectations. The emphasis on engagement was evident in responses like, "*Learn engaging activities (design activities),*" and "*Teaching and learning activity (stimulus),*" suggesting that the design of activities is both a pedagogical and motivational strategy.

The study found that assessment is seen as an integral part of lesson planning, with teachers indicating that both formative and summative evaluation methods are included in the planning phase. Teachers highlighted this by stating, "*Develop assessment strategies,*" and "*Include the lesson activities and evaluation,*" underscoring that assessment is not an afterthought but a core component of planning. Such alignment helps in tracking learners' progress and adjusting instruction where necessary.

Finally, it was also found that in secondary schools, lesson planning under CBC is characterized by a structured and systematic approach. Teachers detailed the specific components they include in their plans, demonstrating adherence to a standard format that supports consistency and thoroughness.

One teacher shared, “I include the preliminary information i.e. subject, topic, sub-topic, learning resources, methodology, prerequisite knowledge, life skills, references,” which reflects the comprehensive nature of CBC lesson plans

4.5.2 Challenges encountered in developing CBC- aligned lesson plans

In this study, teachers shared the challenges they face when developing Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC)-aligned lesson plans, with time and workload being a prominent challenge:

Many teachers find the CBC lesson planning process to be time-consuming due to the detailed CBC requirements and the need for daily planning. *“As one respondent observed, “Time allocation to learning activities is hard because it’s limited and yet learners need more time to pick concepts.” These reflections indicate that time pressure not only affects planning but also impacts the depth and quality of lesson delivery.*, compounded by an already tight teaching schedule, often makes it difficult for teachers to balance lesson preparation with classroom delivery.

The intensive structure of CBC leaves teachers unable to plan far in advance, requiring daily preparation to meet the curriculum demands. The level of detail required for each lesson plan is more extensive compared to previous curricula. One respondent remarked, *“It’s more detailed,”* while another elaborated, *“It involves integration of different knowledge from different sources of information.”*

Teachers also struggle with articulating competencies in clear, measurable ways—*“Defining clear competences,”*—suggesting that the design of CBC-aligned plans requires a high degree of pedagogical sophistication and content familiarity, which not all educators feel fully equipped for.

Another widespread challenge concerns the limited availability of teaching and learning resources, particularly learner guidebooks and digital tools. Teachers highlighted the scarcity of textbooks, technological devices, and appropriate classroom infrastructure, which collectively hinder effective lesson planning and execution under CBC

The study found that some teachers attributed their planning difficulties to limited training and professional development in CBC methodologies. The lack of targeted training on lesson planning, competency design, and assessment formulation under CBC leaves teachers without sufficient support to navigate the new demands. These insights point to the need for sustained and practical training programmes that go beyond introductory workshops. Some teachers, however, reported fewer challenges, attributing it to their growing experience and familiarity with CBC systems, especially the New Lower Secondary Curriculum (NLSC) assessment procedures.

4.5.3 Management of the challenges encountered in developing CBC- aligned lesson plans

In response to time constraints in developing CBC-aligned lesson plans, teachers have adopted proactive strategies such as creating space in their schedules and starting lesson development early to reduce last-minute pressures, emphasizing daily preparation and basing lesson plans on the content to be covered each day. Early planning allows for systematic thought and better organization, as confirmed by the statement, “Yes, by preparing early.”

Collaboration has been highlighted as a valuable strategy to overcome planning difficulties. Working with peers and department members to share insights, distribute workload, and enhance the quality of lesson plans. Involving all concerned parties to lighten planning burdens and promote collective problem-solving. As one teacher expressed, “By avoiding to work in isolation—by involving all the concerned people,” indicating that shared responsibility helps lighten the individual planning burden and encourages collective problem-solving.

Teachers focus on ongoing training and retooling to enhance their CBC planning skills by attending workshops, seminars, and professional development opportunities to deepen their understanding of CBC expectations. Continuous learning helps teachers stay updated and refine their planning techniques according to CBC guidelines.

To address limited resources, teachers have adopted creative methods like improvisation. Using local and available materials creatively to compensate for the lack of formal teaching aids. Strategies such as improvisation reflect teachers' adaptability and resilience in challenging situations.

Teachers have introduced learner-centered strategies to mitigate challenges like limited materials and time. Grouping learners to allow shared resource access and maximize time efficiency. Promoting learner autonomy through pre-class research tasks, library use encouragement, and summarized lesson notes. As respondents noted, “*Yes. I give tasks so that they can research ahead of the lessons so that less time is spent on certain learning activities in class.*” Another added, “*Advising the learners to go and make use of the library,*” and “*I develop summarised lesson notes to supplement their discoveries (printouts).*”

Teachers manage CBC complexity by familiarizing themselves with curriculum content and designing competency-aligned lesson strategies. Internalizing curriculum content and focusing on articulating competencies improve the efficiency and effectiveness of lesson planning under CBC.

4.5.4 Promotion of critical thinking in lesson plans

The study reveals strategies teachers employ to promote critical thinking including:

- **Questioning Techniques.** Teachers deliberately use stimulus and open-ended questions to encourage critical thinking. Stimulus questions aim to provoke curiosity and independent conclusions. These practices reflect a pedagogical shift towards inquiry-based learning, where questioning becomes a central tool for fostering analytical thought.
- **Inquiry-Based Learning.** A pedagogical shift towards inquiry-based learning emphasizes questioning to foster analytical thought.
- **Learning Activities.** Teachers create activities challenging learners to analyze, evaluate, and synthesize information actively. Tasks encourage multi-step problem-solving processes, prompting learners to engage deeply.
- **Learner-centred approaches.** Teachers shift from information-giver to facilitator, promoting active student participation. Involvement in discussions, debates, and presentations enhances critical thinking skills. As one respondent noted, “*I ensure group discussions, debates, presentations where the learner is allowed to think and then discuss to the rest of the class.*”

- **Problem-Based and Project-Based Learning.** Methods involve learners in real-world scenarios, promoting innovative problem-solving and application of knowledge. Assessment through problem-based learning serves as a critical thinking development tool.
- **Collaborative Learning Environments.** Structured group work, peer discussions, and collaborative tasks encourage engagement with diverse viewpoints. Group-based critical tasks, debates, and discussions stimulate critical dialogue and reasoning publicly. These collaborative settings promote not only intellectual engagement but also communicative competence and the ability to reason publicly. One teacher summed this up by stating, *“Group discussions, debates, presentations where the learner is allowed to think,”* reinforcing the importance of interaction and peer feedback in nurturing critical thinking.
- **Inquiry-Based Learning.** A pedagogical shift towards inquiry-based learning emphasizes questioning to foster analytical thought.

4.5.5 Promotion of problem solving in lesson plans

Teachers utilize problem-based learning (PBL) and real-life contexts to enhance learners' problem-solving skills under the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC). The strategies used include:

- Designing lesson plans that mirror real community challenges to provide relevance and meaning to learning, framing problems within day-to-day contexts for learners to engage with authentic challenges,
- Emphasizing the applicability of content to deepen problem-solving skills, encouraging critical thinking and learner-led discovery by exploring problems from various angles, stimulating analytical abilities through independent or collaborative solution devising. As one teacher stated, *“Use problem-based learning,”* while another elaborated, *“Through bringing out real-life situations for the learners and relate them to the problem.”*

Teachers focus on promoting intellectual curiosity, strategic thinking, and a growth mindset towards challenges by cultivating a positive attitude towards problems as opportunities for learning, developing learners' resilience, engagement, and intrinsic motivation, incorporating high-order thinking tasks like application, analysis, and synthesis into lesson objectives and designing continuous, assessable problem-solving components within lesson plans. One teacher explained, *“Encourage a growth mindset,”* while another echoed, *“View challenges as opportunities.”*

Collaborative learning is fostered to encourage shared problem-solving by encouraging group work, peer discussions, and cooperative activities, exposing learners to diverse perspectives and collective reasoning, valuing social interaction and teamwork in addressing complex issues.

Lesson plans align with CBC's broader capabilities. Integrating problem-solving across domains like literacy, numeracy, and community well-being. This cross-cutting application reinforces the idea that problem-solving is not confined to a single subject but is a foundational competency applicable across life contexts. As one teacher observed, *“They must cater for the capabilities i.e. language, mathematics, spiritual and promotion of community well-being,”* suggesting that CBC lesson planning deliberately embeds problem-solving within a broader framework of holistic learner development.

4.5.6 Promotion of practical skills in lesson plans

According to the study findings, a widely adopted strategy among teachers for promoting practical skills involves incorporating project-based learning and hands-on activities into lesson planning. The study highlights how teachers enhance practical skills through various methods in lesson planning, including project-based learning and hands-on activities. These approaches facilitate tangible skill development by allowing learners to engage physically and meaningfully with materials and real-life tasks. To this effect, teachers stress the importance of project work and hands-on activities to encourage practical skill development. These practical engagements span various domains, as described by a teacher who shared, *“By encouraging my learners to actively participate in projects, hands-on activities like basket making, liquid soap, and etc.”* Such examples illustrate how learners are provided with opportunities to build vocational and life skills.

To make learning more relevant, teachers incorporate real-world scenarios via field trips, guest speakers, and case studies, bridging the gap between classroom content and everyday life.

Teachers also embed hands-on tasks within subject-specific content, such as mathematics and science, to ensure learners can apply academic concepts in real-world contexts:

Furthermore, lessons are designed to be learner-centered, emphasizing exploration, interaction, and discovery to promote active skill development:

Teachers integrate knowledge from various disciplines and external references to offer interdisciplinary lessons that support practical competencies and equip learners with transferable skills:

4.5.7 Generic skills that teachers find easy to integrate into lesson plans

Teachers overwhelmingly find problem solving to be the easiest aspect of the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) to integrate into lesson planning due to its alignment with learners' lived experiences. Some reasons include:

Problem-solving naturally aligns with the realities of students' communities, providing authentic entry points for instruction.

The organic connection between content and context makes problem-based learning relevant and engaging for learners.

Teachers often pair problem-solving with critical thinking, as both competencies complement each other in CBC implementation.

- Practical skills are also relatively easy to integrate due to:
- Availability of local materials and learners' familiarity with practical tasks.
- Focus on experiential and hands-on learning supported in many environments.
- Cultural and linguistic relevance of the skills being taught.

Critical thinking is frequently cited as an easily integrated element of CBC, with reasons such as: flexibility and mental engagement it fosters among learners, activities like brainstorming, analysing, and evaluating require minimal resources but yield high cognitive engagement.

Promotion of autonomy and deeper learning through independent reasoning and exploring multiple perspectives.

Projects, case studies, and specific subjects like Geography, Agriculture, Mathematics, and CRE are viewed as compatible with CBC integration because:

- They offer interactive, real-world orientation, fostering learner motivation and practical application of theoretical concepts.
- Alignment with CBC's learner-centeredness enhances their accessibility.
- Collaboration and teamwork are identified as easy to integrate due to:
- Adaptability and alignment with group-based learning activities.
- Enable peer-to-peer learning, collective problem-solving, and interpersonal skill building central to CBC objectives.
- Require fewer resources and can be integrated through discussions, debates, group projects, and peer reviews.

4.5.8 Generic Skills Integration Challenges for Teachers

Based on their practices, teachers were asked to report which generic skills seems hard to integrate and give reasons why. While practical skills are widely recognized as essential in the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC), several teachers reported that their integration can be quite challenging in practice. This study found the following:

Practical skills integration in the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) poses challenges for teachers due to time constraints because hands-on activities require significant time, aligning practical skills with tight schedules and syllabus coverage is difficult **learner motivation**, some students show passive attitudes or reluctance to engage in practical tasks, learners' lack of enthusiasm affects practical components' implementation consistency.

Critical thinking integration challenges arise from poor task design, instructional activities failing to promote deep reflection hinder critical thinking development, simple tasks that don't challenge learners cognitively impede critical.

4.5.8 Promotion of communication and collaboration skills in lesson plans

In this study, the most consistently mentioned strategy for promoting communication and collaboration skills is the use of *group work and cooperative learning*. Teachers deliberately structure lessons to include group-based tasks, where learners are organized into manageable groups to work on shared assignments

The promotion of communication and collaboration skills in lesson plans is primarily achieved through various strategies implemented by teachers that include group Work and Cooperative Learning, interactive activities and dynamic learning environments, use of technology and visual Aids,

clear Instructional delivery and thoughtful planning, peer review and reflective Journaling, collaborative task design

4.5.9 Promotion of values in lesson plans

The study revealed that teachers integrate values like honesty, respect, empathy, integrity, and justice directly into lesson plans to promote ethical and moral education. This integration involves embedding themes of values in lesson objectives and discussions, encouraging spiritual and moral reflection to connect academic content with broader life principles, incorporating spiritual practices and school culture as mechanisms for shaping values.

Teachers also promote empathy and social justice through activities like classroom dialogue and human rights education to nurture ethical thinking and civic responsibility.

Additionally, designing learning activities purposefully to lead learners towards experiencing and practicing targeted moral behaviours, choosing activities like reading, storytelling, and role play to carry moral lessons or promote ethical reflection.

Efforts to promote respect and social harmony include promoting national unity, peace, and harmony through inclusive language and culturally sensitive teaching approaches, creating environments that honour diversity and promote shared identity.

To ensure values are both taught and practiced, teachers involve learners directly in value-

4.5.10 Promotion of cross cutting issues in lesson plans

Teachers find integrating multiple themes within and across subjects as a key strategy to promote cross-cutting issues in the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC).

Teachers widely reported adapting lesson plans by incorporating *varied teaching methods* that cater to different learning styles. This approach, grounded in differentiated instruction, allows teachers to respond to the diverse needs of learners by using auditory, visual, kinaesthetic, and inquiry-based strategies. This integration of subject-specific content helps in embedding cross-cutting issues effectively. Aligning themes with the curriculum ensures relevance and enhances learners' understanding through practical applications. The same applies to the integration of relevant topics that connect to real-world concerns.

Teachers also utilise hands-on activities and project-based learning to address cross-cutting issues effectively, utilise case studies and research methods to deepen engagement with cross-cutting issues

4.5.11 Adaptation of lesson plans to address different learning needs and abilities

Teachers adapt lesson plans by incorporating varied teaching methods to cater to different learning styles, grounded in differentiated instruction through the following ways:

- Utilisation of learning centres and learner profiles for personalized learning experiences
- Modifying or simplifying learning objectives accommodates diverse learner needs, demonstrate commitment to culturally responsive teaching by acknowledging diverse cultural backgrounds,
- Use various resources for lesson planning, including official curriculum-based documents, utilise digital and online resources are increasingly used by teachers, use evidence-based methodologies
- Collaboration with Other Teachers during Lesson Planning, Resource allocation and assessment components, and Use of CBC templates and syllabus books

4.5.12 Resources (guides, templates, etc.) used in preparing lesson plans

The study found that teachers overwhelmingly rely on official *curriculum-based documents* to guide their lesson planning, ensuring alignment with CBC expectations and national educational standards. These documents include the syllabus, teacher's guides, learner's guides, and standardized CBC lesson plan templates. These resources provide structured guidance for identifying learning outcomes, competencies, and recommended teaching strategies. Teachers noted that they complement the official CBC materials with broader reading resources especially online digital resources and other textbooks

4.5.13 Collaboration with other teachers during lesson planning

Collaboration among teachers in lesson planning was a key practice identified in the study and this was delivered in form of subject-specific and departmental meetings as well as informal and formal collaborations. The study also found that beyond planning meetings, teachers collaborate informally or formally on teaching strategies, materials selection, and instructional design.

Through this process, they share insights on simplifying difficult concepts, co-creating tasks, and selecting effective methods to enhance learner engagement. One teacher noted, "Collaboration comes in when I want to decide on the best teaching materials to use," while another shared, "How to simplify some concepts." Another one emphasized the process of activity design: "When inquiring on better ways of designing teaching activities and tasks." This dimension of collaboration ensures diversity in pedagogical approaches and fosters collective improvement in teaching quality. This approach improves lesson quality, allows pooling of diverse perspectives, reduces isolation and fosters creativity.

4.6 Schemes of work practices in secondary schools in Uganda

4.6.1 Development of schemes of work

Secondary school teachers participating in the study highlighted various crucial elements in their schemes of work to align with the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC). Here are the key findings and insights from the study:

Alignment with CBC: Teachers emphasized the importance of integrating key concepts and thematic strands into their schemes of work to promote deeper cognitive engagement and discourage isolated knowledge acquisition. This objective-based planning process helps teachers anchor lessons around what learners are expected to do, rather than what they are expected to memorize. As one teacher explained, *“Identifying the learner objectives,”* while another elaborated, *“By identifying the competencies required to be achieved by learners and the skills and resources needed.* These reflections underscore a fundamental shift from traditional content-heavy schemes to competency-oriented planning under CBC.

Assessment Planning: Teachers incorporate a variety of assessment methods, both formative and summative, to continuously evaluate learner progress and adjust instruction accordingly. One teacher explained this as, “Plan assessment and evaluation,” reflecting the understanding that assessment is not an afterthought but an integral part of lesson planning. These strategies help ensure that competency acquisition is monitored continuously and that learners receive feedback that supports improvement. This aligns with the CBC's focus on continuous, competency-aligned assessment practices.

Teaching and Learning Resources: Teachers include diverse resources in their schemes to support effective content delivery, ensuring learner engagement and practical application of knowledge. These resources range from textbooks and learner guides to digital tools, real-life materials, and manipulatives. Resource-based planning ensures that teachers are equipped to create interactive, learner-centred lessons and that learners have the tools necessary to engage meaningfully with content. However, limited access to planning resources was reported as a major constraint.

However, the following challenges were highlighted by the respondents. These include:

Limited ICT Access: Teachers reported challenges due to limited ICT access and skills, hindering the digitization and efficiency of scheme preparation.

Complexity of CBC Framework: Integrating knowledge from various sources and disciplines into a cohesive plan was cited as a challenge by teachers.

Planning for Diverse Learner Needs: Balancing detailed scheme content with adapting learning experiences for diverse learner needs, especially in large or mixed-ability classrooms, was highlighted as a challenge.

Instability caused by evolving Curriculum Policies: Frequent changes in curriculum expectations and planning formats create uncertainty and undermine consistency in scheme development.

4.6.2 Curriculum elements in the scheme of work

Secondary school teachers noted that the elements they include in their schemes of work to align with the CBC include:

The clear articulation of learning outcomes. These outcomes guide instructional objectives and provide measurable benchmarks for what learners should be able to know, do, or demonstrate by the end of each topic or unit. Teachers stressed that learning outcomes form the foundation of outcome-based lesson planning, helping to keep instruction focused, purposeful, and aligned with curriculum goals. As one of the respondents elaborated, *“Defining the learning objectives, theme, competency, learning outcomes...”* These outcomes ensure that instruction is directed toward observable and assessable achievements, which are crucial in the competency-based framework.

Strong emphasis on learner competencies. These include both foundational and cross-cutting competencies such as communication, collaboration, problem-solving, creativity, and digital literacy. Teachers reported that they deliberately integrate competencies into planning to move beyond mere content coverage and focus on skills-based, learner-centred instruction. Like one respondent noted, *“by identifying the competences required to be achieved by learners.”* The inclusion of competences ensures that schemes of work are oriented toward holistic learner development rather than rote content delivery. The inclusion of competencies ensures that schemes of work are oriented toward holistic learner development rather than rote content delivery.

Integrating key concepts and thematic strands into the schemes of work. These help to anchor lessons within a broader context, enabling learners to develop conceptual understanding and recognize patterns or connections between topics. By organizing content around themes, teachers promote deeper cognitive engagement and discourage isolated knowledge acquisition

Furthermore, assessment planning is another critical element included in CBC-aligned schemes of work. Teachers in the secondary schools explained that they incorporate a variety of assessment methods—both formative and summative—to continuously evaluate learner progress and adjust instruction accordingly. These assessments are designed not just to test retention, but to measure growth in competencies and application of skills.

Lastly, teachers consistently include *teaching and learning resources* in their schemes to support effective content delivery. These resources range from textbooks and learner guides to digital tools, real-life materials, and manipulatives. Resource-based planning ensures that teachers are equipped to create interactive, learner-centred lessons and that learners have the tools necessary to engage meaningfully with content.

4.6.3 Challenges teachers face in preparing schemes of work for CBC

In this study, teachers were asked to mention and describe the challenges they face in preparing schemes of work for CBC in their schools. This study found that the challenges include time limitation, largely due to the intensive and detailed nature of the CBC planning process, that schemes demand more intellectual engagement and meticulous planning compared to previous curricula, as they require alignment with multiple competencies, specification of learning outcomes, and identification of appropriate resources. As one teacher noted, *“It requires a lot of time because it captures different*

aspects," and "time consuming and is detailed and they need attachment of specific resources". This reflects the pressure teachers face in balancing comprehensive planning with other classroom responsibilities. The workload burden limits the time available for in-depth scheme development, often resulting in either rushed or incomplete planning.

In this study, teachers also reported *limited access to planning resources* as a major constraint for example tangible materials such as updated syllabus books, reference guides, and basic stationery. However, many schools lack sufficient copies of essential documents or materials needed to support comprehensive planning. As one teacher pointed out, "*Limited sources,*" while another added, "*Limited resources that are used when scheming e.g. syllabus books, reams of paper.*" These shortages negatively affect the quality of scheme development and may force teachers to rely on outdated or incomplete references, undermining the curriculum alignment and instructional clarity intended in CBC implementation.

Furthermore, the study found that another critical issue is the *lack of ICT access and skills*, which hampers the digitization and efficiency of scheme preparation. Teachers reported limited access to computers, unreliable internet connectivity, and inadequate ICT infrastructure in their schools. Furthermore, some teachers struggle with understanding how to effectively integrate digital tools and distinguish between instructional techniques and methods during planning." This digital gap presents a barrier to modernization and innovation in lesson planning.

In this study, it was found that the *complexity of the CBC framework* was frequently cited as a challenge, particularly the requirement to integrate knowledge from various sources and disciplines into a cohesive plan. Teachers expressed difficulty in bringing together multiple competencies, subjects, and values into a single scheme, especially when CBC demands a multi-dimensional and holistic approach. One teacher shared, "*It needs integration of knowledge from different sources,*" reflecting the intellectual load required to synthesize information effectively. Another teacher remarked on the logistical burden:

Furthermore, as a key finding, teachers acknowledged the challenge of planning for *diverse learner needs*, particularly in large or mixed-ability classrooms. CBC requires inclusive and differentiated instruction that accommodates learners with various abilities, learning styles, and backgrounds. However, it was found that in the secondary schools visited many teachers struggle to balance detailed scheme content with the need to adapt learning experiences for every student.

It was also found that the *instability caused by evolving curriculum policies* was also mentioned as a significant challenge. In this study, teachers highlighted that frequent changes in curriculum expectations and planning formats force them to repeatedly adjust their schemes without always receiving timely training or support. This constant flux creates uncertainty and undermines consistency in scheme development.

Other elements proposed by teachers to include in their schemes of work and

In addition to learning outcomes, competences, key concepts, assessment methods, and resources, the other elements proposed included:

A set of administrative and contextual details: These often consist of the name of the school, teacher's name, class or grade, number of learners, lesson periods, and reference materials. Including these details allows teachers to personalize their schemes and maintain accurate records for both institutional documentation and classroom logistics. These administrative inputs contribute to contextual relevance and ensure that the scheme is tailored to specific teaching environments.

Specification of teaching methods and instructional strategies: Teachers emphasized that articulating how the content will be delivered is crucial for aligning the scheme of work with CBC's learner-centred and competency-focused goals. Including teaching methods helps teachers ensure that their instructional approaches are not only pedagogically sound but also adaptable to the needs of diverse learners.

It was also found that in addition to general resource lists, some teachers reported the distinct inclusion of *teaching aids and learning tools* as a separate category within their schemes. These aids ranging from visual charts and manipulatives to digital tools are intended to enhance lesson engagement and facilitate comprehension.

The study found that some teachers in the secondary schools visited go further by explicitly incorporating *CBC capabilities* such as critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and citizenship into their schemes of work.

Inclusion of knowledge and values to be attained, as well as evidence of learning. These components emphasize what learners should internalize cognitively and morally, and how teachers will know whether learning has occurred. These entries promote reflection on both the content and the moral or ethical lessons embedded in classroom instruction, consistent with CBC's holistic orientation.

Include standardised components such as *themes and topics*, as well as spaces for *referees or remarks*. Themes and topics help organize content into coherent units, while remarks and references offer opportunities for review, updates, and feedback from supervisors or peer reviewers.

How the additional elements supported or enhanced the delivery of the CBC?

It was found that one of the notable contributions of additional elements in CBC schemes of work is their role in fostering *teacher accountability and ownership*. By including personal identifiers such as the teacher's name, educators become more consciously invested in the planning and execution of their lessons. These entries reinforce personal commitment to quality teaching and highlight the teacher's role as an active curriculum implementer.

The study found that additional elements such as *lesson periods, days, and timing* contribute significantly to improved instructional planning by allowing teachers to pace their lessons more effectively. These time-related entries help educators stay on track with syllabus coverage and ensure balanced distribution of content over the term. as one teacher noted, "*They enable the teacher to organise the workload for a specific period of time.*"

In this study, it was found that elements such as *themes, topics, and references* contribute to the *clarity and coherence* of lesson planning. Teachers use these components to align content with CBC competencies and maintain a clear focus on intended learning outcomes.

Some teachers shared that additional elements in their schemes aid in *preparing teaching materials in advance* and ensuring *resource readiness*. These entries help educators anticipate what materials will be needed, allowing for more efficient classroom delivery and reduced last-minute improvisation. As one teacher put it, "*Guides me as a teacher to know the required materials to be used in a lesson so as to prepare them in time.*" This preparedness contributes to smoother lesson execution and more confident teaching.

It was found that the inclusion of *CBC capabilities* such as creativity, critical thinking, and communication was noted as a key feature that helps teachers focus on higher-order thinking skills. These capabilities guide teachers to design learning experiences that go beyond factual recall and encourage learners to analyse, evaluate, and solve problems.

In this study, several teachers recognized that including *indicators such as evidence of learning and expected outcomes* supports *outcome-focused delivery* help educators remain aligned with the end goals of their lessons, ensuring that teaching is purpose-driven and assessment-ready. One teacher reflected, "*It helps to know the output expected at the end of the lesson,*" underscoring how these entries contribute to both instructional effectiveness and learner progress tracking.

It was furthermore found that including references and structured content also encourages teachers to *engage in research and reflective practice*, thereby enriching their understanding of content and improving lesson delivery. One teacher commented, "*Helps in making research,*" indicating that additional elements serve as a springboard for continuous professional development and content mastery.

4.6.4 Relevance and alignment of scheme of work with CBC requirements

Secondary school teachers ensure the relevance and alignment of their schemes of work with Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) requirements through various strategies:

Adherence to Official Curriculum Documents: Teachers heavily rely on CBC syllabus books, teacher's guides, and learner's guides as core references for organizing content, structuring lessons, and planning activities. As one teacher stated, "*By following the syllabus book and also using the suggested activities in that book,*" while another reinforced, "*By aligning it with the syllabus book.*" These documents provide guidance on competencies, learning activities, and assessment strategies, grounding schemes of work in national standards.

Frequent Reviews and Updates: Teachers emphasize the value of regularly revisiting and updating schemes of work to reflect curriculum changes, emerging priorities, and classroom observations. As some teachers elaborated further, "*through updating it with the required information,*" and, "*reviewing several times, making the necessary changes that can make it be in line with the CBC.*" This process enables continuous improvement, adjustment of teaching strategies, and ensures schemes remain dynamic and responsive to educational shifts.

Self-Reflection and Feedback Mechanisms: After delivering lessons, teachers engage in reflective practices to evaluate effectiveness and make necessary adjustments based on insights gathered from self-reflection and feedback from peers or learners. One teacher summarized this process as, “Teacher feedback and reflection,” while another added, “Doing self-reflection after teaching.” Such practices support more intentional, evidence-informed revisions that align closely with actual teaching experiences.

This approach supports evidence-informed revisions that align closely with teaching experiences and keeps planning learner-centred.

Focus on Learning Outcomes: Teachers maintain a focus on learning outcomes throughout the planning process, ensuring that every part of the scheme contributes to the achievement of specific competencies. As one teacher noted, *“I ensure the learning outcomes are followed throughout the lesson.”* This outcomes-based approach emphasizes skill acquisition over content memorization, preserving the instructional integrity of CBC.

Embedding Contextually Relevant Examples: Teachers embed familiar and contextually relevant examples into schemes of work, tailoring lesson content and activities to learners' environments and experiences. This practice enhances learner engagement, promotes deeper understanding, and aligns with the learner-centred intent of CBC.

Collaboration Among Teachers: Collaboration through planning meetings or peer reviews allows teachers to share strategies, gain insights, and maintain uniformity in curriculum interpretation. Peer interaction supports reflective refinement, increases the overall quality of scheme development, and ensures alignment with school goals.

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4.6.5 Best practices for creating effective schemes of work under the CBC

Best Practices for Creating Effective Schemes of Work under the CBC

Teachers highlighted key practices for developing effective schemes of work under the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC). The study revealed several essential strategies:

Focus on Learning Outcomes and Competencies. Teachers underscored the importance of aligning schemes of work with learning outcomes and competencies. Clear goals and adherence to the broader CBC philosophy were emphasized to guide lesson planning effectively.

Utilize Critical Resources. Teachers identified the syllabus book, teacher's guide, and learner's book as fundamental resources for curriculum-aligned planning. Consistent reference to these materials ensures content selection follows the recommended scope and sequence, ensuring alignment with national standards.

Incorporate Diverse Teaching Methods and Assessments. To address diverse learner needs and promote comprehensive competency development, teachers recommended including a variety of teaching methods and assessment strategies in schemes of work. Incorporating both formative and summative assessments, along with different instructional styles, was advised for better learner engagement and inclusivity.

Ensure Learner-Centeredness and Responsiveness. A core best practice involves ensuring that schemes of work are learner-centred and responsive to student needs, emphasizing the evaluation of teaching strategies and learner responses.

Emphasize Research in Planning. Teachers highlighted the significance of research during the scheming stage as a best practice to stay informed about effective pedagogical practices, content developments, and CBC implementation strategies. Evidence-based planning was noted to lead to more informed, relevant, and impactful schemes of work.

Practicability of Schemes of Work in Real Classroom Settings

Teachers prioritize practicality in implementing schemes of work in secondary schools by focusing on learning outcomes and student-centred principles. Key points include:

Alignment with Learning Outcomes: Teachers enhance practicality by aligning schemes with educational goals and student engagement preferences. **Variety of Teaching Methods:** Incorporating diverse teaching approaches suitable for competency-based curriculum (CBC) while considering time and resource constraints enhances practicality.

Learner-Centred Approaches: Emphasizing learner engagement through ICT, project work, and community-based experiences ensures active and inclusive learning.

Cultural Relevance: Adapting schemes to match learners' abilities and socio-cultural contexts improves usability and relatability.

Balanced Approach: Combining theoretical knowledge with hands-on learning and real-life applications supports competency development and practical understanding.

Flexibility and Review: Treating schemes as living documents for regular evaluation and revision helps in staying aligned with learner needs and curriculum changes.

Coherence with Lesson Plans: Creating lesson plans directly from schemes maintains coherence, ensuring daily teaching aligns with long-term goals.

Resource Planning: Using realistic, accessible tools and materials from school and community settings makes lessons feasible, cost-effective, and inclusive.

4.6.6 Practicability of schemes of work in real classroom settings

The teachers were asked to report on how they ensured that the schemes of work were practical in real classroom settings in their respective secondary schools. From the teacher responses, the study found the following:

- It is noted that teachers consistently reported that the practicality of schemes of work is greatly enhanced when *learning outcomes and student-centred principles* are prioritized

When they incorporated a *variety of teaching methods and activities* that are not only suitable for CBC but also practical within real classroom context, *matching schemes to learners' ability levels and socio-cultural context*

- Balancing theoretical content with hands-on learning and real-life applications. Schemes should not only present academic knowledge but also provide opportunities for learners to apply concepts practically
- Reviewing flexible, living documents subject to regular reference, evaluation, and revision. Continuous review ensures that schemes stay aligned with evolving learner needs, curriculum changes, and teaching experiences.
- Having a clear, consistent connection between the scheme of work and actual lesson plans. Teachers reported that deriving lesson plans directly from the scheme promotes coherence and ensures that day-to-day teaching aligns with long-term planning goals.
- Using realistic, accessible tools and resources when planning schemes.

4.6.7 Linking the Scheme of work to the lesson plans

Teachers were asked to describe how the learning outcomes and key concepts from their scheme of work influenced the structure and content of your lesson plans. From their responses, the following findings are made;

Teachers emphasized that learning outcomes from the scheme of work serve as the foundation for setting clear lesson objectives.

These outcomes guide teachers in defining what the lesson is meant to achieve, ensuring alignment with broader CBC goals and competencies. This approach ensures that every lesson has a focused purpose and contributes to the cumulative development of learner skills. As one teacher explained, “The learning outcomes enable the teacher to organise the content that ensures he set learning outcomes at the end of the lesson.”

The structure and sequence of lesson content are also heavily influenced by the scheme’s learning outcomes and key concepts. Teachers reported that these elements help them break down larger topics into smaller, manageable segments, ensuring that content is delivered logically and progressively

Learning outcomes influence the selection of teaching methods and instructional strategies, ensuring that lessons are delivered in ways that support the targeted competencies.

Learning outcomes and key concepts directly inform the design of learning activities and assessments within their lesson plans. This ensures that both instruction and evaluation are closely tied to intended competencies, making learning more targeted and effective.

Learning outcomes also play a key role in maintaining focus and enabling progress monitoring during instruction. Teachers reported that grounding lessons in specific outcomes helps maintain instructional focus, eliminate irrelevant content, and track whether learners are progressing as expected. Verbatim responses included, “Focused content,” “Focused instruction,” and “Measurable progress.”

Some teachers highlighted that learning outcomes and key concepts help in contextualizing lesson content and selecting appropriate resources. These elements guide teachers in choosing materials that are locally available or culturally relevant, thereby making lessons more engaging and relatable.

4.7 Instructional strategies and classroom implementation

4.7.1 Lesson plans

In this section, secondary school teachers were asked to explain how their lesson plans helped them to decide on the teaching methods or activities they use in the classroom. The following are the findings;

Lesson plans guide the selection of teaching methods based on defined learning objectives and outcomes. Teachers emphasized that knowing what the learners are expected to achieve at the end of a lesson helps them choose strategies that are outcome-driven and purposeful. They enable *inclusive teaching strategies* that address learner diversity.

It was found that teachers use lesson plans to consider different student profiles, ensuring that selected methods are adaptable to the cognitive and learning needs of all learners.

Many teachers pointed out that the nature of the topic or subject being taught influences the choice of method, and lesson plans provide the structure to align the two. Some content areas demand specific strategies for example, practical demonstrations in science or storytelling in language. Lesson planning allows teachers to match method with content for enhanced comprehension. The study found that teachers also use lesson plans to consider *resource availability and classroom context*, ensuring selected strategies are practical within existing conditions. Lesson planning prompts teachers to assess the tools they have at their disposal and adapt methods accordingly. This ensures that the lesson is not only well designed but also feasible.

In this study, teachers noted that lesson plans help in *delivering content in a logical, chronological order*, as guided by the syllabus. As one teacher highlighted this with, “*The lesson plans have objectives to be followed from the syllabus so they guide me to follow the syllabus and teach chronologically.*” This approach helps maintain the integrity of the curriculum flow while organizing instructional steps methodically. Lesson plans allow room for adaptation based on classroom realities, learner feedback, or time constraints.

Lesson plans define learning activities, which in turn shape the teaching method. Teachers described how activities included in the plan—whether group work, inquiry-based tasks, or demonstrations—often dictate whether the instructional method will be collaborative, exploratory, or teacher-led. Finally, teachers use lesson plans to *match teaching methods with the type of learning intended*—be it skills development, knowledge acquisition, or values-based education. This alignment is crucial in CBC, which emphasizes holistic learning.

4.7.2 Schemes of work

In this section, secondary school teachers were asked to explain how their schemes of work guide the strategies they choose in their lessons in the classroom. The following are the findings;

Teachers emphasized that the *scheme of work serves as a foundational guide for selecting appropriate teaching methods and learning approaches*

The breakdown of content into *teachable units and sub-topics* within the scheme of work enables teachers to tailor their teaching strategies based on the complexity or demands of each topic. As one teacher explained, “*The scheme breaks down the units to be covered in the syllabus and each topic requires different strategies so you always have to refer to the scheme.*”

The scheme of work directly influences lesson planning, particularly in defining lesson objectives and learning goals. These objectives then shape the selection of teaching strategies that best support the achievement of targeted outcomes. Schemes of work ensure instructional sequencing and continuity. Teachers reported that by following the week-to-week progression of topics in the scheme, they are able to select teaching strategies that support scaffolded learning.

They embed assessment components, which in turn influence teaching strategy selection. Knowing in advance the types of assessments formative or summative expected at each stage of the scheme helps teachers choose strategies that prepare learners adequately and align with evaluation criteria

4.7.3 Integration of competencies into lessons in the classroom

In this section, teachers were asked to explain how they integrated the different competences into lessons in the classroom. The following are the findings;

4.7.3.1 Critical thinking and problem solving

Teachers find that integrating critical thinking and problem-solving into lessons effectively involves deliberate activity design, prompting learners to reflect, analyze, and generate solutions. Key points include:

- **Inquiry-Driven Activities:** Tasks often necessitate interacting with complex problems, fostering logical reasoning for resolution.
- **Task-Oriented Approach:** Embedding critical thinking at the core of classroom practice supports skill acquisition through experiential learning.
- **Real-Life Scenarios:** By incorporating real-life scenarios and case studies, teachers make problem-solving more relevant and authentic, preparing learners for practical decision-making.
- **Collaborative Learning:** Strategies like group discussions, debates, and presentations facilitate critical thinking and collective problem-solving, encouraging diverse perspectives and refined reasoning.
- **Higher-Order Cognitive Skills:** Teachers emphasize analytical and evaluative activities, essential for critical thinking and problem-solving, aligning with fostering independent, reflective, and solution-oriented learners.
- **Attitudinal Focus:** Besides cognitive skills, teachers work on shaping learners' attitudes, aiming to build resilience, willingness to face challenges, encouraging perseverance, embracing mistakes as learning opportunities, and reinforcing self-belief.

This comprehensive approach not only develops critical thinking and problem-solving skills but also prepares learners to navigate through challenges with confidence and intellectual rigor.

4.7.3.2 Creativity and innovation

Teachers foster creativity and innovation by incorporating activities that require learners to create, design, or transform ideas into tangible products or solutions. These tasks often involve problem-solving in local contexts, utilizing available materials to produce original outcomes. Such activities not only stimulate imaginative thinking but also provide learners with practical skills. One teacher described this process as, *“Using lesson activities that require the learner to create new things or make adjustments to solve certain problems in society,”* while another emphasized, *“We use new ideas to come up with final product.”*

Similarly, another teacher noted the integration of local materials, saying, “*Ensure that there are tasks that call for use of locally available resources, come up with finished goods.*” These responses reflect the CBC’s emphasis on hands-on, learner-driven innovation.

Other Key points included:

- Problem-solving in local contexts using available materials to produce original outcomes
- Emphasis on hands-on, learner-driven innovation in the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC)
- Encouraging learners to think beyond conventional boundaries through open questioning and problem-solving challenges
- Cultivating divergent thinking and intellectual curiosity to explore novel possibilities
- Utilizing brainstorming sessions and free writing activities to promote spontaneous idea generation

Teachers create structured spaces for learners to experiment and build original ideas into actionable solutions, fostering innovation. Other important aspects are:

- Encouraging learners to apply classroom knowledge to real-world scenarios
- Promoting creativity through group tasks that require higher-order thinking
- Modelling creativity by adapting instructional methods to suit diverse learner needs

4.7.3.3 Cooperation and self-directed learning

Teachers consistently highlighted *group work and team-based learning* as the primary strategies for integrating both cooperation and self-directed learning into classroom practice. Through structured group activities, learners engage in collaborative tasks that require them to share responsibilities, communicate effectively, and work toward common goals. These group settings not only strengthen cooperative skills but also allow students to take initiative within their teams developing self-leadership and accountability. As one teacher noted, these practices reflect the Competency-Based Curriculum’s (CBC) emphasis on active participation and peer-led learning environments.

Besides, teachers integrate peer-to-peer learning structures such as debates, brainstorming sessions, discussions, and peer tutoring cultivate self-directed learning, teachers assign tasks that require independent investigation and critical thinking beyond classroom instruction. Some teachers recognized and articulated the *interdependence between cooperation and self-directed learning*. They described how collaborative learning environments serve as the foundation for fostering learner independence

4.7.3.4 Mathematical computation and ICT proficiency

Teachers find that integrating mathematical computation and ICT proficiency in lessons using digital tools like laptops, projectors, and spreadsheets is highly effective. As one teacher explained, “*By allowing learners to access and use ICT gadgets like laptops, and projectors to demonstrate some computations while displaying on the projector,*” Here are key points from this section:

- Digital tools enhance visualization of abstract math concepts and support interactive demonstrations, making lessons engaging.
- Students use ICT gadgets to manipulate data, observe patterns, and collaborate on problem-solving tasks.

- Integration of ICT tools in mathematical problem-solving guides students in using reasoning and digital applications for real-world challenges.
- Lessons focus on building logic, inductive thinking, and collaborative solution development, aligning with CBC's emphasis on multimodal learning.
- Assigning research tasks that require internet use fosters self-directed learning and responsible digital platform use.
- Teaching mathematical and ICT skills in practical contexts such as budgeting and technology use in daily life helps students understand the value of these competencies.
- Teachers use calculators and computation strategies like mathematical induction to support numerical reasoning and fundamental concept internalization.
- Formative assessment is integrated to monitor student progress and provide timely feedback for instructional adjustments in CBC.

4.7.3.5 Communication

Teachers integrate various communication skills in lessons to enhance students' capabilities in both oral and written expression as well as nonverbal communication. As one teacher explained, *"Encourage learners to take on tasks through debates, presentations, etc."* while another added, *"Making presentations per the different groups."* Such activities not only build communication competence but also strengthen critical thinking and confidence in learner expression. Other emerging points include:

- class reporting are used to help students practice public speaking, express ideas confidently, and develop verbal fluency.
- Written communication skills are promoted through project and research report writing, enabling students to organize ideas coherently, use academic language effectively, and communicate findings clearly.
- Language development through literacy-driven activities such as reading, writing, singing, and reciting enhances vocabulary, syntax, comprehension, and creative expression. As another respondent noted, As one teacher described, "Promotion of language capability through reading, writing, singing and reciting," these language-rich practices underpin the broader goal of developing articulate, thoughtful communicators.
- Teachers emphasize nonverbal communication by guiding students on body language and facial expressions to enhance interpersonal interactions.
- Active listening is taught as a vital component of effective communication to foster comprehension, respectful engagement, and collaborative learning.
- Visual communication strategies like charts, posters, diagrams, and digital presentations are used to support verbal and written messages, aiding in better understanding of complex ideas.
- Communication is viewed as a foundational tool essential for facilitating learning and co-constructing knowledge, illustrating its integral role in the teaching and learning process.

4.7.4 Integration of values into lessons

In this study, teachers were asked on how they integrated values into their lessons. The values included respect for humanity and the environment, honesty, justice and fairness, hard work for self-reliance, integrity, creativity and innovation, social responsibility, social harmony, unity, and patriotism. From the teacher responses, the following study findings were registered.

Integration of values into lessons

Teachers in this study incorporated various values, including respect, honesty, justice, hard work, creativity, and patriotism, into lessons in innovative ways:

- **Active Learning Activities:** Teachers found that engaging students in activities that involve the affective domain, like reflecting on values, was the most effective method.
- **Narrative Techniques:** Storytelling and role-playing were used to create moral dilemmas and human-interest stories, promoting empathy and integrity.
- **Group Discussions:** Teachers facilitated structured dialogues to promote respect, justice, and unity among students from diverse backgrounds.
- **Debates and Patriotism Sessions:** Some teachers held sessions to encourage critical thinking about national identity, unity, and civic responsibility.
- **Leading by Example:** Teachers modeled values through their behavior, emphasizing kindness, professionalism, and fairness. As one teacher noted, “By dressing well, having content, and helping learners where there is difficulty.” This approach positions the teacher as a moral leader within the learning environment.
- **Promoting Inclusivity:** Teachers worked to create inclusive and respectful classroom environments, addressing bias and promoting equity.
- **Environmental Initiatives:** Teachers integrated environmental values through eco-friendly projects like planting trees, fostering stewardship among students. A teacher summarized this as follows “encourage them to protect and conserve the environment by planting trees and grass.” Such practices help develop learners who are environmentally conscious and prepared to act as responsible citizens.

4.7.5 Integration of cross cutting issues into lessons

In this study, teachers were asked on how they integrated cross cutting issues into their lessons. The cross-cutting issues included environmental awareness, life skills, mixed abilities and environment, socio economic challenges and citizenship and patriotism. From the teacher responses, the following study findings were registered. In this study, teachers integrated various cross-cutting issues such as environmental awareness, life skills, mixed abilities and environment, socio-economic challenges, citizenship, and patriotism into their lessons through different strategies:

Teaching Methods. Teachers frequently used practical, activity-based learning methods like hands-on tasks, projects, fieldwork, and experiential learning to engage students directly with real-life issues. These methods facilitated practical competencies in environmental conservation, socio-economic understanding, and life skills, bridging theory and practice. These methods enable students to “learn by doing,” bridging the gap between theory and practice.

Teachers affirmed this strategy through responses such as, “Hands-on activities,” “Assigning projects,” and “Provide sessions of watching documentaries, films, videos, project work, field tours.” These activities also build agency, creativity, and problem-solving—essential competencies in the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC).

Environmental Awareness. Environmental consciousness was integrated through classroom instruction and community projects, encouraging ecological responsibility and sustainability. Activities like tree planting, waste management initiatives, and discussions on climate change were utilized to instil environmental stewardship values in learners. As one teacher noted, *“Creating awareness to the learners about environment-related issues,”* while another explained, *“Apart from the lessons taught, learners are also made aware of the importance of conserving the environment in different ways like re-afforestation.”*

Relevance and meaning. Teachers made lessons more meaningful by linking classroom content with real-life scenarios and societal issues, enhancing understanding of cross-cutting issues like socio-economic disparities and human rights. Examples drawn from everyday experiences helped learners think critically and understand their roles as informed citizens.

Life Skills Development. Skills like communication, teamwork, and critical thinking were woven into lessons through collaborative activities and problem-solving tasks. These skills not only foster personal growth but also equip learners to navigate societal and interpersonal challenges effectively.

Equity and Inclusion. Teachers promoted inclusion of learners with mixed abilities and genders by ensuring fair participation opportunities. Classroom structures and group work were designed to support fairness, equal opportunity, and social cohesion, challenging stereotypes and fostering inclusive learning environments.

Assessment Strategies. Assessment was used to evaluate not only academic understanding but also learners' grasp of cross-cutting issues. Value-based questions and reflections in assessments reinforced civic education, social awareness, and environmental responsibility as integral parts of the learning process.

4.7.6 Assessment of competences in the classroom

Teachers utilize various assessment techniques to evaluate learners' acquisition of competences outlined in the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC). The assessment methods employed by teachers include written exercises, Quizzes, Oral presentations, Project work.

These techniques cater to different dimensions of learning such as cognitive understanding, creativity, and communication, allowing for both formative and summative evaluations that accommodate diverse learning styles and abilities.

Teachers' Assessment Strategies. Teachers use a blend of assessment methods to ensure balanced evaluation across multiple competencies. Many teachers assess competencies through direct observation of learner behaviour, especially for evaluating affective and social competencies like communication, collaboration, empathy, and values.

Observing how learners interact with peers and demonstrate social responsibility provides valuable insights into competencies not always evident in written work.

Utilization of Tangible Learner Products:

Teachers review tangible products like project presentations, creative artifacts, and group assignments to assess competencies. Some teachers design more targeted assessments aligned with specific competencies, focusing on skills such as critical thinking, communication, and collaboration. These competency-specific assessments reflect an emerging trend towards more focused and criterion-referenced evaluation practices under the CBC.

4.7.7 Role of learning materials in supporting CBC lesson delivery

Teachers were asked to report on the role learning materials (e.g. textbooks, digital resources) play in supporting CBC lesson delivery in the schools. From the responses of the teachers, the findings are below;

Teachers emphasized the importance of learning materials, such as textbooks and digital resources, in enhancing CBC lesson delivery. Learning materials significantly increase learner engagement and active participation in the classroom.

Incorporating instructional tools like textbooks, digital resources, and visual aids stimulates curiosity and dynamism in the classroom environment. Materials with images, charts, and interactive content sustain learners' interest and attention throughout lessons. The role of learning materials goes beyond engagement to include enhancing comprehension and clarifying complex concepts. Proper materials facilitate effective content delivery, especially for learners who struggle with verbal instruction.

Learning materials reinforce taught concepts, deepen understanding, and improve retention rates. Materials also support a shift towards learner-centered instruction, encouraging autonomy, exploration, and inquiry:

Well-curated materials make autonomous learning more achievable, enabling learners to explore content independently and foster critical thinking skills.

Differentiated materials cater to diverse learning needs, including visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learners, promoting inclusive education. Furthermore, learning materials serve as key sources of information, reference, and practical application:

They bridge the gap between theory and practice by including real-life examples, case studies, and simulations in teaching materials.

By providing information, foundational knowledge, and references, materials facilitate evidence-based, exploratory learning and academic growth beyond the classroom.

4.7.8 Involvement of learners to promote active learning

In this section, teachers were asked to report on the ways they involve learners in the learning process to promote active learning in the classroom. From the responses of the teachers, the findings are below;

Teachers employ various strategies to engage learners actively in the learning process, as reported in the study:

Group Work and Collaboration:

Group discussions, peer collaboration, and cooperative tasks are common strategies used by teachers. These approaches facilitate engagement, idea-sharing, and collective understanding among learners.

Interactive Teaching Methods. Teachers use methods like discussions, presentations, group work, and role plays to promote active learning. Learners actively participate by presenting their thoughts, ideas, and reflections, enhancing engagement and comprehension.

Inquiry-Based Learning. Brainstorming sessions and questioning strategies activate prior knowledge, encourage critical thinking, and stimulate exploration. Such practices shift cognitive load to learners, fostering active mental engagement with lesson content.

Hands-On Activities. Teachers utilize hands-on, experiential tasks that require learners to explore, observe, and discover through movement. These activities empower students to play a more active role in their learning journeys.

Integration of ICT Tools. Some teachers incorporate ICT tools like videos and images to create a visually stimulating learning environment. This approach caters to different learning styles, enhances engagement, and enriches the learning experience.

4.8 Challenges and recommendations

4.8.1 Challenges encountered in implementing the CBC while using your schemes of work and lesson plans

The most prominent challenge highlighted by teachers is the *lack of adequate time to effectively plan, deliver, and follow through with CBC lessons*. Teachers explained that CBC demands detailed and activity-rich lesson planning, which is both time-consuming and mentally demanding. Yet, the reality of tight lesson periods, congested school timetables, and competing responsibilities often compromises their ability to implement plans as designed. One teacher summarized the issue simply: “*Time is always a problem i.e., it's time consuming.*”

Other challenges identified were:

Teachers encounter challenges in transitioning to CBC-aligned assessment practices and accessing comprehensive learning materials.

Large class sizes, time constraints, and insufficient training hinder effective implementation of active learning approaches.

Barriers to Effective CBC Implementation. Teachers struggle with meeting the demands of the curriculum, particularly in facilitating group activities, providing individualized feedback, and covering subject content effectively. Issues like overcrowded classrooms and limited instructional time for certain subjects within the CBC framework pose challenges to promoting active learning.

4.8.2 Ways the teachers have tried to address the challenges

To navigate the persistent challenge of time constraints under CBC, teachers reported adopting *proactive time management strategies*. Teachers adopting proactive time management strategies under Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) undertake the following activities

- Preparing schemes of work during school holidays, adhere to institutional work plans.
- Organizing extra lessons for syllabus coverage.
- Undertake early scheme preparation during holidays and organizing extra lessons are crucial for managing CBC's demanding instructional framework.
- Teachers taking personal initiatives to enhance CBC understanding and methodologies:
- Conducting research independently, participating in collaborative learning, attending professional development workshops.
- Recognizing the value of continuous learning in adapting to CBC reforms.
- Emphasis on collaboration among teachers to lighten planning load and enrich instructional ideas by developing schemes collectively. co-designing lessons. Sharing pedagogical strategies.
- Other strategies include peer support to reduce isolation and support professional growth. Adopting flipped-classroom strategies to optimize classroom time, assigning pre-lesson research tasks. providing advance support materials, enhancing learner autonomy and classroom efficiency, improvising with locally available resources to support CBC content delivery among others.

4.8.3 Gaps in the existing training and resources provided to teachers for CBC implementation

Teachers were asked to give in their opinion, the gaps in the existing training and resources provided to teachers for CBC implementation in their schools. The following gaps were identified:

One of the most prominent concerns raised by teachers is the inadequacy and inconsistency of CBC training. Many teachers reported that training programmes are fragmented, with different facilitators taking over at various stages, disrupting continuity and coherence. Additionally, only a limited number of teachers are selected for training from each school, leaving the rest without access to essential CBC knowledge and updates. These gaps have resulted in uneven levels of preparedness within and across schools.

Teachers also highlighted that most CBC training sessions are overly theoretical, with insufficient focus on practical application. This theoretical bias undermines their ability to effectively plan CBC-aligned lessons, deliver content interactively, and assess learners based on competencies. The disconnect between training content and real classroom contexts limits confidence and implementation. One teacher clearly summarized this gap: *"The existing training is so much*

theoretical rather than being practical." This emphasizes the need for experiential learning opportunities within teacher development programmes.

A further challenge lies in the limited subject matter expertise of some trainers. Teachers expressed frustration that facilitators themselves often lack deep familiarity with CBC methodologies and content areas, diminishing the credibility and effectiveness of the sessions. This issue affects the quality of guidance received and breeds uncertainty about implementation strategies. One teacher explained, "*Some of the trainers themselves are not yet well equipped with the content to teach other teachers,*" reflecting *doubts about the trainers' competence* and a general lack of faith in the cascade model of training.

Teachers noted serious breakdowns in communication and coordination mechanisms related to CBC implementation. Important updates, policy documents, and feedback from training sessions often fail to reach all stakeholders in time or at all. As a result, some teachers remain unaware of procedural changes or instructional updates.

A major gap identified is the insufficiency and obsolescence of instructional materials. Teachers reported using outdated textbooks and vague syllabi, particularly in subjects like Literature, making CBC content delivery inconsistent and frustrating. Learners' guidebooks and other essential teaching aids were also noted as either missing or insufficient in quantity.

Despite ICT proficiency being a core component of the CBC framework, teachers reported *insufficient training on how to integrate digital tools into instruction*. This leaves them underprepared to use technology effectively for interactive teaching, blended learning, or digital assessment.

Finally, some teachers felt sidelined in the CBC training and implementation process, which they described as largely *top-down and rigid*. There is limited space for teachers to adapt CBC tools to their specific contexts or contribute insights to curriculum design and delivery methods. This lack of autonomy undermines ownership and local innovation. As one teacher stated, "*Lack of teacher autonomy,*" suggesting that *more inclusive and participatory approaches are necessary* for sustainable CBC integration.

4.8.4 Recommendations made by teachers to provide the preparation and utilization of lesson plans and schemes of work for CBC

A widely supported recommendation is the promotion of *collaborative planning* at the departmental level. Teachers emphasized that schemes of work and lesson plans should be developed as *collective departmental efforts* rather than as individual tasks. This approach promotes consistency in instructional delivery, reduces duplication of effort, and fosters peer support and accountability. As one teacher advised, "*Scheming and lesson planning should be done as a team teaching the same subject,*"

Teachers stressed that effective lesson planning is heavily dependent on the availability of essential resources. These include updated *syllabus books, teacher guides, learner books, and teaching aids*. Without these, the quality of schemes and lesson delivery is compromised. Equitable access to these materials across all schools was emphasized as a basic requirement for CBC implementation.

A forward-looking recommendation is the *integration of ICT* in both planning and classroom instruction. Teachers called for the adoption of digital tools to facilitate the scheming process, enhance lesson delivery, and enrich student engagement.

Teachers advocated for more *flexible and inclusive lesson plans*, highlighting the need to tailor instruction to accommodate diverse learner abilities and contexts. Rigid lesson plans were seen as limiting, especially in classrooms with mixed-ability learners or where unforeseen events disrupt implementation. As one respondent recommended, “*Incorporate variety and flexibility*,” and another added, “*Differentiate instructions*.” This strategy supports the CBC vision of inclusive and learner-responsive teaching.

There was strong emphasis on the importance of *maintaining alignment between lesson planning and CBC core competencies*. Teachers recommended ensuring that schemes of work remain *focused on learning outcomes*, guiding content, activities, and assessment toward the intended competencies.

Teachers recommended building a culture of *feedback, reflection, and continuous improvement*. They called for systems that allow them to review and revise lesson plans based on learner responses, classroom realities, and evolving educational needs. One teacher remarked, “*Provide opportunities for feedback*,” advocating for an ongoing review process that enhances planning quality over time. Teachers strongly urged the *expansion of school-based training programmes* to ensure that more educators are adequately prepared for CBC planning and delivery. With few teachers currently trained in each school, they recommended *increased reach and continuity* in professional development.

Several teachers highlighted the need for a *comprehensive review of curriculum documents*, particularly in subjects where content is outdated or unclear. For instance, the literature syllabus was frequently cited as vague and in need of revision. As one teacher suggested, “*The literature syllabus should be looked into and redone*,” pointing to gaps that affect lesson preparation and delivery.

Sustainable CBC implementation depends not only on resources and training but also on *teacher morale and motivation*. Teachers recommended the use of incentives, recognition, and supportive leadership to *encourage planning ownership and professional commitment*. One teacher emphasized, “*Teachers should be motivated to make schemes of work and lesson plans*.” This highlights the human side of curriculum success engaged and appreciated teachers.

Lastly, teachers called for a culture of *continuous research, review, and content innovation*. Staying updated with educational trends, contextual realities, and learner needs was seen as essential for maintaining relevance and quality in lesson planning. One teacher advised, “*Making more research and updating them to promote quality and smart work*.” This recommendation supports a reflective, evidence-based approach to CBC planning.

4.8.5 Additional support to improve Lesson planning and classroom instruction under the CBC

Teachers overwhelmingly expressed the need for adequate and updated CBC-aligned teaching resources to support both lesson planning and classroom instruction given the shortages shared.

Time limitations emerged as a persistent barrier. Teachers recommended increasing lesson duration to allow for deeper coverage of content, completion of activities, and meaningful learner engagement hallmarks of CBC methodology.

Collaborative planning was strongly recommended as a solution to the workload and complexity of CBC lesson preparation. Teachers emphasized the importance of *working as a team within departments* to co-design lesson plans, share instructional ideas, and maintain consistency in pedagogy.

Teachers clearly identified the need for *ongoing training and refresher courses* as a major support area. They highlighted gaps in understanding CBC lesson planning formats, assessment strategies, and overall delivery expectations.

The need for *ICT integration in CBC lesson planning and delivery* was another recurring theme. Teachers acknowledged the transformative potential of digital tools in facilitating interactive learning and streamlining lesson preparation. They requested *stronger and more consistent support from the National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC)* and other curriculum stakeholders. Many felt there was a lack of adequate and timely dissemination of planning templates, updated guidelines, and relevant materials for CBC implementation.

A few teachers noted that *they are still adjusting to CBC expectations*, requiring time for observation and reflection to refine their methods. The learning curve associated with CBC is steep for some, and sufficient time and support for trial, feedback, and adjustment is essential for improved implementation. As one teacher put it simply, “*Still observing.*”

4.9 Findings from the trailing phase of lessons plans and Schemes of work in Schools

From the trailing/pretesting phase of the developed scheme of work and lesson plan templates, after initial insights gained from the literature review in phase one of the study offer critical insight into how well the tools align with the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) framework and their functionality in real classroom contexts in Uganda.

4.9.1 Usability, Structure, and CBC Alignment

The majority of teachers involved in the trailing phase found the scheme of work and lesson plan templates clear and easy to use. This usability was primarily attributed to the templates’ structured format, which aligns well with CBC principles. The templates effectively articulate competencies, learning outcomes, and generic skills ensuring that instruction is competency-driven rather than content-focused. The structure was particularly praised for guiding teachers step-by-step in lesson development, assessment planning, and the integration of crosscutting issues. Teachers noted that the templates helped them shift from rote instructional methods to those emphasizing student engagement, critical thinking, and collaborative learning—key tenets of CBC.

4.9.2 Demand on Teachers and Practical Constraints

Despite their clarity and theoretical robustness, the templates were found to be overly demanding for practical use in typical Ugandan classrooms. Teachers voiced concerns about the excessive detail required, which makes lesson planning time-consuming, especially when combined with large class sizes, tight timetables, and institutional demands to complete the syllabus.

Many competencies, values, and skills outlined in the curriculum may not be fully addressed in daily teaching due to these constraints. This indicates a misalignment between the expectations embedded in the tools and the realities faced by teachers on the ground.

4.9.3 Learner-centred Design and Template Enhancements

One of the most consistent recommendations from teachers across all piloting sites was the need to separate teacher and learner activities into distinct columns. While the current templates emphasize teacher-led processes, they fall short in explicitly capturing learner actions, which is central to CBC's philosophy of active, learner-centred pedagogy. By including a dedicated section for learner activities, the templates would promote clearer documentation of student engagement and accountability. Furthermore, teachers suggested including key learning outcomes in a prominent and summarized form within the lesson plan to help maintain focus and support targeted delivery of competencies.

4.9.4 Inclusivity and Special Needs Integration

Teachers appreciated the templates' insistence on inclusivity, particularly in planning for learners with Special Educational Needs (SEN). The tools successfully prompted teachers to integrate differentiated instruction, ensuring that lessons were accessible to all learners. Examples included seating arrangements for visually impaired learners, one-on-one support, and group compositions that factored in mixed abilities. This alignment with inclusive education practices was seen as a vital step in transforming classroom dynamics and ensuring equitable participation for all students, in line with CBC goals.

4.9.5 Integration of Crosscutting Issues and National Values

The trialing exercise revealed that both the scheme of work and lesson plan templates successfully embedded key crosscutting issues, including environmental awareness, citizenship, life skills, and national unity. These themes were addressed through both content and teaching strategies, such as using real-life moral dilemmas or community-based issues to foster critical thinking and ethical decision-making. Teachers were able to connect lessons to learners' everyday experiences—strengthening relevance and supporting the holistic development of the learner beyond academic achievement.

4.9.6 Engagement and Assessment Strategies

Findings show that the tools support a range of learner-centred methodologies including storytelling, case studies, think-pair-share, and group discussions. Such strategies helped foster high levels of learner engagement, with learners demonstrating curiosity and willingness to contribute. However, classroom management emerged as a challenge in larger or combined classes, especially when space was limited. In terms of assessment, both formative and summative methods were clearly integrated, including peer feedback, oral questioning, group work observations, and end-of-topic evaluations. These strategies were crucial in promoting reflective teaching and real-time monitoring of learning progress.

4.9.7 Teacher Development and Systemic Support Needs

Teachers stressed that the effectiveness of the templates depends heavily on ongoing professional development. The shift to CBC requires not only new tools but also a new teaching philosophy. There was a strong call for regular, hands-on workshops and mentorship programmes to help teachers internalize CBC principles and develop practical strategies for implementation. Teachers also highlighted the urgent need for systemic support, including access to internet resources, textbooks, learners' workbooks, and ICT tools to facilitate delivery. Without such resources, especially in rural or under-resourced schools, CBC implementation risks deepening existing educational inequalities.

CHAPTER FIVE

Summary of findings, discussion of findings, Conclusions and recommendations

5.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the key findings presented in Chapter Four in relation to the study objectives, existing literature, and the broader context of competency-based curriculum implementation in Uganda. It provides an interpretive synthesis of the evidence, highlighting patterns, contradictions, and emerging insights related to lesson planning, schemes of work, and classroom practice. The chapter also integrates perspectives from the literature review to critically assess the implications of the findings and identify gaps or strengths in current approaches. By drawing on empirical evidence and scholarly discourse, this chapter offers a comprehensive interpretation of the study's outcomes, setting the stage for actionable recommendations and policy considerations.

5.2 Summary of findings

5.2.1 Teacher Familiarity with CBC

The findings reveal a generally high level of familiarity and engagement with the competence-based curriculum (CBC) among the surveyed teachers, with 76.2% reporting they are very familiar with CBC and a similar proportion integrating key curriculum elements—such as learning outcomes, competences, key concepts, assessment methods, and resources—into their schemes of work. Most teachers (61.9%) had samples of CBC-aligned lesson plans available, and an even higher percentage (81.0%) had access to guides that supported lesson preparation, indicating widespread use of instructional support materials.

The majority also demonstrated reflective practice, with 81.0% revising lesson plans weekly to adapt to learners' needs. Furthermore, 61.9% of teachers engaged in collaborative lesson planning, which supports professional growth and curriculum alignment. However, notable gaps remain: 23.8% of teachers were only somewhat familiar with CBC, 38.1% lacked lesson plan samples, 19.0% did not use planning guides, 19.0% revised lessons less frequently, and 38.1% did not collaborate with peers. Additionally, there were inconsistencies in the inclusion of CBC elements in schemes of work, reflecting varied levels of training, access to resources, or institutional support.

5.2.2 Lesson Planning Practices in Secondary Schools in Uganda

The study found that lesson planning under the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) in secondary schools is a dynamic and multi-faceted process rooted in the consistent use of official curriculum materials. Teachers rely heavily on the syllabus, teacher's guides, learner's guides, and schemes of work to ensure coherence and alignment in their planning.

These materials provide the foundation for identifying competencies and structuring lesson outcomes, with teachers actively reconciling content across resources to maintain consistency. Lesson planning is explicitly competency-focused, with educators striving to integrate capabilities, values, and higher-order thinking skills.

Planning is also collaborative, with many teachers working in departmental teams to harmonize instructional strategies. Research and learner feedback inform lesson development, enabling contextualization and relevance. Teachers deliberately design interactive and learner-centred tasks, prioritize assessment alignment, and adhere to structured formats that reflect CBC expectations.

Despite this robust planning culture, several challenges hinder the full realization of CBC-aligned lesson planning. Chief among these is the pressure of time and workload, with teachers describing the process as labour-intensive and often unmanageable within limited instructional time.

The scarcity of teaching and learning resources including learner guides and digital tools further complicates the process, while the complex and integrative nature of CBC demands a level of pedagogical expertise that some teachers feel unprepared for. Additionally, limited professional development, particularly in areas like assessment design and competency articulation, presents a persistent barrier. However, a few teachers expressed growing comfort with CBC planning, attributing their ease to experience and increased familiarity with the curriculum.

To address these challenges, teachers employ various strategies, including proactive time management, collaborative planning, continuous training, and resource improvisation. Teachers maximize available time by preparing lessons daily and starting early. They lean on departmental collaboration to share planning responsibilities and generate quality lesson content. Ongoing professional development through workshops and training sessions strengthens their capacity to navigate CBC requirements. In the face of resource shortages, teachers show ingenuity by using locally available materials and grouping learners to share resources. Learner autonomy is also promoted through pre-class research assignments, library use, and provision of summarized lesson notes. By internalizing the curriculum and clearly articulating competencies, teachers enhance planning efficiency and alignment with CBC goals.

In promoting critical thinking, teachers incorporate open-ended and stimulus questions into lessons to provoke inquiry and reflective reasoning. Activities are carefully designed to foster analysis, evaluation, and problem-solving, supported by learner-centred methodologies such as group discussions, debates, and presentations.

Practical skills are promoted through project-based learning, hands-on tasks, fieldwork, and integration into subject-specific content. Teachers engage learners with vocational and experiential activities, often tied to real-world tasks, such as crafts, soap making, or scientific experimentation.

Regarding generic skills, problem-solving, practical skills, and critical thinking are among the easiest to integrate, largely due to their relevance to learners' environments and the availability of contextualized resources. Teachers find these competencies naturally aligned with daily life, making them engaging and accessible.

Subjects like Geography, Agriculture, Mathematics, and CRE were also reported as well-suited for CBC integration due to their logical structure and real-world applications. Collaboration and teamwork were noted for their adaptability across various teaching contexts.

Conversely, some teachers reported difficulties in integrating practical skills due to time constraints and learner passivity. Critical thinking and problem solving can be challenging when lesson tasks lack depth or learners struggle to identify core issues. Field trips and outdoor learning are often hindered by financial and logistical constraints. Certain subject combinations, such as History and Technical Drawing, pose integration challenges due to contrasting pedagogical approaches. Limited resources and varied learner readiness also impede effective CBC implementation, though some teachers maintained that all elements are integrable with the right strategies.

Communication and collaboration are promoted through structured group work, interactive activities, and the use of technology and visual aids. Clear instructional delivery and thoughtful planning underpin these efforts, while strategies like peer review and reflective journaling deepen learners' communicative and metacognitive skills. Teachers also emphasize continuity and scaffolding to support consistent collaborative engagement.

Values are deliberately embedded in lesson plans through moral and ethical themes, spiritual education, empathy-building activities, and environmental stewardship. Teachers create value-oriented tasks and encourage respectful, inclusive classroom environments. Real-life examples, storytelling, and group work are used to promote social responsibility, unity, and civic consciousness.

Cross-cutting issues such as health, environment, and gender equality are integrated through multi-thematic planning, real-world connections, and subject-aligned content. Teachers use project-based learning, hands-on activities, and case studies to engage learners with complex social and environmental challenges. These strategies foster holistic education and deepen learners' understanding of societal dynamics.

To address diverse learning needs, teachers adopt differentiated instruction using varied teaching methods, ability-based grouping, learning centres, simplified objectives, and culturally responsive practices. Inquiry-driven and activity-based lessons support inclusive engagement, while structured planning ensures readiness for learner diversity.

Lesson planning is supported by a range of resources, with official CBC documents being the most relied upon. Teachers also use textbooks, library materials, internet resources, and professional knowledge to enrich lesson content and maintain alignment with educational standards.

Finally, collaboration among teachers during planning is widespread, occurring through departmental meetings, joint planning sessions, and informal exchanges. Teachers report that collaboration improves lesson quality, reduces errors, fosters professional growth, and ensures consistency with CBC updates. While most embrace teamwork, a few still plan individually, highlighting the need for stronger institutional support for collaborative cultures in all schools.

5.2.3 Schemes of Work Practices in Secondary Schools in Uganda

The study revealed that secondary school teachers approach the development of schemes of work under the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) through a structured and intentional process. Teachers begin by familiarizing themselves with the CBC framework and syllabus, ensuring a clear understanding of the curriculum's emphasis on competencies, values, and learner-centred pedagogy. A critical first step is the identification of competencies, learning outcomes, and instructional objectives, which shape the design of schemes to reflect the intended shift from content memorization to skill acquisition.

In terms of elements included in schemes of work, teachers consistently emphasized the integration of learning outcomes, competencies, key concepts, assessment methods, and instructional resources. These components collectively ensure that lesson planning is purposeful, measurable, and competency-driven. Additionally, many teachers include administrative details such as the school's name, teacher's name, class level, number of learners, and lesson periods, which personalize schemes and facilitate logistical coordination.

Other commonly included elements are teaching methods, teaching aids, CBC capabilities (such as creativity and critical thinking), and cross-cutting issues. Teachers also highlighted the importance of incorporating evidence of learning, knowledge and values, and structured reflections to support instructional accountability and holistic learner development.

Despite their efforts, teachers face several challenges in developing CBC-aligned schemes of work. Chief among these is time limitation, as the detailed and rigorous nature of CBC demands significant effort in planning. Teachers also cited limited access to planning resources, such as syllabus books and printing materials, as a key constraint. Furthermore, a lack of ICT infrastructure and digital skills impedes the efficient preparation of schemes and the integration of digital tools.

The complexity of CBC, with its requirement for interdisciplinary integration and the inclusion of multiple competencies and values, presents additional cognitive and logistical burdens. Teachers also struggle with planning for diverse learner needs, especially in large and mixed-ability classrooms. Curriculum instability manifested in frequent policy changes further compounds these challenges by creating uncertainty and requiring repeated revisions without adequate training or support.

Teachers reported that the inclusion of additional elements in schemes of work enhances CBC implementation in various ways. Administrative details such as names and lesson periods foster a sense of teacher accountability and ownership, while clear time allocation supports effective pacing and syllabus coverage. Elements like themes, references, and topics enhance clarity, coherence, and content alignment.

The inclusion of CBC capabilities helps teachers remain focused on fostering critical competencies such as problem-solving and communication. Indicators such as evidence of learning and expected outcomes enable teachers to remain aligned with instructional goals, while teaching aids and references encourage research, preparation, and reflective practice. However, a few teachers expressed skepticism about the added value of these elements, suggesting that the benefits may not always be universally experienced due to context-specific limitations.

To ensure the relevance and alignment of schemes of work with CBC, teachers emphasized the importance of consistent use of curriculum documents such as the syllabus, teacher's guide, and learner's guide. These resources serve as reference points for content structuring, activity design, and assessment planning. Teachers also reported the regular review and updating of schemes weekly or termly to accommodate policy updates, new teaching insights, or changing classroom realities. Reflective practices, including self-evaluation and peer feedback, play a critical role in refining schemes based on real classroom experiences.

Best practices in developing effective schemes of work under CBC include anchoring all planning around learning outcomes and competencies, referencing official curriculum documents, and incorporating a variety of teaching methods and assessment strategies to cater to diverse learner needs. Teachers emphasized the need for learner-centred planning that responds to students' varied abilities, cultural backgrounds, and classroom contexts. Early and deliberate planning, collaboration with colleagues, and integration of reflective and assessment elements were also highlighted as crucial to ensuring that schemes are both comprehensive and practical. Research was mentioned as a helpful tool during the scheming stage to inform teaching strategies and deepen content understanding.

Finally, in ensuring that schemes of work are practical in real classroom settings, teachers reported; Practicality is also enhanced by integrating real-world applications and hands-on activities, creating opportunities for learners to connect theory with everyday experiences. Regular reference to the scheme of work, coupled with frequent revisions and flexible planning, ensures that instructional delivery remains dynamic and responsive.

The study found that learning outcomes and key concepts from the scheme of work play a central role in shaping the structure and content of lesson plans under the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC). Teachers reported that these outcomes form the basis for setting clear lesson objectives, ensuring that each lesson is purposeful, aligned with curriculum goals, and contributes to the development of targeted competencies.

5.2.4 Instructional strategies and classroom implementation

The findings from this study reveal that instructional strategies and classroom implementation under the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) in Ugandan secondary schools are deeply rooted in structured lesson planning and scheme development that prioritize learning outcomes, competencies, and learner engagement. Teachers consistently use lesson plans to inform the selection of teaching methods, ensuring alignment with specific objectives, classroom context, and learner diversity.

Schemes of work serve as the foundational documents that guide weekly and term-based instructional strategies. Teachers use schemes to break content into manageable units, define learning goals, and determine the pedagogical approaches suitable for each topic.

The study also found that the integration of core competencies such as critical thinking, problem solving, creativity, innovation, and communication is achieved through carefully designed classroom activities. Teachers employ problem-based learning, real-life scenarios, open-ended questions, and collaborative projects to cultivate higher-order thinking skills.

Creativity is promoted through tasks that require learners to design solutions using locally available materials, while cooperation and self-directed learning are nurtured through group tasks, peer interactions, and independent research assignments. Teachers also leverage digital tools and mathematical reasoning to enhance learners' ICT proficiency and computation skills, grounding lessons in real-world applications and practical problem-solving.

Values such as integrity, social responsibility, patriotism, and environmental stewardship are woven into classroom practices through storytelling, role-play, group discussions, teacher modeling, and community-related projects. Teachers integrate these moral dimensions both explicitly and implicitly, ensuring holistic learner development in line with CBC principles. Similarly, cross-cutting issues such as environmental awareness, life skills, socio-economic realities, inclusion, and citizenship are addressed.

Assessment practices reflect a blend of formative and summative approaches aimed at evaluating the acquisition of CBC competencies. Teachers use written exercises, projects, peer presentations, observation, and performance tasks to assess not only knowledge but also behavior, collaboration, creativity, and values. This comprehensive assessment approach ensures that learning outcomes are measured holistically and aligned with both cognitive and affective development.

Learning materials play a critical role in supporting CBC implementation. Teachers reported that resources such as textbooks, digital content, charts, and visual aids enhance engagement, deepen understanding, and encourage independent exploration.

Lastly, learner involvement is a cornerstone of classroom practice under CBC. Teachers actively engage students through group discussions, presentations, brainstorming sessions, ICT integration, and exploratory tasks. These participatory methods foster active learning, ownership, and self-expression, transforming learners from passive recipients into co-creators of knowledge. Interactive dialogue and feedback loops further enrich classroom dynamics, making learning more responsive, inclusive, and transformative.

5.2.5 Challenges and recommendations

The findings of this study reveal a complex set of challenges faced by secondary school teachers in implementing the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) through schemes of work and lesson plans. A predominant challenge is the constraint of time, as CBC demands detailed and activity-rich planning which is difficult to execute within the limited timeframes of school timetables. Teachers also face disruptions from unplanned school events and learner-related issues, which often interfere with the intended delivery of lessons.

The problem is compounded by a lack of sufficient training in CBC methodology, particularly regarding learner-centred teaching and competency-based assessment.

Many teachers reported that available CBC resources, such as teacher guides and learners' books, are either inadequate or outdated, making lesson preparation more difficult.

To manage these challenges, teachers have adopted several coping strategies. They reported preparing schemes during school holidays, following school work plans, and conducting extra lessons to ensure curriculum coverage. Teachers are also engaging in self-directed professional development, including research, peer learning, and attending workshops.

Collaborative planning has emerged as a vital tool for sharing the workload and enriching lesson content. Other strategies include modifying the intensity of learner-centred activities, using flipped-classroom techniques, and improvising with locally available materials. In some cases, teachers have also reached out to school administrations for additional teaching resources, demonstrating initiative in addressing systemic gaps.

However, significant gaps remain in existing training and resource provision. Teachers identified CBC training as inconsistent, theoretical, and poorly coordinated, with many teachers excluded from training opportunities. Additionally, training often lacks practical guidance and is sometimes delivered by underqualified facilitators.

Poor communication from curriculum authorities and the use of outdated instructional materials were also highlighted as major concerns. Teachers voiced a need for more targeted training, better information flow, and up-to-date curriculum documents, particularly in content-heavy subjects like Literature. Furthermore, they reported a lack of autonomy and contextual flexibility in CBC implementation, which undermines teacher agency and innovation.

Teachers made several recommendations to improve lesson planning and the use of schemes of work under the CBC. Chief among these is the need for collaborative planning at departmental levels to ensure consistency and shared responsibility. Teachers also emphasized the importance of providing adequate teaching and learning resources, aligning lesson planning closely with CBC competencies, and integrating ICT to enhance both planning and delivery.

They advocated for flexible lesson plans that accommodate learner diversity and classroom realities. Feedback and reflection were highlighted as essential elements of continuous improvement. Teachers strongly recommended expanding training opportunities to cover all staff within schools, and called for the revision of outdated syllabus content to improve planning relevance and clarity. Additionally, they stressed the importance of motivating teachers through recognition and support systems to enhance morale and ownership of the CBC process.

Finally, teachers called for broader institutional and policy-level support to strengthen lesson planning and classroom instruction. They expressed a need for more teaching materials, extended lesson durations, and structured teamwork to handle the heavy CBC workload. Continuous professional development and integration of ICT were emphasized as key enablers for improving CBC lesson planning.

Teachers also urged the National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC) and other stakeholders to provide timely and adequate materials, templates, and updates.

Some teachers acknowledged that they are still in a phase of adjustment and requested time and space for reflection and adaptation. Overall, the findings underscore a committed but strained teaching workforce, navigating a significant pedagogical transition with limited resources, but considerable resolve.

5.2.6 Trailing of lesson plans and schemes of work

The trialing of the developed scheme of work and lesson plan templates revealed that while the tools are well-structured, user-friendly, and aligned with the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) principles—emphasizing competencies, learning outcomes, inclusivity, and learner engagement—they remain demanding for teachers due to the depth of detail required and the practical constraints of large classes and tight school schedules.

Teachers appreciated the clarity of the templates and their support for differentiated learning and crosscutting issues, but strongly recommended the separation of teacher and learner activities in lesson plans to better reflect CBC's learner-centred focus.

The tools effectively integrated values education, inclusive practices, and a variety of active teaching methodologies, but their implementation is hindered by limited resources and the need for regular teacher retooling. Overall, while the templates provide a strong foundation for CBC delivery, refinement and greater systemic support are essential to ensure their practicality and sustainability across diverse school contexts.

5.3 Discussion of findings

5.3.1 Familiarity with the CBC

The findings indicate a relatively high level of familiarity with the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) among secondary school teachers in Uganda, with 76.2% reporting being very familiar with its principles. This aligns with global shifts noted in the literature, where CBC adoption has become a cornerstone of educational reform aimed at fostering practical competencies over rote memorization (Giddens & Mansfield, 2023; Shumba, 2024).

Teachers' engagement with CBC elements in their schemes of work and lesson plans reflects a level of curriculum internalization necessary for effective implementation. However, the 23.8% of teachers who are only somewhat familiar with CBC mirror concerns in literature about inconsistent teacher preparedness (Kidega, 2024; Mweru & Wambiri, 2021), largely attributed to disparities in training access and quality.

The literature emphasizes that successful CBC adoption hinges not only on exposure to curriculum documents but also on deep pedagogical shifts supported by continuous professional development (Kabita & Ji, 2017; Palermo et al., 2022). While Uganda's efforts to train teachers in CBC are noted, the findings suggest gaps in both coverage and practical orientation of such training echoing critiques that teacher development programmes remain overly theoretical (Mulenga & Kabombwe, 2019). Hence, while teacher familiarity is progressing, full operational competence with CBC still requires targeted, practice-based training and institutional support.

5.3.2 Lesson Plan Practices

Lesson planning under the CBC is widely acknowledged by teachers as a reflective, resource-driven, and learner-centred process. Teachers use a range of official documents syllabi, teacher's guides, and learner guides—to structure CBC-aligned lessons, a practice that supports findings from the literature on the importance of curriculum documents in pedagogical alignment (Kavita, 2024; O'Donovan et al., 2021). The study found strong emphasis on integrating competencies, values, and higher-order thinking skills into daily lesson plans, reflecting principles of constructivist and competency-based learning theory (Açıköz & Babadoğan, 2021; Cate & Schumacher, 2022).

However, challenges such as workload, limited time, and insufficient resources hinder the full realization of CBC-aligned lesson planning. These findings resonate with scholarly critiques that CBC planning is time-intensive and often constrained by institutional realities, including large class sizes and limited instructional time (Mweru & Wambiri, 2021; Ajani, 2022). Teachers' adaptive strategies—such as collaborative planning, resource improvisation, and flipped classrooms—are consistent with innovative practices globally (Wu, 2023; Rapanta et al., 2021), suggesting a growing professional agency among teachers despite systemic constraints.

The emphasis on designing learner-centred, interactive, and competence-based activities resonates with the constructivist underpinnings of CBC (Açıköz & Babadoğan, 2021), and is consistent with the global pivot towards using lesson plans not just as organizational tools, but as instruments for transforming classroom experiences (Chong, 2024). Teachers in the study cited the use of problem-based learning, critical thinking tasks, and real-life applications approaches widely supported in literature as conducive to competency development (Ammenheuser, 2022; Setiawati et al., 2021).

Yet, these planning processes are constrained by workload, large class sizes, and time limitations. Teachers described lesson planning as laborious, often conducted outside regular work hours. These challenges echo similar experiences in Kenya and Nigeria, where teachers report insufficient time and training to develop high-quality, CBC-aligned lesson plans (Ajani, 2022; Kaburu, Mwenda & Mbaka, 2024). In Uganda, the literature further shows that while some training has been conducted, it remains theoretical, lacking practical orientation on designing learner-centred lesson content (Wambi, 2024; Katurebe, 2024). The gap between lesson planning expectations and classroom realities creates cognitive and logistical overload for teachers, potentially undermining instructional effectiveness.

Despite these constraints, teachers demonstrate innovative strategies such as peer collaboration, improvisation of materials, and learner-preparedness approaches like pre-reading and research assignments.

Crucially, formative assessment and feedback mechanisms, while acknowledged in theory, remain underdeveloped in practice. This reflects a gap in literature where many schemes and lesson plans remain focused on traditional summative assessments, despite the CBC's emphasis on continuous and formative assessment (Steen, 2023; Onyango, Indoshi & Nyangara, 2024). The findings underscore the need to explicitly integrate assessment rubrics, peer feedback, and reflection tasks into lesson planning to foster real-time monitoring of competency acquisition.

5.3.3 Scheme of Work Practices

The study reveals that schemes of work are carefully structured by teachers to include learning outcomes, key concepts, assessment methods, and CBC capabilities. This corresponds with international best practices, where schemes of work serve as macro-level planning tools ensuring pedagogical coherence and content sequencing (Maran et al., 2021; Aytaç, 2024). Teachers' use of CBC templates and official guides reflects alignment with national standards and the strategic design of competency-driven instruction (Wesselink et al., 2017).

The review of literature confirms that schemes of work function as both curricular roadmaps and scaffolding tools for instructional planning (Aytaç, 2024; Maran et al., 2021). In Uganda's CBC, they serve to break down the broader curriculum into manageable instructional units, ensuring sequencing, coverage, and pedagogical coherence. Teachers reported deriving lesson plans directly from schemes, suggesting strong alignment—a feature that supports the backward design model discussed in literature (Wesselink et al., 2017).

However, practical implementation remains uneven. Time constraints, difficulty accessing planning materials, and the complexity of integrating CBC elements (such as capabilities and cross-cutting issues) pose significant barriers. These constraints echo global critiques that schemes of work, while essential, are often too ambitious or detached from classroom realities when not localized (Beyessa, 2023; Garzón, 2023). The literature underscores that rigid, top-down schemes can be counterproductive unless adapted to teachers' actual contexts and capacities (Khoerunnisa et al., 2020; Makar et al., 2023).

Furthermore, some teachers questioned the utility of administrative details and extended scheme elements, perceiving them as redundant or burdensome. This concern reflects findings from Wesselink et al. (2017) and Oroszi (2020), who argue that while comprehensive schemes enhance accountability and instructional clarity, they can become overly prescriptive or bureaucratic if not accompanied by teacher autonomy and input.

One key insight from the literature is the potential of schemes of work to foster interdisciplinary learning and integrate real-world competencies, especially when designed collaboratively and informed by ongoing research and contextual examples (Evagorou, 2024; Reimers, 2020). The study found evidence of this practice, especially in vocationally inclined subjects like Agriculture and Geography, where schemes were adapted to local contexts and used to develop practical, employability-related competencies. However, teachers in humanities or abstract disciplines (e.g., History, Literature) found integration more challenging, highlighting a subject-based tension in scheme flexibility an issue also identified by Gunadi et al. (2022).

To overcome these challenges, the literature recommends a blend of structured guidance and teacher-led contextual adaptation. Finnish models, for example, provide skeletal schemes that are enriched by teachers based on classroom realities (Picardo, 2024; Sahlberg, 2011). Such a model could be considered in Uganda to balance national curriculum coherence with school-level relevance.

Finally, regular review and updating of schemes—weekly or termly as practiced by some Ugandan teachers—aligns with best practices globally, where iterative refinement ensures responsiveness to changing instructional needs (Darling-Hammond, 2009; Palermo et al., 2013).

5.3.4 Instructional Strategies and Classroom Implementation

The findings highlight that instructional strategies under CBC are competency-focused, learner-centred, and aligned with real-world applications. Teachers employ problem-based learning, discussions, fieldwork, and project-based tasks—demonstrating an understanding of constructivist pedagogy and higher-order learning principles emphasized in the literature (Ammenheuser, 2022; Evagorou, 2024). These methods are well aligned with the CBC philosophy and reflect the pedagogical shift from passive to active learning, as endorsed by the reviewed literature (Açıkgoz & Babadoğan, 2021; Cate & Schumacher, 2022).

Teachers also embed values and cross-cutting themes—such as environmental stewardship, gender equality, and civic responsibility—through storytelling, collaborative tasks, and case-based learning. This practice supports the holistic education model advocated in CBC literature (Dewi, 2021; Palermo et al., 2022). Moreover, the integration of technology, while uneven, suggests an awareness of the transformative potential of ICT, as highlighted by scholars such as Kinnear (2023) and Sorokolit (2024).

However, limitations in infrastructure, digital literacy, and access to devices significantly constrain consistent implementation—a challenge widely reported across African CBC contexts (Zhang, 2023; Njeru & Itegi, 2018).

Assessment practices also reflect CBC principles, with teachers employing formative tools such as presentations, peer reviews, and observation to track competency development. However, as noted earlier, these practices are inconsistently embedded in lesson planning and schemes, often due to training gaps and a lack of standardized tools—challenges echoed by Onyango, Indoshi & Nyangara (2024).

In practice, teachers face competing pressures of syllabus coverage, large class sizes, and mixed learner readiness. These contextual constraints shape instructional choices, often forcing compromises in activity depth and assessment rigor. This tension is well captured in the literature, where scholars like Takalao (2024) and Sugiyono (2021) stress that CBC's success is contingent on resource availability, institutional support, and realistic teacher workloads.

5.3.5 Challenges and recommendations

The study identifies a broad set of structural and pedagogical challenges facing CBC implementation in Uganda: time constraints, inadequate training, resource shortages, curriculum complexity, and limited teacher autonomy.

These findings are consistent with empirical research across multiple CBC systems (Mweru & Wambiri, 2021; Sahlberg, 2011). A particularly acute challenge is the mismatch between curriculum expectations and the realities of under-resourced, overcrowded schools—a disconnect also noted by Garzón (2023) and Beyessa (2023).

Teachers in the study reported coping through self-driven professional development, collaborative planning, material improvisation, and curriculum prioritization.

Both the study and the literature call for wide-ranging reforms. These include:

- More practical and inclusive teacher training (Steinert, 2024; Kabita & Ji, 2017);
- Provision of context-sensitive, digital-friendly lesson planning tools (Lai, 2024; Morales et al., 2021);
- Institutionalized collaboration through departmental planning sessions (Afdal & Maaranen, 2023);
- Strengthening feedback loops between policymakers, curriculum developers, and teachers (Obczovsky et al., 2023);
- Revising schemes and guides to ensure local contextualization and subject-specific flexibility (Picardo, 2024; Wesselink et al., 2017).

The call for greater teacher motivation and recognition also echoes findings from international settings, where teacher morale is strongly linked to effective reform implementation (Zembylas, 2021; Mabona et al., 2022).

5.4 Conclusions

5.4.1 Teacher Familiarity with CBC

The study concludes that there is a generally high level of teacher familiarity with the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) among secondary school teachers in Uganda. Most teachers have internalized CBC concepts and incorporate them into their schemes of work and lesson plans. However, a significant proportion of teachers remain only partially familiar, indicating gaps in training coverage and quality. Effective CBC implementation requires not just awareness of curriculum elements, but deep pedagogical understanding, which is still developing among many educators. Thus, the transition to CBC, while underway, is uneven and dependent on sustained professional development and institutional support.

5.4.2 Lesson Planning Practices

Lesson planning under CBC is recognized as a thoughtful, learner-centred, and reflective process that emphasizes competencies, values, and critical thinking. Teachers actively engage with official curriculum materials to guide this process. However, planning remains constrained by time, large class sizes, inadequate resources, and inconsistent training. Despite these barriers, teachers demonstrate considerable ingenuity through collaboration, material improvisation, and innovative pedagogical strategies. This underscores a committed teaching force striving to reconcile curriculum ideals with practical classroom realities, though the full potential of CBC lesson planning remains unrealized without systemic reform.

5.4.3 Scheme of Work Practices

Schemes of work are foundational to CBC implementation, with teachers using them to structure content, sequence instruction, and embed key competencies. While most schemes reflect strong alignment with CBC principles, practical challenges—such as limited time, resource shortages, and difficulty integrating cross-cutting issues—hinder their effectiveness. Some elements of schemes, particularly administrative details, are perceived as burdensome, indicating a need for more flexible and contextually relevant formats. Nevertheless, regular updating and collaborative development of schemes are emerging as best practices, supporting curriculum responsiveness and teacher accountability.

5.4.4 Instructional Strategies and Classroom Implementation

Instructional strategies under CBC are broadly aligned with constructivist principles and emphasize critical thinking, problem-solving, collaboration, and real-world application. Teachers employ a variety of learner-centred methods and integrate values and cross-cutting issues into classroom activities. However, inconsistent access to digital tools, overcrowded classrooms, and learner diversity pose persistent implementation challenges. Assessment practices are evolving to include formative strategies, but remain unevenly integrated into planning and teaching. Overall, classroom practices reflect a growing embrace of CBC, though their effectiveness is contingent upon improved infrastructure, teacher capacity, and instructional resources.

5.4.5 Challenges and Recommendations

The study concludes that CBC implementation is hindered by systemic and pedagogical challenges: inadequate training, resource scarcity, curriculum overload, limited planning time, and poor alignment between curriculum design and classroom realities. Teachers have responded with adaptive strategies, but these remain fragmented and insufficient without broader institutional backing. There is an urgent need for comprehensive and practice-oriented teacher training, improved access to updated curriculum materials, and stronger collaboration mechanisms at school and policy levels. Empowering teachers through recognition, autonomy, and professional support will be essential for sustaining momentum and deepening CBC integration in Ugandan secondary schools.

5.4.6 Trailing of lesson plans and schemes of work

The study concludes that the developed scheme of work and lesson plan templates are instrumental in supporting the effective implementation of Uganda's Competency-Based Curriculum by promoting structured, learner-centred, and inclusive teaching practices. However, their full potential can only be realized through targeted refinements particularly the clear separation of teacher and learner activities and sustained investment in teacher capacity building, resource provision, and supportive infrastructure. To bridge the gap between policy intentions and classroom realities, the study underscores the need for continuous professional development, simplified planning tools, and equitable access to learning materials, especially in under-resourced settings.

5.5 Recommendations for Educators

5.5.1 Deepen Understanding of CBC through Self-Directed and Peer Learning

- Engage in continuous learning by reviewing CBC documents such as the syllabus, teacher guides, and assessment frameworks.
- Form study groups or professional learning communities (PLCs) within departments to unpack CBC concepts and share experiences.
- Reflect on teaching practices by keeping professional journals or logs that track how competences, values, and cross-cutting issues are addressed in lessons.

5.5.2 Strengthen Lesson Planning through Collaboration and Innovation

- Prioritize collaborative planning sessions at departmental level to co-create lesson plans, pool ideas, and standardize instructional approaches.
- Adopt flexible planning formats that accommodate learner diversity, classroom realities, and CBC expectations without overwhelming teachers.
- Integrate learner feedback into lesson plans by using exit slips, quick reflections, or informal discussions to adjust subsequent lessons.

5.5.3 Embed Competencies, Values, and Cross-Cutting Issues Deliberately

- Design lessons around real-life tasks that require learners to demonstrate problem-solving, communication, critical thinking, and creativity.
- Use storytelling, debates, and project work to integrate values such as empathy, responsibility, and environmental consciousness.
- Plan interdisciplinary projects or thematic units that allow for seamless integration of cross-cutting issues like gender equity or health.

5.5.4 Diversify Instructional Strategies to Promote Engagement

- Use learner-centred methods such as group work, role-play, inquiry-based learning, and hands-on tasks.
- Apply differentiated instruction techniques by varying tasks, resources, and levels of complexity to cater to mixed-ability learners.
- Utilize locally available materials and community knowledge to enrich lesson content and make learning more contextual.

5.5.5 Improve Assessment Practices to Align with CBC Goals

- Incorporate formative assessment tools such as observation checklists, peer reviews, self-assessment rubrics, and journals.
- Link assessments to specific competencies and ensure each activity clearly reflects the targeted learning outcomes.
- Balance formative and summative assessments to ensure both continuous feedback and end-of-topic evaluations are conducted effectively.

5.5.6 Enhance Use of Schemes of Work as Living Documents

- Align schemes closely with learning outcomes and competencies to ensure coherence between planning and instruction.
- Regularly review and update schemes to reflect learner needs, policy shifts, and classroom realities.
- Include practical elements such as teaching aids, references, CBC capabilities, and expected evidence of learning for clarity and focus.

5.5.7 Maximize Use of Available Resources and Technology

- Leverage free digital tools (e.g., videos, quizzes, open educational resources) for content delivery and learner engagement.
- Incorporate visual aids, charts, and real objects to cater to varied learning styles and promote inclusivity.
- Advocate for better access to teaching and learning resources through school management or district-level stakeholders.

5.5.8 Participate Actively in Professional Development Opportunities

- Attend workshops, in-service training, and webinars on CBC pedagogy, assessment, and integration strategies.
- Seek mentorship or coaching from experienced colleagues to deepen practice and improve planning efficacy.
- Document and share innovative practices within and across schools to foster peer-to-peer learning.

5.5.9 Promote Learner Autonomy and Active Participation

- Assign pre-reading, research tasks, and reflection exercises to empower students as active agents in their learning.
- Encourage learners to set personal goals and track progress, linking their achievements to specific competencies.
- Facilitate platforms for student voice through presentations, feedback sessions, and class forums.

5.5.10 Foster a Positive, Inclusive, and Values-Based Classroom Culture

- Create safe, respectful spaces that allow for open dialogue, teamwork, and critical thinking.
- Celebrate diverse learner strengths and tailor instruction to affirm cultural and individual identity.
- Model CBC values such as integrity, responsibility, and collaboration in daily teacher conduct.

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