



Attitude of Teachers of English towards Implementation of Integrated English Curriculum in Public Secondary Schools in Kinangop Sub-County, Nyandarua County, Kenya

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ABSTRACT

Despite drawing a lot of praise from scholars, the Integrated English Curriculum continues to face obstacles in its enactment. This paper seeks to assess the impact of attitude of teachers of English towards integrated English on the implementation of integrated English curriculum. The research was guided by the concerns-based conceptual change model. A convergent parallel research design was applied for this study. Systematic sampling was applied to select 36 teachers of English. Simple random sampling was used to select 19 principals and 19 Heads of Departments while purposive sampling was applied to select the sub-county Director of Quality Assurance and Standards Officer and sub-county Director of Education. The study used questionnaires, interview schedules and an observation check list in data collection. The main findings of the study are that, majority of the teachers of English have a positive attitude towards Integrated English curriculum. On the impact of attitude towards implementation of Integrated English Curriculum, majority of the teachers of English who had a positive attitude towards Integrated English curriculum also had Integrated English Curriculum successfully implemented. However, majority of the teachers of English who had a negative attitude towards integrated English curriculum also had Integrated English Curriculum not successfully implemented; an indication that attitude has an impact on implementation of Integrated English Curriculum.

Key Words: attitude, integrated English curriculum

INTRODUCTION

According to Okwara, Shiundu & Indoshi, (2009) the critical role of the English language in Kenya cannot be underrated as it is the communication and instruction language in institutions of learning, meaning that English is applied across the curriculum. This has seen those with a mastery in English reaping benefits as it is not only a core subject but also a language of communication, instruction and examination in all subjects other than language subjects such as Kiswahili, German, French, Arabic among others (Ongong'a, Okwara & Nyangara, 2010; Kioko & Muthuri, 2001). In addition to its use as a language of communication and instruction, Kisilu and Lelei, (2008) state that English is taught as a compulsory and examinable subject in pre-university education.

Since 1963, the education sector has experienced a number of reforms undertaken in order to align with the changing national development goals (Lumala, 2007). For instance, in 1981 the Mackay commission introduced the 8.4.4 system of Education which brought the concept of integration of subjects in the Kenyan curriculum. During this time, integrated English (IE) replaced English Language and Literature in English taught independently. According to Malik and Malik (2011), integration refers to the Organization of teaching matter to compress together subjects that are usually taught separately.



Shriner, Schlee and Libler, (2010) demonstrate the need for skills and vocabulary drawn from more than one area in order to effectively teach an integrated curriculum. In addition, Campbell and Henning (2010) state that curriculum integration is vital as more knowledge is becoming interdisciplinary and integrated calling for a multi-disciplinary approach in learning. A number of researches on integrated curriculum have shown that, students in schools that focus on integrated curriculum achieve better results on standardized tests and state examinations as compared to schools that do not (Shriner *et al.*, 2010; Campbell & Henning, 2010; Hinde, Popp & Dorn, 2007). While citing Jacobs (1989), Wafula, (2012) views learning as a holistic experience. He also re-defines curriculum integration as a process that organizes education in such a way that several subject matter lines are addressed and various aspects of the curriculum are brought into meaningful association that enables to focus on extensive study areas.

While supporting integration, Sadeghi (2007) demonstrates how literature is a powerful tool for any teacher of English as a second or foreign language especially because language learning (including literature) is above all educational undertaking, a view that is echoed by the Kenya secondary school syllabus on page 3 stating that, the “exposure of the learner to literature improves his/her language skills” (Secondary School English Syllabus, 2012, p.3). Despite drawing a lot of praise from scholars, the Integrated English Curriculum continues to face obstacles in its enactment. For instance, KIE (1989) evaluated the syllabus and found it too wide for coverage in the time allocated. The report also highlighted several challenges such as negative attitude from teachers, teachers’ skills and government policy that favors sciences as compared to the languages and social sciences. Further researches have continued to unearth several challenges key among them being negative attitude of English language teachers towards integrated English curriculum; inadequate training on application of integrated method; over-loaded curriculum; unclear concepts and unfavorable teacher to student ratios (Lumala, 2007; Nyakundi, 2011; Wafula, 2012). Another challenge as highlighted in Lumala (2007) was the rush in implementing the integrated English approach without conducting pilot studies, hardly preparing English teachers and poor consultations with stakeholders (Eshiwani, 1993).

Written and spoken English standards in Kenya have notably been declining. According to KNEC (2013), the desired level of achievement is 70% while the minimum is 50%. During the release of the 2015 Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education results, it was noted that English was one of the subjects that were poorly performed in the country with a mean of 40.29%. The year 2014 had equally reported an even lower mean score of 38.84% countrywide. The dismal performance was also reflected in Kinangop sub-county where for instance, in the year 2013, English had a mean of 4.962 with a large number of candidates (877) scoring D+ and below. Similarly, the intended curriculum changes in 2018 has not made it clear to the public on whether English curriculum ought to be integrated or taught separately. While examining the factors that influence the implementation of IEC in public secondary schools in Transmara West District, Kenya, Basweti (2014) noted that the attitude of teachers of English towards integrated English curriculum posed a greater threat towards the poor implementation of Integrated English Curriculum (IEC) in public schools. Wambulwa (2016) supports this view and states that implementation was done without piloting, adequate preparation of teachers and consultation deficit. Thus, a lot of challenges are encountered by teachers of English in IEC and this may hinder its implementation. Therefore, this study was set up to examine the impact of attitude of teachers of English



towards implementation of the integrated English curriculum in public secondary schools in Kinangop Sub-County, Nyandarua County.

Statement of the problem

Despite the introduction of the integrated approach to teaching of English in secondary schools in 1985, one of the key challenges has been the attitude of English teachers who are vital in the implementation. Mostly, the teachers lack prior preparation and training on the implementation of IEC and thus possess a non-supportive attitude towards integrated English curriculum and thus affect the implementation (Ongong'a *et al.*, 2010; Okwara *et al.*, 2009). In most parts of the country, teachers of English have diverse interpretation of the IEC to an extent that some do not use it at all while those that do tend to be largely haphazard. Thus, this affects the whole procedure in teaching English in secondary schools in Kenya. This study therefore sought to assess the impact of attitude of teachers of English towards integrated English curriculum in the implementation of IEC in public secondary schools in Kinangop Sub-County, Nyandarua County.

Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study was to assess the impact of the attitude of teachers of English towards the Integrated English curriculum and its implementation in public secondary schools in Kinangop sub-county, Nyandarua County.

EMPIRICAL LITERATURE REVIEW

Attitude refers to a person's tendency to respond to a situation or a person negatively or positively. It will determine the handling of a situation at hand. A number of factors should be considered for successful implementation of IEC. Of these factors, teachers' attitude towards implementation of IEC is among them. This is because attitude is concerned with individual thinking and thus it is a personal issue and will play a central role in implementation of integrated English curriculum. In addition, attitude makes people view issues from several perspectives, hence making English language teachers to perceive IEC differently. According to Meenakshi (2008), attitude is either positive or negative and both have different effects on a person's view of events and motivation.

Kilgaton and Maloney (2008) describe the importance of attitude in innovative tendencies saying that people with a positive attitude tend to be more innovative in the way they do things. Similarly, Eyo *et al.*, (2006) perceived that attitude may not be directly visible but can easily be noticed from explicit behavior through verbal and non-verbal communication. By accepting the implementation of IEC, it is contended that teachers have a supportive attitude (Otieno, 2003). An evaluation report by KIE (2004) notes an existence of negative attitude possessed by some teachers towards curriculum changes. Gichuki (2007) studied the challenges that teachers of English faced while implementing the revised English curriculum and noted that 21% of the English language teachers had a negative attitude towards IEC which in turn tends to affect its implementation.

A national workshop as reported in KNEC (2011) is said to have noted that most teachers of English had a negative attitude towards IEC and most of them responded to sticking to old ways of teaching English in order to enhance good performance in the subject. In her study, Collum (2012) asserts that teachers tend to have a negative attitude when they are unfamiliar with the curriculum, program or method of application and also notes that this is a recipe for



burn out and emotional exhaustion. Thus a need to train teachers becomes necessary in improving their attitude towards a program. Magoma (2011) supports this view by stating that beliefs and attitudes are a strong influence in curriculum implementation. As such he recommends on the need to consult teachers during the development of a curriculum in order for them to own it. According to Mosa (2014), inadequate participation by teachers in the preparation of IEC alienates them from being ready for implementation. The findings of this research found out that teachers of English were ineffectively trained on IEC which affects their attitudes towards teaching.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theory that forms the guidelines of this study is the concerns-based conceptual change model. This theory is an intermarriage between the theory of change and the conceptual change theory which is thereafter referred to as the Concerns-Based Conceptual Change Model (CBCC) as discussed in Molebash, Capps & Glassett, (2009) and Molebash (2010). The model proposes four major stages of concerns encountered by teachers during the teaching career; orientation, understanding, feasibility and progression. *Orientation* informs the other three stages, and despite being initially prominent, it persists all through. *Understanding* and *feasibility* are closely intertwined and are argued to be the lifeblood behind any conceptual change that occurs. While most conceptual change models apply the term *fruitful* at the final stage, CBCC, conversely, applies *progression* which is a clear indication that change is an ongoing phenomenon in a teacher's career. Due to the reflexive and recursive nature of the CBCC, it is challenging to afford specific time frames for each stage.

The applicability of this model in this study is its ease in explaining the implementation of IEC. At the initial stage of IEC, English language teachers pass through the four stages of the CBCC in order to cultivate a supportive attitude. It should be clearly noted that if any of the stages in innovation implementation is skipped, then successful implementation will not occur. Therefore, the CBCC model provided adequate framework for the study.

METHODOLOGY

Research design

A convergent parallel research design was applied for this study. As justified in Orodho, Khatele and Mugiraneza (2016), a convergent design is applicable when the researcher uses simultaneous timing in implementing both quantitative and qualitative elements in a research process, giving equal priority to both elements and maintaining independence in both of them during data analysis and blends the results in the interpretation stage. A convergent design was applicable in this research as it enabled the researcher to collect both quantitative and qualitative data simultaneously and blend the overall results in interpretation as explained in Creswel (2012).

Sampling procedure and sample size

The study adopted systematic, simple random and purposive sampling techniques. Systematic sampling was applied to select 36 teachers of English. Simple random sampling was used to select 19 principals and 19 Heads of Department (HoDs) while purposive sampling was applied to select the sub-county Director of Quality Assurance and Standards Officer and sub-county Director of Education.



Data collection instruments

The study used questionnaires, interview schedules and observation checks list in data collection.

Questionnaires were applied to collect data from teachers of English, the interview guides were used to collect data from the Heads of Department while the lesson observation check lists were used to collect information from form one and form two learners in the selected public secondary schools and were used to record the observed interaction between teachers and students.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Whether English teachers of English enjoy teaching integrated English

One measure of attitude was whether the teachers enjoy teaching integrated English curriculum. The response from the teachers are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1: Whether the Respondent enjoys teaching Integrated English

	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	25	86.2	86.2
No	4	13.8	100.0
Total	29	100.0	

From table 1 above, 25 (86.2%) of teachers of English reported that they enjoyed teaching Integrated English, 4 (13.8%) reported that they do not enjoy teaching integrated English. The findings confirm the need for implementers to have a positive attitude for successful implementation of an innovation (Kilgaton & Maloney, 2008). As Kilgaton & Maloney (2008) demonstrated, having a positive attitude persuades one to seek relevant information that guides changes and impacts an innovative implementation of an activity. The fact that teachers of English enjoyed teaching integrated English curriculum means they were positive to implement integrated English curriculum.

Feelings about using integrated English Curriculum

The teachers of English were also to report on their feelings towards the implementation integrated English Curriculum. This item was an open-ended question that was assessed by the researcher and then ranked on whether teachers of English had a positive or negative feeling about implementing integrated English curriculum. The overall response on feelings towards integrated English curriculum were as shown in the table below;

Table 2: Feelings on IEC

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Negative feeling	10	34.5	34.5
Positive feeling	19	65.5	100.0
Total	29	100.0	

From table 2 above, it is evident that majority of the teachers of English (65.5%) have a positive feeling towards integrated English Curriculum while 34.5% of the teachers have a negative feeling towards integrated English curriculum. One teacher who had a positive feeling indicated that *"Integrated English curriculum is very efficient and helpful in enhancing holistic study"*. Another teacher who had a positive feeling towards integrated



English curriculum responded that *“It helps the student to learn all part of English i.e. linguistic and literature harmoniously unlike when it was separated”*. A closer look at the responses of another respondent who had a positive feeling reviewed his/her response as *“The curriculum is relevant as it prepares learners for life after school”*.

Another teacher whose feeling was viewed as negative stated that *“IE is too much to cover within limited time”* while another one had his response as *“IE makes learners get confused”*. A sampled response that was also viewed as negative saw the respondent indicate that *“I feel that the approach should be changed to give the individual subjects the time and attention they deserve”*.

Teachers’ of English attitude towards Integrated English Curriculum

Regarding the two issues on whether teachers of English enjoy English and on their feelings about integrated English curriculum, an attitude scale was developed to help determine whether teachers of English had a positive or a negative attitude towards IEC. This analysis led to the following results;

Table 3: Attitude towards IEC

Nature of attitude	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Negative attitude	4	13.8	13.8
Positive attitude	25	86.2	100.0
Total	29	100.0	

From table 3 above, it is evident that majority of the teachers (86.2%) have a positive attitude towards IEC as compared to only 13.8% who have a negative attitude.

Implementation of IEC

In order to assess whether IEC curriculum has been adequately implemented, teachers of English were required to indicate the achievements gained so far by teaching IEC. By so doing, when responses showed the achievements are appealing, the implementation would be deemed successful, and if not appealing, it would be deemed unsuccessful. From this analysis, the following results were demonstrated.

Table 4: Level of Implementation of IEC

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Not successfully implemented	10	34.5	34.5
Successfully implemented	19	65.5	100.0
Total	29	100.0	

Out of the total respondents, 65.5% believed that implementation of IE curriculum has been successful while 34.5% believed it is not successfully implemented.

Attitude of teachers of English towards implementation

In order to assess the influence of attitude towards implementation of IEC, a cross tabulation between implementation and attitude was carried out and the results tabulated below in table 5 below.



Table 5: Effect of attitude of teachers of English on implementation of IEC

		Attitude scale		Total
		negative attitude	positive attitude	
Implementation of curriculum	Not successfully implemented	3 (75.0%)	7 (28.0%)	10
	Successfully implemented	1 (25.0%)	18 (72.0%)	19
Total		4	25	29

It can be observed that 72.0% of the respondents who had a positive attitude towards IEC also had IEC successfully integrated while 28.0% who had a positive attitude towards IE also had IEC not successfully implemented. On the other hand, 75.0% of the respondents who had a negative attitude also had IEC not successfully implemented while only 25.0% who had a negative attitude had IEC successfully integrated. This is clear that attitude has an impact on implementation of IEC.

DISCUSSION

Attitude of teachers of English towards IEC and its influence on implementation of IEC

From the teachers' responses, majority of the teachers of English (86.2%) have a positive attitude towards IEC as compared to only 13.8% who have a negative attitude. This is also supported by the response from principals and Heads of Department whereby 68.8% of the principals believe that the teachers of English have a positive attitude towards IEC while 31.3% have a negative attitude towards IEC, while 62.5% of the teachers of English have a positive attitude towards IEC while 37.5% have a negative attitude. In the implementation of an innovative activity such as the integrated English Curriculum, it is important to make sure that the implementers have positive attitude as Kilgaton and Maloney, (2008) observed in their study.

CONCLUSION

Overall, majority of the teachers of English (86.2%) possess positive attitude towards integrated English curriculum, while 13.8% possess negative attitude towards integrated English curriculum. According to this study, attitude had an impact on implementation of IEC.

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