International Journal of Arts and Education 2(3): 66-73, 2021

ISSN 2616-1818

Sleek Publishers © SLEEK PUBLISHERS, 2021 www.sleekpublishers.org

CRITICAL ASSESSMENT OF SOCIO- ECONOMIC BENEFITS AND CHALLENGES ACRUING FROM SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION OF COMPETENCY BASED CURRICULUM IN KENYA

DR. WAMICHWE JOEL MWANGI

(Affiliation Author): Nairobi, Kenya
Email: joewamichwe67@gmail.com

Abstract: The ever-increasing demand for skilled and knowledgeable manpower in Kenya has necessitated the introduction of a new system of Education namely, Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC). The competency-based curriculum is a need driven and more of demand-side financing than supply side financing. Introduced in 2018, the new system comprises of 2,6,3, 3,3 meaning the learner has to undergo two years in early childhood education, six year in primary, 3 year in Junior secondary, three years in senior school and three years in University. The system emphasizes student's centered rather than teacher centered and involves assessment, grading and reporting which is based on demonstration of the learned knowledge and skills. The knowledge and skills are the two pillars of the new system and are based on leaners talents and abilities. The new system is expected to achieve the following; acquisition of skilled and knowledgeable man-power, the goals and core values of education. It is expected that the competency based curriculum will achieve the various socio-economic benefits namely: skilled man-power, increased foreign earnings and reserves, accumulation of human capital, reduced dependence ratio, reduced crime and poverty rates, improved balance of payment on capital accounts, increased per capita income both at national levels and household levels and boost investors, create quality population and stimulate economic growth among others. However, the above gains may have some associated costs, which include financing of infrastructural facilities and technological change, training of educational personnel, civic education, as well as finances to recruit more teachers in junior and senior high schools. All in all the implementation of the new system was long overdue, its implementation is timely and measures should be put in place to oversee a proper implementation of this noble project, such that the returns of the investments are actualized and realized on time.

Keywords: Curriculum, Skills, Investment, Household, Efficiency, Foreign revenues, Human capital, Cost saving, Talent

1. Introduction

The competence based curriculum (CBC) is a newly introduced curriculum in Kenya. The curriculum emphasizes the complex outcome of learning process i.e. knowledge, skills and attitude to be applied by learners other than focusing on what learners are expected to learn. The CBC is learner centered and not teacher centered.

In its broadest term the curriculum can also be referred to as a system of instructions, assessment, grading and academic reporting that are based on the student demonstration of the knowledge and skills learned and expected of them. The system allows learner to advance based on his/her ability to master a skill or competency at their own pace, regardless of the environment. It is tailored to meet

different abilities and can lead to more efficient student outcome. The CBC is modeled as a framework for defining the skills and knowledge of a job, the system is a collection of competences that jointly define successful job performances

The CBC is quite different from the traditional curriculum in that the old curriculum was concerned with objectives while CBC emphasizes outcome. The recent curriculum was introduced in USA in the period 1960`s. This was as a result of demand for skilled manpower in the labor market and of which the traditional curriculum could not provide the solution.

The new system of education is thus intended to meet the national goals of education, such as promotion of national unity, fostering individual development and self-esteem, promotion of ethical values, eradication of poverty and positive attitude towards health, environment as well as appreciating the diverse cultures of all races, ethnicities and religious affiliation.
The CBC is also expected to achieve the following objectives:

i. **To develop skills and knowledge**: - The CBC aims at equipping the learners with practical skills and knowledge on socio- economic development. These skills and knowledge will make the graduate become competitive in the labour market.
ii. **To appreciate national core values of peace, love, utility, respect, patriotism, and integrity**. The aforementioned are key ingredients for a stable and developed nation. Kenya aims to achieve the key values in order to progress socially and economically.
iii. **To develop critical thinking and problem solving citizen**: - Once successfully implemented, the CBC is expected to produce graduate that have the competence and ability to think critically and solve problems in the appropriate way and in the right judgment
iv. **To promote imagination, innovation, research and creativity**: - The CBC is expected to produce people with the capacity and ability to innovate, invent and be imaginative on issues touching on socio- economics. The above mentioned factors are crucial in socio- development of a nation.
v. **To improve and increase digital literacy and digitalization in our socio-occupational set-up**:- The world has been reduced to a global village by digital technology. It is expected that CBC will equip learners with skills and knowledge needed on digital technology so that the country (Kenya) will be at par with other advanced nations.

Though the introduction of CBC is a worthy cause, the successful implementation of CBC may face some shortcomings, which may affect socio- economic benefits accruing from the new systems. These includes inadequate financing, incompetent personnel, lack of political good will, political interference, time factor, emerging issues like Covid-19, among others

However in order to comprehend the relationship between CBC and Socio-economic gains, the researcher has based the study on education production function theory. The theory was introduced by Pritchett and Filmer (1997). Princhett and Filmer discerned the relationship between inputs (CBC) and the outputs (socio-economic benefits). From the theory, the socio-economic benefits depend on the efficiency and quality of education or the nature of educational system. Though the opponents of this theory criticize it as a theory based more on technology than behavioral relationship, the proponent find it as worthy model in describing the relationship between socio-economic benefits that accrues from competence based curriculum the inputs (independent variable), versus the output (dependent variable), thus the socio-economic benefits (out-put) will occur as a result of CBC (inputs).

The CBC- Socio-Economic Model.

$Y_{se} = f\ (E_f + Q_f + \ - - -\ )$

Where;

Y_{se} = Social economic benefits
E_f = efficient education
Q_f = Quality education

The model explains the relationship between CBC and Socio- Economic Benefits .The Y_{se} indicate socio- economic benefit and depicts the dependent variables while E_f and Q_f denotes efficient and quality education (CBC) respectively and depicts independent variables.

Thus, socio- economic benefits are products of efficient and quality education which is anchored on competence based curriculum. The following are the various socio economic benefits likely to occur as a result of successful implementation of CBC.

2. SOCIO-ECONOMIC BENEFITS

2.1. Benefits to household

i. Skills and knowledge

The CBC will lead to acquisition of the right skills and knowledge as per individual`s abilities and talent. The system will enable the learner to acquire and apply his/ her potential by specializing in areas one is capable. This will make learning easy, thus reducing time wastage as well as wastage of resources. In addition the skills acquired will enable one to acquire gainful employment which will lead to increased household income.

ii. Optional investment

The new system of education will enable the household to invest their hard-earned resources in areas with optimal results or outcome. Thus, the returns on capital invested on the long-term educational investment will be realized. This will motivate the household to invest more in education, thus receiving more returns that accrue from long term investment in education.

iii. Increased efficiency

The CBC is very attractive to both the learners and household in general. This is due to the fact that one will pursue his/ her educational goals or dreams. As such, there will be an increased involvement rates both gross intake rate (GIR) and net intake rate (NIR) will be realized; the dropout rate as well as repeaters rate will be curtailed. This will lead to high retention rate, survival rate and graduation rate, thus reducing wastage rate drastically. This will result to optimal use of resources invested in education by households, thus increasing efficiency and effectiveness on education investment and consumption by households.

iv. Health benefits

The health of a person is paramount. Good health leads to wealth. There is positive correlation between individual and individual education. As earlier mentioned, the CBC will lead to paradigm shift on matters education enrolment. Increased Goss enrolment rate will mean high literacy rate or a literate household. This enlightened household will by virtue of its education be able to take health issues seriously both at individual as well as environment level. At individual levels health issues will involve personal hygiene, mental health, biological and general body health, while at environmental level will entail environmental conservation, respect for natural environment and reduction in environmental degradation. This will lead to healthy environment and whole self-health hence reduced expenditure on health budget. This will increase the household marginal prosperity to save leading to increased household investment since saving is equal to investment.

v. Reduced dependent ratio at household level

The aim of the cob is to enhance talents and potentialities of an individual i.e. add value to his/ her abilities. This will mean that each individual will acquire and develop skills, knowledge and expertise at early age. Besides, every individual is destined to benefit from this system. This will therefore mean all school-going age children will acquire skills and knowledge, which will enable them to acquire gainful employment. This gainful employment will go a long way reducing the would be dependents, to sizeable ratio hence putting dependent ratio to check, thus disburdening the household and offering the households to invest the balance realized from reduced dependence.

vi. Confident booster

At individual level, the system will work as booster to one`s confidence for "mission accomplished". This is because one will specialize in areas comfortable with, besides being employed to enhance his/her skills and knowledge, in doing so the individual will accomplish what he knows best, hence increased productivity. This will boost their confidence, leading to job satisfaction as well as motivation to render more services. This will result to high production, more revenues and incomes.

2.2 Benefits to the state

1. Foreign exchange and reserves

The CBC system of education will result to mass production of specialized units of labor. The surplus labor will be exported to other countries. Thus, the nation will become a major producer and exporter of man-power, thus reducing the deficit on balance of trade on capital account; since, labor is part and parcel of capital (human capital). This will earn the country the much needed foreign exchange and foreign reserves, thus reducing dependency on foreign economic powers. In addition, foreign earnings will be invested locally to stimulate development leading to spiral economic activities in all sector of economy, therefore creating employment, reducing poverty ratio, as well as increasing income at individual level, household level and the much need government revenue

2. Skilled and knowledgeable man-power

The system is primary meant to identify and add value to individual talents, potentials and abilities. This will result to acquisition of skilled man-power. This labor development will lead to mass production of good and services at minimal factor cost due to comparative advantage. Mass production at minimal factor cost will effectively result to higher and greater marginal prosperity to save which will lead to investment. The capital invested will raise revenues through taxes and levies, reduced through borrowing, thus realizing the various cycles of economic development

3. Human capital accumulation

Due to specialization in areas that the learner has a comparative advantage in the nation will in the end accumulate a pool of human capital. Human capital is powerful ingredient in production of goods and services and an important factor at labor market demands. This pool of human resources will stabilize the labor market demands hence attracting investors into the country and to large extend stabilize our economy. This will act as economic enabler, thus stimulating economic activities and development. This will increase gross domestic product (GDP) and gross national income and overall economic development in the country

4. Innovation and economic development

The system will create enabling environment to an individual or company to innovate and research. The aforementioned will lead to technological development; this will enable the country to produce goods and service at minimal factor cost. This minimal factor price will mean goods will be supplied or available in market at both domestic level and international level at lower price, thus the demand for our goods will be higher leading to mass production. This will result to wide spread economic benefits

in all factors of economy which will trickle down to household level, therefore reducing poverty levels and raising standards of living to the citizens.

5. Reduced crime

Occurrence of crime is at times related to idleness or ignorance. The two have direct relation to lack of education and engagement to any activity. Education eradicates ignorance and leads to gainful employment. The CBC, by extension or to large extent will enable one to be in school at the right time, at the right place and specialize on the right course. The engaged individuals both at school and at work will have no time to use his/ her energy negatively. Beside crime committed as a result of poverty will reduce, since poverty levels will fall due to acquisition of skills and utilization of talents. This will imply that the mental and physical efforts will be extend towards learning or working hence no idle time to think and commit crime , this will save the state resource that are budgeted to be used to prevent and fight crime . Lack of crime will provide a fertile environment for investment, which will result to enormous production and related economic benefits to the country.

6. Cost saving (budget)

The CBC in essence will reduce wastage rate in our education system .the reduce wastage rate in terms of dropout rate , repeater rate , delayed graduation and overstated school enrolment data will drastically reduce the never enough education budget . These cost effective measure will enable the government to invest, save funds to other sectors of economy, pay foreign debts, or loans from other countries. The aftermath will be an economy that is highly stimulated and motivated to produce more. More production will mean high per capita income and increased state revenues, which if utilized efficiently and effectively will scale the economy to greater height of development

7. Quality population

The nation's socio-economic development largely depends on the quality of its citizen. This could be on health, education and enlightens. When the population of a nation is knowledgeable, possesses the necessary skills and expertise, chances are that the population have little ignorance and mediocrity. The fore - mentioned are indicators of a quality population. Such population is very crucial as nation building. This is because the population will be patriotic to the national course and aspiration. This factor is of paramount importance in nation`s development since the citizen is enlightened and know precisely the aspiration of the country.

8. Widened democratic space

Educated people are enlightened people, they know their rights, what to do and what ought not to do; such citizens will put the ruling and the governing hierarchy to toes on matters performance. A government that is pushed to perform by her citizen will certainly deliver. The deliverance will motivate the population to work harder, voluntarily pay levies and taxes, meaning no tax evasion, thus reducing Budget deficit, reduction borrowing both at domestic and international level, the country will become self- sufficient and no expenses paid on interest on borrowed loans which depletes our foreign reserves

2.3 Benefits to learners

i. Talent development

Individual are endowed differently, it is every child`s wish to develop what he/ she knows best. The CBC offers the learner the space, time, and the right environment to develop and nurture his/ her talent unlike the former system of education. This nurturing of talents will lead to discoveries, innovation and

creativity of greater height. The end results will be enormously felt by the learner in his endeavor to earn and invest the proceeds of his enhanced abilities and potentials

ii. Motivate the learner

The system motivates the learner to learn more, since the CBC is tailored to learner's abilities. Thus, the learner will yearn to learn more of his/her talents, therefore learning will become learnable, interesting and skills and knowledge will be easier to acquire and apply, leading to production of school products with ease

iii. Psychological satisfaction

A successful acquisition of skills and knowledge will certainly satisfy the learner. This will create psychology satisfaction to the learner leading to calm state of mind, cognitive development and development of the whole self. This state of affair is very important for the day-to-day operation, since it enables one to learn or work efficiently and effectively leading to a lower indirect and direct social cost

iv. Anticipated gainful employment

The new system create a sense of hope to the learner due to the anticipated gains, the learner have more morale to work even harder. Due to the nature of the system, the learner will have the opportunity to utilize his/ her enhanced talents and potentials. This anticipated hope is very important since it will encourage the learner to do all it demands to acquire skills and complete ``race course`` on time since some gainful employment is anticipated. This will lead to efficiency at school, hence little wastage at individual and school level.

2.4 Challenges

i. Inadequate financing

Resources are scarce in nature, faced with unlimited demand. In the short run the government and households will be faced by inadequate financing. This is due to the requirements that are needed to as successfully roll-out of the system.

ii. Insufficient skilled personnel

The new system requires skilled and knowledgeable man-power namely teachers, instructors, economists, tutors, lecturers, educational officers and educational specialists. In the short-term, the personnel will be inadequate thus slowing the holistic implementation. Thus, measures should be put in place to induct the existing teachers or educational personnel, to acquire the necessary skills and knowledge to inculcate to the new system.

iii. Inappropriate infrastructural facilities

The new system requires modern infrastructural facilities, for instance, new classes, laboratories, workshops, resource centers among others. This must be planned for and acquired. The time- frame required and nature of the nation`s budget may render some fiscal problems. These realities require effective and efficient planning in order to efficiently and effectively implement the new system.

iv. Political interference

Divergent political views and attitude may affect successful implementation of CBC. Ordinarily, financing of education in Kenya is supply side driven other than demand side driven. Lack of political good will delay policies meant for smooth roll-out of the system, or financing of the new system.

v. Resistance to change

Human beings are habitual in nature; they abhor changes that interfere with their day to day operations and habits. Any change in the curriculum will face some resistance from trade unions, state holders association, or interested groups thus hampering the smooth implementation of system.

3.0 CONCLUSION

From the aforementioned, it is evidently clear that the new system has its gains and costs. It is a reality that if properly implemented the new system will be an economic`` game changer`` to the government, households and individual learners. Thus, the government should put measures in place to ensure successful implementation of the new curriculum

References

1. AL –Samarrai S. & Peasgood .T. (1988). Educational attainment and characteristics in Tanzania. Economics of Education. 4/ (3) I 412-439.
2. Becker G.S (1962) Investment in human capital a theatrical analysis. Journal of political economy 70 (5.part 2). 9-49.
3. Bhagwati J& Kamat.T. (1973). Opportunity cost of education. New Delhi. India.
4. Bowma N.J (1962), Human capital concepts and measures. Economics of higher education (5) 69-92.
5. Jamaican Education department (2004). Taskforce on educational reform final report. A transformed education system. Jamaica.
6. Ministry of education (2009) Education management system, Nairobi. Kenya.
7. Kenya Institute of curriculum development. (Sep 2017) session 5 ICT Integration in CBC Implementation.
8. https://educationnewhub.co.ke. Teachers training manual for competence based curriculum (20 Nov.2020) Nairobi Kenya.