



## DESIGNING COMPETENCY BASED HIGHER EDUCATION CURRICULUM: STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

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### **Abstract:**

Emerging educational trends globally and the changing needs of society and learners dictate the need for regular curriculum reviews and development in higher education. This is a concept paper on the curriculum design process for Competency Based Higher Education. The drive to write this concept paper was induced by curriculum reforms in Kenya in basic education levels with a focus on Competency Based Curriculum. The paper draws examples from the experiences and expectations in Kenya. The author of this paper is a specialist in Curriculum Studies and a senior faculty member in School of Education in a public university in Kenya and wished to contribute to this area for quality higher education. The paper discusses the need for Competency Based Higher Education and the theoretical perspectives that inform the curriculum design process for Competency Based Higher Education. The paper expounds on effective strategies and actions in the curriculum design process for Competency Based Higher Education for quality and relevance. The paper uses documentary analysis method in achieving the purpose. The ideas advanced in this paper add on the available literature on Competency Based Education and curriculum design activities. Universities and ministries of education will find the paper useful in the curriculum design endeavours for higher education and especially on curriculum design for Competency Based Higher Education.

**Keywords:** Competency Based Higher Education, Competency Based Curriculum, curriculum design, quality, relevance, curriculum review and development

### **1. Introduction**

With the explosion of knowledge, higher education programmes need frequent reviews to keep pace with the needs of the society and the learners (World Bank, 2019; UNESCO, 2000). This is a concept paper on the curriculum design process for Competency Based Higher Education (CBHE). The drive to write this concept paper was induced by

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curriculum reforms in Kenya at basic education levels with a focus on Competency Based Curriculum (CBC). The author of this paper is a teacher educator in a public university in Kenya and wished to contribute to this area for quality higher education. The paper uses the documentary analysis method in achieving the purpose.

## 2. Curriculum Reforms in Kenya

Kenya has had various curriculum reforms since its independence in 1963. The Basic Education Curriculum Framework (BECF) reforms in Kenya focus on Competency Based Curriculum (CBC) and the implementation was done from the year 2018 in basic education (KICD, 2019; Syomwene, 2022). The reforms in basic education replaced the structure and principles of the 8:4:4 system of education enacted in 1985 which was criticized for not providing flexible education pathways for identifying and nurturing the talents and interests of learners early enough to prepare them for the world of work, career progression and sustainable development (KICD, 2019).

As at 2023, the pioneer class of CBC in Kenya is at Junior secondary school (three years level) which means that the beneficiaries of the curriculum are expected at the university from the year 2029 onwards after the Senior secondary school level (three years level). To adequately prepare teachers for Junior and Senior secondary education, teacher education departments in Higher Education in Kenya are compelled to review their programmes for quality and relevance. As Syomwene (2018) opines, a central resource in quality curriculum implementation is the availability of adequately trained teachers. Teachers teaching in both Junior and Senior secondary education in Kenya have to be competent on CBC for quality education in basic education levels and beyond. Being a teacher educator in a university in Kenya, I wish to mention that curriculum review for teacher education programmes in many universities in Kenya for Competency Based Higher Education (CBHE) is underway and hence the significance of this paper.

Instructors in higher education have the task to design the programmes and courses they offer in various departments. The implication of the current curriculum reforms in Kenya is that universities in Kenya are expected to revise their programmes to align with CBC. In addition, departments are expected to develop new courses where appropriate to cater to any new content areas in the CBC offered in basic education to allow smooth transition of learners to the university. This paper shall add to the available literature on curriculum design for CBHE Curriculum for Kenya and elsewhere.

This paper provides requisite knowledge on the expectations in curriculum design for CBHE. One condition in the successful implementation of curriculum innovations is the understanding of the change by the stakeholders (Carl, 2012; Syomwene, Nyandusi & Yungungu, 2017). Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth (2006) opine that changing practices require a deep understanding on the part of educators. According to World Bank (2019), quality higher education needs to be flexible, creative, innovative, developing and evolving to meet students' and society's needs. Instructors in higher education in Kenya have to master the skills of aligning their programmes and courses to the dictates of CBC and other emerging educational trends.

### 3. Competency Based Higher Education

To this end, it is pertinent to define some key terms as used in this paper. A curriculum is a programme of study. Syomwene, Nyandusi & Yungungu, (2017) define curriculum design as the structure, pattern or organization of the curriculum. It's the way the elements of the curriculum are arranged and aligned to facilitate instruction. Higher education refers to education offered in universities and other tertiary institutions.

According to the Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary, competence is the ability to do something successfully or efficiently. Competence Based Curriculum (CBC) is an outcome-based curriculum that is centered on mastery of skills and application of knowledge and skills to real life. In this paper, the terms Competency Based Curriculum (CBC) and Competency Based Education (CBE) are treated synonymously.

This paper is centred on curriculum design for Competency Based Higher Education. In this paper, the curriculum design process for Competency Based Higher Education (CBHE) is conceptualized as an innovative and transformative way of designing the higher education curriculum with a focus on the expected graduates' expertise as reflected in the job market. The aim is to achieve a thorough preparation of the graduates for the job market through mastery and application of knowledge and skills. Effective CBHE curriculum is practical oriented, need centred and conforms to the local and global expectations of university graduates in the job market. Kenya Vision 2030 aims to transform Kenya into a newly industrializing middle-income country and providing a high quality of life to all its citizens by 2030 (RoK, 2008). This can be achieved through success in training highly qualified graduates who perform well in the labor market. World Bank (2019) opines that quality and relevance in Higher Education can be achieved through innovative curricular and pedagogical practices as proposed in this paper.

The employability of graduates is integral in the design of CBHE curriculum. Fry, Ketteridge & Marshall (2009: 503) define employability as a set of achievements, skills, understandings and personal attributes that make graduates more likely to gain employment and be successful in their chosen occupations. With recent cases of graduates' unemployment in Kenya and other parts of the world, CBHE is a timely endeavour in making the curriculum for higher education relevant and significant in enhancing a country's national and economic development. CBHE curriculum enhances the achievement of the fifth objective of university education in Kenya on the promotion of high standards and quality of teaching and research (RoK, 2016) and the fourth Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) on quality education (UN, 2015). World Bank (2019) observes that the demand for advanced cognitive skills, socio-behavioral skills, and skill combinations associated with greater adaptability is rising in higher education. Many employers in Sub-Saharan Africa, Kenya included have cited an inadequately skilled labor force as a major constraint (World Bank, 2019). The quality curriculum design process for CBHE as expounded in this paper is an indispensable endeavour both locally and globally.

## 4. Theoretical Perspectives in Designing Competency Based Higher Education (CBHE) Curriculum

Curriculum design process is a theory-based undertaking. In this section, is a discussion of two theories that effectively inform curriculum design for CBHE.

### 4.1 Revised Blooms Taxonomy of Educational Objectives

Dynamics in 21<sup>st</sup> Century curriculum design endeavors can be effectively anchored under the revised Blooms taxonomy. The revised Blooms taxonomy was advanced by a group of educationists in the year 2001 in the publication '*A taxonomy of learning, teaching and assessing*' edited by Anderson, L. W and Krathwohl, D. R. In this book, the authors present the cognitive development levels of the Blooms taxonomy, sequenced from simple to complex with various verbs to explain them as opposed to nouns in the original version of Blooms taxonomy dated 1956 as illustrated below:

- a) **Remember:** Recognizing, Recalling,
- b) **Understand:** Interpreting, Exemplifying, Classifying, Summarizing, Inferring, Comparing, Explaining,
- c) **Apply:** Executing, Implementing,
- d) **Analyze:** Differentiating, Organizing, Attributing,
- e) **Evaluate:** Checking, Critiquing,
- f) **Create:** Generating, Planning, Producing.

In addition, the authors of the revised Blooms taxonomy propose a continuum characterized by four knowledge levels to guide the curriculum design process: The four knowledge levels are again sequenced from simple to complex and include:

- a) **Factual knowledge:** The basic elements students must know to be acquainted with a discipline or solve problems in it.
- b) **Conceptual knowledge:** The interrelationships among the basic elements within a larger structure that enable them to function together.
- c) **Procedural knowledge:** How to do something, methods of inquiry, and criteria for using skills, algorithms, techniques, and methods.
- d) **Metacognitive knowledge:** Knowledge of cognition in general as well as awareness and knowledge of one's own cognition.

21<sup>st</sup> Century curriculum trends have put a demand on instructors in higher education to design learner centered programmes and courses that can propel their countries in the achievement of the 4<sup>th</sup> SDG on quality education (UN, 2015). The revised Blooms taxonomy is an effective framework in this endeavor. Ordered from simple to complex, the six levels of cognitive development and the verbs that explain them, compounded by the four knowledge levels offer a standard guideline on curriculum design process for higher education with a learner centered orientation.

In the curriculum design process, instructors can borrow heavily from the revised Bloom's taxonomy in the selection, statement and sequencing of expected learning outcomes, content, teaching methods, learning activities, instructional resources, and assessment methods.

## 4.2 Tyler's Model of Curriculum Development

Tyler's model of curriculum development is a classical approach that has been widely used globally in curriculum design ventures. The theory is discussed in Tyler's book, *'Basic principles of curriculum and instruction'* of 1949.

In this model, Tyler advances four fundamental questions which have to be answered systematically in the curriculum development and design process and include:

- a) What educational purposes should the school seek to attain?
- b) What educational experiences can be provided that are likely to attain these purposes?
- c) How can these educational experiences be effectively organized?
- d) How can we determine whether these purposes are being attained?

The four questions suggest a sequential four-step process in the curriculum development process: statement of objectives, selection of learning experiences, organization of learning experiences, and evaluation. According to Tyler, the first step is stating the objectives and it is the most important as all the others emanate from and are informed by this step. Tyler postulated three sources of curriculum objectives: the learners, the society and suggestions from subject specialists. This involves an analysis of the needs, interests and abilities of the learners for whom the curriculum is prepared as well as the needs, aspirations and challenges in society (Syomwene & Kimengi, 2014). According to Tyler, the curriculum objectives must be filtered through philosophical and psychological screens to obtain significant and specific objectives. This is then followed by the selection of learning experiences; organization of learning experiences and evaluation in the curriculum design process.

Tyler's model informs the curriculum design process in higher education in many ways. First is the emphasis on objectives also known as expected learning outcomes in the curriculum design process. Second, the step-by-step procedure outlined in this model is an indication of the noteworthy elements and logistics in the curriculum development and design process.

## 5. Curriculum Design Process for Competency Based Higher Education

The curriculum design process is primarily centred on appropriate selection, sequencing, alignment and organization of the elements of the curriculum for quality instruction. Elements of curriculum include expected learning outcomes (also known as objectives), content, instructional methods, learning activities and assessment methods (Syomwene, Nyandusi & Yungungu, 2017; Ornstein & Hunkins, 2018).

In Kenya, universities work independently in designing courses and programmes. According to CUE (2014:46), an academic programme for university education, shall facilitate a balanced learning process, ensuring that the students are able to acquire such cognitive, affective and psychomotor skills as are consistent with the educational goals and aspirations of Kenyans. I wish to mention that currently, the aspirations for Kenyans are centred on CBC and thus the inspiration to write this paper.

In this section, I wish to narrow down to the strategies in the design of course descriptions and course outlines by instructors in higher education. In Kenya, the Commission for University Education (CUE) provides standards and guidelines on how instructors should perform these noble roles (CUE, 2014). For an effective CBHE curriculum, this paper proposes some strategies that can enhance the process for quality purposes in Higher Education.

A course is a unit of study in a programme (CUE, 2014). In most cases, a course description and a course outline are treated synonymously. However, this paper points out at a slight distinction between the two. A course description is a write-up with information about a course in a particular programme. It specifies the What? the Why; and the How? about the course. This includes the course code and title, the course purpose, expected learning outcomes; course content; mode of delivery; instructional methods; instructional materials; assessment methods and reading list (CUE, 2014).

On the other hand, a course outline is derived from the course description and has similar components but it details the content of the course and specifies the specific times in the semester when the topics shall be covered. The course outline is shared with the students during the first week of the semester for information about the course expectations.

In this section, the requirements of a course description and/or course outline in the curriculum design for higher education are discussed following the principles of CBE. The parts of a course description and/or course outline are explained:

### **A. Course Code and Title**

Every course is named by a course code and title stated in a brief and clear statement that is descriptive of the content of the course (CUE, 2014). The courses in a programme must be related to the programme purpose, programme learning outcomes and philosophy.

### **B. Course Purpose**

This is the general aim of the course. It is stated preferably in one sentence and should be derived from the course title.

### **C. Expected Learning Outcomes**

These are the specific behavioral changes expected in the learners after undertaking the course. In CBE, the term 'expected learning outcomes' has replaced the older terminology of 'objectives'. Expected learning outcomes emanate from the course purpose. They specify the skills or competencies that should be developed in the learners (UNESCO, 2000). For CBHE curriculum, the expected learning outcomes should be specific of the expected competences in the learners. The emphasis should be on what the learner should be able to do not know. The expected learning outcomes should be learner centered, concisely and precisely articulated (CUE, 2014). They should be sequenced from simple to complex based on the cognitive levels in the revised Bloom's taxonomy. In addition, they should be stated in action verbs and should be Specific, Measurable,

Achievable, Realistic and Time Bound (SMART) (Syomwene, Nyandusi & Yungungu, 2017).

#### **D. Course Content**

This is the subject matter to be covered in the course. It includes clearly stated topics and sub-topics that are relevant and drawn from the expected learning outcomes. The course content should be sequenced in meaningful ways: spiral arrangement, from simple to complex, from concrete to abstract, from known to the unknown, logical sequencing (Syomwene, Nyandusi & Yungungu, 2017; UNESCO, 2000). In addition, the course content should be sufficient for the duration of the course such as a semester (CUE, 2014). It should not be too broad or too narrow considering the time given in the programme for course coverage.

#### **E. Instructional Methods**

These are the procedures of content delivery. They should be aligned to the expected learning outcomes. CBHE curriculum demands a shift from teacher centred to learner centered instructional methods. These are interactive approaches that provide the learners with the opportunities to experience and practice the behaviour stated in the expected learning outcomes. This happens when learners are permitted to: do something, communicate, think, reflect, collaborate, solve problems, be creative, be critical, apply knowledge and skills to real life, and assess situations among others. World Bank (2019) advises higher education institutions in Kenya on the need to move away from traditional teaching methods and make teaching and learning more interactive, collaborative, and experiential for quality education. Some effective instructional methods in higher education in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century include interactive lectures, experiential learning, discussion method, case method, problem-based learning, enquiry-based learning, research-based learning and project writing.

#### **F. Instructional Resources**

These are the instructional tools that aid learning. For effectiveness, in CBHE curriculum, they should contribute to the achievement of the expected learning outcomes, be appropriate and relevant. A variety of instructional materials make learning interesting.

#### **G. Assessment Methods**

Education assessment is the process of determining the extent to which learners have acquired specified knowledge, skills, values, attitudes, abilities and competencies. Assessment methods are strategies of finding out if the expected learning outcomes have been achieved. CBHE demands continuous assessment from the beginning to the end of the course. Instructors should incorporate both formative assessment (continuous assessment tests and tasks) and summative assessment (end of semester exams) in their curriculum designs. The weighting of each assessment method should be specified (UNESCO, 2000). Fry, Ketteridge & Marshall (2009) opine that facilitating students to achieve learning outcomes means setting assessment tasks that support learning. World

Bank (2019) supports the use of competency-based assessment in higher education to enhance students' acquisition of 21<sup>st</sup>-century skills. It says that universities need to implement assessment strategies different from the ranking and classifying practices that are commonly applied. The CBC for Kenya recognizes the importance of assessment, both as a tool of learning and as a means of establishing the extent to which the desired learning outcomes have been developed (KICD, 2019).

In recent times, there is an emphasis on a variety of assessment methods in CBC for Kenya.

First, is *assessment for learning* (formative assessment). This is carried out during the learning process to provide immediate feedback to both the learner and the teacher (KICD, 2019). It occurs throughout the learning process. With competency-based assessment in higher education, the emphasis is more on formative assessment as opposed to summative assessment (World Bank, 2019).

Second, is *assessment of learning* (summative assessment). Summative assessments are used to evaluate students' learning, skill acquisition, and academic achievement at the conclusion of a defined instructional period (KICD, 2019). They are used to gauge the achievement of expected learning outcomes. CBC for Kenya advocates a balance between formative and summative assessment (KICD, 2019).

The third, assessment method is *assessment as learning*. Assessment as learning occurs when students monitor their own learning and use the feedback from this monitoring to make adjustments, adaptations, and even major changes in what they understand (Manitoba Education, Citizenship & Youth, 2006). The emphasis and focus in CBC for Kenya is to foster learners' skills of self-assessment such as self-monitoring, and self-correction, self-reflection to promote self-awareness of strengths and weaknesses in their learning (KICD, 2019). Assessment as learning focuses on students and emphasizes assessment as a process of metacognition (knowledge of one's own thought processes) for students (Manitoba Education, Citizenship & Youth, 2006).

## H. Reading List

A course description or outline has to include the reading list. This includes the core texts recommended for the course, other supplementary texts and journals. CBHE curriculum demands that the reading lists should be related to the content of the course, current and appropriate for the achievement of the expected learning outcomes (UNESCO, 2000). In addition, it is important for curriculum designers in HE to use materials authored both locally and internationally; and both hard copy texts and e-resource publications.

### 5.1 Constructive Alignment in Curriculum Design Process

In the curriculum design process in higher education, constructive alignment is emphasized. Constructive alignment implies the compatibility of the expected learning outcomes to the content, learning activities, instructional methods, resources, assessment methods and reading lists (Fry, Ketteridge & Marshall, 2009). World Bank (2019) notes that instructors in higher education require skills in designing teaching and learning experiences and especially on aligning expected learning outcomes, activities, and



assessments. This calls for frequent refresher courses for instructors on the curriculum design process for CBHE and thus the significance of this concept paper.

## 5.2 Recommended Characteristics for Competency Based Higher Education Curriculum

This paper recommends some basic characteristics of CBHE curriculum. The examples in this section are drawn from Kenya:

- **Integration of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills**

For effective design of CBHE, integration of 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills is a prerequisite. Great Schools Partnership (2020) define 21st Century Skills as comprising a broad set of knowledge, skills, work habits, and character traits that are believed by educators, school reformers, college professors, employers, and others to be critically important to success in today's world.

Twenty-first century skills comprise four main knowledge domains:

- a) Ways of thinking (creativity, critical thinking, innovation, problem solving, decision making, learning to learn)
- b) Ways of working (communication, collaboration);
- c) Tools for working (Information, Communication and Technology (ICT), information literacy;
- d) Living in the world (Life and career skills, citizenship, personal and social responsibility) (Chu et al, 2017; Erdem, 2019; Great Schools Partnership, 2020).

No matter how these skills are termed or grouped, they all have to do with dealing with the complex world we are living in (Erdem, Hakkı & Mehmet, (2019). In addition, these skills are not necessarily new. They have been in existence all along, but are being emphasized more in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. CBHE curriculum has to integrate the 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills for quality education and relevance. Assuring and achieving quality in higher education is the primary responsibility of higher education providers and their staff (World Bank, 2019).

For Kenya, integration of the seven core competences identified in basic education for CBC is paramount for CBHE. The vision of the Basic Education Curriculum Framework (BECF) in Kenya is to *"enable every Kenyan to become an engaged, empowered and ethical citizen" and the vision is 'nurturing every learner's potential'"* (KICD, 2019). To achieve this vision and mission for CBC, seven core competencies are identified: communication and collaboration; self-efficacy; critical thinking and problem solving; creativity and imagination; citizenship; digital literacy; and learning to learn (KICD, 2019: 21). The seven competences emanate from the 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills discussed previously in this paper. In the curriculum design process in higher education in Kenya, instructors have to integrate the seven core competences in the various components of programmes and courses for learners' smooth transition from the basic education level to the university.

- **Technology Integration**

Of importance in CBHE, is technology integration in course design and implementation. Technology is reshaping the demand for skills (World Bank, 2019) and is an important instructional media. According to World Bank (2019), Kenya is ranked one of the fastest-growing digital economies with high momentum and potential for growth in that about 25 percent of digital innovation start-ups in Africa are based in Kenya. Technology-enhanced learning makes learning interesting and meaningful.

- **Instructors are Guides and Facilitators of Learning**

As facilitators, instructors in higher education should oversee the learning process by encouraging students to take responsibility for their own learning. CBE enables instructors to act as role models for learners, caring for and inspiring every child to achieve his or her potential (KICD, 2019). Instructors should train the learners to be thinkers and creators of knowledge through reflection and application of knowledge gained. This begins with needs assessment and a statement of clear and specific learning outcomes. This necessitates an appropriate selection of content, learning activities, resources and assessment methods for quality CBHE.

- **The Curriculum Should be Learner Centred**

CBHE should permit active learning in which the learners engage with the learning tasks for better achievement of the expected learning outcomes. A learner centered curriculum is interactive. In the instructional process, interactions can be in various levels: teacher to student, student to student, and student to materials' interactions. For such interactions to take place, instructors have to use a variety of learning activities and materials.

Instructors should use a variety of techniques, often integrated with technology, to build active learning environments (Richey, Klein & Tracey, 2011; Syomwene, Nyandusi & Yungungu, 2017). According to Fry, Ketteridge & Marshall (2009), higher education demands students to operate at higher levels of thinking, creativity, problem-solving, autonomy and responsibility. The integration of these skills in the curriculum design process can be achieved in the selection and use of instructional methods, learning activities and resources. World Bank (2019) notes that pedagogical practices are very traditional in many higher education institutions in Kenya with overreliance on rote learning and outdated curricula that tends to be excessively theoretical. A paradigm shift to learner centred higher education is a timely endeavor in Kenya.

- **Application of Knowledge and Skills to Real Life Situations**

Each course or programme has its own set of expertise skills and processes that students need. These need to be identified and students given the opportunity to develop and practice them fully (Fry, Ketteridge & Marshall, 2009). The goal should be the appropriate application of knowledge, and not necessarily just its acquisition (KICD, 2017). Erdem, Hakkı & Mehmet, (2019) proposes that the curriculum should be relevant to students' lives. Instruction should be linked to real life contexts. This not only makes the instruction more interesting but also motivating (Richey, Klein & Tracey, 2011).

- **Community Service Learning**

Learners have to be provided with opportunities to apply their knowledge and skills in a real-world setting. According to KICD (2017), Community Service Learning (CSL) is an experiential learning strategy that integrates classroom learning and community service to enable learners to reflect, experience and learn from the community. The Kenya Vision 2030 places great emphasis on the link between education and the labor market (RoK, 2008). World Bank (2019) stresses the need for higher education institutions to strengthen links with industry as an effective way of increasing the relevance of higher education programmes. CSL provides experiential learning opportunities that enable learners to apply the acquired knowledge, skills, attitudes and values in different contexts while also strengthening school-community relationships (KICD, 2019).

- **Integration of Value-based Education**

CBC for Kenya is value based. Values can be defined as standards that guide an individual on how to respond or behave in a given circumstance (KICD, 2019). Value based education entails integration of ethical principles, morals, life skills and standards of behaviour for learners' holistic development. The teaching of values in Kenya facilitates the achievement of the basic education vision, particularly with respect to developing ethical citizens. For CBHE, curriculum designers should integrate values in their course designs. In Kenya, values such as love, peace, unity and national co-existence are essential in graduates' lives and for national development. Other values stated in the Kenya Constitution (2010) include responsibility, respect, excellence, care and compassion, understanding and tolerance, honesty and trustworthiness, trust, and being ethical.

- **Parental Empowerment and Engagement in Higher Education**

Parents are expected to not only safeguard the welfare of their children, but also get involved in their learning at all levels (KICD, 2019; Syomwene, 2022). Instructors have to work cooperatively with parents to achieve the mission of BECF: nurture learners potential (Syomwene, 2022). Higher Education institutions in Kenya have to develop strategies on parental empowerment and engagement. Student welfare departments have to communicate to parents more on their role in supporting their children's learning in higher education. Schools of Education have to incorporate parental engagement content and courses in the teacher education programmes for teacher empowerment in curriculum implementation for basic education in Kenya.

- **Differentiated Learning**

Every class has learners with varying ability levels, needs and aspirations. The varied needs of individual learners have to be factored into the curriculum design process in higher education. The mission of the basic education curriculum reforms in Kenya is nurturing every learner's potential (KICD, 2019).

- **Assessment**

A balance of both formative and summative assessments is key for CBHE. Assessment tasks should be aligned to the achievement of the expected learning outcomes of every course.

Other notable aspects for quality CBHE include inclusiveness, education for sustainable development, life skills, health education, social economic issues, teacher communities of practice and instructors' professional development.

## **6. Conclusion**

Competency Based Higher Education (CBHE) is inevitable for Kenya considering the global educational trends and curriculum innovations in the country. With the implementation of Competency Based Curriculum (CBC) in basic education levels in Kenya and for the smooth transition of learners from secondary schools to universities, the curriculum design strategies proposed in this paper will go a long way in enhancing quality and relevance in higher education in Kenya. With a Competency Based Higher Education (CBHE) curriculum, Kenya shall prepare graduates with hands on experiences required in the job market and in life. This will enable Kenya to compete globally and build effective systems for economic and national development.

### **Conflict of Interest Statement**

The author declares no conflicts of interest.

### **About the Author**

Prof. Anne Syomwene is a holder of an earned PhD in Curriculum Studies and an Associate Professor in the same field in Moi University, Kenya. She is currently the Dean, School of Education. She has previously served as a Chair of Department, Campus Coordinator and Teaching Practice Coordinator. She has published many papers in refereed journals and several books in the field of curriculum and instruction. She has supervised many post-graduate theses. Her research interests are on curriculum design, development and implementation; and gender issues in education. Her works can be accessed through the Google Scholar link: <https://scholar.google.com/citations?user=J3YqAjqAAAAJ&hl=en&oi=ao> and through profile webpage on her institution: <http://profiles.mu.ac.ke/annes/syomwenekisilu/>

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