Abstract

When Kenya rolled out the Competency-Based Education (CBE), it quietly changed the deal between schools and families. Parents were no longer just expected to show up for meetings and pay fees. They became partners in their children's learning helping with projects at home, providing materials, talking to teachers, and guiding learners as they built competencies and values. This paper examined how parental involvement shaped the implementation of CBE in public junior schools in Mbooni West Sub County, Makueni County, Kenya. The paper used a mixed-methods orientation and reviewed recent global, African, and Kenyan evidence to establish the link between parental involvement and curriculum implementation. The proposed study targeted 98 public junior schools in Mbooni West Sub County: 98 head teachers, 294 junior school teachers, and 2,940 parents or guardians. Using Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) table, the proposed sample was 80 head teachers, 169 teachers, and 340 parents making a total of 589 respondents. Questionnaires, interview schedules, and document analysis were used. The literature showed that parental involvement was generally linked to better educational outcomes, although what parents actually did mattered more than how often they showed up. A 2024 global meta-analysis found a significant positive relationship between parental involvement and mathematics performance, while studies in the United States, South Africa, and Rwanda also reported positive relationships between parental participation and learner outcomes. Kenyan studies showed that parental involvement was held back by limited understanding of CBE, financial strain, time constraints, and weak home school communication. Evidence from Makueni County showed that parents attended academic clinics and parent meetings fairly often but rarely consulted teachers directly. The paper concluded that parental involvement mattered for CBE implementation, but its effectiveness depended on what parents understood, what resources they had, how well schools communicated, and whether there were real opportunities for them to take part. It recommended systematic parental sensitization, stronger school home communication, affordable CBE activities, and regular parent participation in monitoring learner progress.