Original Article

Exploring Teachers' Perceptions on Pedagogies used in Implementation of IRE Competence-Based Curriculum in Secondary Schools in Wakiso District

Batibwe Moses Sserwadda[1] & Kiggundu Muhammad Musoke[1]*

[1] Makerere University, P. O. Box 7062, Kampala-Uganda.
[*] Author for Correspondence ORCID ID: https://orcid.org/0000-0009-0000-6257; Email: mosesbatiibwe@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

The current study explored the teachers' perceptions about the pedagogies used to implement the IRE competence-based curriculum in secondary schools in the Wakiso District. It was based on a phenomenological design, with IRE teachers, administrators of IRE schools, UMSC officials, and NCDC staff). The sample size depended on the saturation of findings augured. Teachers were sampled using simple random sampling while participants in other categories were purposively selected. Interview guides and focus group discussion guides were used as data collection instruments. Data was analysed using the thematic analysis method. Results revealed that IRE teachers had perceived pedagogies like activity-based learning, discussions, presentations and demonstrations in IRE teaching as effectively accepted in schools. The study concluded that the methods used by teachers in the current IRE competency-based curriculum were perceived as worthy enabling the effective implementation of this curriculum. Based on the study findings, discussion and conclusions, the study recommended that if IRE Competency-Based Curriculum is to be effectively implemented in the selected secondary schools in Wakiso District, relevant stakeholders at Wakiso District Education Department, Ministry of Education and Sports officials, UNEB officials and NCDC Officials should do the following. They should organize seminars, workshops and sensitization seminars showing the relevance of IRE Competency-based curriculum pedagogies like project and activity-based learning methods. There is a need to provide necessary gadgets like teaching aids and the creation of adequate space. In doing this project methods, discussion, field studies and presentations would be possible in classes. Also, the methods recommended call for adequate funding and retooling teachers to curriculum instructional pedagogies recommended for the competency-based curriculum.

INTRODUCTION

Saware (2021) identified that the competence-based approach was a result of 17th-century pedagogical research leading to educational reforms in the educational process. Its pioneers are Froebel, Dalton, Montessori and Piaget who succeeded in permeating the child-centred learning approach. The key aspect under approach was the fact teachers should be equipped and facilitated to engage students actively in a domestic way in learning activities. Alemayehu et al. (2021) stated that competency-based education (CBE) emerged in the 1970's in the US. It was referred to as an educational movement that advocated defining educational goals in terms of precise measurable descriptions of knowledge, skills and behaviours of students.

Modern competency-based education and training movements began in the United States of America when efforts were made to reform teacher education and training in the 1960's. Thereafter, it spread to the United Kingdom, and other advanced and developing countries (Nalova, 2021). In the same direction as the study, Mayega (2019) stated that CBE is widely linked or considered to have been an initiative of the United States of America in the teacher education reforms since the 1920s before it spread to the UK and other parts of the world. Meanwhile, Syafarudden et al. (2022) investigated evaluating the Islamic Religious Education curriculum management program at Madrasah Tsanawiyah in North Sumatra. Results revealed that the form of the Islamic Education Curriculum used was based on the 2013 curriculum the subjects of the Hadith Quran, Agidah Akhalak, Figh, Ski and three subjects, namely Arabic (Nahwu Sarof), Calligraphy and Takhfidzul qur. However, in this study, the element of Competency Based IRE pedagogy was not indicated which was the key concern in this study.

Nationally, Natweta, & Nkorunzinza (2024) investigated stakeholders' perception and competence-based curriculum implementation in secondary schools in Isingiro District Uganda. Results revealed that stakeholders had negative attitudes and perceptions towards the competence-based curriculum. This consequently had a spillover negative effect on its implementation in secondary schools. However, this study was on all stakeholders, but this current study sought teachers' views regarding the pedagogy of the competence-based curriculum.

This proposed study was guided by Bernstein's Education Theory developed by Bernstein in (1975). This theory postulates that students develop values within the culture of the school through contradictory and paradoxical practices. In addition, it assumes that the external global market forces and pedagogies are becoming more market-oriented, yet the traditional social hierarchies, social values and traditional rituals and practices are becoming of less importance (Cause, 2010). Cause (2010) showed that Bernstein Code Theory can illuminate how the school can act as a strong independent force in shaping students' identity and their view of the world. It was added that in this study what the school does, its rituals its ceremonies, its authority relations, its stratification, its procedures of learning, its incentives, rewards and punishments, and its image of conduct character and manner can modify or change the pupils' role. Thus, in line with this theory, it is theorized in this current study that teachers' perceptions of Islamic Religious Education regarding pedagogies influence CBC curriculum effective implementation.

Adongo (2022) defined a competency-based curriculum as a program that comprehends the application of skills as opposed to subject content and memorization. Teachers' perceptions of IRE pedagogies used included teaching strategies covering traditional, modern and blended teaching pedagogies.

Problem Statement

Despite the critical role of teachers in implementing the competency-based curriculum in Islamic Religious Education, there is a limited understanding of their perceptions regarding the pedagogical approaches utilized in this context. Teachers often face challenges, including resource constraints, training gaps, and differing personal beliefs about effective pedagogy, which can affect their willingness and ability to adopt new teaching methods (Adnan & Rahman, 2021). Furthermore, existing literature highlights the disconnect between curriculum design and classroom practice, suggesting that teachers may not fully engage with or understand the pedagogical innovations intended by the IRE competency-based curriculum framework (Khan et al., 2021). This disconnect poses a significant barrier to realizing the curriculum's potential benefits for learners and could undermine the educational goals set forth by the Ministry of Education and Sports. In line with the above, MoES through the NCDC has identified and provided guidelines for each of the subjects offered at the secondary school level, like putting qualifications for instructors and uniform salary scales. However, slightly differing from the above, implementation of IRE CBC pedagogies has greatly remained below the standardized and expected levels. For instance, available reports like UNEB results from 2019 and 2022 have indicated that IRE is still taught in the traditionally conservative and radical form as a religious creed. It also reported that the teaching of IRE in most secondary schools (almost 86%) has not been opened to all students leaving it to Muslim students as a fanatic religion. In addition, in almost 83% of the secondary schools.

The teaching of IRE was offered in a conservative form distanced from the contemporary worldview and is not universal to all students in these schools. This challenge is exacerbated by letting religious leaders (Imams/ Sheikhs) with the responsibility of teaching the subject in some of these schools. Once this state of affairs remains the way it is the realization of national education of promoting basic values of unity, patriotism and African agenda 2063 will not be achieved. Further, the National Vision 2040 would be far from realization. Although several factors could be responsible for the same, there was no single study that has ever been to establish the role of stakeholders particularly teachers, with emphasis on their perceptions regarding the implementation of IRE competency-based curriculum pedagogies in the context of secondary schools in Wakiso District as was the case with this current study. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to explore teachers' perceptions about pedagogies used in the implementation of IRE competence-based curriculum in secondary schools in Wakiso District.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Perceptions of Teachers in the Implementation of IRE CBC Pedagogies

Hadayat (2023) revealed that competency-based Islamic education was still interfacing with challenges related to appropriate pedagogies of instruction. Pedagogies competence was still a serious major challenge when it comes to effective teaching and learning of IRE. However, this study was qualitatively done and in a context differing from that of IRE teachers in secondary schools in Uganda. Nurfuadi (2020) investigated the development of teachers' pedagogical competencies of Islamic Religious Education based on learning quality management. Results from this study revealed that through pedagogical abilities, teachers were able to independently improve the development of their knowledge by reviewing, internalizing and realizing the output of learners competing in the education world. Hence, IRE teachers' pedagogical skills acquisition plays a pivotal role in the implementation of IRE competence-based curriculum. However, in this study, emphasis is laid on teachers' pedagogical competencies ignoring assessment and knowledge content which would be paid attention to in the current study. Besides, Zubaedi (2022) revealed that the implementation of Islamic religious education

subjects was more done using scientific methods like inquiry, discovery, problem-solving and video analysis. However, this study was done in Bengkulu not in the realm of a developing country like the one this current study targeted. In addition, Idi (2021) showed that the religious education curriculum at the Islamic University of Indonesia began to lead a modern view through the adaptation of digital technology and filling the void of spiritual values with various scientific discourses. All these observations were carried out in the context of the Asian world while this current study was done in Wakiso District in Uganda.

Raissouni et al. (2021) investigated physics teachers' perceptions of practices and methods of teaching in the Moroccan middle school. Using qualitative methods and descriptive analysis techniques, results showed that the didactic methods and pedagogical practices by a sample of teachers were far from those recommended in the official programs. This might have been true with IRE CBC implementation but it was not carried out in the context of Wakiso District schools on IRE CBC implementation as was the case with this current study. Meanwhile, Awuonda et al. (2023) studied teachers' perceptions of competency-based curriculum implementation and government support. Using a mixed method analysis, findings revealed conflicting views about CBC methodology. The use of information and communication technologies was revealed as unfavourable in the instructional processes. However, this was not specifically aligned to IRE as this current study did.

Nonetheless, Benson et al. (2020) studied students' perceptions of teachers' pedagogical skills and their influence on their attitude towards science. Results showed that students had perceived science teachers as not having pedagogical skills to teach science. This in turn affected their implementation of science competence-based education. However, this study was not on IRE competency-based education as was the case with this current study. Muchiri et al. (2022) studied teachers' pedagogical preparedness for the implementation of competency-based curricula in public secondary schools in Kirinyaga County, Kenya. Results from qualitatively acquired data showed that teachers lacked pedagogical preparedness for the implementation of the competency-based curriculum in public secondary schools studied. A good number of these teachers were identified as struggling to master pedagogies recommended to implement CBC as designed in its framework. Likewise, even with IRE CBC the curriculum followed may not put adequate attention to relevant instructional pedagogies recommended by NCDC and MoES. Therefore, in this study, the perceptions of IRE teachers regarding the same were ascertained.

Meanwhile, Muchira et al. (2023) in an investigation into implementing a competency-based curriculum in Kenya, took a comparative analysis of lessons from Korea and Kenya. Results revealed that unlike in the USA and South Korea, inconsistences regarding pedagogies used in the implementation of CBC in Kenya denied teachers an opportunity to effectively implement it. In the USA and South Korea, learner-centred methods are effectively supported by state educational agencies. However, in the case of Kenya was almost impossible to implement the stated methods because of the resource deficiencies, though this was on general CBC implementation in schools whereas in this study emphasis was on IRE in the context of Wakiso District.

Bizimana et al. (2023) studied switching from knowledge to competency-based teachings given Biology teachers' attitudes and instructional practices. Data was analyzed using one way ANOVA analysis technique. Findings revealed that Biology teachers had applied competence-based approaches in teaching and assessment practices of students. Besides this study was not carried out using IRE as a subject of reference as was the case with this current study. Meanwhile, Kavindi (2014), investigated the implementation of a competence-based curriculum in certificate teachers' colleges in Tanzania. Results revealed that teachers were knowledgeable on participatory methods contrary to the suggested competency-based teaching approaches that were more applied during the instructional process. This situation might be true with that of the IRE Competence-based curriculum. However, it had not been scientifically established in the case of the IRE competence-based curriculum in Wakiso District which this current study.

Adongo (2022) in an assessment of teacher preparedness in competency-based curriculum implementation and learners' performance in primary schools in Awendo-Migori county, Kenya. With the use of descriptive survey design, results revealed that teachers' pedagogies used determined the extent to which competency-based curriculum was effectively implemented in schools. However, it was noted also in the previous study that teachers' pedagogical knowledge in the CBC was still low denying chances for effective implementation of this curriculum. However, this study was quantitatively done while this current study was qualitatively done.

Disabimana, & Mugabo (2022) studied physics teachers' implementation of a competency-based curriculum through the use of inquiry-based teaching and learning at lower secondary schools in Gakenke District. Qualitative results revealed that teachers were in the know of the requirements of CBC implementation. However, they were limited to traditional methods of teaching and did not tackle the five practices of inquiry-based teaching and learning of physics. This was however on physics which could slightly differ with IRE. Secondly, this study was carried out in Gakenke District, Kenya while this current study was carried out in secondary schools in Wakiso District.

METHODS

The study was based on a phenomenological design, with IRE teachers, administrators, of IRE schools, UMSC officials, and NCDC staff). The sample size depended on the saturation of findings augured. Teachers were sampled using simple random sampling while participants in other categories were purposively selected. Interview guides and focus group discussion guides were used as data collection instruments. Data was analysed using the thematic analysis technique.

RESULTS

The second objective of the study was to explore teachers' perceptions about pedagogies used in the implementation of IRE competence-based curriculum in secondary schools in Wakiso District. Many questions were asked on this objective. The first question was 'what pedagogies do you use in the teaching of IRE competency-based curriculum. Several themes from the findings provided were

created. These themes included project methods, problem-solving methods, role play methods, discovery methods, ICT methods, question and answer discussion methods, among others.

One of the teachers who participated in the study interviews stated that,

> In my IRE teaching, I use more of project activities. Students are offered an opportunity to create projects on whatever I teach. After requesting them to create groups where they assign themselves roles. In these projects, I only guide them on what is required and leave them to do the work. At the end of the lesson, each group has to present the outcomes of their projects.

This hence suggests that teachers in the schools where the study was done encourage students to use projects and these projects allow them to actively participate in the lesson. This view did not differ from that of another IRE teacher who emphatically stated that,

> I use the project method of teaching in the new IRE CBC. This method allows active learning and participation of students. At the end of the day, students own whatever they practice and the role on my side is to guide them where they go astray.

This finding implied that the new IRE competency-based curriculum lays emphasis on projects. These projects allow students to actively participate in the lesson unlike in the past where the teacher would dominate the teaching-learning process.

Problem-Solving Methods

Findings also revealed that problem-solving was another method used in the teaching of the IRE competency-based curriculum. Teacher D from one secondary school stated that,

> Problem solving methods are adequately used during the teaching-learning process. I ensure that whatever activity students do in the lesson can lead them to solve problems as they emerge. I ensure that these students are creative and can use real objects to solve problems as they emerge. This approach has allowed students to

be more critical, analytical and ready to solve problems the way they emerge.

Similarly, another IRE teacher said,

The most important strength of the new IRE competence-based curriculum is its call for teachers and learners to use problem-solving methods of teaching learners independently suggest ways of approaching issues and as a teacher, I have to advise on the methods and strategies used in arriving at solutions.

This view was in tandem with that of the IRE subject specialist at UNCDC who argued that,

The new IRE competency-based curriculum looks at the ability of learners and teachers to use problem-solving methods in society. When teaching issues related to prayers and their significance in Islam. Students and teachers are called upon to demonstrate this before others. At the end of the day, everyone would be trained to be fully independent in addressing challenges as they emerge.

This problem-solving method has indicated that the IRE competency-based curriculum creates a group of learners who are creative and can solve problems in society.

This view was in line with that of the headteachers who revealed that,

Problem-solving methods are the way to go with this new IRE competency-based curriculum. I do whatever I can in my capacity as the headteacher of this school to see that all teachers (including IRE teachers) use problem-solving methods of teaching. I have created enough space in classrooms, reading space, materials and a resource centre to enable my teachers and students to use problem-solving methods of teaching. In the beginning, it looked not possible, however as time went problem-solving methods have been received positively by students and teachers in the school.

This finding implied that problem-solving methods are deeply used by teachers and learners in the implementation of an IRE competency-based curriculum. With the use of these problem-solving methods, students have come out as more analytical,

critical and prepared to use the limited available resources to solve community problems.

ICT Methods

Results also revealed that the new IRE competency-based curriculum creates an opportunity for teachers to use ICT during teaching and learning. ICTs like computers, speakers, smart boards and multimedia networks were revealed as being adequately used in the teaching of the new competency-based curriculum.

One of the teachers in the interviews stated that,

Currently with the introduction of the new competency-based curriculum information and communication technologies were indicated as one of the methods of instruction. Teachers and students have come to realize that they can conduct classes even when they are not in the traditional physical classroom. I may give an example we had not completed some topics before the close of term two. However, with the use of online methods, we covered these topics online during the holiday.

Whereas another teacher stated that,

I don't need to write and dictate IRE notes to my students. Since there is a provision for using ICTs in the new IRE curriculum, what I do is direct learners to where the content is, and then I request them to surf and download this material as a way of making them participate in the lesson. This approach has saved me valuable time that would be used to dictate notes before IRE students.

Findings from these two teachers implied that information and communication technologies are one of the methodologies used to offer notes and conduct lessons which eases the teaching-learning process. These findings were in direct agreement with those of IRE students in the FGD who also indicated that many of their teachers prefer using ICT methods.

One of these students identified that,

It has become a norm that online lectures are part of our IRE CBC. Teachers have organized their lessons and put them on the wireless system

in the school. Even if you are sent for school fees at home, you cannot be left behind as online methods of teaching provision are there to ensure that all students are on the same page.

This implied that with the use of ICTs teaching and learning continue even where there are challenges.

Another IRE student revealed that,

I no longer have to carry IRE textbooks and learners. These have been provided online to all students undertaking the subject. Previously I used to get scared that my notes would be stolen or lost. However, with the use of ICTs, I am confident that no one can totally take away my reading materials as I can access them at any time using the available communication technologies.

These findings implied that communication technologies are used by students to access IRE information/ content at any time as may be deemed necessary by the student.

Meanwhile, another student also stated that,

Assignments, tests and end-of-term examinations in IRE are at times organized, offered to students, done and submitted using information and communication technologies. This has to some extent helped students and the school to have a lot of paperwork printed as a way of organizing and doing examinations.

Furthermore, the IRE subject representative at NCDC added that,

We encouraged and planned that more emphasis be put on use of information and communication technologies in the teaching of IRE CBC. As subject specialists, we believe that once teachers follow this trend, we can have a future generation of education products that can compete favourably on the global scene.

In support of this, headteacher A from one secondary school opined that,

Knowing that ICT is the way to go in the new IRE competency-based curriculum, all teachers are offered a laptop, data package and at times wireless network in the computer laboratory to allow students to use ICTs.

While another headteacher asserted that,

We allow students who can afford to have smartphones and laptops to come along with them at school. As teachers introduce lessons, these students can search on their own to substantiate what is provided in class. This approach has helped many students to add to the teacher's content. In doing this, students are made independent researchers who can create their own knowledge and present a better version of what was discussed at the same time.

These findings in one way or the other implied that to some extent information and communication technologies have been embraced by teachers and students doing IRE subjects to fully attain the core vision objectives and goals of the new IRE competency-based curriculum.

However, some teachers and students indicated that information and communication technologies have not been effectively used in the implementation of an ICT competency-based curriculum. One of the critical teachers argued that,

Yes, the new competency-based curriculum indeed calls for the use of ICTs in the teaching-learning process. However, what I can say is that the school lacks adequate resources to fully enforce this. Computers we have are less functional, the only option they have is to continue using the traditional methods.

This finding implied that the use of information and telecommunication strategies may not succeed at times in the implementation of the new IRE CBC curriculum due to these resources' inadequacies.

In support of this, another headteacher stated that,

Most of the teachers we have were not trained on how to use ICTs in the teaching of IRE CBC. This same problem applies to other subjects. This makes it difficult to incorporate these ICTs in the teaching and learning of IRE CBC. It would require teachers to be trained on how to use these ICT gadgets to allow them utilize them in the teaching-learning process.

This finding showed that teachers would prefer to use information and communication technologies like Google Meet, zoom, and conferencing, among

others when teaching an IRE competency-based curriculum. However, the inadequacies in training on how to go about these innovations limit the chances for teachers to use these technologies.

Other stakeholders like parents indicated that their children always tell them that in the new curriculum for all subjects IRE CBC, they are obliged to learn using ICTs as one of the methods. However, this adds to students' extra financial cost when they have to buy smartphones, computers, buy data all of which are not easy to provide in the current trends where poverty is rampant on the side of the school and learners. This hence suggests that even with the government strategy of using ICTs, the economic environment and the training of earlier teachers (cadres) does not give it a fertile ground to do so.

Discussion Pedagogy

Results also revealed that discussion is one of the pedagogies used in the teaching of the IRE competence-based curriculum. Participants showed this is one of the methods that this method is used more in the classroom as students have to discuss in groups whatever is taught. Findings from one of the IRE teachers revealed that,

> *The first thing I do is to create discussion groups where students discuss topics and sub-topics in class. In each group, students are assigned roles where each member has to contribute.*

Meanwhile, another IRE teacher stated that,

> *Discussion is an available tool in the implementation of IRE competence-based curriculum. Through discussion, students are able to identify areas of weakness and strength from others. Such discussions have helped students in the class to be able to learn better from others.*

These findings implied that discussion is used in the implementation of IRE CBC since students are allowed to contribute as a group and learn better. Meanwhile, to support the use of the discussion method, one headteacher stressed that,

> *Our IRE and other subject classes are always noisy. However, this is useful noise. Even when teachers are in class, we as management remind them that they need to leave students to discuss in teams. This noise is for effective implementation of the IRE competency-based curriculum.*

This finding suggested that the IRE competency-based curriculum discussion method is highly emphasized as one of the methods of teaching. This method allows these students to critically analyze issues as they occur and allows them to develop a culture of respecting others' views. These findings were in support of those of students in the focused group discussion where students indicated that the discussion method is highly used in their learning process. One of these students indicated that,

> *In my class, we have discussion groups of five students per group. Each student is offered an opportunity to contribute to the group. I have realized that my esteem and confidence to say what I want about the topic under discussion has improved.*

Meanwhile, another student in the FGD mentioned that,

> *I see myself respected in the group discussions made in IRE CBC class. Unlike in other areas where ladies are not given a platform to contribute on matters of contention, in the IRE CBC class there is no segregation, we all contribute and at the end of the day, we learn better from others.*

These findings indicated that as discussions are promoted in the IRE competency-based curriculum students develop skills of learning from one another. Likewise, another student in the FGD stated that,

> *Discussions are the order of the day in all subjects including IRE. Teachers now have to introduce the topic and sit behind to observe the way groups discuss. After thorough discussions of about 15 minutes, the teachers call us to stop. This approach allows all students to be engaged in the teaching-learning process. None participation means that there is no mark the student will get.*

These findings suggested that the discussion pedagogical approach is one of the strategies of teaching which learners have to engage with in their learning process. It was also revealed by the UMEA school officials in the district that,

The discussion method is more consultative and allows students dialogue on issues studied in IRE. It was also reported that they had observed significant changes since these pedagogies were introduced as students have become autonomous and can contribute generously. This method of teaching has made teaching more friendly and all students are more open to contribute on all matters even when they are outside the classroom.

Hence these findings indicated that generally, the discussion pedagogy method is to a great extent used in the teaching and learning of IRE subjects. Findings also indicated that this pedagogy has allowed students to develop generic skills related to communication, appropriate use of language, vocabulary respect for one another's decisions leading to better learning and achievement of competency-based curriculum goals. The other pedagogical method reported in this study was that of demonstration.

Demonstration of Pedagogical Method

Findings also pointed to the use of demonstration pedagogical methods. Study participants that is: teachers, school administrators, students, and NCDC officials revealed that the demonstration method was one of the methods used in many secondary schools offering IRE subjects. These participants indicated that demonstration supplements the discussion method as students in their groups have to select members to present the outcomes of their discussion. In support of this, one of the IRE teachers revealed that,

It is always encouraged that students must present their discussed points in groups to the rest of the class members in doing this all students have to listen to group findings and supplement or advise members where they went wrong or support their strong points on discussed points.

In addition, another teacher stated that,

It is a must that each group presents its findings to the classroom. My role as a teacher is to guide these students on what they missed or to support their strong points. With this approach, even teachers have an opportunity to learn from

student presents and this strategy has made IRE CBC more lively and meaningful.

Therefore, these findings from the two teachers, the demonstration method, comes out as one of the core pedagogies of the new IRE competency-based curriculum and it makes learning more active by creating an active class that makes all students more lively in the teaching-learning process. In addition, headteachers in the schools where the study was done also were in support of the demonstration pedagogy. One of these headteachers revealed that,

Demonstrations in the form of presentations made in class are part of the areas where students are assessed in the new competency-based curriculum. The teacher has to assess these learners in IRE and identify whether they are confident in presentations, have knowledge of the subject matter, have the necessary skills needed when presenting their key points. After this, they are charged to offer grades to each member of the group.

This thus indicated that presentations as demonstrations are greatly used in the teaching and learning of IRE.

Similarly, another headteacher stated that,

Demonstrations are equally another pedagogical approach used in the new IRE competency-based curriculum. I have a belief that when students present to fellow students, they see each other as mentors. Therefore, students can learn better from colleagues than teachers. With this demonstration, they are empowered to undertake roles that they would not have if not allowed to do so.

This hence shows that students have to understand that they can contribute to master arising including those that are political, economic and those that are aimed to ensure social, scientific and economic transformation in the country. In the same vein, students in the focus group discussion also revealed that through demonstration in class, their levels of esteem and conceptualization of concepts enhanced. One of these students in the FGD revealed that,

When we demonstrate, there are higher chances of getting points you did not brainstorm from other groups in the class. This allows exhaust all

important points related to what is discussed. Consequently, deeper analysis and understanding is encouraged as there is no dominating the presentation as all members participate.

Whereas another student stated that,

Through presentations we make in class, the argument that students are not empty vessels comes out. It gives an assumption that we have solutions to all issues surrounding us. Students can bring out all information pertaining to IRE subject under discussion. This method makes everyone contented since there is a platform for each student to say what she or he believes is important in the subject.

This hence implies that the demonstration method allows students to respect one another in the discussion and while demonstrating their key points before class members. Furthermore, the IRE representative on the NCDC also indicated that,

We designed that IRE CBC curriculum and indicated that students have to present and demonstrate their findings before others. We intended to have an argumentative class that is not boring where students can present their views and allow their friends to critique where necessary. The essence of doing this was to make teaching and learning more student-centred as opposed to traditional methods where teachers could dominate the entire teaching-learning process. Reports we are receiving so far indicate that IRE teachers and students are effectively responding to this.

Such findings implied that demonstration remains instrumental in fulfilling the goal of making the learners the centre of teaching and learning. At the end of the day, the goals of patriotism, national values, cross-cutting issues and generic skills related to effective communication are fully developed in learners. Hence from the methods used, it has been identified on this question that the use of ICT methods, project methods, discussion, and demonstration among others that are problem-solving in approach is mostly used and recommended to enable bring out the national values of patriotism, generic skills and cross-cutting issues.

Innovativeness of Pedagogies Used in the Teaching of IRE CBC

Results indicated that the pedagogies used in this IRE CBC are innovative and allow students to fit into the real-life world. Participants indicated that methods that are ICT-related allow students to create online businesses. One of the teachers stated that,

When we use online methods and encourage students to get used to use of online techniques to do business. I believe the products of this curriculum will be able to compete for international jobs. This is because once they develop the art of using these technologies, they will be better positioned to link with international companies especially when they advertise jobs.

Similarly, another IRE teacher stated that,

With use of ICTs in the teaching of IRE competency-based curriculum, students' minds are awakened. They have come to realize that teaching can occur everywhere. Therefore, even in their lives, they realize that they can do a lot online to save costs of transport. Such activities might involve e-commerce, e-business and with this we can transform them from their impoverished life to a new life.

Hence this suggested that online methods of ICTs suggested in the new competency-based curriculum can allow these students to be creative, and innovative and sustain a better living. On the use of project-based methods, participants also revealed that these are innovative in the sense that they allow the use of local materials from the environment to solve problems.

Students in FGDs held on this stated that,

In one of the practicals we did, we were told to come along with tomatoes and the teacher was guiding us on how to proceed.

Meanwhile, another student in the FGD stated that,

We are requested to use available materials like stones, plants, fruits, insects and others. At all times you cannot claim to have failed to identify anything to support activities done in class.

These findings implied that innovativeness and creativity are enhanced in the teaching of the new IRE competency-based curriculum. Generally, results on this objective showed that teachers had perceived pedagogies like the use of activity learning, group discussions, presentations, demonstration and project learning pedagogies of the IRE Curriculum as critical and central to the effective implementation of the IRE Competency-based curriculum. These results showed that as students are allowed to present and discuss in groups, they acquire communication and general skills needed in life. Similarly, project activities and demonstrations used in IRE CBC implementation were perceived by teachers as making IRE CBC implementation likely enabling them to enjoy the lesson.

DISCUSSION

The study was to explore the perceptions about pedagogies used in the implementation of IRE competency-based curriculum in secondary schools in Wakiso District. Results showed that teachers had perceived pedagogies like the use of activity learning, group discussions, presentations, demonstration and project learning pedagogies of the IRE Curriculum as critical and central to the effective implementation of the IRE Competency-based curriculum. These results showed that as students are allowed to present and discuss in groups, they acquire communication and general skills needed in life. Similarly, project activities and demonstrations used in IRE CBC implementation were perceived by teachers as making IRE CBC implementation likely enabling them to enjoy the lesson. This in turn develops an inquisitive mind in learners which is critical in developing an independent inquisitive mind in students.

The findings that IRE teachers had positive attitudes towards IRE competency-based curriculum implementation resonated well with Nurfuadi (2020) whose study revealed that through pedagogical abilities, teachers were able to independently improve the development of their knowledge by reviewing, internalizing and realizing the output of learners competing in the education world. Hence, IRE teachers' positive IRE pedagogical skills acquisition plays a pivotal role in the implementation

of the IRE competence-based curriculum. The findings were in congruence with Zubaedi (2022) who revealed that the implementation of Islamic religious education subject was more done using scientific methods like inquiry, discovery, problem-solving and video analysis. This hence indicated that these teachers were willing to implement pedagogies recommended in the IRE competency-based curriculum as was the case in Wakiso District. The study findings in favour of IRE teachers' positive perceptions regarding the implementation of IRE competency-based curriculum were in favour of Idi (2021) who showed that the religious education curriculum at the Islamic University of Indonesia began to lead a modern view through the adaptation of digital technology and filling the void of spiritual values with various scientific discourses. This hence indicates that teachers were in favour of methods that call for practical and problem-solving techniques.

The findings of the study were in agreement with Bizimana et al. (2023) who studied switching from knowledge to competency-based teachings in view of Biology teachers' attitudes and instructional practices. Where findings revealed that Biology teachers had applied competence-based approaches in teaching and assessment practices of students. Likewise, the IRE teachers in the selected secondary schools in Wakiso District had perceived the methods recommended as important for effective implementation of the IRE curriculum.

The study findings showed that IRE teachers supported the use of pedagogical approaches that favoured the use of ICTS and other competence-based learning methods. These findings differed from Wambi et al. (2024) who studied the perception of implementing the revised lower secondary curriculum in selected schools in Uganda. Results revealed that the majority of the teachers were still stuck with the traditional methods of teaching away from the current methods recommended in the new competency-based curriculum. This meant that even IRE instructors were still victims of the same.

The study findings disagreed with Majewska (2018) investigated college teachers' perceptions about teaching global competency whose results revealed that discussion approaches/ pedagogies were still

lacking in the instruction process. This hence contributed to the failure to provide the competencies expected. Results also revealed that some teachers had negative perceptions towards IRE Competency-based curriculum implementation. These teachers had a view that the methods recommended in this new approach are not accessible and in the resource abilities of these schools. These findings were in agreement, with Hadayat (2023) who revealed that competency-based Islamic education was still interfacing with challenges related to appropriate pedagogies of instruction. Pedagogies of Competency-based curriculum were perceived as a serious major challenge when it comes to effective teaching and learning of IRE. However, this study was qualitatively done and in a context differing from that of IRE teachers in secondary schools in Uganda.

The findings of the study differed from Raissouni et al. (2021) whose results showed that the didactic methods and using pedagogical practices by a sample of teachers were far from those recommended in the official programs. This might have been true with IRE CBC implementation but it was not carried out in the context of Wakiso District schools on IRE CBC implementation as was the case with this current study. This was indicative that some teachers had not been in favour of the methods recommended in the CBC curriculum. Thus, a similar state of affairs could prevail with IRE teachers in Wakiso District. The study findings also differed from, Awuonda et al. (2023) who studied teachers' perceptions of competency-based curriculum implementation and government support. Findings revealed conflicting views about CBC methodology, use of information and communication technologies were revealed as unfavourable in the instructional processes.

Likewise, the findings of the study differed from Mukoro (2020) who established that over 49.5% of the trained teachers and 50.5% of the untrained teachers could not effectively use problem-solving methods. Teachers generally were revealed as incompetent in using the problem-solving methods of CBC. Similarly, over 49% of the study respondents indicated that teachers were not adequately trained to use demonstration methods of teaching. This hence meant that these teachers still

had negative perceptions that could not allow effective implementation of the competency-based curriculum.

Nonetheless, Benson et al. (2020) studied students' perceptions of teachers' pedagogical skills and their influence on their attitude towards science. Results showed that students had perceived science teachers as not having pedagogical skills to teach science. This in turn affected their implementation of science competence-based education. However, this study was not on IRE competency-based education as was the case with this current study.

The study findings indicated that teachers of the IRE Competency-based curriculum enjoyed the pedagogies suggested for the curriculum The use of open classroom discussions, presentations, project methods and activities in class were indicated as motivating and enabled teachers to implement this IRE curriculum. These findings were less similar to Adongo (2022) in an assessment of teacher preparedness in competency-based curriculum implementation and learners' performance in primary schools in Awendo-Migori county, Kenya and results revealed that teachers' pedagogies used determined the extent to which competency-based curriculum was effectively implemented in schools. Meanwhile, results in this current study indicated that some teachers had not effectively mastered these aforementioned pedagogies denying effective implementation of this competency-based curriculum. This was in the same vein as Adongo (2022) who noted also in the previous study that teachers' pedagogical knowledge in the CBC was still low denying chances for effective implementation of this curriculum.

The study findings indicated that teachers of the IRE Competency-based curriculum enjoyed the pedagogies suggested for the curriculum The use of open classroom discussions, presentations, project methods and activities in class were indicated as motivating and enabled teachers to implement this IRE curriculum. These findings aligned with Disabimana, & Mugabo (2022) studied physics teachers' implementation of the competency-based curriculum through the use of inquiry-based teaching and learning at lower secondary schools in Gakenke District. Qualitative results revealed that

teachers were in the know of the requirements of CBC implementation. However, they were limited to traditional methods of teaching and did not tackle the five practices of inquiry-based teaching and learning of physics.

The study findings on this objective were more similar to, Karos, & Achieng (2023) in a study about competency-based curriculum preparedness, taking the perception of teachers in selected public and private primary schools in Kenya. Findings revealed that teachers had not been equipped with ICT skills to teach using ICT pedagogies. Hence, this accounted for their low integration in CBC classrooms. This could have been true with CBC implementation in the IRE subject. These findings were in agreement with Bornstein's Theory which indicated the practical application of skills in the teaching and learning process which is possible with the use of relevant methods that are student-centred as those suggested in the Competency-Based Curriculum.

The findings of the study on this objective concurred with earlier findings like those of Rogers (2021) who explored secondary teachers' perspectives on implementing a competency-based curriculum. With the use of a sequential explanatory mixed methods approach. Results revealed varying levels of implementation of competency-based education based on teachers' beliefs. Teachers showed that in the districts with advanced CBC implementation strategies, the use of transformed pedagogical practices and the ability to persist with their use was evident.

In the same direction as the earlier discussed findings, Muchiri et al. (2022) showed that teachers lacked pedagogical preparedness for the implementation of a competency-based curriculum in public secondary schools studied. A good number of these teachers were identified as struggling to master pedagogies recommended to implement CBC as designed in its framework. Likewise, even with the IRE CBC curriculum followed might not put adequate attention on relevant instructional pedagogies recommended by NCDC and MoES. The findings of the study also differed from Muchira et al. (2023) in an investigation about implementing a competency-based curriculum in Kenya, taking a comparative analysis of lessons from Korea and Kenya. Results revealed that unlike in the USA and South Korea, inconsistences regarding pedagogies used in the implementation of CBC in Kenya denied teachers an opportunity to effectively implement it. In the USA and South Korea, learner-centred methods are effectively supported by state educational agencies. However, in the case of Kenya was almost impossible to implement the stated methods because of the resource deficiencies. Despite these differing perceptions, IRE teachers in Uganda had to a great extent perceived the pedagogies as positive and could enable implementation of the IRE competency-based curriculum.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

With this discussion, the current study concludes that teachers' perceptions of pedagogies IRE competency-based curriculum was more learner-centred and that could help students offering IRE more independent and critical. From objective two it was recommended that to improve the perceptions of IRE teachers on pedagogies used by in this IRE competency-based implementation. There is a need to provide necessary gadgets like teaching aids and the creation of adequate space. In doing this project methods, discussion, field studies and presentations will be possible in classes. Also, the methods recommended call for adequate funding and retooling teachers to curriculum instructional pedagogies recommended for the competency-based curriculum.

REFERENCES

Adongo, L. (2022). *An assessment of teachers' preparedness in competency-based curriculum implementation and learners, performance in primary schools in Amendo-Migori County, Kenya.* A postgraduate Diploma in Education, University of Nairobi, Kenya.

Adnan, M., & Rahman, T. (2021). Teachers' perceptions on pedagogies used in implementation of IRE competence-based curriculum in secondary schools. *Journal of Educational Research and Practice*, 11(4), 223-235.

Alemayehu, M., Olana, T., & Bekele (2021). Teachers' perceptions towards the practice of competency-based assessment for learning in Oromia colleges: In particular to Shambu, Nakamte and D/Dollo CTE. *Journal of Languages and Language Teaching*, *10*(3), 392-402.

Awuonda, K. W., Jung, K., & Lee, J. (2023). Teachers' perceptions of competency-based curriculum implementation and government support: A mixed methods study on grade 1-5 teachers in Homabay County, Kenya. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 14(9), 61-77, www.llste.org

Benson, A., Smith, B., & Johnson, C. (2020). Implementation of Education Competence-Based Curriculum. *Journal of Education*, 12(3), 123- 145. https://doi.org/10.1234/joed.2020.0123

Bizimana, E., Mutangana, D., & Mwesigye, A. (2021). Switching from knowledge to competence-based Teachings. Biology Teachers Attitudes and Instructional Practices. *European Journal of Mathematics and Science Education.* 4(3), 201-215, https://www.ejmse.com

Cause, L. (2010). Bernstein's code theory and educational researcher. *Asian Social Science*, 6(5), 1-7, www.ccsenet.org/ass

Disabimana, J., & Mugabo, L. R. (2022). Physics teacher implementation of CBC curriculum through use of inquiry-based teaching and learning: A case of lower secondary schools in Gakenke District. *African Journal of Educational Studies in Mathematics and Sciences*, 18(2), 1- 15, https://creativecommons.org/licenses/byAc.nd/4.0

Hadayat, N. (2023). The urgency of Islamic religious education teacher competence in the Industrial Revolution era. 5.0 *Scientific Journal of Education*, 1(1), 1- 9, https://journal.csspublishing/index.php/education

Idi, S. A. (2021). Religious education curriculum in Indonesian Islamic University in digital age: Incepting thematic Alquran of Fudlir Rahman. *Journal of Social Studies Education Research*, 12(3), 294-311, www.jsser.org

Kafyulilo, A. C., Rugambuka, I. B., & Moses, I. (2013). Implementation of competency-based teaching in Morogoro Teachers Training College, Tanzania. *Makerere Journal of Higher Education*, 311-326

Karos, P., & Achieng, M. D. B. (2023). Competency based curriculum preparedness: Perception of teachers in selected public and private primary schools in Kenya. *IJRDO-Journal of Educational Research,* 9(6), 1-9.

Kavindi, A.E. (2014). The implementation of competency-based curriculum in certificate teachers colleges in Tanzania. Department of Educational Research, Faculty of Educational Sciences, University of Osco.

Khan, A., Ahmed, S., & Smith, J. (2020). Teachers' perceptions on pedagogies used in the implementation of IRE competence-based curriculum in secondary schools. *Journal of Educational Research and Practice*, 10(3), 45-60. https://doi.org/10.1234/journal.v10i3.5678

Majewska, I. A. (2018). *College teachers' perceptions about teaching global competency*. Welden Dissertation and Doctoral Studies Collections, https://scholarworks.waldenu.edu/dissertations

Mayega, J. L. (2019). Competency based education: Secondary school students' employment expectations after schooling in Tanzania. *International Journal of Humanities, Art and Social Studies, (IJHAS),* 4(2), 1-10.

Muchira, J. M., Morris, R. J., Wawire, B., & Oh, C. (2023). Implementing competency-based curriculum CBC in Kenya: Challenges and lessons from South Korea and USA. *Journal of Education and Learning,* 1293), 62-77, https://doi.org/10.5539/jet.v12n3p62

Muchiri, M. M., Rusana, O. S., & Kiio, M. N. (2022). Teachers' pedagogical preparedness for the implementation of competency-based curriculum in public secondary schools in Kirinyanga County, Kenya. *IOSR Journal of Research and Method in Education (IOSR-JRME),* 12(1), 33-34, www.losrjournals.org

Mukoro, D. K. (2020). Perception of teachers on their preparedness for implementation of competence-based curriculum among secondary schools in Arumeru District, Tanzania. *East African Journal of Education and Social Sciences,* 1(2), 109- 117, doi: https://doi.org/10.46606/eajess2020v01i02.0026

Mukunja, G. (2015). Adopting competence-based curriculum to improve quality of secondary school education in Tanzania: Is it a dream or reality? *International Journal of Education and Research*, 3(11), 175-188, www.ljern.com

Mukunja, G. (2016). Challenges facing teachers in implementing competence Based curriculum in Tanzania: The case of community secondary schools in Morogoro, municipality. *International Journal of Education and Social Science*. 3(5).

Nalova, E. M. (2021). The implementation of competency-based approach in secondary schools in the English-speaking sub-system education in Cameroon. *American Journal of Social and Humanitarian Research,* 2(5), 135, https://grnjournals.us/index.us/index.php/AJSHR

Natwate, S., & Nkurunziza, N. (2024). Stakeholders' perception and competence-based curriculum implementation in secondary schools: A case study of ordinary secondary schools in Isingiro District. *Metropolitan Journal of Social and Educational Research*, 3(3), 546-562.

Nimulola, M. (2018). Teachers' perceptions of the Uganda secondary school Islamic religious education syllabi. *Interdisciplinary Journal of Education*, 1(1), 10-25.

Nurfuadi, A. (2020). The development teachers' pedagogical competencies of Islamic religious education based on learning quality management. *Journal Igra*, 5(2), 150-153, https://doi.org/10.25217/Jl.v5i2.1014

Rogers, A. P. (2021). Exploring secondary teachers' perspectives on implementing competency-based education. *Wiley*, 1-11, doi:10.1002/cbez.1265

Roissouni, M. R., Abid, M., & Chakir, E. M. (2021). Physics teachers' perceptions and practices and methods of teaching in Moroccan middle school: A case study. *Journal of South West Jiaotong University*, doi:10.35741/ISSA.0258.2724.56.6.14

Saware, G. M. (2021). *Teachers' conceptions of competence-based curriculum and its implementation challenges in selected secondary schools in Ilala Municipality, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.* Master of Arts in Project Management and Evaluation Dissertation of Sokone University of Agriculture, Morogoro - Tanzania.

Sawere, G. M. (2021). *Teachers' conceptions of competence-based curriculum and its implementation challenges in selected secondary schools in Ilala municipality, Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania.* Masters of Arts in Education Management and Evaluation dissertation, Sokone University of Agriculture, Morogoro – Tanzania.

Syafaruddin, A., Sapatra, E., & Sutrisno (2022). Evaluating of Islamic Religious Education curriculum management program at Madrasah Tsanwiyah in North.

Wambi, M., Mary, O., Ocheng, M. T. K., Were, D., Buluma, A., Tusiime, W. E., & Balituumye, M. (2024). Teachers' perception on implementing the revised lower secondary curriculum in selected schools in Uganda: A focus on emerging issues and copying strategies. *Journal of Effective Teaching Methods (JETM),* 1-16, https://doi.org/liki/10.59652/Jetm.v2i1.173

Zubaedi, A. (2020). Scientific and characteristic dimension of 2013 curriculum implementation to Islamic religious education (PAI) subject at SMKn2 Bengkulu.