

Implementation of Integrated English Curriculum: Teachers' Challenges and Opportunities in Public Secondary Schools in Nyakach Sub-County, Kisumu County, Kenya

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Abstract: Despite the inception of the Integrated English Language Curriculum (IELC) two decades ago, by the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD), the implementation has resulted into challenges and opportunities on teachers' part. The objective of this study was to examine the strategies teachers experience in maximizing on opportunities and minimizing challenges in implementing the IELC. Guided by Fuller's Concern Based Adoption Model (CBAM) theoretical framework, this study utilized Concurrent Triangulation design under a mixed methods approach. Saturated sampling design was used to select 110 subject teachers for questionnaires and the one Sub County Quality Assurance Officer for interviews. Purposive sampling was done to select 16 heads of departments (HODs), and 16 principals for interviews. A document analysis was done to corroborate and triangulate data. The researcher piloted the instruments to determine reliability and validity while the research purpose was clarified to participants for authenticity and trustworthiness. Quantitative data was analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 20 computer program while the qualitative data was analyzed through content, narrative, and thematic analysis in line with the study objective. The findings indicated that most teachers experienced certain specific challenges and opportunities in implementing the IELC. The study recommended a localized, institutionalized on-going preparation model for teacher development and further research on student perceptions on IELC in Nyakach Sub County, Kenya. This study is significant in adding to the body of knowledge in integrated approaches to language educators, policy makers and the schools' Boards of Management (BOM).

Keywords: Challenges, Curriculum, Implementation, Integrated, Opportunities, Strategies.

I. INTRODUCTION

Curriculum integration has many and varied meanings and definitions. The more common examples describe integrated curriculum as interwoven, connected, thematic, interdisciplinary, multidisciplinary, correlated, linked, and holistic area of study (Kathy, 2000). For example, Knowles and Smith (2001) say integration in the teaching of literature in language has been placed on the power of literature to integrate curriculum, because linking disciplines through literature provides a richer, more meaningful understanding of subject matter and can facilitate collaborative learning as in addition to helping students become independent problem solvers. Integration of subjects implies an adjustment of teaching activities which require teachers out of necessity to have an attitudinal paradigm shift (Sivasubramaniam, 2006) to capitalize on available educational opportunities. This in itself is a challenge.

International Journal of Novel Research in Education and Learning

Vol. 5, Issue 1, pp: (28-42), Month: January-February 2018, Available at: www.noveltyjournals.com

In Kenya, the use of integrated English language curriculum in secondary education can be traced to Mackay report of 1981 when the Presidential working party on the establishment of second University in Kenya recommended a change that was to introduce integration in secondary curriculum. English language and literature were integrated. The syllabus review of 1984/85 in line with Mackay report resulted in the 8-4-4 education system in Kenya and brought about integration of the curriculum in schools. Despite this requirement and expectation that the teachers teach English language and Literature as one subject –English, the two subjects continued to be examined separately due to some challenges. This practice worked against the demand to teach the two subjects in an integrative manner.

Mohammad (2013) realized that in many classrooms, the teaching of literature has remained unchanged with emphasis on teacher-centered and text-directed activities (e.g., lectures; period and genre surveys; biographical summaries; teacher's explication and 'critical analyses' of canonical texts; stereotyped exam questions requiring stereotyped answers). According to Al Magid, (2006), the activities have been confined almost to lectures consisting of a long monologue by the teacher on a piece of literature, taking the form of the teacher primarily attempting to explain the meaning of the text preceded by a brief introduction of the author and his works. The main challenge is how to integrate and what to integrate. As a result, teachers rely almost exclusively on guidebooks which are themselves scarce and leading to rote learning. In a nutshell, these challenges are compounded with little research to guide teachers in making thoughtful decisions to integrate with what, why, when, how and for whom to ensure better grades (Gavalek Raphael, Biondo and Wang, 2000).

Integration of language and literature components take various levels as follows: curriculum level, skills level, resource level, methodology level, techniques level and efforts level (Ongong'a et. al., 2010; Okwara et.al, 2009; KIE 2002). Effective integration of these levels present bottlenecks to teachers used to separate teaching methods for specific subject areas. Oketch (2005) explores the five major content areas; the first four are introduced and taught in Forms 1 and 2, forming the foundation of secondary school teaching: Listening and Speaking, Grammar, Reading, Writing and Literature set books. In each section, lessons for Forms 3 and 4 should be developed with relevant content from the course books and supplementary materials covering the areas outlined in the syllabus. The genres of literature are part of the components included in the five major content areas for language integration. However, Manyasi (2014) reveals that teachers taught language in isolation without using the teaching of literature with the language skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. Punctuation and grammar is also not taught due to a wide syllabus hence there is a disparity between curriculum developers' expectations and classroom practice. Okwara (2010) noted that teachers do not implement the official integrated English curriculum in Busia due to such challenges.

The implementers of IELC such as teachers, course designers and examiners have therefore developed some strategies to overcome certain difficulties like a general attitude that Literature is particularly complex and inaccessible for the language learner and can even be detrimental to the process of language learning (Savvidou, 2004) and curriculum implementation. The positive change of individual teachers' attitudes towards integrated curriculum itself and towards the specific intended innovation can contribute to the quality and direction of the change (Altrichter, 2005). In the face of implementation of a curriculum, it is important that everything possible is done to ensure that the implementers have positive attitudes as Kilgalon and Maloney (2008) observed. One of the key problems noted by K.I.E (2004) evaluation report is that there still exist negative attitudes of some teachers towards the changes in the curriculum. This is echoed by another study by Gichuki (2007) on challenges facing teachers implementing revised English curriculum in public schools in Othaya Division of Nyeri District that realized negative attitude hampered the implementation of IELC.

Mehwary (2005) observes that teachers have always found more subtle and specific ways around the challenges they encounter in implementation of the integrated curriculum using various strategies. In terms of scarcity of resources and poor understanding of concepts, teachers have improvised, borrowed and purchased their own teaching materials for IELC. Teachers have also attended in-service training programs though they confess the one day workshops and seminars do not translate into much. Abu (2004) study results showed that teachers needed more training and assistance to be competent in their teaching. Similarly, Ibn (2003) study recommended the need for training teachers in the preparation and the integration of instructional materials. According to Mehwary (2005), producing teaching materials have topped the list of strategies of solving problems facing educators in the implementation of integrated language curriculum. Magoma (2011) established that the following strategies were used by teachers to improve teaching of integrated English curriculum. Sharing and discussing ideas with colleagues, sharing of materials e.g. cassettes, organizing workshops, reading pamphlets, discussing with teachers of other schools, buying and reading reference books. Concurring with

Magoma is Macharia (2011) who realized that on the challenge of lack of knowledge of the concept of integration, most of the respondents preferred attending seminars and workshops so as to learn how to manage challenges. They also consulted colleagues and researched on the concept of integration implying that teachers employed the same strategies in dealing with challenges.

1.1 Statement of the Problem:

Curriculum integration is a philosophy that can bring both challenges and opportunities. The last curriculum review of 2002 greatly reduced the learning areas in order to reduce on the amount of content that learners had to cover in different subjects. Amongst the affected were English language and literature subjects which were merged only to be examined in an integrated manner in 2006. While the KIE now KICD (2002) requires both English and Literature be integrated, and that teachers of the same subjects should be trained on the two subjects, a pre research study reveal that there is a lot of variance in the manner in which English language teachers in Nyakach Sub County practice integration and as a result, there is relatively below average performance in KCSE compared to the neighboring sub counties. The question that is worth raising is therefore, could it be that teachers don't understand their role in integration? Or could it be that teachers are ever ill prepared for the implementation of the integrated English language curriculum. In addition, while there may be studies on the integrated English language curriculum, there are few, especially on challenges and opportunities experienced by teachers implementing such curriculum in Nyakach Sub County, Kisumu County.

1.2 Purpose of the Study:

The Purpose of this study was to explore the strategies teachers experienced to challenges and opportunities of secondary school teachers in implementing the integrated English language curriculum in Nyakach Sub County, Kenya.

1.3 Objectives of the Study:

The specific objective of this study was to examine the strategies teachers of English language experience in maximizing on opportunities and minimizing challenges in implementing the integrated English language curriculum in Nyakach Sub County.

1.4 Research Question:

What strategies do teachers of English language experience in maximizing on opportunities and minimizing challenges in implementing the integrated English curriculum in Nyakach Sub County?

1.5 Significance of the Study:

The study was deemed significant in explaining the poor English language results in KCSE and the low level of linguistic competence manifested by the KCSE graduates. The study hoped to provide direction and knowledge to English language and literature teachers and teacher educators in colleges of higher education and universities in improving the adoption of pedagogical content knowledge. Moreover, the findings of the study were expected to provide valuable information on the teachers' experiences regarding teaching language and literature in Kenya as per the current English language teaching policy. Parents and education managers would learn of how to motivate teachers of English after establishing their experiences. The County government might benefit from the rich data on teachers views on expected roles and their experiences while implementing the language policy. The Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development and the Ministry of Education might derive enhanced curriculum development knowledge from teachers' experiences while implementing curriculum and use such information in subsequent curriculum reviews to develop more relevant innovations, materials, and address the gaps in the English language and literature teacher education programs in line with teacher experiences. Above all, the study could contribute to the growing body of literature on integrated approaches to language and literature teaching from which future research undertakings would be based.

1.6 Limitations of the Study:

Some participants were unwilling to provide full and accurate information for fear of victimization as they were duty bound not to provide negative information against the school's policy on curriculum implementation. The researcher overcame this by assuring them of confidentiality of the data collected as part of classified information meant only for the researcher and themselves. On the flip side, there were instances when some participants exaggerated their experiences in

implementing integration of English to gain sympathy or attack the school administration. This was resolved by using triangulation to corroborate the multiple sources of data. Given the busy schedules in some schools, time was a constraint especially for commuting professionals. The challenge was negotiated by fitting data collection schedule that accommodate teachers' work programs. Resources like data collection instruments were limited due to financial constraints but ensuring minimal losses through purposeful visits and proximity of target population delimited such inadequacy. Participants who found difficulty in interpreting the questionnaires were guided through clarifications and explanations on the spot. The study was on the whole limited to its objective and any findings outside its scope were recommended for further research.

1.7 Scope of the Study:

This study was confined to experiences of school teachers in the English language departments because they were the ones implementing the integrated language curriculum. It was conducted in 52 public secondary schools in Nyakach Sub County, Kisumu County. The study specifically sought data on the strategies that the teachers experienced in maximizing on opportunities and minimizing on the challenges of IELC. Interview data was gathered by the researcher from the principals and heads of language departments using interview schedule and subject teachers through questionnaires and document analysis. The sub county quality assurance officer was also interviewed. The study used concurrent triangulation design within a mixed method approach and was informed by Fuller's Concern Based Adoption Model as explained in the next section.

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

2.1 Research Approach:

The study used a mixed methods approach which combines both qualitative and quantitative approaches. Creswell (2014) notes that mixed methods approach involve collecting both qualitative and quantitative statistics, using two forms of data using distinct designs that may involve philosophical assumptions and theoretical frameworks. This approach provides a more complete understanding of a research problem than either approach alone and was suitable and relevant for this research because it provided the opportunity for collecting both quantitative and qualitative data and statistics in the same study. Mixed methods approach was also suitable for this study because it permitted the use of both deductive and inductive methods which are present in quantitative and qualitative studies respectively as it enabled a reliable conclusion from both results. The reasoning behind the mixing of methods may include the fact that both approaches may be insufficient by themselves. In this study, either filled the gaps of the other to provide different evidences that were corroborated (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003).

2.2 Research Design:

Within the mixed methods approach, concurrent triangulation model research design was used in the study to allow the researcher to collect both quantitative and qualitative data concurrently and simultaneously (Joffrion, 2010). However, data was analyzed separately but converged during the discussion to bring a comprehensive case which either quantitative or qualitative approaches were insufficient to present in the discussion; (Creswell and Clark, 2007). This design further permitted a combination of the merits of quantitative approach such as generalization and others like numbers, and in-depth information. Quantitative data was collected through a questionnaire while qualitative data was collected through interviewing and document analysis. The questionnaire was used to collect closed and open-ended data because they cover a larger population in the study while interviews targeted collection of data from a few respondents in the study through in-depth probing and document analysis concurrently. This design allowed the researcher to achieve the objectives because it could collect qualitative data which was triangulated, analyzed and discussed in the same study.

2.3 The Study Population:

The study population is a set of events, people, or objects to which the researcher wishes to generalize the results of the research (Kothari, 2004). The study targeted 52 head teachers, 52 head of departments, 110 subject teachers from 52 public secondary schools in the Sub County and the only Sub County Quality Assurance Officer.

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2.4 Sample Technique and Sampling Size:

The study used saturated sampling to select 52 public secondary schools in Nyakach Sub-County, 52 principals, 52 heads of English departments, 110 teachers of English stationed in those schools and the Sub County Quality Assurance Officer.

A total of 110 subject teachers were selected by saturation from trained teachers of English language to fill in questionnaires. This sample was used to ensure a large enough sample to assure that most or all of the experiences that might be important were uncovered (McLeod, 2014).

Purposive sampling was used to select a further sample of 16 heads of departments and 16 principals who taught English language based on the bio data questionnaire. Over ten years of service was considered longest since the last changes were effected on the integrated English curriculum. This group of heads of departments and principals were preferred because they were likely to have taught all forms in the schools and were experienced. Purposive sampling focused on participants that were rich in information because they were special in some way (Kombo and Tromp, 2006). This type of sampling allowed the study to focus on teachers who could offer the practical information regarding their cumulative pedagogical experiences in the schools during interviews.

The study further used saturated sampling to select the Sub County Education Quality Assurance Officer. He was interviewed to corroborate the data from the teachers.

2.5 Research Instruments:

The study used questionnaires, interview schedule, and document analysis as tools for collecting data. The selection of these tools was guided by the nature of data to be collected, the time available as well as the objectives of the study. The study used both closed and open-ended items in the questionnaire because data collected were both quantitative and qualitative. The questionnaires were based on either a five-point Likert scale namely; Strongly Disagree (SD), Disagree (D), Neutral (N), Agree (A) Strongly Agree (SA), to capture teachers' bio data, strategies teachers experience on minimizing challenges and maximizing on opportunities in the implementation of IELC. Questionnaires enabled confidential responses from teachers on their experiences on implementation of the IELC that some of the respondents felt shy and timid to give the researcher in a face to face interview (Whellan, 2007; Fraenkel and Wallen, 2009). The tool was also suitable for the study because it was cost effective and more restricted (McLeod, 2014). An appointment was sort with the respondents on the suitable date and time for questionnaire administration and immediate collection.

An interview schedule that the researcher constructed to interview 16 principals who taught English and 16 heads of departments was administered alongside that of the quality assurance officer. Interviewing was suitable for the study because the questions allowed for in-depth information which could not be documented or put in writing in the questionnaire and enhanced constant probing that enabled the study to dig meaning beyond the words (Yin, 2003). The principals, HODs and subject teachers were interviewed because they were either or both curriculum implementers and supervisors of the IELC while the Sub County Quality Assurance officer was interviewed to corroborate the information of teachers because he plays an oversight role in ensuring quality implementation of the curriculum. The interviews enabled the study to get information that could not be obtained by questionnaires or document analysis from participants due to its inquiry nature. Moreover, interview guide helped probe data on the strategies teachers experience to minimize the challenges and maximize on opportunities in the implementation of IELC.

The document analysis was instrumental in the analysis of such documents as schemes of work, Records of work, examinations, syllabus, lesson plans, correspondences, policies and circulars. Using a document analysis checklist, information on the strategies that teachers used to maximize on opportunities and minimizing challenges in implementing English curriculum were obtained. The documents corroborated the data on the other tools.

2.6 Validity:

Validity is the degree to which a test measures what it purports to be measuring (Orodho, 2009). The study used a mixed methods approach therefore validity was determined for both qualitative and quantitative approaches. In qualitative approach, validity can be determined by the process of transactional validity. According to Cho and Trent (2006) transactional validity is an interactive process between the researcher, the researched and the collected data that is aimed at

achieving relatively higher level of accuracy and consensus by means of revisiting facts, feelings, experiences and values or beliefs collected and interpreted. This member checking activity ensured that participants confirmed the truth of the collected data. Thomson (2011) refers to the above type of validity as both descriptive and interpretive validity. This study ensured validity by strictly adhering to the research procedures, reporting what the respondents expressed and giving interpretation to non-verbal communication that formed part of the data for the study. Guion, Diehl and McDonald (2013) state that triangulation is used by qualitative researchers to check and establish validity in their studies by analyzing a research question from multiple approaches. This study ensured further validity by employing interviews to collect data. In quantitative approach, internal validity refers to the extent to which an experiment rules out alternative explanations of the results (Kazdin, 1998). In this study threats to internal validity such as attrition were controlled by collecting data within a fixed period from the individual teachers. Kazdin further observes that external validity refers to the extent to which the results of a study can be generalized to other population, settings and conditions. In the current study threats to external validity such as reactivity by the participants during the data collection were maintained by encouraging the participants to exercise as high degree of honesty as possible while responding to the questionnaire items.

2.7 Reliability:

Reliability is a measure of the degree to which a research instrument yields consistent results or data after repeated trials (Phelan and Wren, 2006; Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003; Orodho and Kombo, 2002). Test- retest technique was used. To go through the process, a pilot study was conducted in two secondary schools not included in the study. The instruments were ministered twice in two weeks to the same individuals numbering 21 in both schools. The results from piloting were analyzed to check for reliability and to establish the extent to which the contents in the questionnaire were consistent in eliciting the same responses. The results were used to modify and remove the ambiguous items from the instruments. Since the study used a mixed methods approach, reliability of tools for collecting qualitative data was done. Bapir (2014) posit that qualitative research can be evaluated or made reliable by checking how and to what extent consistent strategies and procedures are used in the process of data collection. This study ascertained the reliability of tools by adhering to the strict procedures of data collection, analysis, and member checking.

To ensure further reliability, the questionnaire for all participants, interview schedule for teachers, and the Quality Assurance Officer and document analysis for subject teachers were pre-tested with teachers of integrated English and their heads of departments respectively in two public secondary schools other than Nyakach Sub County and a Quality Assurance Officer in another Sub County. The purpose of piloting the instruments was to test the appropriateness of the items as well as the time required to use each instrument. The items were improved accordingly to enhance their reliability and validity; and also their quality and efficiency. The schools and the participants in the pilot study were not part of the main study.

2.8 Data Analysis:

The study used descriptive statistics from the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 20 as an analytical tool, while thematic analysis was employed for qualitative data, based on the content, and narrative data which were first transcribed. In both cases coding was done.

This used measures of central tendencies such as mean, median and mode, tabulating, and describing data (Orodho, 2009). This study used descriptive statistics where frequencies and percentages effectively summarized quantitative data by cross tabulation of responses and calculation from the teachers' questionnaire according to research objectives. The raw data was coded and entered in the SPSS version 20 and frequency counts and percentages of median, mean and mode calculated.

Thematic analysis was done to analyze qualitative data in the study. It emphasized indicative, examining and recording patterns within data (Braun and Clark, 2006). It was performed through the process of transcribing, coding in six phases to create established meaningful patterns. The six steps included becoming familiar with the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes and lastly producing the report (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003). The qualitative analysis procedure followed the five objectives of the study using the concurrent triangulation.

III. DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 The strategies HODs experience to minimize challenges and maximizing on opportunities in the implementation of IELC:

Heads of Departments were asked on the strategies they experienced to minimize challenges they faced and maximize on opportunities in IELC implementation as follows; scarcity of resources-improvise, attitude towards IELC, motivation etc. Heads of Departments were requested to Strongly Disagree (1), Disagree (2), remain Neutral (3), Agree (4), or Strongly Agree (5) on this because strategies form the bulk of what sustained the integrated curriculum in the middle of challenges. Table 3.1 presents a summary on the strategies HODs’ experience to minimize challenges and maximize on opportunities.

Table 3.1 Strategies HODs experience to minimize challenges and maximize on opportunities in implementing IELC (n=50)

Statement	Agree(A)	Disagree(D)	Neutral(N)	Strongly Agree(SA)	Strongly Disagree(SD)
There is Scarce Resources- I improvise.	26(52%)	00	19(38%)	5(10%)	00
Negative Attitude is prevalent-I motivate myself	27(54%)	5(10%)	11(22%)	6(12%)	1(02%)
Time Management is a problem- In-Set helps me	22(44%)	2(4%)	7(14%)	7(14%)	12(24%)
I am inadequately Grounded- I invite a resource person	27(54%)	5(10%)	11(22%)	6(12%)	1(2%)
The syllabus is wide- I share a lot	25(50%)	00	1(02%)	24(48%)	00

Source: (Researcher)

One of the challenges HODs experienced was the resources which teachers addressed through improvising. Improvisation is a creative way of availing an alternative teaching and learning resource. It is a strategy that teachers use in the absence of teaching aids. Resources are the teaching and learning aids. Scarcity of resources can thus affect the teaching of a language skill or concept. To counter this problem, teachers do improvise. On improvising resources to address the scarcity of materials, HODs were asked to Strongly Disagree (1), Disagree (2), remain Neutral (3), Agree (4), or Strongly Agree (5) on this. Table 3.1 presents a summary on improvisation as an opportunity in tackling the challenges of integration according to the HODs; The Table shows that 26(52. %) of the HODs agreed that teachers improvised IELC teaching materials to address shortage of materials, 19(38.0%) were neutral, while 5(10.0%) strongly agreed they were improvising teaching materials. Therefore, it means that a significant majority of 62% of the HODs acknowledged that English language teachers under them improvised teaching materials into their teaching while a good number of 38% disagreed. In triangulation, HOD 12, hinted that without improvisation, a teacher had no business in class because most schools were under resourced. HOD 12 thus said:

“Being creative and resourceful helps me improvise without which, I have no business going to class because this is a survival strategy. Sometime the appropriate material is not within reach”

And Teacher 5 describes how they improvise, namely photocopying if books are scarce, thus:

“I can say that the resources are not enough and we go ahead to improvise, are some photocopied at times so that the students get a chance to have the books...”

From these sentiments, it is clear that a good number of teachers improvise in the course of implementation of the IELC and this is a strategy to fill the gap left by schools’ inability to purchase enough relevant materials. In corroboration, KIE (2005) expects that schools are resource starved yet principals must provide enough materials to the teachers of English to enable implementation of the IELC effectively in spite of the meager school income collected from fees.

On motivating IELC teachers with negative attitude, the heads of department motivate teachers using various ways to implement the integrated curriculum accordingly. Motivation can take various forms such as incentives, monetary rewards, and letters of commendation to encourage and inspire teachers. Table 3.1 indicates that 27(54.0%) of the heads of departments agreed that motivation can be an opportunity to address challenges facing IELC, 5(10.0%) disagreed,

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11(22.0%) were neutral, while 6(12.0%) strongly agreed motivation is an opportunity. 1(2.0%) of the heads of departments strongly disagreed. On the whole, it implies that 66% of the HODs acknowledged that motivation is an opportunity in countering IELC challenges. In line with the findings, HOD **2** says,

“Motivation is also seen as way to counter the problems of attitude and complacency because a motivated teacher is a natural overcomer of challenges”.

In triangulation, HOD **13** said thus”

“The HOD as head, cannot afford to work without encouraging teachers to work through various means. He must, he must find out way, to boost the teacher’s morale even under difficult circumstances”

Teacher **12** however, disagreed that most of the HODs motivated them and negated their role because;

“Some of the HODs are too full of authority which they misuse and demoralize teachers implementing IELC.

It is clear from these statements that motivation, either for self or others is a strategy that HODs have adopted to cope with the challenge of IELC implementation. These findings are in line with what Lambert and McCombs (2000) allude to when they say the integrated approach requires a lot of motivation because it has so much challenge of the how, the why and the what and by the time a teacher answers all this, he would have given up. Furthermore, Macharia (2011) findings observed that the teachers needed to explore opportunities such as additional education, support from administrators, support from themselves and inclusion in decision making about the integrated curriculum to foster motivation.

In-service (IN-SET) programs are other important strategies to refresh subject teachers on new knowledge and address pedagogical weakness like poor grounding. In- service programs are courses that either the schools, ministry of education, semi autonomous government agencies or the private sector may collaboratively or single handedly offer to sharpen teachers skills in pedagogical practices. The HODs were asked to state their view on in-service programs as a strategy to counter IELC challenges. Table 3.1 indicates that 22(44%) agreed, 2(4%) disagreed, 7(14%) were neutral, 7(14%) strongly agreed while 12(24%) disagreed strongly in-service programs on IELC was a suitable opportunity. This means that a simple majority of 58% of the HODs reported that in-service programs presented an opportunity to counter the challenges. Pressed to explain why some HODs thought it wouldn’t be of much help, the HODs gave various reasons ranging from lack of a serious forum to impact knowledge through In-Service programs offering opportunities for the organizers to embezzle funds in the name of training teachers. However, some interviewees’, HOD **7** asserted:

“Yes, in- service programs are good because they fill the gaps left by college tutors. The in-service program on how to integrate, the language and literature can help us understand the nitty gritty of integrated syllabus”

However these findings are contrary to some of interviewees’ position. Teacher **10** was categorical,

“In-service programs are of no consequence because they are just theoretical. even heads of departments can help lot in directing on the right thing to do more than these programs that waste money,”

There is a clear indication that the in-service programs are being used an opportunity but some teachers abhor the intention and organization of the said in-service programs. This finding supports Magoma’s (2011) study which analyzed the whole program of integrated English curriculum and discovered that 57.4 % of the teachers were in-serviced in the integrated English curriculum as an opportunity for managing the IELC.

Invitation of resource persons is an opportunity for addressing IELC challenges like wide syllabus and time management. Resource persons are teachers with wide experience in curriculum delivery and testing. Teachers do invite resource persons to help guide their learners and themselves on critical curriculum areas like integration learning and examination points. The HODs were requested to Strongly Disagree (1), Disagree (2), remain Neutral (3), Agree (4), or Strongly Agree (5) on this because resource persons come in to fill the teachers’ knowledge gap in integrated curriculum teaching. Table 3.1 indicates that 27(54.0%) of the heads of departments agreed that invitation of resource person is an opportunity. 5(10.0%) disagreed, 11(22.0%) were neutral, while 6(12.0%) strongly agreed that the invitation of resource persons is a suitable opportunity in addressing challenges of IELC. 1(2.0%) of the heads of departments strongly disagreed. On the whole, it implies that 66% of the HODs acknowledged that inviting resource persons into their teaching is a good opportunity to counter IELC challenges. In line with the findings, HOD **2** says,

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“Teachers do invite other teachers as resource persons, and consultants as a strategy to address shortcomings in the teaching and implementation of the IELC but what we do here is to invite motivational speakers on KNEC exams.”

Another HOD, HOD 11

“You know I am not all that good at every aspect of integrated English language curriculum, so I need someone occasionally to teach and guide my students and this is where I ask the principal to invite an expert, lets say in paper 3 to assist.”

And Teacher 10 confirmed this practice and said,

“They are not really resource persons in the truest sense of the word but teachers who mark national exams”

Therefore, the HODs agree that by inviting resource persons who are experts in KNEC English exams, this is an opportunity they use to tackle challenges of IELC and time management of the wide syllabus. These findings are in line with Magoma’s (2000) statement that resource persons presents a learning opportunity in the sense that they guide and direct teachers activities to expedite the communication in the classroom where a teacher has shortcoming.

On sharing and collaboration, the HODs were asked to give their experiences on sharing as an opportunity to counter the challenges of IELC of poor grounding, time management and wide syllabus coverage. Table 3.1 reveal that 25(50%) of the HODs agreed that sharing on IELC implementation was one of the opportunities to counter challenges, 1(2.0) % were neutral, while 24(48.0%) strongly agreed that sharing through discussion on the integrated English curriculum was an opportunity to understand the curriculum. On the whole, over 98% of the HODs considered sharing the implementation of IELC as a strategy they adopted. The interviews revealed that a number of HODs shared a lot in their work. According to HOD 14,

“Yea, without anyone sharing their challenges, these English language teachers would not do the right things in class”

Teacher 10 equally supported HOD 14’s view and posited:

“Implementing this thing is challenging... You need to discuss with other teachers throughout.”

Therefore, one can conclude that teachers believe that collaborating and consulting about their problems is a good sharing strategy to cope with the challenges of the IELC. In corroboration, Subban and Sharma (2005) state that teachers believed the support of other school leaders and sharing were critical in order for them to implement new practices. They add that, forming community of learners to brainstorm over challenges would be a strategy to ensure effective implementation.

3.2 Findings on strategies subject teachers experience on minimizing the challenges and maximizing on opportunities in the implementation of IELC:

Subject teachers being the actual implementers of the IELC face certain challenges which they overcome through certain strategies. The subject teachers were requested to Strongly Disagree (1), Disagree (2), Remain Neutral (3), Agree (4), or Strongly Agree (5) on the following challenges: scarcity of teaching resources-improvise, negative attitude- motivation, time management-In-Set, wide syllabus- sharing and inadequate grounding- invite resource person. This is presented in the Table 3.2.

Table 3.2 Strategies subject teachers experience on minimizing the challenges and maximizing on opportunities in implementing IELC (n=105)

Statement	Agree(A)	Disagree(D)	Neutral(N)	Strongly Agree(SA)	Strongly Disagree(SD)
There is Scarce Resources- I improvise/share	30(28.6%)	11(10.5%)	23(21.8%)	40(38.1%)	01
Negative Attitude is prevalent- I motivate myself	71(67.6%)	1(1.0%)	8(7.6%)	25(23.8%)	00
Time Management is a problem-In-Set helps me in	22(21.0%)	5(4.8%)	30(28.5%)	39(37.1%)	9(8.6%)

IELC					
I am inadequately Grounded- I invite a resource person	39(37.1%)	14(13.4%)	35(33.3%)	17(16.2%)	00
The syllabus is wide- sharing	40(38.1%)	5(4.8%)	13(12.4%)	46(43.7%)	1(01%)

(Source: Researcher)

Table 3.2 indicates that 30(28.6%) of the subject teachers agreed, 11(10.5%) disagreed, 23(21.9%) were neutral, 40(38.1%) strongly agreed improvisation is a strategy to tackle challenges on IELC while 1(1.0%) strongly disagreed. This means a simple majority 66.7% of the subject teachers agreed that improvisation is a suitable opportunity for IELC challenges. Upon interviewing the teachers, the findings indicated there is a challenge and addressing it require strategies like improvisation. Teacher **1** observed:

“When it comes to resources, I believe there is a big challenge and of course teachers must go out of their way to improvise teaching materials that they need but are not available. Books are rare here”.

This is further upheld by Teacher **5** who observed:

“Ok, as concerns the resources, I can say that the resources are not so many and I can say that the ones which are readily available are the text books, which text books are also not enough, so, it involves sharing and improvising to have a sufficient.”

HOD **9**, said,

“Improvisation here is the order of the day, from flash cards to seating arrangements to symposium. Without these, nothing happens around and we might not enjoy our teaching.”

The findings therefore indicate a situation where teachers improvise as a strategy to make up for scarce resources, and even program to enhance integration. The results are in line with Labo-Lopoola’s (2010) historical research on the place of literature in the teaching of English language as a second language in Nigerian Junior Secondary School which deduced from the various studies that poor performance of students in English is due to lack of improvisation by teachers on methodologies and teaching materials for the effective teaching of English.

Teachers’ self motivation to implement IELC is an important segment in their practice since they are the actual implementers of the curriculum. Their motivation has to do with several requirements on the tools, methods, and their readiness to teach IELC even under difficult circumstances. Table 3.2 shows that 71(67.6%) of the integrated English language teachers agreed that motivation can be a strategy to tackle challenges on IELC, 1 (1.0%) disagreed while 8(7.6%) remained neutral while 25 (23.8%) strongly agreed that motivation is a suitable opportunity in the implementation of the integrated English curriculum. This implies that slightly over 91.4% that is the majority of the teachers were convinced that motivating teachers who are implementing IELC presents an opportunity to address negative attitude and lack of cooperation. During the interviews, Teacher **10** observed:

“Okay, I can say that motivation for the teaching of the Integrated English can be encouraged”.

Moreover Teacher **3** emphasized,

“One of the major challenges that we face is the organization of curriculum in such a way that it makes it a bit difficult for the teacher to integrate”.

HOD **8** acknowledged;

“Yea, it is you as a teacher to be motivated on how best you want to integrate because you can give up.”

From these views, one can deduce that the teachers believe intrinsic motivation is part and parcel of their calling without which their teaching life would be unsatisfactory. According to Vieluf (2012), without any motivation, the instructors are bound to be frustrated because innovative instructional practices place new demands and pressures on the teachers which involve acquiring knowledge, skills, attitudes and values including a degree of flexibility that is often uncomfortable to an insecure teacher.

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Another strategy in place for teachers was the in-service courses. The Subject teachers were asked to say if in-service programs on IELC were a coping strategy and the results are shown Table 3.2. They were asked to Strongly Disagree (1), Disagree (2), Neutral (3), Agree (4), and Strongly Agree (5). Table 3.2 indicates that 22(21.0%) of the subject teachers agreed, 5(4.8%) disagreed, 30(28.6%) were neutral, 39(37.1%) strongly agreed while 9(8.6%) strongly disagreed that in-service programs is a suitable strategy to counter challenges of implementing IELC. This means that slightly more than half (58.1%) of the subject teachers agreed that in-service programs are a good strategy to counter challenges on IELC. The rest had their doubts. These findings are corroborated by a number of interviewees such as Teacher **1** who observed:

“Well, in-service programs are good because some of us got raw deal in colleges and they help us focus on the teaching of English in an integrated way once we are in the field but the programs are never there

Teacher **12** however doubted the effectiveness of the IN-SETs and substantiated thus,

“The current once a year workshops and seminars actually help no one because the trainers come packed with their own content and give it in a matter of hours only to come back the following year. I think the IN-SETS are just a money minting venture”

HOD 6 adds:

“Secondly, we don't have proper orientation in the system on how to integrate, so, we almost do it intuitively but with time anyway we would be in those in-service programs. Currently, the ad-hoc, one day workshops and seminars can do

Going by these concerns, teachers feel that there are real challenges to teaching English in public schools and from their talk, it is the experiences of the teachers that in-service programs can be a good strategy to tackle challenges they face in implementing IELC although such programs are not there and it is the workshops saving the day. The findings are consistent with Shah (in press) that emphasized the need for more in-service teachers training opportunities because grounding teachers in their subject areas is a lifelong affair. Similarly, Abu (2004) study results indicated that teachers needed more training and assistance to be competent in their work.

Invitation of resource person is an opportunity that can be integrated to counter challenges faced by IELC. The subject teachers were requested to Strongly Disagree (1), Disagree (2), remain Neutral (3), Agree (4), or Strongly Agree (5) on this because resource persons are meant to assist in the teachers' pedagogical content knowledge in the integrated curriculum. The findings are presented in Table 3.2. The table reveals that 39(37.1%) of the subject teachers agreed that inviting English resource persons would be a suitable strategy because teachers are not the only depositories of knowledge. 14(13.3%) disagreed, 35(33.3%) were neutral, while 17(16.2%) strongly agreed inviting resource persons is a good opportunity. On the whole, it means that a simple majority of 53.3% of the subject teachers acknowledged the invitation of resource persons during their teaching is welcome as an opportunity to counter challenges on knowledge gap, material improvisation, attitude and even motivation. During the interviews, Teacher **8** agreed with these findings when asked about the efforts of colleagues in teaching integrated English and states thus,

“Oh, yes, inviting resource personnel for a week or so can stimulate my lessons a lot. And they have helped us a lot”. it is a good strategy”.

Teacher **1** confirmed these views and said,

“Oh, those people are good! Resource persons can open not only your eyes but the eyes of the learners as well”.

And HOD **10** on further probing as to the frequency of invitations and areas they address, said,

“We invite the resource persons annually and they come with a focus on exams only. So we can invite speakers per paper to guide our students and teachers in specific papers” where we feel teachers and students may have some challenges”.

For that matter, one can deduce that regardless of varied opinions, teachers invited resource persons to assist in the clarification of IELC concepts to both teachers and students. In corroboration, Mbogori (2006) and Mehwarly (2005) observed that the teaching methods and use of teaching aids were challenges that required more expertise to impart and use in delivering the integrated curriculum and this is where schools can invite more experienced teachers to assist.

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The subject teachers were further asked to state if sharing their challenges in whatever forums was a way of addressing challenges. They were asked to Strongly Disagree (1), Disagree (2), Neutral (3), Agree (4), and Strongly Agree (5). The results are shown in Table 3.2. The table shows that 40(38.1%) agreed, 5(4.8) disagreed, 13(12.4%) were neutral, 46(43.8%) strongly agreed while 1(1.0%) strongly disagreed that sharing would be a suitable opportunity in tackling problems of IELC. The findings mean that the majority, 81.9% of the subject teachers reported that sharing is an opportunity which they used to counter the IELC challenges. In triangulation, Teacher **3** summed up on this strategy:

‘Ok, the strategy we use mostly is sharing during informal group discussions.’

From the interviews, HOD **8** had the following to say on sharing:

“We share on methodology and material development. And sometimes time management which is a challenge.”

And Principal **4**, had this to say about sharing:

“We share resources, both physical and human, we have borrowed the Radio and VCDs, DVDs for use in English lessons before. So you can see it is working for us. No man is an island.”

From the foregoing, teachers tend to agree that sharing information in formal or informal forum is an ideal opportunity for addressing the challenges of IELC. This is in agreement with Onchera (2013) study which focused on the pedagogical hindrances and found out that most teachers held informal discussions during tea or lunch break to inquire about what is working or not working for their colleagues implementing IELC.

IV. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Summary of the study:

The study had set out to examine strategies teachers experienced to lessen challenges and maximize on opportunities in the implementation of the Integrated English language curriculum in public secondary schools in Nyakach Sub County. The findings indicated that the teachers experienced various strategies to minimize the challenges and maximize on opportunities as follows: As for scarcity of resources, teachers improvised and shared the available resources amongst themselves while regarding negative attitude, self motivation and sharing worked for most of the teachers. The same strategies were adopted in the challenges of time management and wide syllabus. However, for the problem of inadequate grounding, attending In-Set programs, and invitation of resource persons were adopted as strategies to minimize challenges and maximize on opportunities. The findings were as follows:

A majority of the HODs and subject teachers acknowledged teachers improvised materials as a strategy to curb scarce resources.

A majority of the HODs and the subject teachers acknowledged that self motivation was a strategy to minimize challenges and maximize on opportunities in implementing IELC amidst challenges of attitude, grounding and scarcity.

A simple majority of HODs and subject teachers acknowledged they experienced IN-SET programs as a strategy to minimize challenges and maximize on opportunities in implementing IELC.

A majority of the HODs and a simple majority of subject teachers acknowledged invitation of resource persons as a strategy to minimize challenges of time management and widespread syllabus and maximize on opportunities in implementing IELC.

An overwhelming majority of HODs and subject teachers acknowledged they experienced sharing and collaboration in matters of resource scarcity, poor grounding, negative attitude as a strategy to minimize challenges and maximize on opportunities in implementing IELC.

4.2 Conclusion:

In conclusion, the study found out that the following opportunities were available as strategies to the majority of heads of departments facing challenges at varying degrees: improvisation of teaching and learning resources, self motivation, in-service programs, invitation of resource persons, and sharing of ideas and resources. The majority of the heads of

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departments, precisely more than two thirds considered improvisations, motivation, in-service programs, invitation of resource persons and sharing their ideas as workable opportunities arising from the challenges of implementing IELC.

The subject teachers were of similar opinion as their HODs though at varying degrees, and a simple majority with slightly more than half of the subject teachers feeling that in-service programs and invitation of resource persons were less available though were felt to be better strategies.

4.3 Recommendations:

Based on the research findings and the conclusions above, the following recommendations were made:

To exploit the opportunities presented by the challenges in the implementation of IELC such as improvisation for resource scarcity-; self motivation for negative attitude-; collaboration to address time management and wide syllabus; and collaboration, refresher courses and invitation of resource person to address problems of inadequate grounding in subject pedagogy and content, the researcher recommends putting in place a long term a localized, institutionalized In-Service Program to put together the strategies on maximizing on opportunities and minimizing challenges in the continuous implementation of Integrated English Language Curriculum. The program shall be named Capacity Assistance and Building for Language Education in Kenya (CABLE-Kenya) and shall specialize in linking the theory and practice of language education as taught in colleges of education and practiced in secondary schools. The CABLE- KENYA shall bring on board resource personnel, IELC teachers and educators and KICD into the schools periodically but continually.

4.4 Suggestions for Further Research:

Based on the findings, the researcher suggested the following studies, it is apparent that there are challenges and opportunities in implementing the IELC with regard to the strategies to maximize on opportunities and minimize challenges. The researcher suggests the following areas for further study:

1. This particular research was on teachers' experiences on IELC and at some point the participants almost apportioned blame on the unsuitability of the integrated curriculum to some category of learners. Therefore, a research on learners' experiences of the official curriculum in schools in Kenya and their co-relation to students' performance is needed to determine the relevance of the language curriculum.
2. The current study was done in public secondary schools; it would also be interesting to carry out a research exploring experiences of secondary school teachers in private schools on their strategies to maximize on opportunities and minimize challenges in the implementation of IELC.

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