

The Quest for Quality Education: The Case of Curriculum Innovations in Kenya

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The paper sets out to analyze the quality education curriculum innovations that have been implemented in Kenya since independence in 1963. The purpose of the analysis is to assess the success and or failure of the innovations and determine the lessons learned that can inform future design and implementation of curriculum innovations designed to improve the quality of education. This was a desk review of curriculum policy documents and related research literature. The documents analyzed included various education commission reports produced by education commissions, committees and task forces appointed to inquire into education and make recommendations to government; primary school syllabuses and related research literature. The review has revealed that the curriculum innovations recommended and implemented in Kenya have targeted the attainment of the goals of individual and national economic development; national identity and unity; socio-cultural, moral and ethical development; cognitive development and globalization; and psycho-social skills development. Many of the innovations have not been implemented effectively. Impediments to effective implementation have included hasty implementation, limited in-service training for teachers, inadequate ongoing professional support for teachers, and inadequate resources. Achieving effective curriculum innovation is not easy. It requires greater participation in curriculum decision making, patience in training those in various levels of the curriculum implementation process and enormous resources. In adopting content analysis as a methodology, the paper constitutes a unique contribution to the study of curriculum innovation in Kenya.

Keywords: Curriculum development; Curriculum innovation; Curriculum reform; Kenya; Quality education; Vocationalization

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