

## Why It Is Important For A Curriculum To Be Monitored And Evaluated In Kenya

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**Abstract:** This study presents a descriptive analysis of the essence of curriculum monitoring and evaluation in Kenya. The existing literature agrees that curriculum monitoring as a process of gathering data for evaluating and defining the effectiveness of the curriculum against the set predetermined objectives is an essential must-have aspect for effective curriculum implementation. It ensures that the implemented curriculum aligns with the set objectives. Curriculum monitoring and evaluation focuses on the relevance, practicality, scaling-up, sustainability, relevance, effectiveness, and consistency of the curriculum. Learners should achieve the desired outcomes ascertained through curriculum monitoring and evaluation. As such, the curriculum should be monitored in the area within which it will be used.

**Keywords:** curriculum, curriculum monitoring, curriculum evaluation

### Reasoning for Curriculum Monitoring and evaluation

#### A. Essential Facets of Curriculum

##### Adjustments and Adaptations

Monitoring and evaluating can help make the necessary adjustment. The curriculum is dynamic and changes with the changing students' needs and technology. Hence curriculum monitoring could help organizations make the needful adjustments to ensure the curriculum is effective as possible. Curriculum monitoring and evaluation can help organizations align with the changing needs to achieve their objectives and improve overall performance. It is important to monitor and evaluate curriculum as it informs data-driven insights into what is working and what is not, hence the need to make adjustments. For instance, through monitoring and evaluating the 8-4-4 curriculum, the curriculum planners show adjustments through data-driven insights, necessitating the transition to the CBC system.

##### Setting Future Roadmaps

Curriculum monitoring and evaluation help set future curriculum roadmaps. According to Okoti & Makhanu (2022), monitoring and evaluating an existing curriculum is important as it can help provide guidelines for future planning. Ideally, monitoring and evaluating an existing curriculum can inform future curriculums through its shortcomings or identify specific learning needs that can only be met through a different or new curriculum that offers an improvement from the existing curriculum. For example, the 8-4-4 curriculum was functional and effective for a long time, but it has been replaced by the CBC curriculum for parts of primary-level education as the CBC can help equip learners with the knowledge, skills, and competencies they need to thrive in the 21st century. The new curriculum was established after monitoring and evaluating the old curriculum and identifying new learning needs.

##### Meeting Learners' Needs:

The Kenyan curriculum should be monitored and evaluated to ensure that it meets learners' specific needs. A curriculum should be commensurate with the diverse needs of all learners and meet these needs (Okoti & Makhanu, 2022). A curriculum should be monitored in Kenya to identify the specific needs of the learners. In turn, this ensures ongoing awareness of student learning needs and aspects that shape their needs that should be factored into the curriculum and continued provision of on-time support to the learners per their needs. For example, a syllabus set

for Grade 6 students in Kenya can only be monitored and evaluated based on the target group's specific needs to inform the provision of relevant support and resources.

### **B. Process and Outcomes of Monitoring and Evaluation**

#### **Real-time Feedback**

Curriculum monitoring and evaluation would provide real-time feedback. Through monitoring and evaluation, an organization can track the curriculum progress, measure outcomes, and identify areas of strength and improvement to provide feedback if they are on track to meet the set goals and objectives. Jacob et al. (2020) asserts that one of the functions of curriculum monitoring and evaluation is identifying its effectiveness in meeting all students' needs and making changes in cases where it is not effective (Jacob et al. 2020). A curriculum needs to be monitored and evaluated to assess learners' progress in real-time to provide proof of failure or success to the interested and targeted parties. The process should identify issues with a curriculum within the shortest time possible to ensure that learners do not rely on an inadequate curriculum. For instance, in the case of CBC, it is only through monitoring and evaluation the curriculum stakeholders can know if the CBC curriculum is making any progress or not.

#### **Personalized Adjustment of Support**

Curriculum monitoring and evaluation would help the organization with personalized adjustment of support needed and adjust their strategies accordingly. This is because all learners have specific needs which a curriculum should meet. It is important for a curriculum to be monitored and evaluated in Kenya to facilitate the identification of specific learners' needs (Jacob et al., 2020). For example, students have needs depending on their grades and level of education. Further, these needs become more diverse due to learning abilities and differences. A curriculum should identify the specific needs of the target population and focus on them. Monitoring and evaluating a curriculum in Kenya ensure that it meets the specific needs of all students.

#### **Equitable Allocation of Resources**

Curriculum monitoring and evaluation would help ensure equitable allocation of resources. That means it is important for a curriculum to be monitored and evaluated in Kenya to address inequalities. A curriculum may have various shortcomings, including inequalities (Tumuheise et al., 2023). Inequalities in education refer to differences in access to education services and differences in the quality of educational services provided. For example, a curriculum may have inequalities by not catering to the needs of mentally challenged students. Therefore, a curriculum should be evaluated and monitored to address inequalities and provide equal opportunities for all students.

#### **Checking Curriculum Structure and Design**

Monitoring and evaluating a curriculum provide information pertaining to its structure. Aside from providing information about learning needs, monitoring and evaluating checks the relevance of a curriculum design. It is important for a curriculum to be monitored and evaluated to improve its design (Tumuheise et al., 2023). A curriculum can be designed to teach specific issues at specific learning stages. Monitoring and evaluating the curriculum may give insight into a faulty design providing younger students with complex ideas at a younger age. For example, a curriculum may teach grade 5 mathematics in grade 4; thus, it is only through monitoring and evaluating that educators can change the design only after evaluating and monitoring it.

### **C. Stakeholder Involvement and Views**

#### **Incorporating Stakeholders' Views**

Monitoring and evaluating a curriculum help incorporate views from stakeholders. Notably, stakeholders' views are critical in the curriculum at any phase of the curriculum, with curriculum monitoring and evaluation likely to ensure accountability, permitting the various stakeholders to track the progress, give their views, and hold each other responsible for achieving the set goals (Chen, 2023). For example, external assessors from the United Nations may find that a curriculum does not meet all students' needs and may require it changed to meet them. Without monitoring

and evaluation, it would be impossible for these external assessors to note the gap. It would also be difficult for stakeholders' views to be incorporated into the curriculum without monitoring and evaluation.

### **Practicality and Sustainability**

#### **Ensuring Practicality**

Monitoring and evaluating a curriculum ensure its practicality (Nsier, 2021). Practicality is the ability for an item to be incorporated into real-life situations. For example, when the CBC curriculum was rolled out, there were concerns about its practicality because some of its facets had not been implemented before in the country. Such concerns like changes in the grades where the learners would sit for national exams during grades 4 and 7 had to be practical because of the resource factor. This escalated such-like concerns; however, the curriculum evaluation and monitoring done during its first year of implementation assured stakeholders that CBC was practical in the Kenyan academic landscape.

#### **Assuring Sustainability**

Monitoring and evaluation can assure sustainability. According to Nasir (2021), curriculum monitoring and evaluation is a critical aspect that should be done to ascertain its sustainability. To ensure curriculum sustainability, monitoring and evaluation can help ensure resource allocation to ensure the smooth running of the project. For example, a curriculum can be developed without considering the long-term goals of the academic and learning process and available resources. For instance, the implementation of CBC has faced the setback of the inadequacy of resources, including infrastructure, human capital, and learning resources. However, the monitoring and evaluation task force commissioned by President Ruto seems to assess the resources needed to ensure the CBC model sustainability; hence could be why the government is recruiting teachers and releasing the capitation grant to ensure the resources needed are available.

### **D. Improvement Initiatives**

#### **Identifying Areas of Improvement**

By unveiling areas of improvement to initiate changes in the existing curriculum, monitoring, and evaluation makes the world a better place. Ideally, monitoring and evaluating the curriculum allows the identification of weaknesses, leading to targeted improvements, resulting in a more effective education system that empowers individuals and promotes positive societal change. For instance, information technology has changed most industries, including education. Hence, curriculum monitoring and evaluation can help assess the need for IT investment and inclusion (Okoti & Makhanu, 2022). Information technology has been incorporated into the education sector, and the country is working towards achieving more success in this area. Evaluating and assessing the curriculum identifies areas where the country needs to improve its IT infrastructure.

### **E. Justification for Funding**

#### **Assessing Effectiveness and Relevance**

The curriculum should be monitored and evaluated to assess whether there is a need to continue funding it or not. Monitoring and evaluating the curriculum is crucial to determine its effectiveness and relevance. It helps identify areas of improvement, ensures resources are allocated efficiently, and justifies the need for continued funding. By assessing the curriculum, education authorities can gauge its impact on student learning outcomes and whether the curriculum should continue to be funded. Ideally, curriculum monitoring and evaluation ensure that taxpayer money is wisely spent on educational programs that yield positive results.

## F. Clear Communication and Teacher Development

### Communication of Curriculum Situation

The curriculum should be monitored and evaluated since this can help communicate the curriculum situation clearly and precisely. Monitoring and evaluation provide a clear and precise picture of the curriculum's impact, progress, performance, challenges, and improvement areas, enabling stakeholders to understand the project's current situation and take appropriate actions for continuous improvement and better educational outcomes.

### Informing Teacher Education and Development

The curriculum should be monitored and evaluated to inform teacher education and professional development. By evaluating the curriculum, the ministry can gain insights into the areas of teacher education and professional development that require further attention and adapt their instructional strategies accordingly. Undeniably, curriculum monitoring and evaluation can help identify gaps in teachers' knowledge or instructional practices, informing targeted professional development initiatives to enhance their skills and expertise. This iterative process ensures teachers receive relevant training and support, ultimately improving student learning outcomes. Okoti & Makhanu (2022) posits that it is important for a curriculum to be monitored and evaluated to ensure that it matches the professional qualifications and needs. For example, a curriculum that incorporates junior secondary school may need teachers who can teach students at this educational level. As such, the curriculum must provide grade 7 education. Monitoring and evaluation ensure that professional qualifications match curriculum needs by ascertaining that teachers have the qualifications to teach a particular grade.

### Dynamic Nature of Curriculum

The curriculum should be monitored and evaluated to ensure the implementers and/or institutions maintain order and stay organized. According to Chen (2023), the curriculum is designed by individuals who intend for learners to get certain skills and knowledge, with the curriculum ought to be monitored and evaluated to ensure that the intended curriculum is implemented and attained (Chen, 2023). By closely monitoring the curriculum implementation, administrators and curriculum implementers can ensure that the intended learning goals and objectives are effectively delivered to students. This process allows for the early detection of deviations or gaps between the intended and actual curriculum. For example, curriculum developers intend students to learn about identifying animals in preschool, but teachers introduce these animals in grade 1. In such cases, the intended curriculum was not implemented as initially programmed. This, when evaluated, can ensure the intended curriculum aligns with the actual curriculum.

### Conclusion

Based on the above observation, it is important for a curriculum to be monitored and evaluated in Kenya for several reasons. They are; ensuring that the curriculum remains aligned with an institution's educational goals and objectives, providing a coherent and effective learning experience for students. Secondly, it helps maintain the quality of education by assessing teaching methods, materials, and assessments and making necessary improvements. Thirdly, it promotes accountability among educators and ensures compliance with educational standards and guidelines. Moreover, monitoring and evaluation focus on student learning outcomes, allowing personalized learning and targeted support. Additionally, it facilitates continuous improvement by gathering feedback and making informed decisions to refine the curriculum. Lastly, it informs teacher education and professional development initiatives, enabling educators to enhance their skills and practices. Generally, monitoring and evaluating the curriculum is essential for educational institutions to provide high-quality education, meet the needs of students, and continually improve teaching and learning processes.

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