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Parental Involvement in Supporting Competency-Based Curriculum Implementation: Evidence from Public and Private Junior Schools in Upper Eastern Kenya

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ABSTRACT

The rollout of the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) in Kenya marks a transformative shift toward learner-centered pedagogy and continuous assessment. However, successful implementation relies heavily on extending learning beyond the classroom into home environments. Despite national policy mandates, significant variations persist in how parents engage with school activities, creating disparities in curriculum execution across public and private Junior Schools. This study evaluated parental involvement in supporting CBC implementation in public and private Junior Schools in the Upper Eastern Region of Kenya (Isiolo, Marsabit, Meru, and Tharaka-Nithi counties) and tested whether significant differences exist between school categories. Utilizing a comparative cross-sectional survey design within a descriptive framework, the study targeted 5,116 education stakeholders. A sample of 403 respondents comprising headteachers, teachers, Parents Association (PA) representatives, and County Quality Assurance and Standards Officers (CQASOs) were selected via stratified simple random and purposive sampling. Data were collected using structured questionnaires and key informant interview guides. Response rate validation yielded $n = 369$ (91.6%), with a sub-sample of $N = 264$ educators analyzed for comparative classroom dynamics. Parametric diagnostic tests (normality, collinearity, homoscedasticity, and residual independence) were verified. Analysis utilized descriptive statistics, Independent Samples t -tests, Chi-square (χ^2) tests of independence, and thematic analysis. School-parent communication ($M = 4.25$ headteachers; $M = 4.02$ teachers) and routine homework supervision ($M = 4.18$ headteachers; $M = 3.87$ teachers) emerged as the highest-rated dimensions of parental engagement. Conversely, assistance with project-based learning received the lowest ratings ($M = 3.77$ headteachers; $M = 3.51$ teachers), constrained by limited parental pedagogical knowledge, financial burdens, and time demands. Inferential testing rejected the null hypothesis (H_{01}), demonstrating that parental involvement was significantly higher in private Junior Schools ($M = 4.12$, $SD = 0.54$) than in public Junior Schools ($M = 3.74$, $SD = 0.72$), $t(262) = 4.312$, $p < .001$. Furthermore, administrative support mechanisms were significantly stronger in private schools ($\chi^2 = 14.962$, $p = .001$). The findings highlight a structural divide where market-driven accountability in private institutions fosters stronger parental collaboration and administrative supervision compared to public schools. To ensure educational equity, the Ministry of Education and Teachers Service Commission should formalize structured parental engagement protocols, offer community orientation workshops demystifying CBC assessment rubrics, and strengthen instructional leadership mentoring in public Junior Schools.

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

The successful implementation of the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) is central to Kenya's education reform, requiring systematic engagement of stakeholders including parents and communities to realize intended learning outcomes (Ministry of Education, 2017; Tan, 2021). Parental and community involvement fosters a supportive learning culture, reinforces accountability, and enhances engagement in school activities essential for competency acquisition (Katel & Katel, 2024). In high-performing global systems, sustained engagement of parents is recognized as a core pillar of successful curriculum enactment (Tan, 2021).

In Kenya, the CBC model explicitly relies on parental involvement to support continuous assessment, home-

based learning activities, and the practical application of competencies beyond the classroom (Ministry of Education, 2017). Despite its importance, implementation across Kenyan schools exhibits considerable variation, with many institutions struggling with low parental engagement (Wambua & Maree, 2021). In the Upper Eastern Region of Kenya, comprising counties such as Isiolo, Marsabit, Meru, and Tharaka-Nithi, variable levels of parental involvement shape the institutional capacity of schools to deliver learner-centered education (Micheni, 2021). Counties like Isiolo and Marsabit continue to struggle with issues like remoteness, population mobility, and low parental involvement in education, whereas counties like Meru and Tharaka-Nithi have comparatively higher concentrations of private schools with differing stakeholder dynamics (Gichuhi, 2021). Variations in

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parental support across public and private schools can lead to unequal implementation outcomes, highlighting the need for a comparative study on how parental involvement influences CBC effectiveness (Katel & Katel, 2024).

Most existing research focuses on national or urban contexts, often neglecting comparative analyses of parental involvement across diverse school types in transitional phases like Junior School (Kim *et al.*, 2020; Sager & Gofen, 2022). Against this background, the present study sought to evaluate parental involvement in supporting CBC implementation in public and private junior schools in the Upper Eastern Region of Kenya (Ministry of Education, 2020).

Statement of the Problem

The CBC represents a transformative shift in Kenya's education system, requiring strong stakeholder engagement to equip learners with core competencies (Ministry of Education, 2017). However, its implementation at the Junior School level is uneven, with public and private schools facing differing stakeholder engagement levels and parental support mechanisms (Ogembo, 2025). These disparities raise concerns about educational equity, as learners in under-supported home environments may not fully benefit from the curriculum's intended outcomes (Wambua & Maree, 2021). Despite national rollout strategies, there is limited empirical evidence comparing how parental involvement influences CBC implementation between public and private junior schools in the Upper Eastern Region of Kenya (Gichuhi, 2021). It is thus unclear how differences in parental support affect curriculum delivery and learner outcomes across these school types (Katel & Katel, 2024). Therefore, there was a need for a comparative study to evaluate parental involvement in supporting CBC implementation in public and private junior schools in Upper Eastern Region Kenya.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to compare parental involvement in supporting Competency-Based Curriculum implementation between public and private junior schools in Upper Eastern Region Kenya.

Research Objective

To evaluate parental involvement in supporting CBC implementation in public and private Junior Schools in upper Eastern region of Kenya.

Research Hypothesis

H₀: There is no statistically significant difference in parental involvement in supporting CBC implementation between public and private Junior Schools in upper Eastern region of Kenya.

Significance of the Study

Policy makers and the Ministry of Education (MoE)

can utilize the evidence to understand how parental involvement shapes curriculum enactment and design targeted interventions to address engagement disparities (Ministry of Education, 2018). Parental and community stakeholders can recognize their critical role in supporting learning, promoting stronger collaboration between schools and homes (Katel & Katel, 2024). Researchers and academic institutions can draw on this empirical evidence to address gaps in literature regarding parental engagement during curriculum reform in socio-culturally diverse contexts (Ogembo, 2025).

Scope of the Study

The study was conducted in counties within the Upper Eastern Region of Kenya encompassing Isiolo, Marsabit, Meru, and Tharaka-Nithi, focusing specifically on parental involvement dynamics across public and private junior schools (Micheni, 2021). The study was delimited to the Junior School level and involved head teachers, teachers, Parents Association representatives, and CQASOs to capture comprehensive insights on parental engagement in curriculum implementation (Ministry of Education, 2020).

Limitations of the Study

There is a risk that parents and school administrators may provide socially desirable responses regarding the level of parental involvement in CBC activities (Gitonga, 2022). To mitigate this, participants were assured of confidentiality and anonymity, and data was triangulated across multiple respondent categories (Gitonga, 2022). Unique community dynamics across individual schools may also influence findings, which was addressed by using open-ended questions and piloting instruments in similar schools outside the study area (Wambua & Maree, 2021).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Competence-Based Curriculum Implementation

Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) prioritizes learner-centered pedagogy, core competencies, and continuous formative assessment over traditional, time-bound syllabus coverage (Mugambi & Chepkonga, 2022; OECD, 2019). Globally, this shift aligns education with 21st century workforce needs, though implementation faces persistent hurdles in assessment standardization, teacher preparedness, and resource allocation (OECD, 2019; World Bank, 2022). In Africa, and specifically in Kenya CBC replaced the 8-4-4 system in 2017, reforms aim to foster holistic, skill-oriented learning, requiring the alignment of global curriculum frameworks with local socio-cultural contexts (Global Partnership for Education, 2021; KICD, 2017; Ministry of Education Kenya, 2023; World Bank, 2022).

However, systemic challenges such as inadequate infrastructure, teacher overload from portfolio assessments, and public-private school disparities continue to constrain execution (UNESCO, 2020; World Bank, 2022). Successfully adapting these systemic

reforms requires localizing policy frameworks to fit community realities (Global Partnership for Education, 2021). Crucially, successful CBC delivery relies heavily on extending learning into the home (Cherui & Kipkenei, 2025). The curriculum positions parents as vital co-educators, yet uneven parental engagement driven by limited awareness and financial demands of project-based tasks remains a major barrier to effective implementation (Mugambi & Chepkonga, 2022; World Bank, 2022).

Empirical Literature on Parental Involvement and CBC Implementation

Frequency of Parent-Teacher Meetings Attendance

Regular attendance at parent-teacher meetings serves as a primary structural mechanism for home-school collaboration (Kumar & Singh, 2026). Globally, structured school-home partnerships enhance student motivation, engagement, and retention (Castro *et al.*, 2015). Regionally, primary school data from Uganda and Tanzania show that consistent meeting participation clarifies curriculum expectations and improves academic performance (Mhando & Mboya, 2018; Nabukeera & Ssempebwa, 2020). In Kenya, studies in Kiambu, Murang'a, and Tharaka Nithi counties demonstrate that parental attendance at school meetings directly enhances learner discipline, task completion, and competency acquisition (Muthoni & Kimathi, 2023; Nyaga & Maina, 2022; Wambiri, 2020). Nevertheless, attendance remains inconsistent, particularly in low-income and rural settings where economic pressures, low literacy levels, and poor communication channels limit participation (Mfum-Mensah, 2017; Oketch & Rolleston, 2013).

Level of Homework Supervision at Home

Homework supervision shifts parents from passive observers to active facilitators of academic progress (Cherui & Kipkenei, 2025; Kumar & Singh, 2026). Evidence from North American and European meta-analyses confirms that home-based academic supervision and high parental expectations yield stronger positive impacts on student outcomes than school-based activities (Ates, 2021; Mocho *et al.*, 2025). In East Africa, structured supervision significantly improves retention and academic performance in lower primary grades (Oketch & Rolleston, 2013). Studies across Kiambu, Meru, and Tharaka Nithi counties in Kenya reveal that active homework monitoring directly boosts learner engagement in CBC tasks (Ngunjiri *et al.*, 2024; Wambiri, 2020). However, in low-resource environments, this support is constrained by low parental literacy and limited understanding of CBC's formative assessment demands (Castro *et al.*, 2015; Ngunjiri *et al.*, 2024).

Participation in School Academic Activities

Active parental participation in school academic activities such as exhibitions, school governance, and educational forums fosters strong alignment between school targets and home environments (Castro *et al.*, 2015; Nxumalo

& Mncube, 2019). Research in South Africa highlights that involving parents in school governance structures improves learner discipline and school-wide engagement (Nxumalo & Mncube, 2019). In Kenya, engagement in academic events helps parents better understand curriculum expectations, directly enhancing learning outcomes (Nyaga & Maina, 2022). However, participation is frequently impeded by a lack of structured school-led parental training programs and poorly institutionalized engagement frameworks (Muthoni & Kimathi, 2023; Uwineza & Mukamana, 2021).

Support for Learner Projects and CBC Tasks

The practical, experiential, and project-based nature of CBC requires substantial parental support through the provision of learning materials and guidance at home (Cherui & Kipkenei, 2025). Studies in Rwanda confirm that parental involvement in practical tasks directly increases project completion rates and learner responsibility (Uwineza & Mukamana, 2021). Evidence from Nairobi and Murang'a counties in Kenya shows that parental backing in project-based activities elevates competency acquisition (Karanja *et al.*, 2023; Nyaga & Maina, 2022). However, this dimension exposes severe socioeconomic disparities: higher-income households comfortably support digital and material-intensive tasks, whereas lower-income families struggle with the financial burden, leading to equity concerns (Karanja *et al.*, 2023; World Bank, 2022).

Communication Between Parents and Teachers

Transparent, reciprocal communication between teachers and parents ensures continuity in learner development (Castro *et al.*, 2015). Studies across OECD countries demonstrate that formalized communication channels significantly bolster student self-regulation and motivation (Castro *et al.*, 2015). Conversely, evidence from South Africa, Tanzania, and Kenyan counties (such as Murang'a and Tharaka Nithi) reveals that weak communication systems create role ambiguity (Mhando & Mboya, 2018; Muthoni & Kimathi, 2023; Nyaga & Maina, 2022; Nxumalo & Mncube, 2019). When schools fail to clearly communicate performance expectations, parents struggle to provide pedagogically relevant support at home (Mhando & Mboya, 2018; Nxumalo & Mncube, 2019).

Theoretical Framework

Systems Theory

Bertalanffy's (1968) Systems Theory models an organization as a web of interdependent subsystems working toward a unified goal. In this study, the school operates as a system where effective CBC implementation depends on seamless coordination among its components (Bertalanffy, 1968). Parental involvement functions as the essential external subsystem that bridges classroom instruction with home reinforcement (Bertalanffy, 1968). From a systems perspective, when parental support aligns harmoniously with school activities, CBC delivery is

optimized; conversely, weak parental engagement creates systemic friction that hinders curriculum enactment (Bertalanffy, 1968).

Fullan's Theory of Educational Change

Fullan's (2007, 2016) Theory of Educational Change explains that reform success depends on implementation coherence and stakeholder engagement rather than policy design alone. In this framework, parental involvement represents critical stakeholder collaboration and home-school partnership (Fullan, 2007, 2016). Fullan posits that educational changes are sustained when external stakeholders understand and actively support reform goals (Fullan, 2007, 2016). Applied to this study, variations in CBC implementation across schools are heavily driven by the strength of parental engagement in reinforcing learning outside the classroom (Fullan, 2007, 2016).

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework illustrates the hypothesized relationship between parental involvement (the independent variable) and CBC implementation status (the dependent variable), mediated by institutional and environmental conditions (intervening variables).

The independent variable in this study is parental involvement, which is operationalized through five distinct, measurable dimensions: attendance frequency at parent-teacher meetings, level of homework supervision, participation in school academic activities, material and financial support for CBC projects, and the quality of parent-teacher communication. Each of these dimensions represents a critical pathway through which home environments directly influence school-based learning.

Regular meeting attendance and active communication establish instructional alignment between home and school, ensuring parents understand curriculum goals. Concurrently, consistent homework supervision and hands-on support for practical CBC tasks ensure that experiential learning initiated in the classroom is effectively reinforced at home.

The dependent variable, CBC implementation status, reflects the degree to which the curriculum goals are realized within the learning environment. This is evaluated using indicators such as learner acquisition of core competencies, timely completion and quality of practical projects, consistency in continuous formative assessment portfolio documentation, and overall learner engagement and retention rates. Higher levels of structured, high-quality parental engagement across all five independent dimensions are expected to yield higher levels of curriculum execution and learner achievement. The relationship between parental involvement and CBC implementation status is mediated by intervening variables. These factors include school classification (public versus private), institutional leadership and communication infrastructure, and the socioeconomic background of the local community. For instance, private school settings or schools with robust institutional leadership may possess stronger formal channels that facilitate parent communication and active involvement, thereby amplifying the positive effect on curriculum execution. Conversely, lower socioeconomic environments may constrain a parent's capacity to provide material support for practical projects, even when willingness to participate is high. Accounting for these intervening factors helps isolate the true effect of parental involvement on CBC.

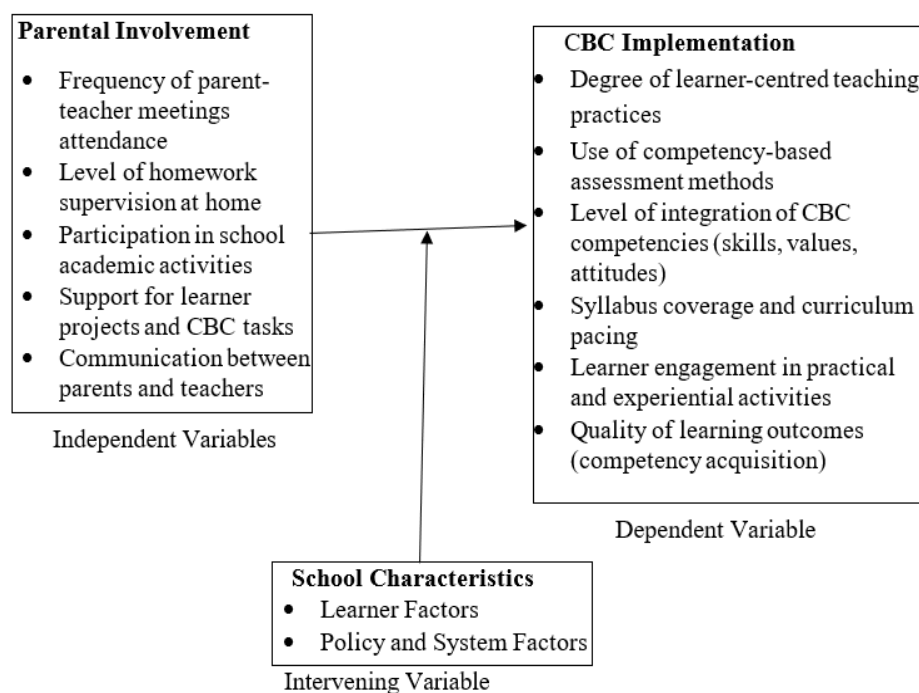


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Source: Author's conceptualization (2026)

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study Location

The study was conducted in the Upper Eastern Region of Kenya, which comprises four counties: Isiolo, Marsabit, Meru, and Tharaka-Nithi. The region presents significant socio-cultural, economic, and educational diversity. While Meru and Tharaka-Nithi counties possess relatively better educational infrastructure and a higher density of private schools, Isiolo and Marsabit face challenges tied to remoteness, nomadic population mobility, and historically lower parental engagement. These contrasting contextual features provided a suitable comparative setting for examining how institutional determinants such as teacher preparedness, instructional resources, administrative support, and parental involvement affect Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) implementation across public and private junior schools.

Research Design

The study adopted a comparative cross-sectional survey design within a descriptive framework. This design allowed data collection across different junior school categories at a single point in time to compare institutional determinants and CBC implementation status between public and private schools. The design enabled the concurrent application of descriptive and inferential statistical methods to evaluate differences and

associations among the study variables.

Study Population

The study targeted a population of 5,116 subjects across public and private junior schools in the four counties. This target population comprised 1,664 head teachers, 1,785 teachers, 1,664 Parents Association (PA) representatives, and 3 County Quality Assurance and Standards Officers (CQASOs).

Sample Size and Sampling Procedure

The sample size (n) was calculated using the Yamane (1967) formula:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + Ne^2}$$

Where:

n = Sample size

N = Target population (5,116)

e = Precision level / Error term (0.05)

Substituting the target population into the formula yields:

$$n = \frac{5,116}{1 + 5,116(0.05)^2} = \frac{5,116}{1 + 5,116(0.0025)} = \frac{5,116}{13.79} = 399.99 \approx 400$$

To account for non-response and non-retrieval attrition, the sample size was increased slightly to 403 respondents. The sample distribution is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Distribution of Target Population and Sample Size

Category	Target Population (N)	Sample Size (n)	Sampling Method
Head Teachers	1,664	130	Simple Random Sampling
Teachers	1,785	140	Simple Random Sampling
Parents Association Representatives	1,664	130	Simple Random Sampling
CQASOs	3	3	Purposive Sampling
Total	5,116	403	—

Source: Field Survey Data (2026)

Sampling within strata was executed using a comprehensive sampling frame of all registered public and private junior schools across the four counties, which was obtained directly from the respective county education offices. Simple random sampling, stratified by county, was employed to select the participating schools. Within each selected institution, specific sampling strategies were applied based on the target respondent category: one head teacher was automatically included due to their administrative oversight role, while teachers were drawn via simple random sampling from established staff lists. Additionally, one Parents Association (PA) representative was selected per school to capture critical home-school collaboration perspectives. In contrast, due to their limited population size and strategic institutional knowledge, all three County Quality Assurance and Standards Officers (CQASOs) were purposively selected to serve as key informants.

Research Instruments

Data collection utilized questionnaires for quantitative data and structured interview guides for qualitative data.

Questionnaires

Structured and semi-structured questionnaires were administered to head teachers, teachers, and Parents Association (PA) representatives to collect quantitative and qualitative data. The questionnaires incorporated background demographics, Likert-scale items, and targeted open-ended questions organized into seven functional sections. Section A gathered background and demographic characteristics of the respondents. Section B evaluated perceptions of teacher readiness, focusing on training, pedagogical skills, and assessment design. Section C assessed the availability, adequacy, and utilization of instructional resources. Section D examined administrative support and school leadership

practices. Section E captured the extent of parental and community involvement, including attendance at meetings, homework supervision, support for learner projects, and parent-teacher communication. Section F measured the implementation level of the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC), concentrating on learner-centred methods, continuous assessment, portfolio documentation, and syllabus coverage. Finally, Section G identified key implementation challenges, such as resource constraints, training gaps, and large class sizes.

Interview Guide

An interview guide was administered to the County Quality Assurance and Standards Officers (CQASOs) to collect qualitative data across eight structured thematic sections. The instrument systematically examined the respondents' background and curriculum oversight experience, their perspectives on teachers' knowledge, pedagogical competencies, and professional development adequacy, as well as the availability, provision, and management of instructional resources. Additionally, the guide explored school leadership practices regarding supervision and institutional monitoring, alongside parental and community engagement dynamics within the region. Finally, the tool captured practical classroom instructional and assessment realities, evaluated existing implementation bottlenecks and local coping mechanisms, and solicited strategic and policy recommendations aimed at enhancing Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) delivery.

Pilot Study

A pilot study was conducted in Kitui County (Lower

Eastern Region). Kitui County was selected because it exhibits socio-economic and educational conditions comparable to the Upper Eastern counties without risking sample contamination. The pilot sample comprised 10% of the target sample size (41 respondents: 13 head teachers, 14 teachers, 13 PA representatives, and 1 CQASO).

Validity

To establish the accuracy and appropriateness of the data collection tools, content, construct, and face validity were thoroughly evaluated. Content validity was ensured by systematically aligning the questionnaire and interview items with the study objectives and theoretical constructs, after which the instruments were subjected to expert review by specialists in Educational Management and research at Chuka University to refine item clarity and relevance. Construct validity was operationalized by structuring the instrument items into distinct, logical sub-scales grounded in Systems Theory and Fullan's Theory of Educational Change. Finally, face validity was evaluated during the pilot study by obtaining direct feedback from participants regarding the overall layout, readability, and potential item ambiguity, allowing for final adjustments prior to main data collection.

Reliability

Internal consistency reliability was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha coefficient (α) via SPSS Version 29. All sub-scales exceeded the standard academic threshold of 0.70 (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994), as detailed in Table 2.

Table 2: Reliability Statistics for the Research Instruments

Instrument	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha (α)	Standardized Alpha	Reliability Status
Head Teachers' Questionnaire	36	0.902	0.893	Excellent
Teachers' Questionnaire	36	0.902	0.893	Excellent
Parents Association Questionnaire	24	0.895	0.889	Good / High

Source: Pilot Study Data (2026)

Data Collection Procedure

Research authorization permits were secured from the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) and respective County Directors of Education prior to field deployment. Permission was obtained from institutional head teachers. Questionnaires were self-administered with adequate completion time provided. Key informant interviews with CQASOs were pre-scheduled, audio-recorded (with participant consent), and supplemented with field notes.

Data Analysis

Quantitative data were coded, entered, and analysed using statistical software. Descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations) were

calculated for all variables. Inferential statistical tests included Chi-Square (χ^2) tests of independence to evaluate differences across school categories (public vs. private), alongside multiple linear regression analysis to determine the joint predictive effect of institutional determinants on CBC implementation. Qualitative data were transcribed and analyzed using thematic analysis, with narrative findings used to triangulate and contextualize quantitative results.

Ethical Considerations

The study strictly adhered to established ethical principles to protect participants and maintain research integrity. Formal research permits and institutional authorizations were secured from national, county, and local school

management authorities prior to field entry. Informed consent was systematically obtained from all participants after fully disclosing the study's scope, objectives, and their right to voluntary participation or withdrawal at any stage without penalty. To guarantee anonymity and confidentiality, personal identifying details were removed from response sheets, and collected data were stored securely in encrypted digital files accessible only for academic purposes. Finally, instrument administration was strategically scheduled in coordination with school leadership to ensure minimal disruption to regular instructional time and classroom schedules.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Response Rate

Out of the target sample of $n = 403$ respondents (130 headteachers, 140 teachers, 130 PA representatives, and

3 CQASOs), a total of 369 instruments were successfully retrieved and validated, yielding an overall response rate of 91.6%. For the comparative quantitative analysis of instructional and classroom dynamics (Section 4.4 and 4.5), a sub-sample of $N = 264$ respondents consisting of 128 headteachers (98.5% response rate) and 136 teachers (97.1% response rate) was analyzed. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), a response rate above 70% is excellent for social science research and sufficient for empirical analysis and statistical generalization.

Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents Gender

Female respondents constituted a substantial proportion of teachers and formed the majority among Parents' Association representatives. This pattern reflects the gendered nature of educational leadership and parental

Table 3: Gender Distribution of Respondents

Respondent	Male n (%)	Female n (%)	Total
Headteachers	81 (63.3)	47 (36.7)	128
Teachers	73 (53.7)	63 (46.3)	136
PA Chairpersons	45 (42.9)	60 (57.1)	105
Total	199 (54.0)	170 (46.0)	369

involvement commonly observed in many school contexts, where leadership positions are more frequently occupied by men, while women tend to be more actively engaged in school-family partnerships.

Age

Parents' Association representatives were also largely middle-aged, with the majority falling within the 36–45 years' age group.

Table 4: Age Distribution of Respondents

Age Category (Years)	Headteachers n (%)	Teachers n (%)	PA Chairpersons n (%)	Total
Below 25	0 (0)	28 (19.9)	8 (7.6)	36
26–35	34 (26.6)	69 (50.7)	39 (37.1)	142
36–45	36 (28.9)	24 (17.6)	45 (42.9)	106
46–55	47 (36.7)	11 (8.1)	8 (7.6)	66
Above 55	10 (7.8)	4 (2.9)	5 (4.8)	19
Total	128 (100.0)	136 (100.0)	105 (100.0)	369

Highest Level of Education

The comparatively higher proportion of PA representatives with bachelor's degrees and other professional qualifications indicates that parents participating in school governance also possessed

education as required by the Education Act 2012 / Basic Education Act 2013 (Government of Kenya, 2013). Such a profile is likely to enhance meaningful participation in school management and support informed engagement with curriculum implementation issues.

Table 5: Highest Level of Education of Respondents

Highest Level of Education	Headteachers n (%)	Teachers n (%)	PA Chairpersons n (%)
Diploma	39 (30.5)	38 (27.9)	20 (19.1)
Bachelor's Degree	79 (61.7)	94 (69.1)	39 (37.1)
Master's Degree	7 (5.5)	4 (2.9)	11 (10.5)
Other Qualifications	3 (2.3)	–	35 (33.3)
Total	128 (100.0)	136 (100.0)	105 (100.0)

Experience of Respondents in Their Current Roles

Most PA chairpersons had served for 5–10 years, indicating sustained involvement in school governance

and parental engagement. Such experience is likely to enhance their understanding of school operations and curriculum-related initiatives.

Table 6: Respondents Experience in Their Current Roles

Years of Experience	Headteachers n (%)	Teachers n (%)	PA Chairpersons n (%)
Less than 5 years	39 (30.5)	92 (67.6)	37 (35.2)
5–10 years	41 (32.0)	30 (22.1)	58 (55.2)
11–15 years	32 (25.0)	10 (7.4)	7 (6.7)
Above 15 years	16 (12.5)	4 (2.9)	3 (2.9)
Total	128 (100.0)	136 (100.0)	105 (100.0)

School Type

The absence of PA chairpersons from private schools implies that comparisons involving parental governance

structures should be interpreted cautiously and confined to the public-school context.

Table 7: School Type of Respondents

School Type	Headteachers n (%)	Teachers n (%)	PA Chairpersons n (%)
Public	79 (61.7)	91 (66.9)	105 (100)
Private	49 (38.3)	45 (33.1)	-

Diagnostic Tests for Statistical Analysis (Parental Involvement Excerpts)

Before conducting inferential statistical procedures, diagnostic tests were performed to evaluate whether the parental involvement data satisfied the key assumptions underlying parametric analyses. The test for normality yielded a Kolmogorov-Smirnov statistic of 0.038 ($p = 0.200$) and a Shapiro-Wilk statistic of 0.996 ($p = 0.356$). Because both probability values exceeded the standard threshold of .05, the data for parental involvement were confirmed to be approximately normally distributed. Multicollinearity was evaluated using tolerance and Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) metrics, where parental involvement recorded a tolerance value of 0.782 and a VIF of 1.279. These metrics fall well within acceptable parametric limits (tolerance > 0.20 and $VIF < 5.0$), demonstrating the absence of multicollinearity between parental involvement and the other predictor variables. To assess autocorrelation, the Durbin-Watson statistic was calculated for the regression model evaluating parental involvement against CBC implementation. The resulting value of 1.963, being very close to the optimal benchmark of 2.0, confirmed the independence of residual errors and the absence of autocorrelation. Finally, the assumption of homoscedasticity was verified using the Breusch-Pagan test. Parental involvement produced a non-significant statistic of $\chi^2 = 1.752$ ($p = 0.186$), confirming that the error variance remained constant

across all predicted levels. Collectively, these diagnostic results establish that the parental involvement construct meets all parametric assumptions, validating its suitability for subsequent multiple linear regression and hypothesis testing.

Parental Involvement in Supporting CBC Implementation

The study sought to examine the extent of parental involvement in supporting the implementation of the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) in public and private Junior Schools in the Upper Eastern Region of Kenya. Recognizing that parental engagement is a fundamental pillar of the CBC framework, the study assessed respondents' perceptions across five main indicators: participation in school academic activities, support for learners' homework and assignments, assistance in project-based learning, regular communication between schools and parents, and the contribution of the wider community to CBC implementation.

Descriptive statistics summarizing the perceptions of headteachers ($N = 128$) and teachers ($N = 136$) were computed using frequency distributions, percentages, means (M), and standard deviations (SD) derived from a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). The quantitative results are presented in Table 10.

Table 8: Headteachers' and Teachers' Perceptions of Parental Involvement in Supporting CBC Implementation

Indicator / Statement	Respondent Category	N	SD (%)	D (%)	N (%)	A (%)	SA (%)	Mean (M)	SD
Academic Activities	Headteachers	128	1.6	3.9	15.6	47.7	31.2	4.03	0.85
Parents participate in school academic activities	Teachers	136	3.7	8.1	18.4	44.1	25.7	3.80	1.03
Homework & Assignments	Headteachers	128	0.8	3.1	10.9	47.7	37.5	4.18	0.80
Parents support learners with homework/ assignments	Teachers	136	2.9	7.4	16.9	45.6	27.2	3.87	0.99

Project-Based Learning	Headteachers	128	3.1	8.6	21.1	42.2	25.0	3.77	0.99
Parents assist learners in project-based learning	Teachers	136	5.9	12.5	24.3	39.0	18.3	3.51	1.11
School-Parent Communication	Headteachers	128	0.8	1.6	10.2	46.9	40.6	4.25	0.73
Regular communication between school and parents	Teachers	136	2.2	4.4	14.7	47.1	31.6	4.02	0.91
Community Involvement	Headteachers	128	2.3	5.5	18.0	46.1	28.1	3.92	0.91
Community involvement supports CBC implementation	Teachers	136	4.4	9.6	22.8	42.6	20.6	3.66	1.05

Note. $N = 264$ (128 Headteachers, 136 Teachers). Likert scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree (SD), 2 = Disagree (D), 3 = Neutral (N), 4 = Agree (A), 5 = Strongly Agree (SA).

Complementing the survey data, qualitative insights were gathered through key informant interviews with Curriculum Quality Assurance and Standards Officers (CQASOs). The qualitative findings were analysed thematically to provide context to the quantitative trends, as summarized in Table 9.

Table 9a: Summary of Qualitative Findings on Parental Involvement in Supporting CBC Implementation

Interview Question	Emergent Theme	Summary of Qualitative Findings	Illustrative Participants
How would you describe the level of parental involvement in supporting CBC implementation in Junior Schools?	Parental participation in CBC implementation	Involvement is recognized as vital, but actual participation varies widely across schools due to differences in parental understanding of CBC, demanding work schedules, and socioeconomic constraints.	Respondents 1, 2, and 3
In what ways do parents support learners' academic activities, including homework and project-based learning?	Parental support for home-based learning and competency development	Parents actively supervise homework and supply materials, but encounter significant barriers in assisting with project-based tasks due to limited pedagogical knowledge, time, and financial resources.	Respondents 1, 2, and 3
What strategies do schools use to strengthen communication and collaboration with parents and the wider community?	School-parent communication and community collaboration	Schools utilize academic clinics, digital platforms, open days, and progress reports. Sustained engagement requires continuous sensitization and structured community partnerships.	Respondents 1, 2, and 3

Parental Participation in School Academic Activities

The descriptive analysis revealed that both headteachers ($M = 4.03$, $SD = 0.85$) and teachers ($M = 3.80$, $SD = 1.03$) generally agreed that parents participate in school academic activities. A substantial majority of headteachers (78.9%) and teachers (69.8%) either agreed or strongly agreed with this indicator. Headteachers exhibited a higher level of agreement and lower variance than classroom teachers, indicating a more favourable administrative view of overall parental engagement.

Qualitative data from CQASO interviews corroborated these findings, establishing that parental participation is fundamental to the successful implementation of CBC. Interviewees observed that the curriculum's emphasis on learner-centered instruction and continuous assessment requires parents to assume a more proactive role than under legacy content-based curricula. Active parental engagement was reported primarily through attendance at academic clinics, parent-teacher conferences, and learner progress review sessions. However, CQASOs noted that

participation remains inconsistent due to variations in parental education, awareness, and socioeconomic status. Illustrating this dynamic, Respondent 1 stated:

"The success of CBC largely depends on how well parents understand and embrace their role. Parents who regularly attend school meetings and engage with teachers are better able to support their children and appreciate the competency-based approach to learning."

Adding an administrative perspective, Respondent 2 remarked:

"We have noticed that schools where parents actively participate in school activities tend to experience fewer implementation challenges. However, some parents still perceive education as the sole responsibility of teachers, limiting the level of collaboration required under CBC."

Respondent 3 further emphasized the need for ongoing capacity building:

"There is a gradual improvement in parental participation, but continuous sensitization is still necessary because some parents have not fully understood what CBC expects of them. Once they appreciate their role, they become more supportive of school"

programmes.”

These findings align with Epstein’s (2018) Overlapping Spheres of Influence framework, which posits that student learning is maximized when schools, families, and communities actively interact. The results also echo recent empirical evidence from Kenya by Amagove *et al.* (2024), who observed that while parents recognize the value of participating in primary school academic activities under CBC, active engagement is often mediated by parental sensitization and household socioeconomic dynamics.

Parental Support for Learners’ Homework and Assignments

Support for homework and home assignments received strong ratings across both respondent groups. Headteachers reported a mean score of 4.18 (SD = 0.80), with 85.2% agreeing or strongly agreeing, while teachers recorded a mean of 3.87 (SD = 0.99), with 72.8% expressing agreement. Only a minor fraction of headteachers (3.9%) and teachers (10.3%) expressed disagreement.

The thematic analysis confirmed that homework supervision represents one of the most consistent ways parents engage with the curriculum. CQASOs noted that parents regularly monitor home assignments, purchase routine learning materials, and encourage home study habits. As Respondent 1 observed:

“Parents generally help learners with homework and ensure that assignments are completed.”

These empirical observations validate those of Ayuma (2023), who investigated parental involvement in Grade Four take-home assignments in Vihiga County and established that parents play a pivotal role in supervising routine homework and reinforcing classroom instruction at home. The high ratings recorded in the current study indicate that routine home-based academic support is firmly established within the region.

Parental Involvement in Project-Based Learning

In contrast to routine homework support, parental involvement in project-based learning received the lowest mean scores among all five indicators. Headteachers recorded a mean score of 3.77 (SD = 0.99), whereas teachers reported a lower mean of 3.51 (SD = 1.11). Furthermore, 18.4% of teachers and 11.7% of headteachers explicitly disagreed that parents adequately assist learners with project-based tasks.

Qualitative responses provided contextual explanations for these lower scores, highlighting systemic constraints surrounding experiential and practical assignments. CQASOs explained that while parents are generally willing to assist, many lack the requisite pedagogical knowledge, technical skills, time, or financial resources required to source project materials. Elaborating on these practical barriers, Respondent 1 noted:

“...project-based learning is more demanding because some activities require materials, close supervision, and skills that many parents may not possess.”

Respondent 2 added:

“Some parents are willing to support their children but they do not fully understand how competency-based projects should be carried out. Others are constrained by work commitments and therefore cannot provide adequate guidance at home.”

Highlighting the gap between willingness and capacity, Respondent 3 stated:

“The greatest challenge is not unwillingness among parents but inadequate capacity. Many require more orientation on how they can effectively support practical learning without completing the work for the learners.”

These findings resonate directly with the empirical conclusions of Amagove *et al.* (2024) and Ayuma (2023), both of whom identified project-based learning as a primary point of friction in CBC execution. Their studies emphasized that without targeted parental orientation, project-based tasks risk placing undue financial and operational burdens on households or leading to situations where parents’ complete projects on behalf of learners rather than facilitating competency acquisition.

Regular Communication Between Schools and Parents

Regular communication between schools and parents emerged as the highest-rated aspect of parental involvement across both quantitative cohorts. Headteachers registered a high mean score of 4.25 (SD = 0.73), with 87.5% agreeing or strongly agreeing. Similarly, teachers rated this indicator highest among all measures, with a mean of 4.02 (SD = 0.91) and 78.7% reporting positive agreement.

Interview data reinforced these findings, indicating that schools have established diverse communication channels to bridge the gap between home and school. CQASOs highlighted the widespread adoption of academic clinics, progress reporting sessions, open days, and digital communication platforms (e.g., mobile messaging groups). Respondent 1 emphasized the benefits of these measures:

“Regular communication enables parents to understand learners’ progress and appreciate the expectations of CBC. Schools that maintain consistent communication with parents experience greater cooperation in supporting learners.”

Underscoring the importance of proactive dialogue, Respondent 3 remarked:

“Communication should not only occur when learners experience difficulties. Schools need to establish continuous collaboration with parents so that they become active partners throughout the learning process.”

These results support the conceptual assertion by Epstein (2018) that clear, multi-channel communication forms the structural backbone of effective school-family partnerships. They also concur with Ayuma (2023), who identified structured parent-teacher communication as a vital prerequisite for sustaining home-based learning support under the CBC framework.

Community Contribution to CBC Implementation

Community involvement in supporting CBC implementation yielded moderate to high ratings.

Headteachers reported a mean score of 3.92 (SD = 0.91), with 74.2% expressing agreement, while teachers recorded a mean score of 3.66 (SD = 1.05), with 63.2% agreeing. Qualitative feedback indicated that community engagement occurs primarily through institutional bodies such as Boards of Management (BOMs), Parents' Associations (PAs), local leadership, and community-based organizations. These stakeholders assist in resource mobilization, infrastructure support, and local sensitization initiatives. Respondent 2 observed:

"Community stakeholders have become increasingly supportive of school programmes, but schools still need to strengthen partnerships with parents through continuous awareness campaigns and structured engagement forums."

These findings align with the broader systemic framework of educational reform articulated by Fullan (2016), who argued that sustainable curriculum implementation requires embedding educational institutions within supportive community ecosystems. While community structures in the Upper Eastern Region provide baseline support, the findings suggest

that deeper integration is needed to fully leverage community resources for competency development.

Test of Hypothesis 1 (H_{01})

To address the primary research objective and test the null hypothesis (H_{01}), an Independent Samples t-test was conducted to examine whether there was a statistically significant difference in overall parental involvement scores between public and private Junior Schools.

The null hypothesis stated:

H_{01} : There is no statistically significant difference in parental involvement in supporting CBC implementation between public and private Junior Schools in the Upper Eastern Region of Kenya.

The composite scores for parental involvement were calculated across the five dimensions (academic activities, homework support, project-based learning, communication, and community involvement) on a 5-point scale.

Table 9b: Group Statistics and Independent Samples T-Test for Parental Involvement by School Type

School Type	N	Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (SD)	Mean Difference	t-value	df	p-value (2-tailed)
Private Junior Schools	94	4.12	0.54	0.38	4.312	262	< .001
Public Junior Schools	170	3.74	0.72				

Note. Statistical significance established at $p < .05$.

Results and Interpretation

The mean parental involvement score in private Junior Schools (M = 4.12, SD = 0.54) was higher than in public Junior Schools (M = 3.74, SD = 0.72). The Independent Samples t-test revealed that this difference was statistically significant, $t(262) = 4.312$, $p < .001$. Because the probability value ($p < .001$) is less than the standard significance threshold ($\alpha = .05$), the null hypothesis (H_{01}) was rejected. It is concluded that there is a statistically significant difference in parental involvement in supporting CBC implementation between public and private Junior Schools in the Upper Eastern Region of Kenya, with private schools demonstrating higher overall parental engagement.

Empirical Discussion

These results reflect structural and socioeconomic differences between public and private school environments. Private schools often maintain direct

financial contracts and structured reporting mechanisms with parents, fostering higher accountability and routine engagement in home-based CBC assignments. Conversely, public schools frequently face larger class sizes and serve communities with varied socioeconomic backgrounds, where financial burdens and limited familiarity with formative assessment rubrics constrain full parental participation in project-based learning.

Administrative Support Mechanisms in Public and Private Junior Schools

In addition to evaluating parental engagement, the study sought to examine administrative support mechanisms across public and private Junior Schools in the Upper Eastern Region of Kenya. Administrative support was categorized into three ordinal levels: Low, Moderate, and High, to evaluate structural differences between school types prior to performing inferential hypothesis testing. The cross-tabulation results are presented in Table 10.

Table 10: Categorized Levels of Administrative Support by School Type

Administrative Support Level	Public Junior Schools n (%)	Private Junior Schools n (%)	Total N (%)
Low	18 (10.6%)	4 (4.3%)	22 (8.3%)
Moderate	95 (55.9%)	31 (33.0%)	126 (47.7%)
High	57 (33.5%)	59 (62.7%)	116 (43.9%)
Total	170 (100%)	94 (100%)	264 (100%)

Percentages are within school type (N = 264).

The descriptive distribution demonstrates marked differences based on institutional ownership. A majority of respondents from private Junior Schools (62.7%) categorized administrative support as high, compared to 33.5% of respondents in public Junior Schools. Conversely, most public-school respondents (55.9%) rated administrative support at a moderate level, compared to 33.0% in private institutions. Low administrative support was reported by 10.6% of public-school respondents, more than double the proportion observed in private

schools (4.3%).

To test whether these observed institutional differences were statistically significant, a Pearson Chi-square (χ^2) test of independence was executed. The null hypothesis (H_0) stated that there is no statistically significant difference in administrative support mechanisms for CBC implementation between public and private Junior Schools in the Upper Eastern Region of Kenya. The inferential test results are detailed in Table 11.

Table 11: Chi-Square Test for Differences in Administrative Support Between Public and Private Junior Schools

Test Statistic	Value	Degrees of Freedom (df)	Asymptotic Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square (χ^2)	14.962	2	.001
Likelihood Ratio	15.187	2	.001
Linear-by-Linear Association	12.641	1	.001
N of Valid Cases	264		

Note. Statistical significance established at $p < .05$.

The Pearson Chi-square test revealed a statistically significant association between school type and the level of administrative support provided for CBC implementation, $\chi^2(2, N = 264) = 14.962, p = .001$. Because $p < .05$, the null hypothesis was rejected. The strength and directional consistency of this association were confirmed by the Likelihood Ratio, $\chi^2(2) = 15.187, p < .001$, and the Linear-by-Linear Association test, $\chi^2(1) = 12.641, p < .001$.

Institutional and Theoretical Implications

These empirical findings indicate that administrative support mechanisms such as instructional supervision, teacher mentoring, resource allocation, and clinical feedback are significantly stronger and more consistently implemented in private Junior Schools than in public counterparts. From an institutional leadership perspective, private schools appear to maintain organizational conditions that foster proactive instructional management. These findings align with the instructional leadership model articulated by Hallinger and Wang (2015), whose meta-analysis established that strong administrative supervision directly enhances teacher efficacy and curriculum delivery. Similarly, the results support the empirical conclusions of Leithwood *et al.* (2020), who demonstrated that school leadership influences learner outcomes primarily by structuring supportive professional environments, coordinating learning tasks, and maintaining accountability systems. In the context of CBC implementation in Kenya, while teacher training and learning resources provide the baseline capacity for reform, effective administrative support acts as the primary organizational catalyst that translates capacity into effective classroom practice.

Limitations of the Study and Directions for Future Research

While this study offers valuable empirical insights into the institutional dynamics of CBC enactment across

public and private Junior Schools, several methodological limitations should be acknowledged. The geographical scope was confined to specific sub-counties, which may limit the direct generalizability of the findings to rural-remote or informal urban settlement contexts with distinct socio-economic profiles. Additionally, the reliance on self-reported survey data from administrators, teachers, and parents introduces potential social desirability bias, particularly regarding the reported frequency of instructional supervision and home-based involvement. Future research should adopt longitudinal mixed-methods designs to track how administrative practices and parental involvement strategies evolve as the CBC cohort transitions into upper secondary education. Comparative studies across broader, geographically diverse regions would help isolate regional socio-economic influences from institutional practices. Further empirical investigation is also needed to examine the specific impact of parental digital literacy and household socio-economic status on the quality of home-based assessment tasks, providing a more granular understanding of educational equity under the curriculum reform.

CONCLUSION

This study highlights how administrative support and parental involvement shape Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) enactment in Kenya's Junior Schools. A stark structural divide exists: private institutions benefit from systematic instructional supervision, teacher mentoring, and structured parental engagement. Conversely, public schools face institutional constraints and resource deficits that hinder headteachers from fully operating as instructional leaders despite high educator adaptability. Bridging these disparities is essential to unlock the transformative potential of CBC for all learners.

To resolve these gaps, the Ministry of Education and Teachers Service Commission must establish standardized, formative supervision protocols for public

school administrators, shifting the leadership paradigm from compliance auditing to instructional mentoring. Additionally, School Management Committees should formalize structured parental engagement policies that offer clear frameworks for home-based learning support and regular consultations. School leaders must also host community workshops to demystify CBC assessment tools, such as rubrics and portfolio evaluations, for co-educator parents. Finally, policy frameworks must prioritize equitable funding for public Junior Schools to secure digital infrastructure and essential learning materials, relieving headteachers from administrative firefighting so they can focus on instructional quality and community outreach.

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