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From Co-Curricular to Core Curricular: Implications of Sports as An Academic and Career Pathway in the New Kenyan Curriculum Reform

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Abstract

Sport is a major enhancer of economic and social development of individuals and nations. Many young people have risen to stardom, affluence and influence, as well as contributed to development of their nations through pursuit of sporting careers. Yet in most African countries, the scope of this achievement in sports as a career pathway still remains curtailed by the perception of sports as a co-curricular activity that only complements the regular curriculum in school. However, the new Kenyan curriculum reform as enshrined in Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) has re-defined sports to become an academic and career pathway. The purpose of this paper therefore is to examine the implications of this shift of sports from being a co-curricular activity in schools, to becoming a core and integral academic and career pathway. The paper reviews the history and current status of PE in Kenyan curriculum, examines the new curriculum reform, discusses the significance of sports as a career pathway and finally shows the implications of the reform. The methodology used included document analysis and retrospective analysis and synthesis of scientific literature. The paper finds that there is a general attitude of indifference towards sports and PE in schools, it has been given less priority, and most PE and sports departments grapple with inadequate funding and deficiency of essential resources. In order to effectively launch the trajectory of sports as a career pathway in curriculum, the paper recommends the necessity of a societal paradigm shift, government's preparedness and multi-sectoral partnerships that can create synergies among the relevant stakeholders in Education and Sports. The need for the government to strategically position the Kenya Academy of Sports as an entity to professionalize sport talent development towards realization of the Sports Pathway also advised.

Keywords: *Sports, Career pathway, Curriculum, Paradigm Shift*

Introduction

Apart from the fame and fortune gained by the Kenyan athlete Eliud Kipchoge in the INEOS-159 challenge of 2019, the completion of the marathon in under two hours left the world drenched in a heavy conviction that no limit cannot be conquered. Hoogkamer, Snyder and Arellano (2019) rightly observed that this event carried many important lessons. That sporting career can propel one to stardom, success and significance was one of the lessons, clearly illustrated. In many African countries however, the scope of such achievement in sports as a career pathway has been curtailed by the perception of sports as a co-curricular activity that only complements the regular curriculum in schools. In the Kenyan school set-up, sporting skills and competences are expected to be learned and developed through Physical Education (PE) lessons, so as to prepare learners for competitive sports. But though PE is one of the subjects in curriculum, research has shown that its theory and practice in schools has been wanting due to this erroneous perception (Quay, 2014).

The concepts of physical education and sports, albeit being closely related, have been defined differently. Webster's New World College Dictionary (2014) defines physical education as an "instruction in physical exercise and in the



care and hygiene of the human body”. This definition, however, does not particularly pin physical education to school curriculum. The Department for Education and Employment (2000) while examining physical education in the national curriculum for England and Wales defined physical education as “a statutory area of the school curriculum, concerned with developing pupils’ physical competence and confidence, and their ability to use these to perform in a range of activities” (as cited in Bailey, 2005). Such development of physical competency and skill majorly involves sports and games.

A sport on the other hand as defined by the Cambridge Online English dictionary is “a game, competition, or activity needing physical effort and skill that is played or done according to rules, for enjoyment and/ or as a job”. According to African Union (2008), sport is a “physical activity that is governed by a set of rules or customs involving specific administration, governing body, organization and an historical background and often engaged in competitively”. This includes all forms of physical activity that contribute to physical fitness, mental well-being and social interaction, such as play, recreation, organized or competitive sport and indigenous sports and games. As observed by Holt, Strean and Garcia (2002), sporting activities form a major part of most PE programs. Bailey (2005) in an evaluation of the relationship between PE, sport explains that PE focuses on learning the skills and understanding that are requisite for participation in physical activities such as sports. Unfortunately, PE lessons are rarely taught in most public schools (Kariuki, 2017). According to Quay (2014), in cases where teachers make effort to engage students during the PE lesson, they instead teach other subjects that they consider to be “academic”, as PE and sports are considered co-curricular activities which students can engage in after classes.

The new Kenyan curriculum reform has re-defined sports by placing it on an equal rating as other disciplines that are both academic and career pathways that learners pursue. The non-examinable PE in curriculum has been upgraded into an academic and career pathway. There is therefore need to examine the implications of this shift so as to ensure effective implementation of the reform. In this paper, the authors review the history and current status PE, examine the new curriculum reform that redefines sports as an independent academic and career pathway, discuss the significance of sports as a career pathway and finally underscore the implications of this reform in terms of the requisite paradigm shift, preparedness and partnerships. The authors hold that through the theory and practice of sports within the concept of basic education, learners will be able to gain competencies that can thrust them beyond sporting talent into successful sporting careers. This would also offer an easier transition from basic education into sports academies for nurturing of young sport talent, as established under Sports Act of 2013 (Republic of Kenya, 2013).

History and Current Status of Sports And P.E in Kenyan Schools

The history of sports in Kenya can be traced way back to the period prior to the British colonial rule (Njororai, 2013). Before the coming of Europeans, informal education was practiced for impartation of cultural knowledge and customs to all and sundry. According to Mwisukha, Njororai and Onywera (2003), this indigenous education had a component of sports, but only to a less extent as sports were generally regarded as a pastime activity. However, Sifuna (1990) asserts that sports and play were not a pastime activity, but the actual conduit through which the young were taught to emulate the actions of elders, as well as received training that informed their character and identity.

In the pre-colonial period, sports and play were basically interwoven into the very fabric of the African culture to help children and youths in acquiring cognitive, social and physical skills critical in adulthood. In the various indigenous communities, people actively participated in traditional sports such as dancing, hunting, wrestling matches, shooting with bows and arrows, plus many more. Rintaugu, Mwisukha, and Munayi (2011) explain that these early forms of sports and games were closely related to the activities that people engaged in for basic survival. For instance, spear-throwing was related to hunting and need for defense; running helped to meet the need for food through hunting; swimming was for use during fishing and communication across large rivers and lakes; and wrestling was a way of identifying gallant fighters who would be relied upon to defend their communities during attacks by enemies.

During the colonial period (1895- 1963), most of the modern sports such as tennis, cricket, rugby, football, basketball and many more found way into Kenya. The traditional ones were set aside as being crude and obsolete. These modern sporting activities got infused into the educational activities bit by bit. However, Mahlmann (1988) in his review of literature argues that sport was introduced and used as a weapon of colonialism, and that some of the sports were played along racial lines. For example, rugby and tennis were strictly for whites, and hockey was played by Kenyans and Indians. He further opines that the main aim of the sporting culture was to dominate the social conversation of the community by making Africans to have feelings of inferiority in all aspects of life, having been defeated in sport competition (Mahlmann, 1992, as cited in Kipchumba & Jepkorir, 2015). Nevertheless, the intention of colonialists



notwithstanding, it is clear that modern sports found way into Kenyan society and her education system at this time. The colonialists laid emphasis on the inclusion of PE and sports in the School Curriculum as an extra-curricular activity (Nteere, 1982, in Mwisukha, *et al*, 2003). In the Phelps-Stokes Commission Report of 1924, it was observed that there was need for official inclusion of recreation in school curriculum, with the main focus on Physical Training (PT). This was followed by development of PT curriculum for schools that focused on the teaching of the modern sports as well as introduction of competitive sports in schools, communities and international levels (Rintaugu, Mwisukha, & Munayi, 2011).

After Kenya gained her independence from colonial rule in 1963, the government put in place several educational commissions with a mandate to restructure the system of education with a view to make it relevant to the needs and interests of her indigenous people. The Kenya Education Commission of 1964 that was chaired by Simeon Ominde made several recommendations. Among them was emphasis on the inclusion of PE as a co-curricular activity in the school curriculum (Ominde, 1964). As a co-curricular activity, PE was to complement the regular curriculum. In 1967, the first PE syllabus for primary schools was drafted, and in 1979, the first expert was appointed as a teacher of the subject. The development of PE syllabus for secondary schools then followed in 1980 and was published in 1985 (Mwisukha, Rintaugu, Kamenju, & Mwangi, 2012).

According to Wamukoya and Hardman (1992), “identifying and nurturing sports talent” and “appreciation of physical education and sports as a foundation for further education and career” were among the key anchors on which instructional activities of sports and PE needed to revolve. In 1980, a presidential decree was made which required that PE should be a compulsory subject in basic education (Gitonga, Andanje, Wanderi & Bailasha, 2012). PE was however, to be non-examinable. Thereafter, the 8-4-4 system which emphasized practical skills in all areas of the curriculum including sports was introduced in 1986. All these initiatives worked together to give sports and PE a bearing in education. However, the presidential commissions and working parties that came after institution of the 8-4-4 curriculum focused more on reviewing the education system in the country, but did not emphasize the teaching of PE in schools. This could in part explicate the shallow attention that the field has received in the country over the years despite the Presidential Decree of 1980 that made PE mandatory (Kariuki, 2017). In view of the attitude of neglect and abandon with which PE has been handled, it is inevitable that its full benefits may not have been realized as envisaged by the curriculum developers. This is because every curriculum innovation is meant to meet a particular need among learners or entire society, and its expected benefits are only reaped if curriculum implementation is done appropriately (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2009). It thus implies that the new curriculum reform in Kenya may rise or fall at the altar of implementation.

The New Curriculum Reform: Sports as an Academic and Career Pathway

World over, a national curriculum that is consistent with the evolving needs of a nation is one of the key drivers of socio-economic development (Esau & Mpofo, 2017). Curriculum therefore must be reviewed from time to time in order to meet the dynamic needs of learners and society (Ogula, 2016). In Kenya, the need to re-align the Education Sector to Vision 2030 and the Constitution of Kenya 2010 led to the setting up of Prof. Douglas Odhiambo Taskforce 2011. Vision 2030 singled out Education and Training as the vehicle that would drive Kenya into becoming a middle-income economy. In addition, the constitution of Kenya 2010 provided for free and compulsory Basic Education as a human right to every Kenyan child (Otieno, 2016). This implies that education in Kenya has been considered as a key factor that would expedite socio-economic growth, provide skilled manpower, stem population explosion, lower crime rates and improve life expectancy. The wealth of a nation is thus seen as being highly dependent on her capacity to develop her human resources and not so much on her physical resources. Every country therefore makes effort to ensure that her educational curriculum is in tandem with the developmental needs by reviewing their educational curricula to increase both relevance and quality (Syomwene, 2017 in Syomwene, Nyandusi & Yungungu, 2017).

The new competency-based curriculum (CBC) is replacing Kenya’s 8-4-4 education system which has been in place since 1986. Unlike CBC which emphasizes acquisition of competencies and skills, the 8-4-4 system was mainly content-based and exam-oriented (Mackatiani, 2017). The CBC structure has two cycles; Basic Education cycle of 14 years which is free and compulsory, and a Higher Education of 3 years. This is as illustrated in Figure 1.



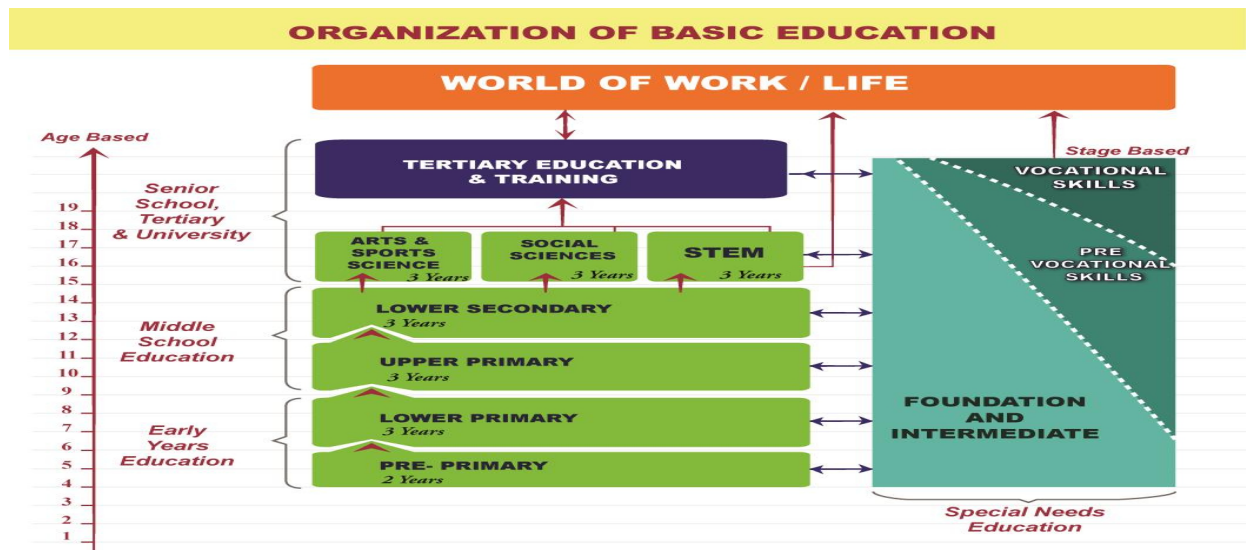


Figure 1: Structure of Organization of Basic Education of Kenya's New Curriculum (Source: Republic of Kenya, 2017)

The new curriculum aims at ensuring that learners acquire competences and skills that will enable them meet the personal and national development needs of Vision 2030 by offering a choice of subject pathways at the end of the elementary school phase (Republic of Kenya, 2017). This is with a focus on acquisition of core competences that include literacy, numeracy and communication skills. It also focuses on early identification and nurturing of talent in individual learners. The talents to be identified and nurtured includes talent in sports. Sport is part of the social pillar of vision 2030 as well as an enabler in achievement of sustainable development goals (Sapkota & Neupane, 2018). The CBC provides for specialization at the end of the Lower Secondary phase. Curriculum evaluation employs a system of Competence Assessment Tests (CATS) measuring knowledge, skills and competences, the results of which will be cumulative and form part of a summative assessment at the end of each phase. This is distinct from the former situation where students either passed or failed and exited the system.

The pathways provided for by CBC are broadly categorized into three: i) Social Sciences, ii) Arts and Sports Science, and iii) Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM). A learner progressing from Lower Secondary to Senior Secondary can select and pursue any pathway depending on their personality, ability, interest, and career choice as shown in Figure 2. Each senior school is expected to make informed decisions with regards to the pathway of choice based on availability of the requisite infrastructure that would ensure development of the competencies identified in that pathway. Schools can also decide to offer one or more pathways depending on the ability to acquire the infrastructure necessary for acquisition of the identified competencies (Republic of Kenya, 2017).

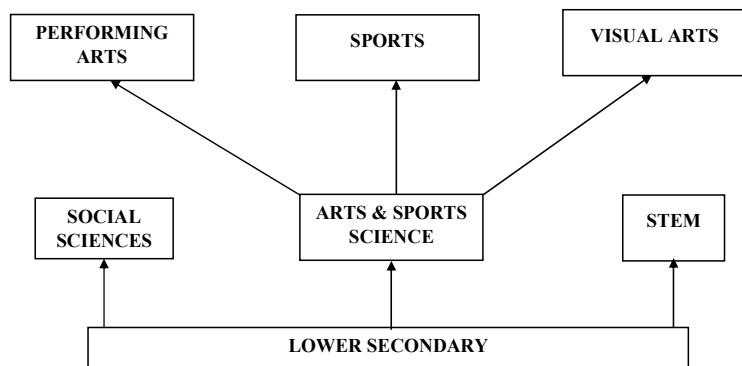


Figure 2: CBC Pathways after Lower Secondary (Source: Republic of Kenya, 2017)



According to Republic of Kenya (2017), learners pursuing sports science are expected to learn particular core subjects as well as some elective subjects. Sports Science core subjects are Human Physiology, Anatomy and Nutrition, and Sports Ethics. In addition, the learner shall choose a minimum of one and a maximum of two of the following optional subjects: Ball Games, Athletics, Indoor Games, Gymnastics, Water Sports, Boxing, Martial Arts, Outdoor pursuits and Advanced Physical Education. This is to be guided by the learner's personality, interests, ability and career choices. Students graduating from this pathway may join middle level colleges or universities to pursue careers in the sports industry depending on their interests, abilities and personality. They shall also be able to join the world of work.

Importance of Sports as a Career Pathway

The importance and benefits of sports as an academic and career pathway for individuals cannot be underestimated. Learners pursuing sports as a career pathway will be equipped in theory and practice for career openings such as self-employment, or employment opportunities connected to sports (Cola, 2006). These include becoming instructors, physiotherapists, sports coaches, sports nutritionists, sports massage therapists, personal trainers, gym attendants, fitness program coordinators, swimming pool attendants, sports researchers, public relations officers. Others career opportunities are refereeing, coaching, lifesaving, teaching, athletics trainers, stadia management specialists, sports masseurs, aerobics and anaerobic trainers, sports journalism, and many more. These are careers that not only benefit the individual, but also contribute to the country's socioeconomic development.

In addition to employment opportunities, sport provides opportunities for self-realization and expression as well as individual development and fulfilment (Meyer & Roche, 2017). The learning environment for sports is experiential and participatory giving learners the opportunity to think critically and articulate their thoughts through creativity and collaboration. Participation in sports will encourage the learners to relate positively to others and engage in movement experiences that promote and support the development of social skills. Sport fosters critical thinking, decision-making and problem solving. The rules and penalties in sport enables the learner to understand the role and the significance that sport plays in promoting a fair and just society. This is strongly supported by the social constructivist theory that highlights the fundamental role of social interaction in learning. Involvement in indoor games will build those social skills in the learner associated with team sports such as reliability, conflict resolution, confidence and positive self-image, and teamwork. Fraile (2017) who investigated the feasibility and possible benefits of indoor games in primary school found that kinesthetic perception, rhythm perception, hard work, dedication to task, self-control, and more skills were developed and strengthened as the learner solved problems, interacted with others and accomplished set goals.

Furthermore, the broader goals and interests of education and socio-economic development of nations are met through sports. Sports has been tailored as one of the main means to achieve Kenya's national goals of education. For example, according to Mwisukha, Njororai and Onywera (2003), there are several aspects by which sports has contributed towards national development in Kenya. These include: provision of opportunities for advertising and marketing; production industry for sporting goods such as sportswear and equipment; creation of employment opportunities for the local people and trade between Kenya and other countries; income to the government through taxes levied; enabling people to engage in recreational activities after routine work; promotion of the tourist industry especially when hosting major international sport events, which also stimulates the local economy particularly for hotels, bars and restaurants, taxis and other retail businesses. As Coates and Humphreys (2003) found in their study, professional sports had some positive effect on earnings and employment in the services and retail sectors.

Another national goal of education in Kenya is promotion of individual development and self fulfilment. Through sports, this goal is achieved by athletes earning a living directly from match allowances and provision of employment opportunities in public and private sectors. Learning about and/ or participating in international sport events enhances promotion of international consciousness and fostering positive attitudes towards other nations. In promotion of positive attitudes towards good health and environmental protection, Currie (2016) found that sporting themes could be used to engage young males in health education lessons. Another goal is fostering nationalism, patriotism and promotion of national unity. As Lim (2019) observed, leisure in the form of spectator sports acted as an entry point to, a promoter of, an educator of, a symbol of, an initiator of conversations and dialogs on, and a unifying mechanism for national unity in Malaysia. This is seen when Kenyan teams compete on the international arena. Kenyans, regardless of ethnicity race or religion come together in solidarity to support their teams, which promotes peace and harmonious existence.



These and many more are the benefits that await individuals and the entire nation as a result of the new curriculum reform. It should however be noted that no curriculum reform that is beneficial comes without challenges. Yet by leveraging on appropriate implementation strategies and approaches, success can be achieved.

Implications of Launching Sports Pedagogy in New Curriculum

Curriculum implementation is “the systematic process of ensuring that a new curriculum reaches the intended consumers: learners, teachers, parents and society at large” (Ojilong & Wafula, 2017 in Syomwene, Nyandusi & Yungungu, 2017). In this process, the curriculum, curriculum materials, resources and infrastructure are prepared and made available to the consumers. Ornstein and Hunkins (2009) explain that curriculum implementation is a change process, and change is not easy. All the relevant stakeholders must therefore be brought on board in order to understand, embrace and support the change process. Synergies created through this stakeholder involvement would help to bring about the requisite paradigm shift, preparedness and partnerships for effective and expeditious curriculum implementation. Lack of involvement can result to lack of ownership and possible resistance to change.

Paradigm shift:

According to Ornstein and Hunkins (2009), one effective curriculum implementation approach is Overcoming-Resistance-to-Change (ORC). This approach is centred on helping the stakeholders to overcome resistance to the proposed change. ORC holds that people must first change their way of thinking and behaviour before the system can change. This is called a paradigm shift. As defined by the Cambridge Online Dictionary, a paradigm shift is “a time when the usual and accepted way of doing or thinking about something changes completely”. It is basically a fundamental change in approach or underlying assumptions about something; a radical change in the way of thinking and behaviour.

In view of the current status of sports and PE in schools, a paradigm shift is necessary for sports pedagogy to be perceived as needful and useful. Research has shown that sports and PE lessons are rarely taught in most public schools. Kariuki (2017) in a study on attitudes and practices of primary school pupils, teachers and head teachers in Physical Education in Kiambu County found that very few public schools were practically teaching PE. In addition, the attitude of pupils and teachers towards PE were negative. In cases where teachers made effort to engage students during the PE lesson, they instead taught other subjects that they considered to be “academic”, as PE and sports were considered co-curricular activities which students could engage in after classes (Quay, 2014).

Muinde (2014) conducted a study to examine the implementation of PE curriculum in secondary schools in Kitui County. The study aimed at identifying the factors affecting the implementing of PE curriculum in secondary schools. It focused on the effectiveness of teaching and learning of PE, qualification of PE teachers and the effects of not examining PE as a subject in the curriculum. The study found that: there were inadequate facilities and equipment in schools hindering effective implementation of PE curriculum; there was a shortage of trained PE teachers in schools; funds for running PE programmes were inadequate; PE was not examined by Kenya National Examination Counsel (KNEC) hence students were not motivated to take it seriously; PE required allocation of more time on the time table for effective implementation of curriculum. The study recommended development of a PE curriculum that is examinable and graded by KNEC, more time allocation for PE, training and regular in servicing of PE teachers. The negative attitude towards PE has been blamed on the subject being non-examinable (in an exam-oriented education system!). Making PE a core and academic subject in schools with learners’ competencies evaluated as proposed by Muinde (2014), and as also envisaged in the new curriculum reform may solve this problem. However, turning sports into an academic subject may again introduce another challenge, in view that sports needs to be enjoyed.

There has been an inadequacy of trained and qualified PE teachers in most schools. This is because, rarely will a school request for a PE teacher when the examinable subjects are still understaffed (Quay, 2014). Consequently, the physical component of basic education has remained least developed, and PE persistently treated as a lesser subject than others. Studies have also shown that most sports and PE departments in schools grapple with inadequate funding and chronic deficiency of essential resources Quay (2014). Professional development of sports and PE teachers has similarly not been prioritized. Furthermore, the experiences of teachers posted from the universities to teach sports and PE as one of the teaching subjects have been devastating. As Wanyama (2011) in Quay (2014) explains from personal experience:

My teaching subjects were PE and Kiswahili.... Since I was allocated a full teaching load in Kiswahili, a compulsory and examinable subject, it took precedence over PE classes. At my second school the situation



was the same: I was Head of Games Department but PE was ignored. In a third school, when the principal introduced me at school assembly as the new PE teacher, the students burst out laughing. Sports and PE teachers in Kenya face many challenges in their work, the biggest of which is to convince students and colleagues that sports and PE is an important subject and worthy of support. Often, I would go to take my PE class only to find a colleague using my allocated PE time to keep the class in for more work in an “academic” subject. In such instances I would have no choice but to let the teacher continue because, in Kenya, examinable subjects are given priority. Whenever I complained I would be reminded that there was enough time in the evening for students to “go out and play.” Noteworthy also is that some of my colleagues and some students too, were amused at the thought that one could study PE at university level as I did.

This clearly shows that sports and PE in Kenya has been widely perceived as being a non-intellectual and non-essential subject, an attitude that had contributed to its devaluation in schools. For sports to take root in the education system under the new curriculum, just as other “academic subjects” like Mathematics or Biology, a radical change in the way of thinking and behaviour of all stakeholders is inevitable. When a paradigm shift occurs, preparedness for change can be easily undertaken.

Preparedness

According to Acosta and Acosta (2017), successful transition and implementation of a new curriculum is dependent upon the preparedness of the entire nation and education institutions to take their part in the adoption of the new program. This preparedness has to do with human resources, availability of curriculum materials, physical infrastructure and adequate funding. Research has shown that many educational innovations suffer most the point of implementation due to lack of preparedness. In Nigeria, the implementation of her basic education under the 9-3-4 system was problematic due to her lack of infrastructural, personnel and cultural preparedness (Omokhodion, 2008). In Kenya, the government implemented Free Primary Education (FPE) in January 2003. Okwemba (2011) and Simiyu, (2019) found that the FPE faced diverse challenges including an increase in enrolment in primary schools which put pressure on learning resources. There was also lack of enough teachers to handle the increased numbers of pupils. Such challenges were indicators of weak preparedness. FPE has continued to suffer problems such as lack of resources and facilities like classrooms, large class sizes, teacher demotivation, negative attitudes by the teachers and inadequate staffing (Ojilong & Wafula, 2017 in Syomwene, Nyandusi & Yungungu, 2017)

The first key variable in successful implementation of a sports curriculum is the human resource and capacity. Zipporah, Kadenyi and Maithya (2016) conducted a study in Manga sub county, Kenya to establish the influence of teacher-related factors on the implementation of PE syllabus in public primary schools. The study involved a total of 28 headteachers, 138 teachers and 4 Zonal Quality Assurance and Standards Officers (ZQASOs) who were selected using simple random and purposive sampling techniques. The findings of the study showed that majority of the teachers were not adequately prepared for the implementation of PE syllabus. Based on the findings, the study recommended that the Ministry of Education needed to put in place mechanisms for teacher training, and enforcing of regular supervision of the implementation of the PE syllabus in schools. In another study conducted by Kipng’etich and Osman (2016) in Bomet County, it was found that most of the teachers who had been assigned responsibility of teaching PE were not trained in the pedagogy of PE. Furthermore, none of the Quality Assurance and Standards Officers (QASOs) in the county was an authority in PE. Due to heavy workloads, teachers who were assigned PE lessons only dropped students off and returned at the end of the lesson, leaving them to do “their own thing” in the field. Training and professional qualification of adequate sports teachers should thus be key on the list. Sports science, being a new entry in the school curriculum does not have already existing trained and qualified teachers. With new and different subjects being offered to pupils, teachers will need to be prepared to adapt to this new curriculum so as to meet the requirements, interests and talents of every child.

The second area that needs preparation is availability of curriculum materials. For teachers to effectively implement the new curriculum, schools need the relevant teaching/ learning materials. These are teaching-learning inputs like: syllabi, textbooks, charts, posters and maps. They by and large constitute the subject matter content that should be taught in schools. The production of the teaching learning materials such as textbooks should be adequate, and distribution should get to the remotest of areas of the country on time. Syomwene (2017) in Syomwene, Nyandusi and Yungungu (2017) opines that one resistance to educational change is lack of resources and facilities. The need for these materials in schools is higher now than it was ever before, because an overhaul of an entire curriculum makes most of the curriculum materials that were in place obsolete or partially obsolete.



School infrastructure is another area that calls for preparedness. The content competency-based curriculum has been designed with a view of equipping the learners with relevant knowledge that emphasizes on technology, innovation and entrepreneurship (Republic of Kenya, 2017). The new curriculum therefore requires schools to provide infrastructure like, classrooms, ICT labs, resource centers, sporting fields, water equipment and electricity. The relevant infrastructure should be provided sufficiently so as to maximize delivery quality and interaction with the learning environment. According to Adequacy of instructional materials and physical facilities has a direct effect on quality of teacher preparation and subsequent delivery (Likoko, Mutsotso, & Nasongo, 2013). However, research has shown that many schools lack the requisite sports equipment and physical facilities. Where present, the facilities are not proportional to the school enrolment (Muthima, Udoto, & Anditi, 2016). Most schools concentrate on infrastructural facilities that have a direct link to school's examination results, such as school library, science laboratory and school agriculture farm at the expense of non-examinable subjects.

Lastly, there is need for preparedness in funding. Curriculum reform is an expensive exercise that requires continuous funding. Mkandawire (2010) argues that inadequate funding is a serious impediment to curriculum implementation in learning institutions. Workers have to be paid. Resources and facilities have to be purchased and maintained. The curriculum implementation process should thus be sufficiently funded to secure the relevant resources adequately and timely. Limited funding often waters down the quality of an otherwise good curriculum. Such need for securing funding, and the view of leveraging on the capabilities, resources and experiences of others in order to create a successful program is what necessitates partnerships.

Partnerships

Multi-sectoral partnerships are a key Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) number 17, which is a means of achieving sustainable community engagements (MacDonald, *et al*, 2018). Multi-sectoral partnerships thus needful in creating and implementing a new educational innovation. McQuaid (2000) as cited in Houlihan and Lindsey (2008) identifies three main reasons for promoting partnerships. First partnerships create increased pool of resources such as finance, expertise and administrative capacity. Secondly partnerships improve effectiveness and efficiency. Lastly partnerships enhance legitimacy through involvement of a broader range of stakeholders. These are the justifications for the necessity of partnerships and linkages between stakeholders in the fields of education and sports in implementation of sports career pathway in schools.

First, partnerships and linkages between stakeholders in the fields of education and sports would be necessary in the designing and/ or finetuning of curriculum for learners. According to Mwisukha, Rintaugu, Kamenju and Mwangi (2012), the sports and PE curriculum in Kenya's educational institutions under 8-4-4 system lacked uniformity and progression of activities. In addition, public primary and secondary schools did not have a standard or uniform criterion for PE evaluation, since it was a non-examinable subject. Such gaps require that the Ministry of Education and that of Sports, together with sports state corporations such as Kenya Academy of Sports (KAS), which is already engaged in the theory and practice of sports partner with the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD) to develop and/ or finetune the sports curriculum for learners. This would ensure that the curriculum is relevant, standard, uniform, practical and realistic.

Secondly, stakeholders in fields education and sports would need to partner with universities and teacher training colleges for effective teacher training. Mwisukha, *et al*, (2012) observed that there were no uniform national standards for preparing professional teachers to enter into teaching sports and PE starting from pre-primary to secondary schools in Kenya. This points to the need of developing a uniform sports science curriculum to be used in universities and all teacher training institutions. Sports organizations equipped and involved in identifying, nurturing and developing sports talent among youth would be needed to partner with teacher training institutions for effective integration of talent development into the teacher-training curriculum, in order to enable teachers to identify, nurture and develop sports talent among the learners. Smith (2015) investigated how partnerships for physical education worked between primary schools and sports coaches in north-west England. The study found that sports coaches were used to deliver aspects of physical education in state primary schools in England by accommodating the coaches within the existing curricular arrangements. Similar arrangements would go a long way in ensuring that teachers are appropriately equipped by practicing experts in the fields of sports. This would further help to impart and/ or improve the teachers' technical skills, which are very key in sports. Nationally recognized sports agencies may also liaise with teacher training institutions to administer and co-ordinate sports courses.



Thirdly are partnerships for improvement of already existing programmes, or creation of new ones. Anderson-Butcher, *et al* (2018) observed that Learning in Fitness and Education through Sports (LiFEsports) at The Ohio State University developed university and community partnerships, which helped to increase the number and quality of sport and recreation programs, highly skilled youth development professionals, and knowledge of best practices in youth development. One reason for curriculum evaluation and review by external partners is for improvement of already existing programmes, or creation of new ones. Carl (2012) explains that this needs to be done on an on-going basis with a view to making timeous adjustments and determining success.

A new educational innovation requires continuous research to avoid unnecessary mishaps due to implementation of error and ill-researched policies. The entire curriculum process from conceptualization to implementation and evaluation must be guided by research (McNeal, *et al*, 2014). Research would also ensure that there is a seamless transition of learners from class to the world of career/ work, linking the young graduates into existing career opportunities. The Ministry of Education thus needs to partner with national sports organizations, institutions of higher learning, and other stakeholders to carry out continuous research in sports and education in order to stimulate sport transformation and development.

Partnerships are also necessary for funding. The findings of Mkandawire (2010) indicated that inadequate funding was the major impediment to curriculum implementation in learning institutions. Funds are very necessary in effecting any curriculum change. Workers have to be paid, and resources and facilities have to be purchased and maintained. Research also requires funding. With increase in demand for manpower, the bulk of money allocated to education is absorbed by salaries leaving very little for other important aspects in curriculum implementation such as in-service training, continuous professional growth. There is thus need for partnerships with local and international finance institutions in order to create an adequate pool of financial resources. A well-researched, designed, implemented and funded educational program is bent on achieving unprecedented success.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The current curriculum reform in Kenya comes against a backdrop of challenges that are a cumulative consequence of the events that have taken place prior, during and after colonialism. The culmination of these events was perception of sports and PE in schools as a co-curricular activity that only complements the regular curriculum. Sports and PE have thus been viewed as comparatively non-intellectual and non-essential, hence receiving minimal attention, resources, infrastructure, professional development and funding. The new curriculum reform however, has sports not as a co-curricular activity, but as an integral part of the main curriculum and a career pathway for Kenyan children. The paper thus finds that there is need for a paradigm shift, preparedness and partnerships among stakeholders. Successful implementation of the new curriculum reform requires creation of synergies among the relevant stakeholders in the fields of education and sports in order to effectively launch the trajectory of sports as a career pathway in curriculum.

In consideration of the above review, this paper recommends creation of multi-sectoral partnerships between Ministry of Education (MoE) and all key stakeholders in Sports, so as to actualize realization of the Sports Pathway. This will not only provide a solid pillar for supporting development, implementation and evaluation of the new curriculum for the Sports Pathway, but will also provide a seamless transition of learners into the career marketplace. Secondly, the Kenyan government should create strategies geared towards attitude change of learners, teachers and the larger society, so as to enhance perception of sports pedagogy as needful and useful. The Kenyan government should work towards timely and adequate mobilization and acquisition of physical, financial, instructional and human resources in readiness for implementation of Senior Secondary Education curriculum. Finally, the government should strategically position the Kenya Academy of Sports (KAS) as an entity to professionalize sport talent development by availing finance and technical resources. Future studies need to investigate how assessment and evaluation of sports pedagogy can be effectively done, without losing the basic feature of play and enjoyment of sports. Once appropriately implemented, the ramifications of pedagogy of sports as a career pathway in the context of basic education may likely propel many Kenyan youths and the nation at large to conquer limits, and rise beyond sporting talent to stardom, success and significance.

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