



TEACHER TRAINING AND IMPLEMENTATION OF INTEGRATED ENGLISH CURRICULUM IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN NANDI EAST SUB COUNTY, KENYA

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Abstract:

The aim of this paper was to investigate the influence that teacher training had on implementation of integrated English curriculum in public secondary schools in Kenya. The study adopted a descriptive survey design. The target population was twenty four public secondary schools, 24 head teachers, 24 HODs, 48 teachers of English and 3000 students from Nandi East Sub County, Nandi County, Kenya. The sample size was 12 head teachers, 12 HODs, 24 teachers of English and 300 students. Data were collected using questionnaires and interview guides. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. The study found out that 50.0% of teachers taught English as integrated whereas 50.0% taught English and literature as separate subjects. With regard to pre-service training on teaching Integrated English Curriculum (IEC), 50.0% said that it was inadequate whereas only 3.75% felt that the training received was adequate. In regard to attendance of in-service training on IEC, 79.2% had attended and 12.5% did not attend. The paper concludes that despite teachers supporting the need for pre-service and in-service training, the programme failed to adequately address the instructional demands brought by IEC in public secondary schools in Nandi East Sub County, Kenya. The paper recommends that pre-service training of teachers should be tailor made to ensure that English and Literature are taught as an integrated course by the teacher education colleges and universities in Kenya.

Keywords: integrated English curriculum, training, English

1. Introduction

English is the most commonly used language of communication around the world. English has become one of the most preferred choices of foreign language in many countries of the world; it has been considered a global lingua franca (Crystal, 2012). English plays an important role as a language of international trade and commerce, education and innovation. This therefore necessitates that countries ensure a proper

mastery of English. English is now regarded as a global language across many countries of the world; developed and developing. The language is used in economic, social and political spheres across the globe. Therefore, education systems of the world have incorporated English as a language of instruction (LoI) and a subject in classrooms.

Teaching of English can happen individually as Grammar or Literature whereas it can be taught as one subject (English and Literature) through a process known as integration. According to Kenya's Ministry of Education (2006), integration places emphasis on the following skills: Listening and speaking, reading skills, grammar and writing skills. These skills are all significant. The general objective of the integrated English syllabus according to the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education regulations and syllabuses 2006-2007 (KNEC, 2005:6), at the end of the course, the learner should be able to: Listen carefully for understanding and respond as required; Listen and process information from several sources; speak articulately, in a confident way and well in several contexts, use non verbal cues well while speaking; read fluently and efficiently; Know the importance of reading for several reasons; build a culture of reading different and varied subjects; read and understand literary writings; read and analyze literary works from Kenya, east Africa and the rest of the world and be able to relate to other peoples' experiences and appreciate their cultures.

According to Shiundu and Omulando (1992), integration emphasizes the horizontal relationships between various curricula areas in an attempt to interrelate content or learning experiences in order to enable the students to perceive a unity of knowledge. This interrelation of knowledge makes it easy for the learners to understand and master the language. Omollo (1990) asserts that it is evident that integration enhances communicative competence in learners. Integration places emphasis on the following skills: listening and speaking, reading skills, grammar and writing skills. Nevertheless, despite efforts of promoting integration, the performance of students in Nandi East Sub County has been below average in English subject during the Form Four examinations. Analysis of 2015 Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) English subject results for all public secondary schools revealed that only two candidates in the entire sub county scored a mean grade of A plain. This therefore is a clear indication that there is a gap in Nandi East Sub County hence the need to carry out this research. The paper analyses how teacher training (pre-service and in-service) on IEC influences the performance of students in English in public secondary schools in Nandi East Sub County, Kenya. Research determining the association between the two variables has not yet been adequately been done necessitating this research.

2. Purpose of the Study

Teacher training (pre or in-service) is critical to ensure the goals of Integrated English Curriculum are put into practice in schools. During the release of the 2015 Kenya certificate of secondary education results it was noted that English was one of the subjects that were poorly performed in the country with a mean of 40.29%. This dismal

performance by students in English which is one of the compulsory subjects for tertiary education has been worrying educational stakeholders. The performance situation could be associated with many factors, but this study focuses on the degree to which teacher training contributes to implementation.

2. Literature review

2.1 The concept of integrated English curriculum

Integration in English entails learning of language and literature as one subject. The four skills: listening, speaking, writing and reading are taught and examined as one single entity. KIE (2004) defines integration as merging of two autonomous but related entities in order to strengthen and enrich both. Listening and speaking skills sharpen the learner's ability to perceive information, process it and respond well to the information. Through the writing and reading skills the learners are able to respond to information. Shiundu and Omulando (1992), integration emphasizes the horizontal relationships between various curricula areas in an attempt to interrelate content or learning experiences in order to enable the students to perceive a unity of knowledge. Teaching of these skills together therefore ensures that learning is more meaningful and relevant. It is equally clear that English language and literature are two entities that complement each other. Language is used to teach literature and literature provides rich possibilities of language use. These two therefore should not be segmented in learning.

Indagasi (1991) supports integration and notes that English and literature are of mutual benefit to each other in the classroom situation because they reinforce each other. Sivasubramaniam (2006) asserts that the use of literature enables learners to acquire language. It gives them interesting contexts to come up with input, deliberate upon meaning and develop motivation. Radhika (1991) on the other hand argues that some of the language activities and work with models on literariness of text can aid such development with increased response to and confidence in working with a language using a variety of integrated activities with language based hypotheses and in classes where investigative, student learning is the norm. This clearly points that language and literature are of mutual benefit to each other and should therefore be taught and examined as one and that teachers should avoid any sort of segregation. Venville et al. (2001) argue that integration enhances pupil engagement with the school. They emphasize that several studies show that providing an authentic curriculum well connected to the pupils' needs and interests and to the world outside of school can result in reducing alienation and raising participation and engagement.

2.2 Teacher training and the implementation of IEC

For effective implementation of the curriculum there is need for competence among the implementers of the curriculum. Farrant (1988) points out that teachers with little or no training tend to use authoritarian and inefficient pedagogy and make students to take schools as repressive places with little to enjoy. It is therefore necessary that a high quality

calibre of teachers be produced both through pre-service and in-service programs of training teachers. Bishop (1986) as cited in Basweti (2014) asserts that a teacher is able to educate others if he/she is well educated. Umeda (2014) in his study, the teaching of English in Secondary schools in Japan: from curriculum to classroom discovered that teachers of English in Japan often have little relevant pre-service or in-service training and therefore tend to imitate the approach which they are most familiar with that is, teacher centered methods. He particularly emphasizes that pre-service courses for teachers of English appear to be characterized by some glaring omissions. This he says has contributed to a large number of learners not being able to communicate in English after secondary school. Menya (1994) cites that for instructional programs to be effective and well taught out there is need that the curriculum material for training teachers both at pre-service and in-service is well developed. Sifuna (1991) argues that for effective implementation of educational programs a good teacher training program is the main element that will ensure success. He adds that there cannot be quality education if the attitudes and competencies of the teachers are not examined and that failure of the education system is caused by poor teacher training. Magoma (1999) in his study recommends that teacher education institutions should ensure to teach English and Literature as an integrated course to teacher trainees and so be done by highly qualified personnel. He recommends frequent and continuous in-servicing of teachers of IEC. Okwara, Shiundu and Indoshi (2009) in their study propose constant in-servicing of teachers to create awareness of the learners needs. This is because their study concluded that the integrated approach had not been understood uniformly and fully by the teachers of IEC.

Basweti (2014) who examined factors influencing the implementation of integrated English curriculum in Public secondary schools in Transmara West District, Kenya observed that training in teaching English and literature as integrated has partially been achieved and this was an indicator that lack of appropriate teacher training posed as negative factor leading to the poor implementation of IEC in public schools. This therefore poses a challenge to the teachers and when they get to school, they end up teaching these skills as separate entities. There is also a need to keep updating the teacher's skills and competencies to keep abreast with the changing trends. This will ensure that the teachers acquire additional skills which will make them be able to cope with the changing environment in their profession. Linet (2014) who examined the teacher related factors influencing implementation of IEC in Ekerenyo Division observed that in-service training is beneficial to the teacher as it improves the teachers' general educational background, knowledge and understanding of their teaching subjects, developing teaching strategies and how to use new technologies, improved professionalism and ethics, providing knowledge and skills linked to the ever changing needs of a dynamic society. This is in agreement with Njoka (1994) who notes that initial teacher training is not adequate for continued professional development he emphasizes that teachers should be given opportunities to acquire additional skills that will enable them to adapt to the changing environments in their profession. KIE (2002) also supports

this that the IEC and that it calls for teachers of English to be supported through in-service training to equip them with new skills and knowledge necessary for implementation. In-servicing of teachers also ensures that the teachers maintain competence especially with the onset of new innovations. It is therefore imperative that the pre-service teacher education curriculum be tailor made to cater for integration. Teachers should constantly be in –serviced to improve their competencies.

3. Materials and Methods

This study employed a descriptive survey design. This design allowed for cross referencing of data collected from various respondents. The study was conducted in public secondary schools in Nandi East Sub County, Nandi County in the republic of Kenya. The target population was 48 teachers of English, 24 heads of department and 24 head teachers and all the 3000 students of the 24 public secondary schools. Twelve head teachers, 12 heads of departments, 24 teachers of English from the selected schools participated in the study. This is because this was a representative sample as it was above 30% of the population. Further, 10.0% of the students (300) were involved in the study. The researcher used interview guide (for principals) and questionnaires (for students and teachers separately) as the research instruments. Both qualitative and quantitative were analyzed. Descriptive statistics was used to analyze the data. The data was coded then entered into the computer. Quantitative data was analyzed where percentages and frequencies were calculated using SPSS version 17.0.

4. Results and Discussions

4.1 Demographic data of respondents

Table 1: Demographic data of respondents

Details	Frequency	Percent
Teachers Age		
21-25 years	2	8.3
26-30 years	12	50.0
31-35 years	7	29.2
36-40 years	3	12.5
Highest Qualification		
Diploma	4	16.7
BED	20	83.3

The majority of teachers were aged between 26-30 years (50%) while only 12.5% of the teachers were aged between 36-40 years meaning that there were very few teachers with many years of experience in the sub County. A majority (83.3%) of the teachers had Bachelor of Education as their highest qualification. Their educational qualification was considered in the study so as to determine the respondents training level.

4.2 Teacher training on the teaching of English as an integrated course

The researcher sought to know if the respondents were trained to teach English literature as an integrated course. The researcher wanted to find out whether English and Literature units were taught independently or whether they are taught in integrated form during pre-service. Opinion was equally divided as 12(50.0%) said yes and another 12(50.0%) said no. Magoma (1999) in his study recommends that teacher education institutions should ensure to teach English and Literature as an integrated course to teacher trainees and so be done by highly qualified personnel. The study agrees with Magoma (1999) and recommends that teacher educators must tailor make the curriculum to ensure that teaches to be are taught how to integrate English and literature.

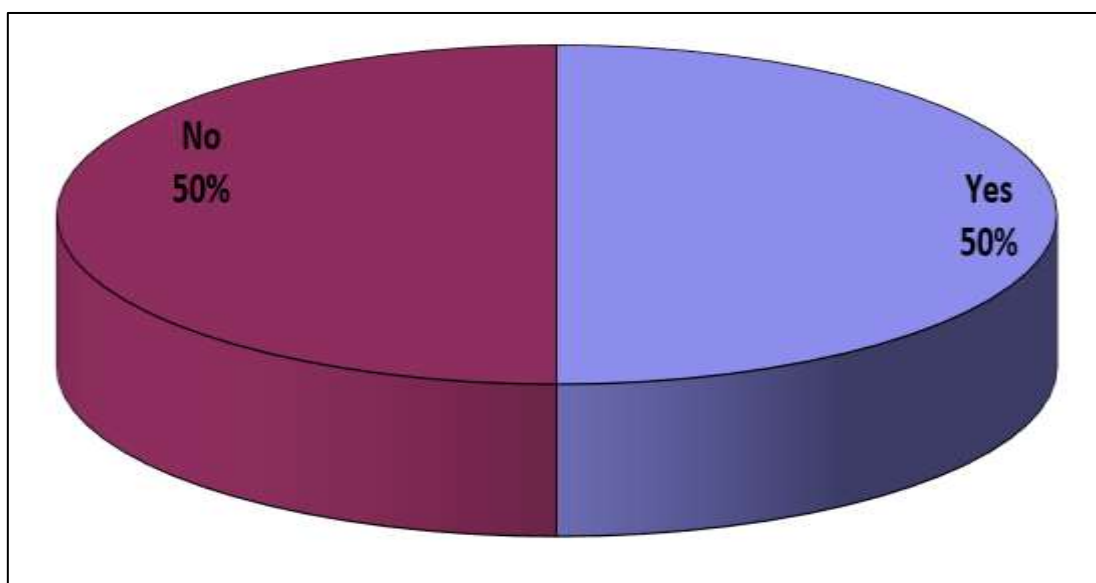


Figure 1: Teachers responses to whether they were trained to teach English Literature as an Integrated Course

This reveals that an equal number of teachers were trained as those who were not trained. This findings agree with those of Basweti (2014) who examined factors influencing the implementation of integrated English curriculum in Public secondary schools in Transmara West District, Kenya observed that training in teaching English and literature as integrated has partially been achieved and this was an indicator that lack of appropriate teacher training posed as negative factor leading to the poor implementation of IEC in public schools.

4.3 Teachers rating of their pre-service training

The researcher sought to find out the respondents' opinion on the pre-service training they had received. Sifuna (1991) argues that a well-designed and effectively implemented teacher training program is the key element to the successful implementation and institutionalization of change programs. He attributes failure of the intended educational changes mainly to ineffective teacher training. Menya (1994) too asserts that instructional programs can only be effective, imaginative and sound if curriculum material for teacher

education at both pre-service and in-service are mounted and developed. This therefore shows that there is need for high quality training for teachers.

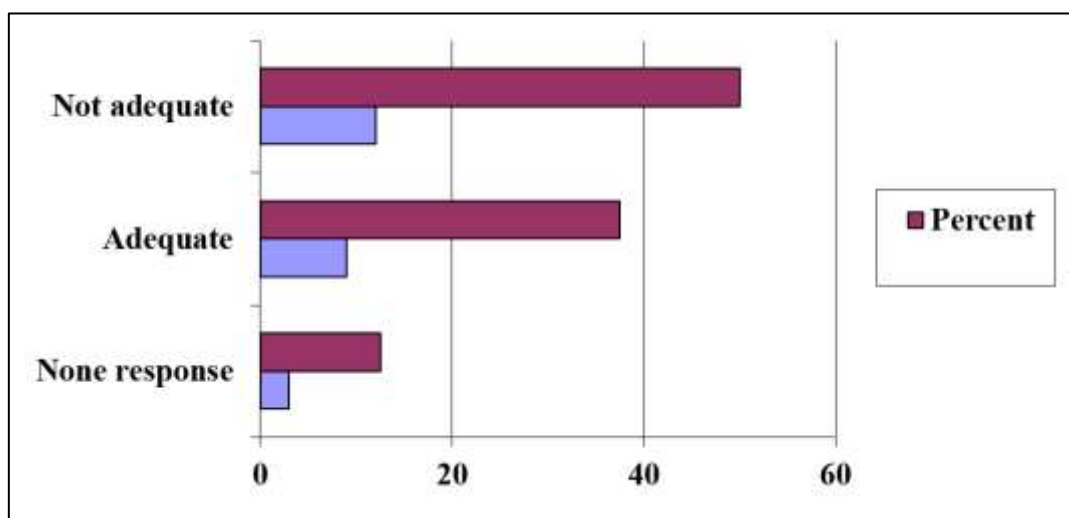


Figure 2: Teachers Rating of their Pre-service Training

A majority of the teachers 12(50.0%) said it was not adequate and 9(37.5%) said it was adequate. This shows that pre-service training is not adequate. The study also sought to find out why the teachers felt that the pre-service training was not adequate. The results are as in Table 2.

Table 2: Teachers rating of their pre-service training

Responses	Frequency	Percent
None response	8	33.3
Did not prepare teachers to English as an integrated course	2	8.3
Improve mode of teaching	4	16.7
Integration done at that level	2	8.3
Irrelevant	1	4.2
Less teaching methodology	1	4.2
Not much program	1	4.2
Tertiary institutions do not organize trainings	1	4.2
Well equip	4	16.7
Total	24	100.0

On being asked to explain why it was not adequate, a majority 4(16.7%) said it needs to improve mode of teaching on integration, 4(16.7%) said it needs to be well equipped, 2(8.3%) said it does not prepare teachers to English as an integrated course another 2(8.3%) said that integration done at that level. A majority of the principals were also in agreement that the pre-service training was not adequate since some of their teachers were still finding it difficult to teach English and literature as an integrated course. Some noted that some of their teachers were not aware of what integration was all about. This therefore means that there was need to improve the pre-service training.

4.4 Teachers attendance of in-service on implementation of IEC

KIE (2002) calls for teachers of English to be supported through in-service training to equip them with new skills and knowledge necessary for implementation. This is in agreement with Njoka (1994) who notes that initial teacher training is not adequate for continued professional development he emphasizes that teachers should be given opportunities to acquire additional skills that will enable them to adapt to the changing environments in their profession. The study therefore sought to know if the respondents had attended in-service on implementation of IEC. Their responses were as in Figure 3.

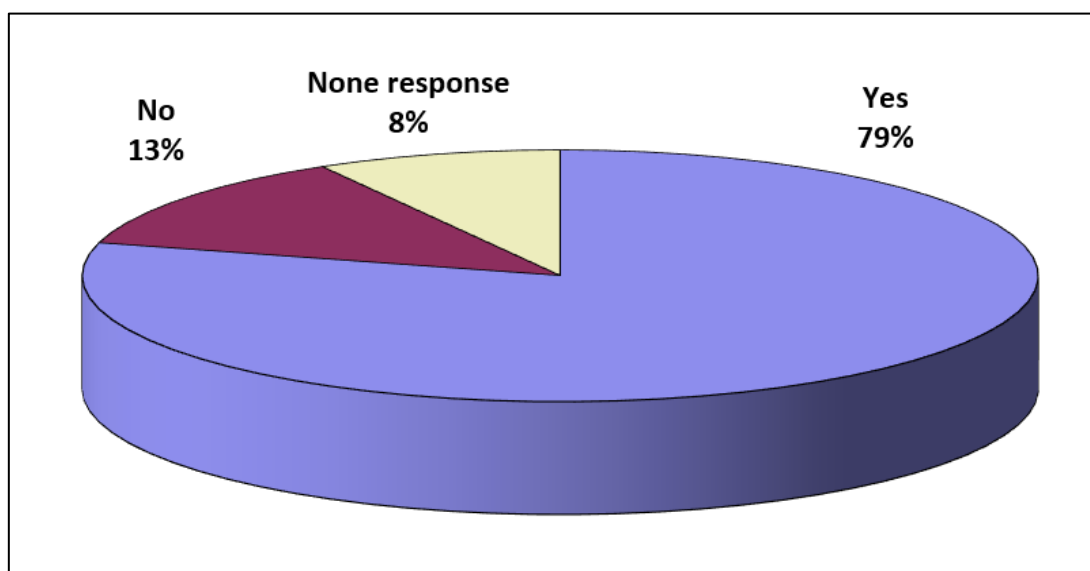


Figure 3: Teachers responses on whether they had attended in-service on Implementation of IEC

From the findings presented in Figure 3 a majority of the teachers 19(79.2%) said that they had attended in-service training while a mere 3(12.5%) said they had not attended. It is therefore evident that most of the teachers have attended in-service on implementation of IEC.

The researcher also sought to find out how many times the respondents had attended in-service training. Table 3 presents the results.

Table 3: Frequency of in-service training attended by teachers of IEC

Number	Frequency	Percent
One	3	12.5
Two	6	25.0
Three	3	12.5
More than five	6	25.0
None response	6	25.0
Total	24	100.0

From the findings in Table 2 it is evident that most teachers have attended a number of in-service. The HODs also agreed that the teachers had been able to go for in-service

trainings often. They indicated that whenever they got invitations for in-service trainings, they made sure to organize for their teachers to attend. A majority of HODs also confirmed that the head teachers of their schools were very supportive in allowing the teachers to attend the trainings. The head teachers too made sure to allow their teachers to attend in-service trainings often.

4.5 Topics covered during in-service training

The respondents were asked which topics were covered during the in-service trainings they had attended. The responses are provided in Table 4:

Table 4: Topics covered during in-service training

Topics	Frequency	Percent
None response	5	20.8
Examination tips	3	12.5
Implementation of IEC and evaluation	2	8.3
Integrated English/Literature	2	8.3
Listening and speaking skills, set books	1	4.2
Methods of teaching oral skills	10	41.7
Teaching grammar and poetry	1	4.2
Total	24	100.0

A majority 10(41.7%) said methods of teaching oral skills, 3(12.5%) said examination tips, 2(8.3%) said implementation of IEC and evaluation, another 2(8.3%) said integrated English literature while 1(4.2%) said listening and speaking skills, set books and 1(4.2%) teaching grammar and poetry. This shows that methods of teaching oral skills are the most commonly covered topic in in-service training.

4.6 Suggested areas for in-service training

Table 5: Areas recommended by teachers to be covered during in-service

Topics	Frequency	Percent
None response	4	16.7
Evaluation	2	8.3
How to handle set books	2	8.3
How to manage schools	1	4.2
IEC	1	4.2
Literary appreciation	1	4.2
Literature	2	8.3
Literature skills	1	4.2
More on integrated English/Literature	2	8.3
Poetry, oral literature	4	16.7
Second language acquisition and its challenges	1	4.2
Special need education	2	8.3
Teaching methods in literature	1	4.2
Total	24	100.0

The study asked the respondents which topics areas they would like to cover during in-service training. The results are given in Table 5.

A majority 4(16.7%) said poetry, oral literature, 2(8.3%) said evaluation with another 2(8.3%) saying how to handle set books, Literature, more on integrated and special need education. This shows that most teachers would like the topic oral literature skills taught more since they felt they were not well equipped to teach oral literature.

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

The study found out that a majority of the teachers had attained a Bachelor of Education undergraduate degree and therefore met the threshold for teaching Integrated English Curriculum in secondary schools in Kenya. Result showed that in classrooms practice, half of the teachers taught English as integrated whereas the other half taught English and Oral Literature as separate subjects. This was due to the fact that a considerable number of teachers were taught in colleges and universities to teach English and Oral Literature as separate whereas others were trained to teach the subject as integrated. Considering the government expects teachers to teach the subject as integrated, the Ministry of Education has been providing in-service training to teachers but 50.0% of teachers surveyed felt that the training received was not adequate. This is despite 79.2% of teachers indicating to have at least attended one training session on IEC teaching. The teachers however were in agreement that there was still needed to improve the pre-service training of teachers of IEC. (91.7%) of the teachers were in support of In-service training citing that it keeps teachers in touch with the changing trends in the teaching of IEC. Teachers of English indicated that teacher training strongly influenced the implementation of IEC. The paper concludes that despite teachers supporting the need for pre-service and in-service training, the programme failed to adequately address the instructional demands brought by IEC in public secondary schools in Nandi Hills Sub County, Kenya. Based on the study findings that pre-service training was not adequate, Pre-service training of teachers should be tailor made to ensure that English and Literature are taught as an integrated course by the teacher education colleges. This should be done by merging English and literature courses at the teacher education institutions so as to prepare the trainees on integration.

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