

# Competence-Based Education Pedagogy and Its Infusion into Primary School Learning Activities: Experiences from Teachers in A Selected Cluster in Eswatini

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## ABSTRACT

*This study sought to explore how Competency-Based Education (CBE) pedagogy was implemented in the selected primary schools and to understand the experiences of teachers with this pedagogical approach. The study was rooted in mixed research method approach. For this study 24 respondents were selected through stratified random technique. Data was collected through an interview and semi-structured questionnaire. In analysing quantitative data, percentages were used and qualitative data was analysed according to emerging themes. This created the platform for quantitative and qualitative data to corroborate each other. From the analysed and interpreted data, it was revealed that seminars, peer tutoring, and workshops were commonly used approaches to prepare teachers for the integration of CBE pedagogy into all learning activities. The results showed that student-centred methods, such as problem-solving, inquiry-based learning, project-based learning, and design-based learning were at the centre of CBE pedagogy's integration into primary school learning activities. The integration of CBE pedagogy in primary school teaching and learning fosters flexible personalised learning with emphasis on skills development. Based on the results it can be concluded that to a larger extent the teachers in the selected primary schools cluster were facilitating the infusion of CBE pedagogy into learning activities. It can be recommended that continuous teachers' professional development to enhance their competencies in the infusion of CBE pedagogy into learning activities.*

**Keywords:** *Competence-Based Education pedagogy, Eswatini, infusion, learning activities, primary schools cluster.*

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## INTRODUCTION

Competency-Based Education (CBE) pedagogy is premised on the development of competences (knowledge, skills and attitudes) in each student as well as the promotion of national identity including inculcating values.<sup>1</sup> It is against this background that the CBE pedagogy has gained significant attention in recent years as a promising approach to improving student learning outcomes.<sup>2</sup> In Eswatini CBE was introduced in 2019 with the purpose of preparing students for the anxieties of the 21st century.<sup>3</sup> This educational framework focuses on the mastery of specific skills and knowledge, rather than traditional measures such as grades or seat time. Thus, it shifted focus from the traditional methods of learning to those methods targeted at developing competencies in students. The goal of this CBE is to better prepare students for the real-world challenges and improve the overall learning outcomes. However, the implementation of CBE pedagogy in Eswatini has faced several challenges, these include limited resources both human and material, and minimal training for the teachers.<sup>4</sup>

Despite the existence of these challenges, the government and schools continue to work towards improving the usefulness of CBE. It has been acknowledged by different scholars that, the CBE is instrumental in helping students to increase the mastery of 21<sup>st</sup> century skills, knowledge and developing of self confidence in problem solving.<sup>5</sup> In the context of primary education, CBE pedagogy has the potential to better prepare students for the demands of the 21st century workforce by emphasizing real-world competencies. The infusion of CBE pedagogy in primary schools requires a shift in teaching and learning practices, as teachers must adapt their instructional methods to align with the goals of the competency-based pedagogy.<sup>6</sup>

According to Tambak et al (2023), the infusion of this new curriculum in numerous countries across the world has been met with excitement, concerns and challenges of course.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Lukas Matati Josua, Cynthy Kaliinasho Haihambo, and Gilbert Likando, "Challenges School Management Experience with Inclusion of Learners with Visual Impairments: A Case of a Secondary School in Namibia," *Creative Education* 13, no. 11 (2022): 3559–80, <https://doi.org/10.4236/ce.2022.1311227>.

<sup>2</sup> Javiera Atenas, Leo Havemann, and Cristian Timmermann, "Reframing Data Ethics in Research Methods Education: A Pathway to Critical Data Literacy," *International Journal of Educational Technology in Higher Education* 20, no. 1 (February 20, 2023): 11, <https://doi.org/10.1186/s41239-023-00380-y>.

<sup>3</sup> Nokuthula Celumusa Dlamini, "Management Practices of Competency-Based Education by Primary School Principals in Eswatini," 2022, <https://uzspace.unizulu.ac.za/handle/10530/2378>.

<sup>4</sup> Kitasse Timothy and Ssembatya Henry Hollan, "Analysis of the Implementation of Competency-Based Curriculum in the Luganda Language Classroom in Selected Secondary Schools in Rubaga Division, Kampala District, Uganda," *Journal of Research Innovation and Implications in Education*, April 5, 2024, <https://doi.org/10.59765/bytr2475>.

<sup>5</sup> Boriss Misnevs and Igor Kabashkin, "Competence-Based Digital Framework for Education as a Service," 2023, 775–84, [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-28076-4\\_56](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-28076-4_56).

<sup>6</sup> Masduki Asbari and Wakhida Nurhayati, "Outcomes-Based Education in Indonesian Higher Education: Empowering Students' Learning Competencies," *International Journal of Social and Management Studies* 5, no. 5 (October 9, 2024): 1–6, <https://doi.org/10.5555/IJOSMAS.V5I5.445>.

<sup>7</sup> Syahraini Tambak et al., "Problem-Based Learning Methods: Is It Effective for Developing Madrasa Teacher Social Competence in Teaching?," *Journal of Education and Learning (EduLearn)* 17, no. 3 (August 1, 2023): 342–53, <https://doi.org/10.11591/edulearn.v17i3.20796>.

One of the concerns is teachers' readiness and competency in spearheading this new educational reform.<sup>8</sup> The curriculum framework stipulated the goals and the direction that the education sector should take to promote development of learning outcomes that will contribute to greater socio-economic achievement.<sup>9</sup> This initiative, initiated by the Eswatini government, was a strategic response to address the evolving needs of both society and the students. Recognizing the restrictions of traditional instructional methods, CBE pedagogy wanted to overhaul the basic education sector, redirecting its emphasis from rote memorization towards a more practical and competency-driven methods.<sup>10</sup> This interchange from content based to CBE pedagogy stresses the transformation in instructional strategies for proper actualization of the curriculum in primary school teaching and learning. However, concerns have been advanced pertaining the extent to which teachers are using the CBE pedagogy in nurturing primary school students. It is against this background that this study guided by the constructivist and social constructivist perspectives sought to contribute towards the closure of the identified gap guided by the following objective: To establish the extent to which primary school teachers were infusing CBE pedagogy in teaching and learning activities.

## METHOD

This section articulates the mixed method approach as the roadmap that guided data collection, analysis and interpretation. This approach provided a comprehensive picture of the respondents' experiences concerning the implementation of CBE pedagogy in primary school teaching and learning activities. In addition, this approach was seen as a catalyst for reflecting the issue under discussion. Triangulation was used to compare the quantitative data from the questionnaires with the qualitative data from interviews to validate findings and provide a more comprehensive understanding of teachers' experiences with CBE pedagogy. The structured questionnaire included questions on teachers' familiarity with CBE pedagogy, its implementation challenges, and perceived outcomes.<sup>11</sup> The interview guide

<sup>8</sup> Karimova Feruza Khamidullaevna and Hakimova Muhabbat, "Methodology of Formation of Students' Professional Competence Based on Innovative Approach," *ASEAN Journal of Educational Research and Technology* 3, no. 2 (December 12, 2023): 111–24, <https://ejournal.bumipublikasinusantara.id/index.php/ajert/article/view/418>; Pujun Chen et al., "Competence-Based Approaches in Curricula: A Comparative Analysis of Russian and Chinese Commercial Vocational Education and Training Programmes," *Research in Comparative and International Education* 19, no. 1 (March 5, 2024): 63–90, <https://doi.org/10.1177/17454999231219840>.

<sup>9</sup> Ministry of Education and Training, "The National Curriculum Centre(NCC)," accessed January 6, 2025, <https://www.gov.sz/index.php/departments-sp-799263136/the-national-curriculum-centre-ncc>; Jiutong Luo and Shengquan Yu, "Implementing a Key-Competence-Based Subject Knowledge Learning Tool in Chinese Middle Schools: The Direct and Sustained Effects," *Interactive Learning Environments* 32, no. 4 (April 20, 2024): 1348–67, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10494820.2022.2120018>.

<sup>10</sup> Juliane Angel A. Bigcas et al., "Extent of Teachers' Utilization of Pedagogical Approaches," *European Journal of Contemporary Education and E-Learning* 2, no. 3 (May 1, 2024): 131–40, [https://doi.org/10.59324/ejceel.2024.2\(3\).11](https://doi.org/10.59324/ejceel.2024.2(3).11).

<sup>11</sup> Samar Rahi, "Research Design and Methods: A Systematic Review of Research Paradigms, Sampling Issues and Instruments Development," *International Journal of Economics & Management Sciences* 06, no. 02 (2017), <https://doi.org/10.4172/2162-6359.1000403>.

focused on deeper insights into teachers' experiences with CBE, including their training, support, and views on its impact on student learning.

The sample size of 24 respondents was selected to provide sufficient depth and diversity in the data, enabling the researchers to explore various perspectives while maintaining practical constraints on time and resource. The collected data was reviewed for completeness and consistency. Incomplete or unclear responses were flagged for follow-up clarification. The data was also cross-checked to ensure it accurately reflected the respondents' experiences.

The respondents were selected proportionally to ensure that different subgroups within the target population were represented, such as teachers with varying levels of experience or teaching in different school settings. Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequency distributions, percentages, and possibly averages, and qualitative data was analysed according to the emerging themes so as to make the analysis and interpretation more effective to provide a clear picture of the patterns and trends in teachers' implementation of CBE pedagogy. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, and participation was voluntary. Respondents were assured that their responses would remain confidential and that they could withdraw from the study at any time without consequence.

## DISCUSSION

### Result

This section presents the main findings of the study based on the collected data. The results are systematically organized to align with the study's objectives, with subheadings used to delineate distinct aspects of the findings.

#### 1. Approaches Used to Prepare Teachers for the Infusion of Competence-Based Education (CBE)

##### a. Continuous Professional Development

A majority of respondents (54.2%) strongly agreed that continuous professional development, including in-service training and refresher courses, was essential for preparing teachers to implement CBE pedagogy. However, qualitative responses revealed concerns about the adequacy of these programs. One participant noted:

*"I desperately need professional grooming on this matter. We seem to be left alone without sufficient follow-up training."*

##### b. Seminars and Workshops

Over half of the respondents (54.2%) agreed that seminars and workshops played a significant role in equipping teachers with the necessary knowledge and skills for CBE implementation. A respondent highlighted their importance, stating:

*"I have attended several workshops, and they have been invaluable in helping me understand key strategies for transitioning to the CBE curriculum."*

- c. Collaboration Through Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)  
The use of PLCs was strongly endorsed by 70.8% of respondents, who emphasized the benefits of collaborative discussions on best practices. One teacher shared:  
*"Our PLC meetings allow us to collaborate with peers and exchange ideas to effectively implement CBE pedagogy in teaching and learning activities."*
- d. Integration of CBE Pedagogy into Teacher Training Programs  
A significant portion of respondents (64.2%) agreed on the importance of incorporating CBE pedagogy into pre-service teacher training programs to better prepare future educators for the shift to competency-based education.
2. Strategies Used to Infuse CBE Pedagogy into Learning Activities
- a. Differentiated Instruction  
Most respondents (62.5%) strongly agreed that differentiated instruction effectively addressed the diverse needs of students. One participant noted:  
*"It is crucial to consider students' unique abilities and adapt our teaching accordingly to ensure equitable learning opportunities."*
- b. Student-Centered Continuous Assessment  
A combined 90% of respondents (37.5% strongly agree, 52.5% agree) supported continuous assessment as a strategy to monitor student progress and tailor instructional methods. One teacher explained:  
*"I regularly assign tasks that allow students to work independently or in small groups, assessing their progress through presentations and peer feedback."*
- c. Individualized Learning  
Approximately 54% of respondents agreed that personalized learning approaches enabled students to progress at their own pace while ensuring mastery of each concept. A respondent stated:  
*"I design activities that accommodate individual learning speeds, fostering an environment conducive to flexible learning."*
- d. Mastery-Based Progression  
More than half of the respondents (58.3%) agreed that mastery-based progression ensured students developed a deep understanding of concepts before advancing to more complex topics.

## Discussion

In this section the respondents were asked to share their experiences concerning the infusion on CBE pedagogy in primary school teaching and learning activities. In the sub-section below approaches used in preparing primary school teachers in the selected cluster for the infusion of CBE pedagogy into learning activities are presented and analysed.

### ***Methods used to prepare teachers for the infusion of CBE pedagogy in primary school teaching and learning activities***

This section presents and analyses results concerning the respondents' views on the some of the approaches used in preparing teachers for the infusion of CBE pedagogy in primary school learning activities.

**Table 1.** Views on the approaches used in preparing teachers for the infusion of CBE pedagogy

Indicators	Strongly Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly Disagree (%)	Disagree (%)
1. Professional development opportunities through continuous in-service training.	54.2	16.6	25	4.2
2. Organizing seminars and workshops to equip teachers with CBE pedagogy knowledge and skills.	29.2	54.2	8.3	8.3
3. Opportunities to partner with other professionals in groups for collaborative training on CBE pedagogy.	70.8	16.7	10	2.5
4. Inclusion of CBE pedagogy in teacher training programmes.	16.7	64.2	16.7	2.4

### ***Professional development opportunities through continuous in-service training***

From Table 1 above it can be noted that slightly above half of the respondents (54.2%) strongly agreed with the notion that the provision of professional development opportunities through continuous in-service training and refresher courses as one of the approaches used to prepare teachers for the infusion of CBE pedagogy into learning activities in the primary school cluster under investigation. This concurred with the contribution from one of the interview sessions, which postulated that:

*I desperately need some professional grooming on this issue. All along I've been teaching Grade 7 guided by OBE [Outcome-Based Education] pedagogy. This year I was shifted to Grade 3 and new to this grade. This has coincided with the sudden introduction of this new creature has put me in a very tight corner professionally (Respondent 1)*

In the same vein, another respondent indicated that:

*We are expected to implement this new approach [CBE pedagogy] in the absence adequate orientation or in-service training. This has made it a bit difficult for us [teachers] to make necessary transformations in terms of instructional methods as per the new thrust's expectations. We seem to be wondering alone in this CBE pedagogy 'thing' leaving us doubting on the existence of INSET Department [Ministry of Education] (Respondent 9)*

In support, one of the respondents had this to say:

*To be honest with you, I do not know how to handle this CBE 'thing.' I depend only on information from my colleagues in the lower grades. But they too are in the dark since they had only been trained during those workshops when CBE was infused in their grades after which there had been no training. How I wish that the Ministry of Education provides regular trainings for all the affected grades yearly until the new approach is fully adopted by us as the main stakeholders (Respondent 3)*

From the above contributions it can be acknowledged that the respondents were of the feeling that continuous in-service training and refresher courses were not adequately taken

advantage of, as some of the professional development strategies in preparing primary school teachers for curriculum implementation. This is against the expectation of the CBE pedagogy that teachers should be adequately prepared to provide students with the opportunity to realize their full potential. In this case teachers need substantial knowledge, and skills to enable them to interact with the students, setting manageable standards and choosing appropriate instructional methods, which can accommodate students with diverse abilities.<sup>12</sup> This concurs Hawa (2023) who postulated that in-service education programmes have the potential to assist teachers in overcoming instructional challenges during the interactions with their students.<sup>13</sup> Thus, these professional development strategies are capable of helping teachers improve their instructional practices, resulting in successful infusion of the CBE pedagogy in primary school teaching and learning activities.<sup>14</sup>

### **Organizing seminars and workshops to equip teachers with CBE pedagogy knowledge and skills**

The respondents' opinions in Table 1 indicated that above half of them (54.2%) were strongly in agreement with the assertion that teachers can be equipped with the relevant CBE knowledge and skills through seminars and workshops. In this same vein a respondent acknowledged that:

*I am a subject panel member, and I have attended several seminars and workshops on the CBE implementation approach, and I have found them to be incredibly helpful. Through the, I have found them to be valuable in helping me understand the key concepts and strategies involved in transitioning to the CBE curriculum (Respondent 2)*

Another respondent echoed the similar sentiments and attested:

*We do appreciate the Ministry's effort to organize CBE seminars and workshops during infusion of CBE materials. This helps in giving us the idea of what this CBE is, and in eliminating the various misconceptions we had had about this new curriculum. However, there is a need for consistency in hosting more follow-up and empowering workshops. As things are, on the ground, workshops are a onetime event. Teachers do need an ongoing support and training to ensure they are up-to-date with best practices and strategies for teaching in this new approach (Respondent 2)*

This was a clear testimony that the selected respondents understood the need for primary school teachers to be staff development as they transit from using traditional instructional methods to the CBE pedagogy. This concurs with Michael et al (2023); Toven-Lindsey et al (2015) who postulated the essential facets of seminar and workshops in equipping teachers with the relevant professional and pedagogical toolkit to enable them to

<sup>12</sup> Denise H. Rhoney et al., "Evaluating the Need for Competency-Based Pharmacy Education (CBPE): The Report of the 2023–2024 Academic Affairs Standing Committee," *American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education* 88, no. 8 (August 2024): 100728, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ajpe.2024.100728>.

<sup>13</sup> Hawa Mpate, "Biology Teachers' Implementation of the Competence Based Curriculum in Tanzania: Challenges and Opportunities," *Journal of Biological Education*, December 14, 2023, 1–21, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00219266.2023.2282428>.

<sup>14</sup> F. R. Fairoz, "Application of Competency-Based Education in Lower Secondary Mathematics Education in Sri Lanka," 2025, 351–72, [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-97-4931-7\\_28](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-97-4931-7_28).

facilitate primary school teaching and learning activities in accordance with the CBE pedagogy requirements.<sup>15</sup> In addition, in other words, lack of teacher training support can lead to resistance and pushback from teachers, as they may feel overwhelmed by the demands of implementing a new educational approach without the necessary resources and guidance.<sup>16</sup> Thus, the education system needs to strengthen teacher professional development programmes to prepare primary school teachers for all the challenges, which might be encountered as they infuse the CBE pedagogy in their teaching and learning activities.

### ***Opportunities to partner with other professionals in groups for collaborative training on CBE pedagogy***

In this section the respondents' opinions concerning the use of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) for preparing teachers for the implementation of CBE pedagogy in primary school teaching and learning activities are looked at. The results presented in Table 1 indicated that most of the respondents (70.8%) were strongly in agreement on the use of PLCs in preparing teachers for the effective implementation of CBE pedagogy in primary school teaching and learning. One of the respondents indicated that:

*Our PLCs meetings often focus on both administrative and instructional strategies. This gives us more time to collaborate with peers and to share best practices for teaching that can be adopted in order to implement CBE pedagogy in teaching and learning activities (Respondent 10)*

Another respondent highlighted that:

*Since the inception of the CBE pedagogy, we had held quite a number of cluster meetings around this issue. These meetings were mainly centred on trying to come up with means and ways of dealing with a new transition in the educational landscape that calls for teachers to work collaboratively for the efficiency of our service (Respondent 1)*

From the above contributions, it was deduced that PLCs were one of the strategies that was being used by the primary schools under investigation to create an environment where teachers were able to share experiences on how CBE pedagogy. This correlated with the assertion by Duong et al (2023); Pacher et al (2024) who indicated that PLCs creates teachers with the platform which enables them to collaborate and interact with the view to improve their culture of innovation in teaching and learning.<sup>17</sup> Therefore, from this discussion the

<sup>15</sup> Kassa Michael et al., "Understanding and Practice of Active Learning among Upper Primary School Science and Mathematics Teachers," *Heliyon* 9, no. 6 (June 2023): e16854, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2023.e16854>; Brit Toven-Lindsey, Robert A. Rhoads, and Jennifer Berdan Lozano, "Virtually Unlimited Classrooms: Pedagogical Practices in Massive Open Online Courses," *The Internet and Higher Education* 24 (January 2015): 1–12, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.iheduc.2014.07.001>.

<sup>16</sup> John Munyui Muchira et al., "Implementing Competency Based Curriculum (CBC) in Kenya: Challenges and Lessons from South Korea and USA," *Journal of Education and Learning* 12, no. 3 (April 27, 2023): 62, <https://doi.org/10.5539/jel.v12n3p62>.

<sup>17</sup> Bich-Hang Duong, Vu Dao, and Joan DeJaeghere, "Complexities in Teaching Competencies: A Longitudinal Analysis of Vietnamese Teachers' Sensemaking and Practices," *Pedagogy, Culture & Society* 33, no. 1 (January 28, 2025): 349–71, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14681366.2023.2262473>; Corina Pacher et al., "Engineering Education 5.0: A Systematic Literature Review on Competence-Based Education in the Industrial Engineering

preparation of primary school teachers for the infusion of CBE pedagogy can be considered a multifaceted process, which requires a combination of professional development, peer learning and strong leadership. In other words, through comprehensive training, supporting collaboration primary school teachers can be effectively equipped with relevant knowledge, skills and values to foster the infusion of CBE pedagogy in teaching and learning activities.<sup>18</sup>

### ***Inclusion of CBE pedagogy in teacher training programmes***

From the above it can be noted that most of the respondents (64.2%) were in agreement with the notion on the need to include CBE pedagogy in teacher training programmes. This concurs with Rusike et al (2024); Boateng et al (2023); who advanced that the inclusion of CBE pedagogy in pre-service teacher training is pivotal as the educational landscape is shifting towards more individualised, student-centred learning.<sup>19</sup> This can be reinforced by a contribution from one of the respondents who indicated that:

*I was privileged that one of the modules that received while furthering my studies at had a topic on CBE. This is helping to have a clear conceptualisation of the CBE pedagogy and how it can be infused my teaching and learning activities with emphasis on competence acquisition (Respondent 4)*

In addition, a respondent indicated that:

*I am currently enrolled for a BEd [Bachelor of Education] Primary degree with one of the local universities and CBE pedagogy forms the core of the activities in different modules and activities. This has since transformed my understanding of CBE pedagogy in terms how it can be infused in primary school teaching and learning approach. Thus, it places much emphasis on student-centredness on whatever is done in primary school teaching and learning (Respondent 7)*

From the above contributions it can be acknowledged that CBE pedagogy centres on competence mastery through exposing students to personalised learning activities. Thus, it permits students development at their own pace and guaranteeing a high level of knowledge and skills attainment.<sup>20</sup> In section it can be highlighted that the infusion of CBE pedagogy in teacher training programmes is important as it prepares primary school teachers to meet the

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and Management Discipline," *Production & Manufacturing Research* 12, no. 1 (December 31, 2024), <https://doi.org/10.1080/21693277.2024.2337224>.

<sup>18</sup> Zhiling Cai et al., "Elementary School Teachers' Attitudes towards Project-Based Learning in China," *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications* 10, no. 1 (October 26, 2023): 737, <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-023-02206-8>.

<sup>19</sup> Patrick Chisango Rusike, Pinias Chikuvadze, and Joseph Zuva, "Competence-Based Education and Training Model and Its Infusion into Learning Activities at One Polytechnic in Zimbabwe," *Eureka: Journal of Educational Research* 3, no. 1 (May 20, 2024): 10–16, <https://doi.org/10.56773/ejer.v3i1.33>; Seth Dankyi Boateng, Daniel Adu Ankrah, and Seth Awuku Manteaw, "Competence-Based Education: Reflections on the Context of Teaching Agriculture in Ghana's Pre-Tertiary Schools," *Cogent Education* 10, no. 1 (December 31, 2023), <https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2023.2207793>.

<sup>20</sup> Eric M. Grebing, Julie A. Edmunds, and Nina P. Arshavsky, "The Relationship between Buy-in and Implementation: Measuring Teacher Buy-in to a High School Reform Effort," *Evaluation and Program Planning* 97 (April 2023): 102224, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.evalprogplan.2023.102224>.

anxieties of CBE environments. Thus, it engrains in primary school teachers the mindset necessary in creating student-centred and supportive learning environments.

### **Strategies used in infusing CBE pedagogy in primary school teaching and learning activities**

This section centres on some of the strategies that are used when infusing CBE pedagogy in primary school teaching and learning. Thus, the strategies to be discussed are expected to augment student-centred learning, customised instruction and continuous assessment.<sup>21</sup>

**Table 2.** Methods used to infuse CBE pedagogy in primary school learning activities

Indicators	Strongly Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly Disagree (%)	Disagree (%)
1. Differentiated instruction.	62.5	25	10	2.5
2. Student-centred continuous assessment.	37.5	52.5	8	2
3. Individualised learning.	19.8	54	23.2	3
4. Mastery-Based Progression.	30.5	58.3	6.5	4.7

### **Differentiated instruction**

From the above table it can be noted that most of the respondents (62.5%) were strongly in agreement with the assertion that differentiated instruction can be used in infusing CBE pedagogy in primary school learning activities. This was supported by one of the respondents who indicated that:

*It important for us as teachers to always remember that each student is unique in one way or the other. This calls for us to treat each student in line with his/her uniqueness in our interactions during the learning activities. For example, these students can move at different paces in the given tasks/activities (Respondent 8)*

In support, a respondent highlighted that:

*As teachers we need to always remember that in our classes there are three groups of students [the gifted, average and slow]. Hence, the need for us to plan and execute our learning activities bearing in mind the existence of these three groups and their needs (Respondent 3)*

The above contributions brought to light the need for the primary school teachers to adapt their teaching and learning activities in ways that meet the wide-ranging needs of students, fine-tuning content, instructional methods and assessment based on students' capabilities, interests and learning styles. This recognises that students have different levels

<sup>21</sup> Christopher Nyoni, "Challenges Facing Teachers in the Implementation of Competence-Based Curriculum in Secondary Schools in Iringa Municipal, Tanzania," *Asian Journal of Education and Social Studies* 49, no. 3 (October 27, 2023): 47–52, <https://doi.org/10.9734/ajess/2023/v49i31133>.

of erstwhile knowledge, strides of learning and learning likings.<sup>22</sup> Hence, differentiated instruction aims to provide appropriate support and challenges for each student so as to acquire the relevant knowledge, skills and values during teaching and learning activities in line with the key principles of CBE pedagogy.

### **Student-centred continuous assessment**

Slightly above half of the respondents (52.5%) agree to the view that student-centred continuous assessment was one of the strategies that were being used to infuse CBE pedagogy in teaching and learning in the selected primary schools. In addition, 37.5% of the respondents were strongly in agreement with the assertion that continuous assessment had a role to play in infusing CBE pedagogy in primary school teaching and learning. This was supported by one of the respondents who postulated that:

*I love challenging my students' criticality; hence I give them from time-to-time small tasks to do on their own or in small groups. In order to monitor progress, I ask them to make presentations in front of their peers. The rest of the class [other students] make ask questions or make contributions. These presentations are assessed at the end* (Respondent 1)

From the respondents' contributions it can be highlighted that regular assessments provide the students with the real time feedback on their progress. In addition, this helps the primary school teacher to adjust the instructional methods with the aim of addressing the acknowledged learning gaps and warrant mastery before moving advancing to more challenging concepts. In this regard the student-centred continuous assessment gives emphasis to the monitoring of students' learning and progress continuously throughout the programme.<sup>23</sup> In other words, this method gives importance to active role of students in teaching and learning activities instead of solely depending on end of term high-stakes examinations.<sup>24</sup> In addition, through this method students have the opportunity to demonstrate their conceptualisation and skills in different ways.

### **Individualised learning**

The presented data indicated that 54% of the respondents were in agreement with the suggestion that individualised learning was one of the strategies that the primary schools

<sup>22</sup> Beatrice Ngeno, "The Relationship between Teacher Training and Implementation of a Competency-Based Curriculum in Public Primary Schools," *East African Journal of Education Studies* 6, no. 1 (March 16, 2023): 280–90, <https://doi.org/10.37284/eajes.6.1.1138>.

<sup>23</sup> Ghada Mohammed Attia Sherif et al., "Effect of Implementing Instruction Module about Competency- Based Education on Educators' Knowledge, Skills and Attitude at Faculty of Nursing -Damanshur University," *Alexandria Scientific Nursing Journal* 26, no. 4 (December 1, 2024): 279–90, <https://doi.org/10.21608/asalexu.2024.392494>; Ongowo Richard Owino, "Towards a Competency Based Curriculum: A Pedagogic Perspective," *Journal of Technology & Socio-Economic Development* 10, no. 1 (2023): 105–17, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.8121850>.

<sup>24</sup> Abdiaziz Osman Abdullahi, "School Based Factors Influencing Implementation Of Competency Based Curriculum In Public Preschools In Garissa Sub-County, Garissa County Kenya," 2019, <https://api.semanticscholar.org/CorpusID:211544498>.

under investigation were using to infuse CBE pedagogy in teaching and learning activities. In line with this one of the respondents indicated that:

*In my class I always try to come up with activities or tasks that allow students to move at their own pace, but ensuring that they fully understand each concept, principles, etc., before moving the next topic. This can only be possible if the environment of conducive for flexible learning (Respondent 9)*

In support, a respondent postulated that:

*During lessons I use a variety of methods to assess my students' progress [portfolios, projects, self-assessments]. This is done with the view to empower my students such that they can take active roles in their activities or tasks (Respondent 4)*

The presented contributions have revealed that the respondents clearly understood the focus of individualised learning. Thus, its geared towards customizing teaching and learning experiences such that they can accommodate each student's specific interests and pace. In other words, it's the type of learning with tailor-made content, pace and instructional methods; engage flexible assessment strategies to monitor students' progress as they take an active role in teaching and learning activities.<sup>25</sup> This mastery-based progression ensures that students achieve a deep understanding of the content or topic before moving to those more advanced. In the same, it can be indicated that CBE pedagogy places much emphasis on the need for students to demonstrate a clear comprehension of the covered concepts or topic.<sup>26</sup> Therefore, this creates a flexible learning environment that supports personalised and skill-based learning. In this regard, CBE pedagogy advocates for the shifting of focus from the traditional time-based education to a more flexible skill-based pedagogy.

## CONCLUSION

The analysis revealed that a variety of methods were employed to prepare teachers for the integration of CBE pedagogy in primary school teaching and learning activities. Respondents reported using diverse strategies to effectively incorporate CBE principles into their classrooms. Overall, teachers expressed a positive perception of CBE, viewing its infusion as fostering a more personalized and skills-focused learning environment. Based on the various methods used to prepare teachers and the positive feedback from respondents, it can be concluded that, to a large extent, CBE pedagogy is being successfully integrated into teaching and learning activities at the selected primary schools. Given the complexity of CBE implementation, it is recommended that ongoing professional development be provided to

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<sup>25</sup> Melkam Zewdu Ayalew, Dawit Asrat Getahun, and Reda Darge Negasi, "Faculty and Academic Leaders' Conceptions of Competence and Competence-Based Education," *Cogent Education* 11, no. 1 (December 31, 2024), <https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2024.2372187>; Kasthuri Krishnan, Nurfaradilla Mohamad Nasri, and Mohd Kamil Bin Sadan, "STEM Approaches in Teaching and Learning Process: Systematic Literature Review (SLR)," *International Journal of Academic Research in Progressive Education and Development* 12, no. 4 (December 7, 2023), <https://doi.org/10.6007/IJARPEd/v12-i4/19904>.

<sup>26</sup> Kateryna Fomin, "Professional Development of Future Primary School Teachers: Enhancement of Scientific Research Activities," *Journal of Vasyl Stefanyk Precarpathian National University* 10, no. 3 (September 30, 2023): 163–72, <https://doi.org/10.15330/jpnu.10.3.163-172>.

further support teachers in understanding and effectively applying CBE pedagogy in their classrooms.

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