Research Article

Competency Based Curriculum (CBC) Implementation in Kenya Higher Education: Reflections on Design and Delivery

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Abstract: The idea of developing students' "competencies" in Kenya higher education is not entirely new. For the last three decades, higher education in Kenya has offered various curricular and co-curricular programmes to students in order to enhance the quality of graduates. Communication Skills, Critical and Creative Thinking, Entrepreneurship, Citizenship and many more have been on the curriculum of first year students. Unfortunately, during the past thirty years, complaints about graduates who were ill-prepared for work and life have been common and education stakeholders have over the years questioned the worth of a university education. With Competency Based Curriculum (CBC), Collaboration, Problem-solving, Learning how to learn, Digital Literacy, Collaboration and Problem solving are the new competencies being added to the university curriculum. The question that needs to be addressed is this: if we have failed in the past, what is it about CBC that will bring the cure? After one year of seeing CBC at work in Kenya Higher education, it is a good time to begin interrogating our style of CBC implementation. As such, reflections on curriculum design and its delivery in Kenya Higher education are presented.
Keywords: Competency based curriculum, competency based education, teaching, Learning, higher education.

INTRODUCTION

In 1990, it became mandatory following a government directive that all public universities in Kenya (four of them at the time-University of Nairobi, Kenyatta University, Egerton and Moi Universities) had to introduce a compulsory course for all undergraduate students then titled simply as Communication Skills. Therefore, the idea of developing students' "competencies" in Kenya higher education is not entirely new. Institutions of higher learning have offered various curricular and co-curricular programmes to their students in order to enhance the quality of their graduates. The first of these courses was Communication Skills the course was meant specifically for students who were joining university for the first time as first years under the 8-4-4 system. They had missed two critical years of senior secondary school level at Form 5 and 6 after these were scrapped following the introduction of the new curriculum. The new course was seen as a way to bridge a serious academic communication skills gap of 8-4-4 students. The scrapped two years of learning at the A level were seen as an opportunity lost for the new crop of university students from 1990 onwards. The additional years had supported the promotion of students' communicative abilities all round and was believed to have produced graduates who were better at writing, reading, speaking and in studying for a degree.

Today, communication is recognized as the topmost 21st century skill, ranked together with collaboration, critical and creative thinking and digital literacy. It is indeed, the most sought after graduate attribute. It forms the necessary foundation for developing all other competencies. It is the tool that all learners require to become effective at learning and in performing competently in work environments and also in life in general. The attainment of all other competencies may be argued to depend on communication. Through communication, we acquire our knowledge, skills and values. Through the same communication we construct knowledge within a specific discipline or in multidisciplinary contexts and share it with others through face to face contacts and also through print and digital platforms. Graduates without this "soft" skill are unlikely to succeed in their personal lives, let alone in the workplace.

Five years after the introduction of communication skills, the introduction of other related competencies followed. Pressure from government, educators, civil society and employers later led to courses in Critical and Creative Thinking, HIV and AIDS, Gender and Development studies, Environmental Education, Entrepreneurship, as well as Citizenship being added to the undergraduate programmes in public universities. As societal socio-economic trends have continued to evolve, so has the educational system. One may argue that the competencies have been with us for a long time. This then leads to the question, why CBC now? What is it about CBC that makes it relevant now? In the CBC, we most probably have the opportunity to rescue ourselves from the mistakes of the 8-8-4. CBC is a unique, non-traditional way of delivering education.

We move from an exam-oriented system to one where focus is on the overall quality of our graduates from a holistic point of view. In CBC, there is both a curriculum as well a way to deliver this curriculum. Focus is not on the subject directly but indirectly, the goal is promote various competencies.

There are many issues that have affected how many countries implement a CBC curriculum. They are conceptual, contextual, curriculum design challenges and delivery issues. They have for example, affected graduate attributes development in countries like Australia, South Africa and UK where CBC has been in practice for years (Herok, Chuck & Miller, 2013; Sibuquashe,2019; Smith, 2015) In reporting about her experience in UK, Smith noted a lack of constructive alignment of graduate attributes to the curriculum and a lack of engagement of both students and staff on specific approaches of alignment and design. Sibuquashe (2019) concluded that academics in South Africa higher education treat graduate attributes as if they are disengaged from the course specific outcomes. The teaching, learning and assessment of graduate attributes was not linked to the development of disciplinary knowledge and skills. In this paper we want to examine the Kenya higher education experience with CBCs. This discussion focuses on two interlinked CBC implementation questions which are examined basically through a literature review methodology and secondly by using the reflective component derived from David Kolb's (1984) reflective cycle model. In using this model, the paper is nothing more than a reflection of our experience with CBC implementation at university level in Kenya. Experience, Kolb argues, has no meaning unless you can reflect on it and draw some lessons from it. A lot of reflection did go into the CBC implementation process in 2019 up to 2021 when the new curriculum was adopted. After one year of offering the competencies in our universities, some more reflection is necessary especially with focus on current CBC practices. Curriculum renewal is a continuous process and so is continuous reflection. This reflection is guided by the following two questions:

- As Kenya's higher education context provided a CBC design compatible with development of learner competencies?
- Are the teaching, learning and assessment methods in Kenya higher education aligned to the achievement competency based learning outcomes?

Competencies: a theoretical perspective

The CBC system has gained a lot of popularity throughout the world. However, competency development is often hampered by a lack of common understanding regarding the meaning of competencies and how best to promote them (Barrie, 2006; 2007; Green, Hammer & Star, 2009). Without a common understanding, how learning outcomes are articulated for any given competency becomes the basic challenge. This conceptual issue leads to a lack of proper alignment of competency outcomes with the core curriculum and particularly with teaching, learning and assessment methods. Green et al (2009) observe that there is considerable confusion regarding how graduate attributes should be defined and this affects how they are implemented. Bowden et al (2000) have presented us perhaps with many would term as the first most comprehensive definition of graduate attributes "as the qualities, skills and knowledge a university community agrees its students should develop during their time with the institution. These attributes include, but go beyond, the disciplinary expertise or technical knowledge that has traditionally formed the core of most university courses. They are qualities that also prepare graduates as agents of social good in an unknown future". They are general skills and they can be transferred to a wide range of contexts. According to Bitzer & Withering (2020), the attributes do not necessarily have to be learned as part of the formal university curriculum. They also do not have to be the same for all students as a student's unique background, abilities and interests determine how he/or she will respond to the opportunity of studying for a degree.

All institutions of higher learning do not refer to them as graduate attributes. Review of literature brings out labels such as graduate attributes, employability skills, generic skills, transferable skills and also competencies. In Kenya higher education, they appear as skills. In the United Kingdom, they refer to them as graduate attributes and are also specific about those skills that relate to a graduate's employability (Yorke, 2003) while in Australia they are referred to as graduate attributes (Barrie,2006). In South Africa, the term graduate attribute is used (Kew, 2014; Bester, 2014; Siquashe 2019; Bitzer &Withering, 2020). Academics, even within the same discipline may not have a common understanding of graduate attributes or of how they ought to be promoted. The confusion notwithstanding, there is agreement that all students should exit their institutions with a set of dispositions, understandings and attitudes that empower them to be effective communicators, critical thinkers, problem solvers, dignitary literate, team players, global citizens and life-long learners who are adaptive to the complex and ever changing socio-economic landscape of the 21st century. In view of these positives, Bester (2014: 74-75) is confident that competencies were "the most direct and beneficial employment solution for the future". CBC has great transformational potential.

The Competency Based Curriculum was introduced in Kenya in 2017 and in 2021 Higher education institutions began implementation of the CBC curriculum at their level. The approach in Kenya seems to be different from what is happening around the world. In most countries, university themselves decide which of the many competencies they want their learners to exit with upon graduation. There seems to be an element of independence which does not seem to be in Kenya. In

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Kenyatta University, the competencies were offered in March to new first year students, now referred to as the CBC students. The new system is part of an extensive global educational transformation that is seeking to understand how best to equip learners with specific knowledge, skills and attributes that they require to perform effectively in a complex and fast changing socio-economic environment. In addition to these so called "soft skills", CBC pays attention to a learner's ability to develop good mastery of subject knowledge by ensuring that learners move away from the wide subject content that was a common problem in the 8-4-4 system to a narrower area geared to a specific career field according to the interests and ability of the learner.

Competencies involve fundamentally, the ability to perform more than the ability to possess theoretical or academic knowledge. The focus is more on the process of learning (learning how to learn) hence creating independent learners who are able to exploit various types of learning environments---in formal, informal and non-formal (DeiBinger & Hellwig, 2011,). Kenya's National Qualifications Framework (NQF) recognizes all these forms of learning, and appreciates the need for flexibility in learning environments that are a key characteristic of CBC. According to scholars on CBC, learning has to be flexible right from primary to higher education if it has to succeed (Amutabi, 2019;Hitchcook 2013). This of course raises some pertinent concerns, how malleable is higher education in order to accommodate the flexibility required by the CBC curriculum?. To promote competences, the teaching learning environment has to reconfigure itself. Institutional rules and policy should support and not inhibit competency development.

Competency based curriculum as a process

To develop a competency is a process. It is in fact a very long process. Developing a competency is not only a long process, it is a complicated process. Competencies are complex to develop by their very nature. A CBC curriculum design must take this inherent reality about competencies into account. Competencies are expected to lead into change of behavior and hence they cannot be fixed quickly. The new curriculum in Kenya has great potential. To realize this potential, we need to look at what it means to have competencies as part of higher education curricula. At the primary school level, the promotion of competencies is distributed across all levels of learning and every teacher promotes competencies alongside his/her subject. Learners progress from grade to grade and in any one level, multiple learning opportunities are provided through teaching, learning and assessment. At university level, the situation is rather simplified. Higher education needs to consider the dividend of a progressive curriculum design (Amutabi, 2019). A progressive curriculum design treats each competency as a journey to be travelled. CBC is much like a race where the baton is passed to the next runner and then the next until all in the race take their turn. This means learning and practice opportunities are spread throughout the learner's entire educational journey—from first grade to the final year of university using both in class, and out of class experiences.

If well handled, CBC could as well the only option in terms of a transformative curriculum. It has many benefits to learners, to society and the global community at large. In countries where CBC has been effectively implemented, it has delivered astoundingly commendable results due to the shift from being exam-oriented to focusing on the individual needs of students as well as their careers Cheptoo & Ramadas (2019). Rwanda implemented CBC in 2018 and has reported that CBC is changing the way education is delivered with regard to change in the learning environment, learner motivation and new teaching methods (Rwanda Education Board, 2018). CBC has become very popular in developed countries such as Canada, USA, United Kingdom, Australia, Norway, Sweden, New Zealand and South Africa due to its flexibility (Smith, 2015; Amutabi, 2019; Kouwenhoven, 2009; Niyomiya, Nakaya, Shiwomura & Sito, 2004). Rather than focus on final grades, focus is on the process as well as the holistic needs of the individual learner. These are met through a wide range of learning strategies and learning outcomes. Teacher, learner and administrative roles have to evolve to accommodate a process approach. CBC is a progressive curriculum that is learner-centered and is flexible enough to adjust to the changing environment and the needs of students, teachers and society. Rather than compete with classmates, learners work collaboratively creating a conducive atmosphere for practicing the competencies throughout the different levels of their education. It is in this understanding that we see the great potential of CBC. Handling competencies any other way is a threat to their development, a compromise of the entire process, the goal and the grand vision for a better future. What follows is a list of factors relating to curriculum design, delivery methods, learner, teacher and the institution. The list is based on observations regarding how CBC is being implemented at university level in Kenya.

Communication skills, critical thinking, problem solving and all the other competencies are not being treated as competencies, but are handled more like the disciplinary course subjects. A proper understanding of their role is not well articulated and there is no clear distinction as teaching, learning and assessment is similar for with that of subject related courses. They start as courses and end as courses. The learners deal with these competencies in just one semester. It does not matter that these are very complex skills we are talking about.

The CBCs are being developed within the old curriculum model. Competencies are not being developed explicitly throughout a learner's entire

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undergraduate journey. There are no competency related activities, assessment and learning outcomes systematically included in the entire undergraduate course of the student. They ought to be embedded or integrated in the entire students' degree programme and not restricted to year one.

The is sadly, very heavy focus on the grade and not what learners can do well after years of skill learning and practice. The approach is still exam-oriented. Alternative assessment methods compatible to CBC ought to be considered. These may vary from learner to learner, and could include alternatives such as portfolios of evidence as is the case at lower grades. Focus is still on the Curriculum Vitae (the competency was taught in a specific semester!) more than the portfolio of evidence. Focus is still on what learners "know" and not what they "can do".

The grading system is punitive and also unrealistic. Passing grade for CBC now is a D of 50 marks up from the 40 % under 8-4-4 and an A of 80. It does not matter that this comes from a onetime assessment. The learner must garner 50 percent in both the CAT and the final exam to attain a passing grade. Failing either is punishable by failure.

The implementation needs a university wide venture through collaboration and accountability to ensure transferability of the competencies and their continued development by other lecturers as they teach their own subjects. There is need for an institutional requirement that all lecturers include competency related outcomes in their teaching and assessment .Policy frameworks that focus on campus wide interventions and increased accountability from all needs to be developed.

The competencies are presented as University Common Units. They are all taught in very large classes with teacher student ratios of 1 to 400 and above. Whereas numbers may remain large in higher education, embedding competencies provides multiple learning opportunities. This scenario justifies the need for a progressive design more than any other.

University learning environments need flexibility in order to support competency development. Competencies require a flexible learning environment and a learner-centered pedagogy where individual progress of learners is promoted. Diversity in learners should compel us to attach greater value to the unique needs of learners.

There is need for learner ownership or understanding of how competencies are being developed by his/her institution. The learner should have an idea of how to develop and monitor his/her progress up to the final year while understanding the role of his/her university in that journey. The institution should be interested in a student's journey and how he moves from lack of confidence to increased confidence in his growth and development.

There ought to be communities of learning or official panels in each undergraduate programme such as Engineering, Education, Medicine, Law, etc with focus on how each degree programme contributes to the development of the competencies of students within their own school. It is a gross oversight to leave this important assignment in the hands of others.

Closely related to the above is the responsibility for each degree programme to organize for the pedagogical needs of each instructor through continued trainings. At the moment, individual schools may not be directly accountable for their own students competency development and their teachers' CBC development capacities because the unit is not housed in their own school. Under CBC, schools need to include competencies within specific courses/ units.

Learners need to be assisted in order appropriately articulate or demonstrate their competencies first in their own school and secondly to the world during and after graduation. If indeed a student has been learning and practicing for a reasonable time, there multiple ways in which to provide evidence of progress or performance. Traditionally the CV and the transcript have been adequate. For 21 st century learners, graduates have to move from paper to real life performance as evidence for attaining skills mastery.

A students' CBC handbook comes in handy in providing initial orientation into the CBC design and what they are to learn and how to learn. Learning outcomes should be clear as well as assessment modes. How each competency is promoted and articulated should be clear from such a students handbook. Unless competencies are singled out in such a manner, or through use of a University Graduates Attributes Charter or Graduate Attribute statement, many students especially on large public campuses may remain lost. In addition to guiding, a charter or university statement is a contract with the student—to support him/her no matter what.

With these factors in mind, development of graduate attributes is more difficult than is currently demonstrated by our curriculum design, teaching methodology and institutional commitment. Treating competencies as hard or complex carries an obvious implication. Allocate more time, provide more opportunities and monitor the progress. Conceptual, contextual as well as design and methodological challenges will need to be thoroughly explored and it does take time. Cheptoo & Ramadas (2019) argues that CBC needs to be "Africanized". Nell & Bosman (2017) also assert that graduate attributes implementation must consider the contextual factors. Implementing CBC in African context has to contend with various factors such

as teacher use of traditional methods, lack of resources, large classes and failure by administration to understand their role in the CBC reform. Amutabi (2019) commends CBC for its cardinal characteristic of being a flexible, progressive design that accommodates every learner. Prof. Gaspard Banyakimbona chief executive at the Interuniversity Council of East Africa (IUCEA) has urged universities and other stakeholders to join the CBC conversation, to share good practice and to work towards achievement of sustainable excellence to enhance student success and employability (University World News, 2021).

Likisa (2018) has emphasized the need for process methodology and not just the product and Ndethiu (2017) considers that students should be encouraged to be reflective about how their competencies are being developed. Ndethiu noted that student understanding of how to foster their own personal growth was critical and depended on use of metacognitive strategies or "thinking about thinking" or simply reflecting on the process and adjusting while there was still time ahead of graduation. Such reflective strategies should be explicitly taught and practiced as important competencies. The development and wide applicability of graduate attributes are emphasized by the South African Qualification Authority (SAQA). SAQA defines attributes as "… those generic outcomes that inform all teaching and learning" implying that every teacher must have a good understanding of the competencies being promoted (Kew, 2014). What SAQA is saying is that teaching and learning run on the wheels of graduate attributes. It is the competencies that drive both teachers and learners to the attainment of professional goals for teachers and learning, career and life goals for graduates.

Flexible and learner-centered pedagogy

Effective competency development in higher education is often constrained by many factors related to the learning environment. It depends not just on a passing grade (we have made this mistake in the 8-4-4 system) but on how the learner measures against a set standard for his/her level of learning and his/her unique background. The learner ought to see that indeed, he/she is not competing with other students and that his/her singular challenges are given attention, and that he has a voice. He/she is to be supported to meet his or her unique academic and career goals. Unless CBC does this, then it will not be different from former systems before it. It is here where 8-4-4 and CBC are supposed to part ways.

Placing the needs of all learners at the top may seem hard to implement in the African higher education context especially due to large numbers and high teacher workload. Nonetheless, any concerted effort can go a long way. By its nature, CBC is about the learner. It is engaging, skills-based, authentic and is sensitive to the cultural and social environment of the learner. It broadens players by strategically incorporating all

programme instructors, as well as a wide range of stakeholders from government, employers, private practice, industry and non-government entities (Barrie, 2012, Bizter & Withering, 2020). That competencies are acquired is what matters. Learners' creativity in enhancing their own development should be accommodated. CBCs are best promoted not just by learning institutions but by the positive contribution of all stakeholders. It is a community affair and formal, non-formal and informal learning contexts play a vital role (Amutabi, 2019).

The provision of multiple avenues in which to practice is the key to achievement of CBC learning goals (Knight & Yorke, 2003). Traditional approaches stress much on the dominant role of the teacher. With CBC, teacher roles evolve, and so do the roles of institutions, learners themselves and the society in which competencies are practiced. The idea of making learner responsible for his/her own learning must acquire a new level of interest. The ultimate vision in teaching all thiese competencies is to make the student an independent learner. He must know where he is going with all these competencies, and he may need to take initiative and seek alternative learning opportunities to get him there. Helping students become experts at learning is every teacher's number one responsibility. Learning to learn is a competency we hardly address in higher education in Kenya. With CBC each learning style is valid, and it is up to the institution to align itself to the diversity of 21st century learning environments with both their opportunities as well as challenges. As things are, teachers are not letting go of "teaching" to take on guiding, facilitating, and yet, this what is expected in CBC.

CBC design in developed countries

With CBC moving forward, the major goal of higher education is to foster, in the best way possible the continued development of the knowledge, skills and values that have been introduced at the basic levels of education by paying attention to the unique needs, abilities and socio-economic background of each learner. Some learners enter the university with great disadvantage. Their "challenge" may not be easily noticed, but a system should be put in place to identify barriers that may not be obvious. To succeed at this level, there ought to be a holistic understanding of competency based education strategies, derived from sound philosophical understanding of how best to foster holistic growth in the learner. Competency development has been part of higher education for the last twenty years especially in the united Kingdom and Australia. In Europe, the work of Peter Knight and Mantz Yorke has been particularly insightful as has been the work of Barrie (2006, 2007) The scholars were very instrumental in promoting our understanding of graduate attributes and how to develop them. Knight and Yorke (2004) have led this work in European Universities.

Knight & Yorke (2003) came up with what has come to be recognized as one of the most helpful strategies for promoting students' employability skills, the USEM Model. The model stands for (Understanding, Skills practice, Self efficacy and Metacognition). Of course, the model is not without its limitations as critics will say. The limitations notwithstanding, the model does the much needed understanding of a process delivery and CBC design. Professor Mantz Yorke is the series editor for Learning and Employability where best practice is shared on how to embed employability skills into the curriculum. The model ensures that skills are being integrated in the learning of disciplinary content and learning outcomes relating to the skills are evident in the course content and assessment within the discipline. Employability skills are not learnt in isolation but have to be integrated into the process of learning all the subjects in the undergraduate programme. In using the USEM model, teachers promote not only student understanding, they provide numerable activities for skills practice, and ensure that they encourage learners to monitor their learning through use of metacognitive strategies such as self-evaluation and reflection. Using the model, students work towards being able to articulate their progress, identifying weaknesses long before graduation day and reflecting on alternative approaches for dealing with their deficiencies(Knight & Yorke, 2003).. This ability to self-diagnose and to creatively come up with a solution is the very process of competency based education. You are moving from the known to unknown. You understand your role in learning.

In Australian universities, the administration, faculty and students are guided by a Graduate Attributes Statement. The statements will vary as you move from university to university, depending on what the university considers to be important qualities for developing in their graduates. Upon joining the university, students are inducted on the attributes or competencies that are held most dear by their university. Australian universities choose the competencies that correspond most strongly to the goals and vision they have crafted for their learners. To arrive at these competencies, there is a consultative process (Smith, 2015). Owning of competencies by all stakeholders is integral to their successful implementation. To ensure that students attain the highest possible growth, the graduate attributes are embedded in the entire university curriculum (Barrie, 2012) Graduates attributes are mapped onto various disciplinary units for campus wide faculty collaboration. The mapping is an effort to match a competency to a disciplinary course through which it can be most effectively integrated through learning activities, assessment modes and learning outcomes. For example, if communication skills are being mapped onto various units in medical degree programme, it means students will practice the skills when learning different units within the medical programme. The secret to CBC success lies in multiplying opportunities for learning and practice, intertwined with appropriate feedback and continuous reflection and monitoring of progress by the learner as he/she progresses from semester to semester, year to year, instructor to instructor.

Competencies as transferable and interdependent

Competencies are acquired during learning in one context and they are often meant to be applied in a different or novel context. Competencies are not just waiting to be used after graduation. They serve both the teaching and learning process. Competencies are never promoted as an end to themselves. They inform both teaching and learning processes. They are for example, very important tools of assessment in every discipline. Competencies also have a strong symbiotic relationship. For example, effective communication, critical thinking, collaboration, digital literacy are the combined tools through which the learning of subject matter is most effectively conducted. Communication and collaboration are the primary means for developing critical thinking, problem-solving, leadership, reflective practice and learning how to learn. In CBC, this awareness is necessary and must be exploited to the full.

With CBC, teaching should be able to demonstrate to learners that success in the academy is as a result of integrating different competencies (knowledge, skills and values) to bear upon a given problem. Teaching, learning activities, assessment and learning outcomes should vividly attest to this in a way that it is verifiable. One should see clearly how for any project-based learning outcome, as many as six competencies may come to play as both teacher and learner engage with the problem. Often, it is not arriving at a solution that may matter. It is this heightened level of engagement that brings into one activity a multiplicity of competencies. Learners build deeper understanding of a subject, they collaborate and hence have to communicate, they apply critical and creative thinking, they search information by depending on their digital literacy skills, they read, they write, they persuade each other as to the best course of action, they build interpersonal relationships and so on. At the moment, this interdependence of skills may not be clear to both instructors and learners. In real life competencies work together. It is only in classrooms that we treat competencies as though they are separate entities. It is a pedagogical responsibility to make the interdependence clear by explicit instruction and modeling.We can see that in the CBC classroom, there is an intricate interplay of multiple competencies. This is the defining hallmark of effective CBC integration in the classroom.
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In CBC knowledge construction is a process not an outcome. The learner constructs knowledge and is aware of the choices he/she makes and why. The CBC offers the tools to be applied in the process of knowledge construction. Learners experiment, they are encouraged to take initiative, to make mistakes and self-correct, to be responsible, to go beyond the confines of the formal

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curriculum and to exploit whatever other opportunities that are excluded by mainstream programmes. Teachers must explain and more importantly model how competencies are promoted by "doing" and not simply by "knowing". Evidence that a competency is being progressively promoted and has not yet been mastered is much needed feedback from the teacher to propel the learner forwards. In basic levels of CBC, portfolios of evidence are very important tools. We have not come to the point of giving them much attention in higher learning as yet. Not in Kenya at least. Higher education still believes more in the grade than it does in the evidence that competencies have actually been mastered. CBC demands alternative means of assessment of learning outcomes.

Because in real life competencies complement each other, prudent classroom practice is a pure effort at integration. When the classroom reflects or mimics how problems are solved in the real world, learning becomes relevant, authentic and motivating. CBC ultimately proves one key point. The connection between what students learn and what the society needs have been on opposite sides. Integration of competencies to reflect the real world is key, and therein lies our greatest educational assignment at all levels. Currently we hold separatist notions of teaching and learning as well as assessment (your department and mine, your course and mine, my students your students) but it is by collapsing the curriculum that we can forge a united front and succeed. Each one has an equal responsibility in CBC. To deliver competencies, we start from adopting sound philosophies about the way effective learning is supposed to happen. Cheptoo (2019 argues that residual philosophies of yester years are strong impediments in the African situation because of inequities in teacher training for CBC. CBC requires highly trained teachers at all level of the education system. Teacher professional development must focus on the unique mode of developing competencies.

CONCLUSION

From the foregoing, the CBC curriculum holds a lot for potential for teachers, learners and all other stakeholders in education especially employers and society in general. In order for us to exploit the CBC curriculum for its many benefits, there is need for continued dialogue on what it really means to teach and learn the CBC way. All our collective roles have to evolve along with the curriculum design suitable for competency development. Competency development is a process that starts at first grade and should not stop until the student graduates. Teaching, learning and assessment has to align itself strongly to competency related outcomes and greater flexibility in learning environments will be very important. Competencies are not developed just for themselves. They serve the teacher and the learner as they both engage with disciplinary content. There is need for intense practice with competencies as learners progress from level to level

since this is what brings the change we are looking for. Because CBC focuses on what learners do, the evidence of what they are actually doing should be a key concern for all stakeholders. Although CBC presents us with many challenges, we are certainly not without options. Continued dialogue of pertinent issues should deliver answers even to most pressing of issues. Hopefully, competency development policy frameworks for specific higher education institutions in Kenya will in time be formulated so that our different roles can be clear.

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