

Implementation of Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC): Experiences from Uyui Secondary School, Tanzania

Michael Fredrick Mgongo¹

Abstract

This study explores how teachers at Uyui Secondary School in Tabora, Tanzania, interpret and apply the principles of the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) in their everyday teaching context. The study used a qualitative case study approach, and data were gathered through interviews and classroom observations with five (5) teachers. The study was guided by Michael Fullan's Change Theory and Constructivism Theory. The findings were analysed using a thematic approach. The findings revealed that while teachers are generally open to CBC principles, implementation is hindered by limited resources, systemic constraints, and inconsistent professional support. Despite these challenges, teachers demonstrated outstanding creativity and flexibility, finding ways to adapt CBC principles to their local contexts. Their interpretations often reflected external pressures and a lack of regular guidance, highlighting the need for deeper engagement with the curriculum's goals. The findings point to an urgent need for ongoing, context-sensitive teacher training and reforms in assessment practices that truly align with CBC's learner-centred vision. Overall, the study offers practical insights into curriculum reforms across Tanzania. It stresses the importance of supporting teachers not only with policy but also with the tools, training, and trust they need to bring CBC to life in diverse classroom settings.

Keywords: Curriculum, Implementation, Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC), Teacher Adaptation, Policy.

1.0 Introduction

In recent years, educators, governments, and policymakers have sought to implement educational reforms to make learning more meaningful and relevant to contemporary society (Nkya, 2021). Similarly, recognising education as a key factor in political, social, and economic development, the Tanzanian government's commitment to education began shortly after the country's independence. One attempt at change has been the shift from traditional, content-focused teaching to Competency-Based Education (CBE). This approach aims to help students develop critical thinking, practical skills, and the ability to learn throughout their lives. In Tanzania, this change began in 2005 with the introduction of the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC). The Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) has emerged as a prominent approach in Tanzania since 2005 (Nyoni, 2023). The approach

¹ Tanzania Public Service College, Tabora, Tanzania. michael.mgongo@tpsc.go.tz

is intended to prepare students with inquiring minds, creative and employability skills, and the capacity to take on a range of responsibilities. The CBC provides a framework for unifying evolving ideas about teaching, learning, and assessment. CBC follows the constructivist theory, a general term for a discovery-oriented approach to teaching and learning. It was designed to make education more relevant and to improve quality, in line with the needs of the job market and national development goals (Kasuga & Kalolo, 2025).

In addition, CBC emphasises a more comprehensive educational approach, including student-centred learning, regular formative assessments, and the development of real-world skills. It generally moves away from memorising facts and teacher-led lessons, encouraging students to take a more active role in their learning (Mulenga & Kabombwe, 2019). However, implementing CBC has been challenging, especially in semi-urban and rural schools such as Uyui Secondary School. Teachers, who play an essential role in delivering the new curriculum, have found it hard to adapt to new teaching methods, assessments, and resources. Students are assigned activities using locally available materials; however, they are unable to practise and apply what they have learnt to solve problems in society. Even though teachers are the primary implementers of the curriculum, studies have consistently shown poor implementation of the competence-based curriculum in Tanzania (Kasuga & Kalolo, 2025; Nyoni, 2023).

Few studies in Tanzania have examined secondary school teachers' perceptions and their capacity to implement a competence-based curriculum. The studies by Godfrey (2018), Kasuga and Kalolo (2025), and Nkya (2021) revealed that many teachers lack sufficient training, materials, and institutional support to fully implement the CBC. These studies show that teachers in various schools in Tanzania do not employ learner-centred approaches to learning, in which students have opportunities to perform practical tasks and experiments that underpin skills and knowledge in everyday life. The situation suggests that students are not given activities that help them develop the technical abilities, skills, knowledge, attitudes, and competencies they need. In this regard, students become less successful in competing in the labour market and in self-employment. Despite the government's efforts, the learning environment in Tanzania does not encourage competence- and skills-oriented education. As a result, the students are commonly filled with only theories and abstract concepts. These issues are exacerbated by crowded classrooms, limited access to technology, and habits that prioritise syllabus coverage and exams over skills development (Kasuga & Kalolo, 2025).

Based on CBC requirements, teachers are expected to manage changes at varying levels of readiness, relying on peer support, informal learning, and creative problem-solving to meet CBC goals. Nkya (2021) encouraged the need for local support systems and regular training to help teachers work effectively with CBC. Meanwhile, Yasmin, Farooq, and Shah (2023) note an ongoing tension between CBC's focus on formative assessment and Tanzania's exam-focused culture, which can lead teachers to prioritise exams over competencies.

The current body of knowledge indicates that many students across the country are unable to apply what they have learned in schools to solve real-life problems in society. In studies such as Kasuga and Kalolo (2025) and Nyoni (2023), it has been revealed that teachers, as the key implementers of the curriculum, have consistently demonstrated poor implementation of CBC in Tanzania. Little attention has been paid to examining teachers' adaptation to the

Competency-Based Curriculum, especially in Tabora, particularly at Uyui Secondary School. Hence, the experience of Uyui Secondary School and the wider Tabora region provides useful ground for exploring how teachers are adjusting to CBC. In addition, most current studies have revealed poor implementation of CBC across different parts of Tanzania and the challenges teachers face in its implementation, including a lack of materials, in-service training in rural schools, and support from their institutions. Therefore, little was known regarding how teachers at Uyui Secondary School in Tabora, Tanzania, interpret and apply the principles of the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) in their everyday teaching context. Hence, this study explored how teachers at Uyui Secondary School adapt to CBC. It explores how their teaching methods are changing, the resources they lack, and how they cope. The study aims to offer practical advice for teachers, policymakers, and others working to improve the relevance and quality of secondary education in Tanzania.

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Empirical Studies

Different regions and countries around the world have attempted to implement educational reforms. Many scholars have devoted themselves to studying the implementation of the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC). At its core, CBC aims to help learners develop the skills, values, and attitudes they need to succeed in real-life situations. It promotes learner-centred teaching, ongoing formative assessment, and a gradual mastery of key competencies (Mulenga & Kabombwe, 2019). Globally, CBC has been adopted to close the gap between education and employability. Countries like Kenya, Rwanda, and Tanzania have introduced reforms to align their education systems with the demands of the 21st century (UNESCO, 2017). In Tanzania, CBC was rolled out in secondary schools to encourage critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving among students (Kasuga & Kalolo, 2025; Godfrey, 2018).

In addition, teachers are central to making CBC work. So far, studies show that many Tanzanian educators are struggling to adapt to the new approach. Limited access to professional development, scarce teaching resources, and confusion about CBC principles have made the transition difficult (Godfrey, 2018; Kasuga & Kalolo, 2025). Moving from traditional lectures to more facilitative, student-driven methods requires a major shift in mindset and practice. As Yasmin, Farooq, and Shah (2023) point out, the pressure to prepare students for national exams often pulls teachers back toward conventional teaching, undermining the goals of CBC.

For teachers to adapt successfully, they need consistent support. Scholars such as Fulgence and Chambua (2025), Urio and Mwakabenga (2025), and Kasuga and Kalolo (2025) stress the value of in-service training, mentoring, and collaborative learning communities in building teacher capacity. However, such support is not always readily available, especially in rural schools (Nkya, 2021; Nyoni, 2023; Mulenga & Kabombwe, 2019), as at Uyui Secondary School. Additionally, Nkya (2021) argues that training programmes tailored to local realities are more effective than one-size-fits-all workshops. They advocate for school-based support systems, such as peer coaching and reflective practice, to help teachers internalise CBC principles and apply them meaningfully.

Moreover, assessment under CBC is meant to be formative, ongoing, and performance-based. Teachers are expected to use tools such as rubrics, portfolios, and real-world tasks to assess student competencies. To date, as Ngussa and Mbuti (2017) report, many teachers lack the necessary skills and resources to conduct these assessments effectively. Without clear guidelines, practices vary widely, leading to inconsistencies. The clash between CBC's formative assessment philosophy and Tanzania's exam-focused culture creates a tough balancing act for teachers, who often feel compelled to prioritise test preparation over deeper learning.

Furthermore, Uyui Secondary School offers a vivid example of both the systemic marks and the strategies that shape CBC implementation. Teachers frequently rely on management, peer support, and informal learning to meet curriculum demands. These efforts reflect the resilience and creativity of educators working under pressure. At the same time, they highlight the urgent need for policy reforms that recognise and strengthen teacher agency, ensuring that those at the heart of education have the tools and trust they need to lead change (Yasmin, Farooq, & Shah, 2023).

Generally, in Tanzania, the curriculum and CBC emphasise learner-centred pedagogy, creativity, and problem-solving to meet contemporary demands. Also, the principles of CBC and teacher adaptation entail shifting from traditional lectures to facilitative, student-driven methods, with support from in-service training and mentoring. However, the current body of knowledge reveals a tension between CBC and examination orientation, which exams often pull teachers back toward conventional teaching, undermining the goals of CBC (Godfrey, 2018; Kasuga & Kalolo, 2025; Yasmin, Farooq, & Shah, 2023).

2.2 Theoretical Review

The study is grounded in Michael Fullan's Change Theory to understand the contextual realities of educational reform. Fullan (2007) claims that meaningful change in schools is not just about enacting new policies but about engaging the people who bring those policies to life, especially teachers. For reforms like Tanzania's Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC), success depends on whether teachers truly grasp the purpose behind the changes and feel equipped to take on new roles. In places like Uyui Secondary School, where professional development and institutional support may be limited, Fullan's framework helps explain why teachers respond differently. Their ability to adapt often centres on how well they understand the curriculum, what resources they have, and whether they work in environments that encourage collaboration and growth.

Besides Fullan's views, this study also supports Vygotsky's Constructivist Learning Theory. Vygotsky (1978) emphasised that learners build knowledge through active participation and social interaction. His views on the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) highlight the importance of guidance and scaffolding in helping students reach goals they couldn't achieve on their own. This theory aligns with CBC's focus on learner-centred teaching, formative assessment, and the application of knowledge to real-life situations. For teachers, embracing CBC means moving away from traditional lectures and stepping into roles that support student independence and group learning. Vygotsky's approach reminds us that

teachers must be thoughtful and flexible, designing lessons that meet students where they are and help them grow.

Similarly, this study centres on three closely connected elements: how the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) is implemented, what influences teachers' ability to adapt, and the outcomes of that adaptation. CBC implementation involves the curriculum's structure, teaching expectations, and assessment methods, all of which ask teachers to rethink how they teach and evaluate students (Kasuga & Kalolo, 2025). The second element is teacher adaptation factors. It looks at what helps or hinders teachers in making this shift. These include access to professional development, availability of teaching materials, support from their schools, and their own beliefs about the value of CBC. These factors play a major role in shaping how teachers understand and apply the curriculum in their classrooms (Kasuga & Kalolo, 2025; Godfrey, 2018).

The last element focuses on what actually changes in the classroom (outcomes). Teacher adaptation outcomes include the use of learner-centred approaches, competency-based assessments, and increased confidence in delivering CBC lessons (Yasmin, Farooq, & Shah, 2023). Altogether, these elements show that curriculum reform is not just about policy but about practice. Success depends on both the systems that support teachers and the choices teachers make in response. This framework highlights the need for tailored support that speaks to the realities of schools like Uyui Secondary, offering practical lessons on how to make curriculum reforms work in local contexts.

2.3 Research Gap

Although the Tanzanian government has introduced the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) to make education more relevant and improve learning outcomes, much of the research to date has focused on policy design, curriculum structure, and implementation in urban settings (Kasuga & Kalolo, 2025; Mulenga & Kabombwe, 2019). Scholars have pointed out major challenges, such as insufficient teacher training, lack of resources, and resistance to new teaching methods (Kasuga & Kalolo, 2025; Godfrey, 2018), but there was still a limited understanding of how teachers in semi-urban and rural schools, like Uyui Secondary School, actually experience and respond to these reforms on the ground.

The current study presents teacher adaptation as a fixed or binary outcome, either successful or not, without capturing the complex, everyday strategies teachers use to manage CBC demands in resource-constrained environments. Little attention has been paid to qualitative research that explores teachers' lived experiences, the coping mechanisms they develop, and the local factors that shape their responses to curriculum change. Therefore, this study aimed to address that knowledge gap by examining how teachers at Uyui Secondary School interpret and apply CBC principles in practice. The research is expected to contribute to inclusive and effective approaches to curriculum reform across Tanzania.

3.0 Methodology

This study adopted a qualitative research approach, well-suited to exploring complex social realities, such as how teachers adapt to curriculum reforms. Qualitative methods allow researchers to dive deep into lived experiences and interpret them within their specific contexts (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Unlike quantitative approaches that aim for broad generalisations, qualitative inquiry offers flexibility and responsiveness, making it ideal for uncovering the layered strategies teachers use to navigate CBC under challenging conditions. Given the limited empirical research on CBC implementation in Tanzania's semi-urban and rural schools, this approach provides a richer understanding of how educators interpret policy and adjust their teaching practices in everyday settings (Lukindo, 2016; Godfrey, 2018).

To explore these dynamics, the study used a case study design focusing on 10 teachers at Uyui Secondary School in the Tabora Region. Case studies enable in-depth examination of a specific setting, helping researchers understand phenomena within their real-life context (Yin, 2014). Uyui was purposefully selected because its rural location and the broader rural areas, particularly rural schools, are reported to receive limited institutional support (Nyoni, 2023; Mulenga & Kabombwe, 2019), reflecting the realities faced by many schools outside Tanzania's major cities. The sample comprised five teachers, each with at least a decade of teaching experience, selected through purposive sampling to ensure firsthand involvement in CBC implementation (Patton, 2015).

Data collection relied on two main tools: semi-structured interviews and non-participant observation. The interviews gave teachers space to share their thoughts, challenges, and coping strategies in their own words, offering insight into how they personally interpret CBC principles. This method is especially valuable for capturing tacit knowledge and emotional responses that are often overlooked in policy-level evaluations (Kasuga & Kalolo, 2025). Observations added another layer by documenting classroom practices, teacher-student interactions, and instructional choices in real time. Together, these methods provided a well-rounded view of teacher adaptation, enhancing the credibility and depth of the findings (Mulenga & Kabombwe, 2019; Godfrey, 2018).

To analyse the data, the study used thematic analysis, a method designed to identify and interpret patterns across qualitative data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Interview transcripts and observation notes were systematically coded to identify key themes, including resource improvisation, pedagogical negotiation, and emotional resilience. This approach also enabled exploration of contradictions and tensions in teacher narratives, revealing the fluid, context-sensitive nature of CBC adaptation. Hence, the study is expected to offer localised insights that challenge the simplistic view of teacher adaptation as either compliance or resistance (Kasuga & Kalolo, 2025; Godfrey, 2018).

4.0 Findings and Discussion

4.1 Teachers' Awareness of CBC Principles

Most teachers at Uyui Secondary School showed a general understanding of the key principles behind the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC). Many emphasised its focus on learner-centred teaching and on equipping students with practical skills. However, their interpretations varied considerably. In several cases, the understanding appeared to be surface-level or inconsistent, suggesting that while teachers were familiar with CBC's core ideas, they often struggled to translate them into effective classroom practice. For instance, during interviews, teachers shared the following reflections:

Teacher A: *I only know that CBC teaches us that students should learn through practice, not just by listening. However, it is sometimes difficult to apply the requirements.* (10 January, 2026)

Teacher B: *I usually understand it as the new policy that wants me, as a teacher, to be a facilitator and enable students to learn, not just a teacher who talks...* (10 January, 2026)

Teacher C: *CBC wants students to be active during teaching and learning, but sometimes we do not have enough resources to guide them effectively.* (10 January, 2026)

Teacher D: *It wants students to be independent, free and allowed to interact, though it is not always easy to do so in classes with many students.* (10 January, 2026)

Teacher E: *To me, CBC means encouraging students to think (critically) and solve problems, but the challenge is in involving all the aspects in the exams.* (10 January, 2026)

The above findings from the interviews reveal a gap between conceptual awareness and pedagogical application. Some teachers could articulate CBC's goals but were unsure of how to implement them in ways that moved beyond traditional methods. Their responses revealed differing levels of confidence and clarity, shaped by their training, experience, and access to support.

Similarly, the non-participant classroom observations indicated that during one particular lesson, the teacher initiated a role-play activity to engage students in a practical application of the material. However, there was a noticeable absence of follow-up questioning that would have facilitated deeper understanding and critical thinking among the students. In another session, the teacher facilitated a group discussion to encourage student interaction and collaboration. Unfortunately, the teacher tended to dominate the conversation, limiting students' opportunities to fully express their thoughts and perspectives. This dynamic led to reduced student engagement and diminished the potential for collaborative learning. Teachers at Uyui Secondary School are increasingly acknowledging a transition from traditional methods to more experiential learning approaches. However, their understanding of this shift tends to be surface-level and lacks the depth crucial for effective implementation. This limited interpretation often stems from insufficient exposure to ongoing professional development opportunities.

These findings align with Michael Fullan's Change Theory, which holds that educational reform relies on sustained support and broader systemic change. Similarly, the findings align with the Constructivist Theory, which emphasises the need for teachers to shift from traditional, theory-based teaching to facilitating active, student-centred learning. Moreover, the findings align with those of other scholars, particularly regarding the poor implementation of CBC across different parts of Tanzania and the challenges teachers face in implementing it, including a lack of materials, in-service training in rural schools, and institutional support. Also, similar to what was found in this study, the previous studies indicated that many teachers in Tanzania tend to equate the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) with engaging in isolated activities, rather than embracing it as a comprehensive and holistic change in pedagogical practices (Kasuga & Kalolo, 2025; Godfrey, 2018; Yasmin, Farooq, & Shah, 2023; Lukindo, 2016; Patton, 2015; Mulenga & Kabombwe, 2019).

4.2 Tension between Competency and Examination Orientation

Teachers demonstrated a dual dedication to the principles of Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) while also striving for students' success in examinations. This sometimes led to instructional compromises as teachers navigated the challenge of balancing innovative teaching practices with the demands of standardised testing. For example, some teachers responded as follows:

- Teacher A: *CBC is good for skills, but parents and students want results...* (10 January, 2026)
- Teacher B: *We try to balance between CBC and exam requirements..."* (10 January, 2026)
- Teacher C: *...CBC stresses creativity; however, the exams decide everything.* (10 January, 2026)
- Teacher D: *...CBC wants skills, and the exams push us to stress memorisation. So, the instance confuses us.* (10 January, 2026)
- Teacher E: *CBC is considered very important; however, the pressure to deliver results makes us return to old methods.* (10 January, 2026)

Additionally, the non-participant observations uncovered a significant trend in the teachers' instructional approach: the lesson commenced with an engaging problem-solving task designed to stimulate critical thinking among the students. However, this initial activity was soon replaced by a more repetitive format, as the teacher transitioned to drilling exam-style questions that prioritised rote memorisation over deeper understanding. Furthermore, there were moments when collaborative group work, which can foster communication and teamwork skills, was replaced by dictation exercises aimed at swiftly "covering the syllabus," potentially diminishing opportunities for interactive learning. This delicate balancing act is a response to external pressures from stakeholders and the inherent expectations of the education system. While the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) emphasises lifelong learning, the prevailing reality of high-stakes exams compels educators to focus on producing quantifiable results.

These findings align with Michael Fullan's Change Theory, which emphasises that educational reform relies on sustained support and systemic change. They also align with the Constructivist Theory that emphasises that teachers must move from traditional, exam-driven teaching to facilitating active, student-centred learning. Moreover, they align with studies in Tanzania that highlight poor implementation of CBC due to limited materials, inadequate in-service training in rural schools, and weak institutional support, showing that many teachers equate CBC with isolated activities rather than embracing it as a holistic pedagogical shift (Kasuga & Kalolo, 2025; Godfrey, 2018; Yasmin, Farooq, & Shah, 2023; Lukindo, 2016; Patton, 2015; Mulenga & Kabombwe, 2019).

4.3 Ambiguity and Inconsistent Understanding

Several teachers reported feeling uncertain about the principles of the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC), resulting in varied interpretations and applications of the guidelines in their classrooms. This lack of clarity has led to inconsistencies in curriculum implementation, ultimately affecting students' educational experience. For example, some teachers responded as follows:

Teacher A: *We received CBC training a while ago, and now we are not sure whether we are implementing it correctly.* (11 January, 2026)

Teacher B: *CBC is hard to understand without regular support.* (11 January, 2026)

Teacher C: *CBC is hard to understand without regular support...* (11 January, 2026)

Teacher D: *We had some training, but without follow-up, I'm never sure I'm applying it correctly.* (11 January, 2026)

Teacher E: *Most of the time, CBC feels unclear, so when there's no guidance, we just fall back on the old methods we know.* (11 January, 2026)

Likewise, during non-participant observation, teachers labelled their instructional approach as "Competency-Based Curriculum" (CBC); however, their practices relied on traditional methods such as lecturing and note-taking. Opportunities for group work and student-led activities were notably limited or absent, indicating a disconnect between the intended curriculum model and the teaching strategies used. This ambiguity underscores the critical need for continuous professional development and more explicit implementation guidelines.

These findings align with Michael Fullan's Change Theory, which holds that educational reform relies on sustained support and systemic change. Similarly, the findings align with the Constructivist Theory, emphasising that teachers must move away from traditional lecture-based methods toward active, student-centred learning. Moreover, they align with studies across Tanzania that highlight poor implementation of CBC due to unclear guidelines, lack of materials, limited in-service training in rural schools, and weak institutional support. Similar to what was found here, previous research shows that many teachers tend to equate CBC with isolated activities rather than embracing it as a comprehensive and holistic change in pedagogy (Godfrey, 2018; Yasmin, Farooq, & Shah, 2023; Lukindo, 2016; Patton, 2015; Mulenga & Kabombwe, 2019). Moreover, Kasuga and Kalolo (2025) emphasise that the effective adoption of competency-based curricula (CBC) demands ongoing capacity-building efforts, rather than relying on isolated, one-time workshops.

4.4 Contextualisation of CBC Principles

Teachers adjusted the principles of the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) to better align with the specific challenges they faced in their local contexts. These adaptations considered factors such as overcrowded classrooms, where the high number of students can make individualised attention difficult, and the scarcity of resources, which limits the availability of teaching materials and tools. Tailoring the CBC principles to address these constraints, teachers aimed to create a more effective, practical learning environment that caters to their students' unique needs. For example, some teachers responded as follows:

Teacher A: *We cannot do all those activities with 60 students and no materials. So, we simplify.* (11 January, 2026)

Teacher B: *We use questions and answers instead of full projects because of time and materials.* (11 January, 2026)

Teacher C: *We were told CBC is about students learning by doing, but without clear guidance, it feels confusing.* (11 January, 2026)

Teacher D: *I try to apply CBC in class, yet without regular support, I sometimes wonder whether I'm doing it right.* (11 January, 2026)

Teacher E: *CBC sounds good in theory, but in practice, we need more training and follow-up to make it work.* (11 January, 2026)

Furthermore, insights from non-participant observations indicated that the teacher skilfully employed chalkboard simulations to replicate the fieldwork experience. In several instances, everyday local objects were used in place of traditional lab equipment, effectively illustrating fundamental principles in a tangible, relatable way. This approach not only engaged the students but also helped them connect theoretical concepts with real-world applications.

These adaptations demonstrate the remarkable inventiveness and flexibility of teachers in challenging educational contexts. Rather than completely abandoning the concept of Competency-Based Education (CBC), these educators actively reinterpret and adapt its principles to align with their specific circumstances and students' needs. This proactive approach exemplifies pedagogical agency, in which teachers take ownership of their instructional methods and adapt them to achieve effective learning outcomes, as discussed by Vavrus and Bartlett (2013). By doing so, they not only navigate the complexities of their teaching environments but also strive to create meaningful educational experiences that resonate with their students.

These findings align with Michael Fullan's Change Theory and the Constructivist Theory, emphasising the importance of contextualising lessons for teachers. Moreover, the findings align with what was found by other scholars, especially on the implementation of CBC, and the challenges that teachers face (Kasuga & Kalolo, 2025; Nkya, 2021; Godfrey, 2018; Yasmin, Farooq, & Shah, 2023; Nkya, 2021; Lukindo, 2016; Patton, 2015; Mulenga & Kabombwe, 2019).

5.0 Conclusion

The results of this study shed light on how teachers at Uyui Secondary School understand and implement the principles of the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC). Their interpretations emerge from the interplay among their conceptual grasp of the curriculum, the specific challenges they face in their teaching environments, and the broader systemic pressures that influence their work. Although these teachers demonstrate a foundational understanding of the CBC's emphasis on learner-centred approaches and the cultivation of practical skills, their ability to apply these principles is often hindered by persistent practical constraints. These include overcrowded classrooms that limit individual attention, insufficient teaching resources that impede effective instruction, and a prevailing emphasis on examination-focused assessment systems that can overshadow the curriculum's intended outcomes.

Generally, these insights emphasise the critical role of localised, qualitative exploration in effectively understanding the demands of curriculum reform. They reveal the necessity of ongoing support for teachers, training tailored to the specific context in which they work, and a harmonious alignment between the educational goals set forth and the methods used to assess student learning. Ultimately, it is vital to empower teachers with the necessary tools, clarity on their objectives, and the flexibility to implement the Competence-Based Curriculum (CBC) meaningfully. This empowerment is essential for unlocking the transformative potential of CBC in the unique settings of semi-urban and rural schools in Tanzania, fostering a more effective and engaging learning environment for all students.

6.0 Recommendations

Based on the findings, it is recommended that the Ministry of Education and curriculum stakeholders in Tanzania prioritise sustained, context-sensitive professional development for teachers, particularly in semi-urban and rural schools such as Uyui Secondary. Refresher training programmes should go beyond initial workshops to include ongoing mentorship, peer collaboration, and classroom-based coaching to clarify CBC principles and support practical implementation. Additionally, curriculum reforms must address the disconnect between competency-based pedagogy and exam-oriented assessment by aligning evaluation methods with CBC goals. Providing low-cost teaching resources and encouraging adaptive strategies that honour local realities will further empower teachers to implement CBC meaningfully and equitably.

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