The Role of Evidence in Policymaking: The case of the National Curriculum Policy and Curriculum Reform in Kenya

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Abstract

There is a considerable amount of social science research that has focused on the use of evidence, including research and evaluation studies, in policymaking processes. This thesis seeks to assess the role of evidence use in policymaking while investigating the role of contextual and stakeholder interests in the process. When looking at the role that evidence plays in policymaking, traditional theories of evidence use often fail to account for the role of factors other than evidence in explaining policy change. This thesis addresses this shortcoming by using policy network theory together with traditional theories of evidence use to assess the role of evidence in education policymaking in Kenya. It investigates the factors that influence education policymaking, including international processes; national education policies, politics, and resource exchange; the stakeholders that influence the process and their interests; and the barriers to and enablers of evidence use. Using the development of Kenya's 2018 National Curriculum Policy (NCP) that has guided curriculum reforms as a case study, the research shows how various factors including politics, stakeholder interests and international organisations influence education policymaking in Kenya, and how the different power dynamics among education stakeholders in the country affect the extent to which they can influence education policy.

Emerging barriers to the use of evidence include a lack of cooperation between government departments, government bias towards certain stakeholders and challenges to accessing research. This study informs theoretical understandings of the influence of evidence in education policymaking in Kenya by introducing evidence as a resource within the wider education policy network. The intention is to help policymakers and education stakeholders to better understand the variables that influence the making of education policy.

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Acronyms and abbreviations

AHADI	Agile and Harmonised Assistance to Devolved Institutions
CBC	Competency Based Curriculum
CEMASTEA	Centre for Mathematics, Science and Technology in Education
CBO	Community Based Organisation
CUE	Commission for University Education
DLP	Digital Literacy Program
EAC	East African Community
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council
EBPP	Evidence Based Policy and Practice
EFA	Education for All agenda
EMIS	Education Management Information System
FBO	Faith-based Organization
FCDO	The Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office
FPE	Free Primary Education
FSE	Free Secondary Education
FTI	Fast Track Initiative
GPI	Gender Parity Index
GOK	Government of Kenya

GER	Gross Enrolment Rate
HE	Higher Education
HELB	Higher Education Loans Boards
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
ILO	Higher Education Loans Boards
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
JFA	Joint Financing Agreement
JKF	Jomo Kenyatta Foundation
KANU	Kenya African National Union
KEMI	Kenya Education Management Institute
KESSP	Kenya Education Sector Support Program
KICD	Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development
KIE	Kenya Institute of Education
KISE	Kenya Institute of Special Education
KNEC	Kenya National Examinations Council
KNQA	Kenya National Qualifications Authority
KNQF	Kenya National Qualifications Framework
KPSA	Kenya Private Sector Alliance
LCE	Learner Centred Education

MoE	Ministry of Education
MoHEST	Ministry of Higher Education Science and Technology
NACONEK	National Council for Nomadic Education in Kenya
NACOSTI	National Commission for Science Technology and Innovation
NARC	National Rainbow Coalition
NER	Net Enrolment Rates
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisations
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PCR	Primary Completion Rate
PPP	Public Private Partnerships
PWPER	Presidential Working Party on Education Reform
SEPU	School Equipment Production Unit
RELI	Regional Education Learning Initiative
SAGAs	Semi-Autonomous Government Agencies
SAPs	Structural Adjustment Programmes
SNA	Social Network Analysis
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SSA	Sub-Saharan Africa

STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering, Maths,
SWAp	Sector wide Approach
TIQET	Totally Integrated Quality Education and Training
TPR	Teacher Pupil Ratio/Textbook Pupil Ratio
TSC	Teacher Service Commission
UASU	University Academic Staff Union
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNESCO-IBE	UNESCO-International Bureau of Education Standards
UNICEF	United Nations International Children Emergency Fund
UPE	Universal Primary Education
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
UDA	United Democratic Alliance

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Chapter 1: Background

Introduction

In 2010 the Government of Kenya's new constitution required the realignment of numerous sectors, including that of education (Rodríguez et al., 2015; Kitavi & Muna, 2020). The 2010 constitution calls for the government to be accountable for the policy decisions made and demands for the use of evidence to inform the policy formulation process (Kitavi & Muna, 2020). In 2011, planning for the streamlining of the education sector was under way. The government set up the Douglas Odhiambo Task Force to assess and recommend the best way of realigning the education system to the new constitution, and in 2012 the task force produced recommendations and a policy framework for its transformation (MoE & MoHEST, 2012). While Sessional Paper No. 14 of 2012, which was drafted from the task force report, and would have provided a framework for curriculum policy development was not ratified in parliament, the task force's report provided the foundation for education reforms that led to the change from Kenya's subject-based curriculum to a competency-based one.

The education reform was opposed by civil society groups, education activists and trade unions, which argued that there was no legal or policy document guiding the process since Sessional Paper No. 14 of 2012 had not been ratified in parliament, and public participation and civic engagement in the decision to make curriculum reforms was limited. There were also concerns about the country's readiness for education reforms, considering the shortage of teachers and limited teacher training for delivery of the new curriculum. It became evident, however, that despite the opposition the government had already decided to change the curriculum. In 2019 March the Cabinet Secretary of Education Hon. Amina Mohamed was replaced after she made a public announcement that the country was not ready for the coming education reforms.

These few illustrations of the highly politicised and contentious nature of education reform in Kenya call attention to the value of investigating what goes on behind the scenes in education policymaking, including how the agenda is set and policy decisions are made. Aiming to understand the processes and negotiations that go into developing Kenya's education policies, this thesis uses the development of the country's National Curriculum Policy (NCP) to investigate

what influences the development of education policy, including the use of evidence such as needs assessments, benchmarking studies and summative evaluations.

Using a mixed-methods case-study approach it first explores the factors influencing education policy development, not including the actors and their interests. Next it describes the actors with an interest in education-policy development that are involved in the process, their positions on such policy development, their attitudes towards one another, their actions and interactions, and the consequences of their involvement in the policy process on Kenya's education reforms. Lastly it considers the influences of evidence-use and the enablers of and barriers to this in the country's education policy development.

1.2. Study background

After years working as a monitoring and evaluation practitioner in education development in South Africa and Kenya, I started to question the meaning of my work. I was primarily working on evaluating education programme offered by the South African government and education NGOs in Kenya. However, I did not know whether the evaluation reports and recommendations that I produced were used. The idea for this PhD emerged from this background: I wanted to shed light on the extent to which evidence from evaluation studies is used in education policy development in Kenya. The concept of evidence-use has been researched since the 1970s, with varying conclusions. Researchers such as Patton, (1978), found little use of evaluations in policy change, whereas others discovered extensive use of evidence (Shulha & Cousins, 1997; Johnson et al., 2009). Considering the arguments in the literature about evidence-use in policymaking, the aim of this research evolved, and it became evident that widening the scope of the research to include what additional factors other than evidence influence education policymaking, could shed more light on the extent to which evidence influences policymaking. This research therefore

includes an assessment of the influence of policy actors and other factors beyond the actors themselves that influence policymaking.

To date very little attention has been paid to the process of education policy development in Kenya, the extent to which evidence is used, the stakeholders involved and the nature of the policy network in such policymaking. This thesis focuses on the influence of evidence and the factors that inform education policy development in Kenya by focusing on the development of the National Curriculum Policy which has guided the curriculum reform process from 2009-2019, with an analysis of the policy networks involved.

1.3. Research problem

Knowledge produced from research and evaluation can support learning in the policymaking process. Evaluations, for instance, have been found to have the potential to inform future action by contributing indirectly to public policy debates, or indirectly by shaping a specific policy decision. Alkin and Taut (2003), argue that learning from evaluation can be generated from either carrying out the evaluation itself or from the reports and findings that an evaluation produces. There has been a considerable amount of research showing limited use of evidence, including that from research and evaluation studies, in policymaking processes.

Numerous researchers have presented various explanations for the limited use. In early research on evaluation use, Weiss (1974; 1977; 1988) showed that the limited use of recommendations from evaluations in policymaking is a major challenge in the evaluation field. The author reflected on how very few evaluation studies had influenced the making of public policy noting that "by the early 1970s, after about five or six years of relatively large- scale evaluation and policy studies, it was becoming obvious that study results were not having visible impacts on policy decisions" (Weiss, 1982:3). Weiss (1988) finds that rational models of evidence-based policymaking are not

always used, and therefore evaluators should aim to generate evaluation as a wider source of information. Evaluation should influence the wider process of policymaking, and not necessarily produce specific programmes (ibid).

Current research centres around how to increase the use of evidence in policymaking, efforts to make evaluations and research processes more rigorous, and the dissemination of evidence (Fleischer & Christie, 2009; Kvernbekk, 2011; Lamont & Maxwell, 2021; Nutley et al., 2019). It considers how evidence such as that from evaluations can be used instrumentally, either directly in policymaking decisions or conceptually to build knowledge and understanding of policy issues among policymakers (Fleischer & Christie, 2009).

Still, Weiss (1993) advised that evaluation is a rational enterprise that takes place in a political context. Understanding that political constraints and resistances exist should guide evaluation research. Only when the evaluator has insight into the interests and motivations of other actors in the system, into the roles that he himself is consciously or inadvertently plays, the obstacles and opportunities that impinge upon the evaluative effort, and the limitations and possibilities

for putting the results of evaluation to work-only with sensitivity to the politics of evaluation research-can the evaluator be strategically useful (Weiss, 1993).

This thesis assessing the influence of evidence in education policymaking in Kenya follows Weiss's premise that evaluation should influence the wider policy-making process, seeing evaluations and the knowledge they produce as evidence, and considers the influence of such evidence in policymaking. This thesis also acknowledges the political context with which evidence is considered, the stakeholder interests and the barriers and enablers to evidence use to shed light on how evidence influences education policymaking in Kenya.

1.4. Research aim

Over the past decade, Kenya has made a deliberate move towards advocating for evidence-based policies. As stated earlier in this chapter, the Kenyan Constitution of 2010, advocates that policies should be developed based and informed by sound evidence. In keeping with the narrative of evidence-informed policymaking, the government through the processes of curriculum reforms, has publicised how evidence was generated and used to inform the development of the National

Curriculum Policy education and the decision to undergo curriculum reforms (MoE, 2018). Weiss (2004), notes that even in the best-case scenario, policymakers rarely and directly apply the findings of evidence generated from research and evaluation studies. Policymakers consider other factors such as costs, staff capacity and stakeholder interests. Still, evidence can have a significant influence on policy and some research ideas become well known and accepted over time (Weiss, 20004).

This study engages with the debates on how evidence influences policymaking while acknowledging that other factors other than evidence including contextual influences, play a central role in the process. Many studies of evidence-use in decision-making focus on the healthcare sector (Jessani et al., 2016; Pallitto, 2010; Rodríguez et al., 2015; Walter et al., 2003; Yazdizadeh et al., 2021). This thesis investigates evidence-use in education policymaking, and more specifically in Kenya's education reforms, focusing on the 2018 National Curriculum Policy (NCP), the policy framework guiding curriculum reforms and the establishment of a competency-based curriculum (CBC) for all levels of education and technical training in the country (MoE, 2018). As the government, has stated that the curriculum reforms have been evidence-based, this

research investigates the development of the NCP and the factors that influenced its development to assess the influence of evidence in the process. This involves identifying the key actors and their reflections on and perceptions of the above factors. It is important to identify which policy actors influence policymaking in Kenya. This research focuses on the role of actors and policy networks in policymaking, defining the wider education policy community as well as the specific policy actors that were involved in the reform of the curriculum policy. This research focuses on the role of actors and policy networks in policymaking, defining the wider education policy community as well as the specific policy actors that were involved in the reform of the curriculum policy in Kenya. The key research questions guiding this research are set out below.

Overall research question

What was the role of evidence in the development of the National Curriculum Policy in Kenya?

Sub-questions

1. What is the role of evidence and the enablers and barriers to using evidence for shaping education policy in the context of developing the National Curriculum Policy in Kenya?

2. What other influences other than evidence, inform education policy development within the context of developing the National Curriculum Policy in Kenya?
3. Who are the stakeholders influencing education policy within the context of developing the National Curriculum Policy in Kenya?

1.5. Thesis structure

Chapter 1 and Chapter 2 outline the background to the study. Chapter 1 summarises the main research questions, reflects on the strengths and challenges of choosing a case-study approach and outlines the contribution and coherence of the research. Chapter 2 presents a contextual outline of the education reform process from 2009 to 2019. Chapter 3 critically reviews the literature on education policy development, the various interest groups involved, and the extent to which evidence is used in the process, demonstrating that reviewing the process of education policy development is of significance. Chapter 4 engages with concepts of stakeholder engagement, policy networks and evidence-informed policymaking to provide a theoretical framework for the research project and goes on to analyse previous work on stakeholder

engagement, policy networks and evidence-informed policymaking to highlight the relevance of theories on evidence-use the related concepts to the topic of this thesis.

Chapter 5 introduces the reader to the mixed methods case-study approach using qualitative methods and descriptive social network analysis (SNA) used in this research and details the data sources used to explore the factors influencing Kenya's education policy development and the groups making up the education policy network. Chapter 5 gives a detailed account of the descriptive SNA, showing how the network was specified and the data were collected, converted, analysed and depicted graphically. It explains qualitative network analysis and how this methodology was used. The chapter closes with reflections on the research methodology and on my position and reflexivity as a social researcher.

The three results chapters, 6, 7 and 8, present an analysis of the extent to which evidence is used in the development of education policy, the factors that influence Kenya's education policy development and the stakeholders in its education policy network. Chapter 6 draws on the qualitative analysis of interviews with stakeholders and a review of secondary data to present the findings on the extent to which evidence influenced the development of the National

Curriculum Policy and the enablers and barriers to evidence use; Chapter 7 also explores findings from qualitative interviews and secondary analysis of documents to assess the factors other than evidence, that influence Kenya's education policymaking. Chapter 8 uses the results of qualitative and quantitative analysis to assess the education policy network, developing an in-depth insight into its content and the inner workings, and examines the position of decision-makers in the network and controversies surrounding stakeholders' engagement with each other through the lens of policy networks theory in the context of Kenya's recent education reforms. Chapter 9 discusses the findings overall, and how each research question has been answered. Chapter 10 reflects on the strengths of the study and its contributions to methodological debate. It examines the methodologies and theories of the project, illustrating the relevance of this research to education policy development analysis. The thesis concludes by outlining the implications of the findings from this research for policy and provides recommendations for advocacy and future research.

Chapter 2: Case Study of the National Curriculum Policy

2.1. Introduction

Kenya has gone through many changes over the last decade, beginning with the development and adoption of a new constitution in 2010 and consequent reform of the education sector to align with it (GOK, 2010). Kenya's recently implemented competency-based curriculum is one example of the country's education reform agenda. The 2018 National Curriculum Policy (NCP) is Kenya's overriding policy framework developed to guide curriculum reform and is the focus of this research (MoE, 2018).

This chapter describes the Kenyan education sector and discusses the education reform agenda. It first presents the geography of Kenya and a description of its government systems, followed by a brief discussion of the legal provisions underpinning education in Kenya and the structure of the education system. In-depth discussion of the education reform agenda follows, including a review of the development process of the national curriculum policy.

2.2. Overview of Kenya

The Republic of Kenya has been a democratic nation since its independence in 1963. It is the second largest economy in East Africa after Ethiopia (TVETA, 2020). Kenya is bordered by Tanzania to the south and southwest, Uganda to the west, South Sudan to the north-west, Ethiopia to the north and Somalia to the north-east. Approximately four in every ten Kenyans are aged 4–17 and of pre-primary, primary and secondary school-going age. Kenya's estimated population in 2021 was 56.7 million (MoE, 2019). The school-aged population grew by 7.3% between 2013 and 2017, which has had consequences for the provision of education, training and employment (ibid).

Kenya is made up of 47 counties and has national and county governments. The country's long-term development plan launched in 2008, Vision 2030, seeks to enable Kenya to become globally competitive and with a high quality of life by 2030 through industrialisation, transforming Kenya from a low-income to a middle-income country (MPNDV, 2012). Vision 2030 is based on three pillars – economic, social and political (TVETA, 2020). Education comes under the social pillar and needs to be aligned with the country's development goals (Government of Kenya, 2013). The

aims of education in Kenya are to increase equity and exploit knowledge of science, technology and innovation for Kenya's global competitiveness, and to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's) (Government of Kenya, 2013). Under the Basic Education Act (No. 14 of 2013) the national government is responsible for education policy, standards, curricula and examinations, and for the provision of university charters (ibid). County governments are responsible for the management of pre-primary education, or early childhood development (ECD), and youth polytechnics which offer vocational training (MoE & MoHE, 2012). However, the development of policies, quality and standards of ECD education is still a function of national government (ibid). The Ministry of Education, (MoE), is mandated by the national government to provide basic, university and tertiary education (ibid).

The Ministry of Education is supported in delivering its mandate by various semi-autonomous government institutions, including the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD), the Kenya National Examinations Council (KNEC) and the Kenya National Commission for UNESCO (GOK, 2021). These semi-autonomous organisations have been particularly influential in the development of the NCP.

KICD was responsible for gathering evidence to inform curriculum change, conducting a summative evaluation of the 8–4–4 curriculum in 2009, a needs assessment of the education sector, and a study of the pilot of the competency-based curriculum (CBC) (KICD, 2017). It also played a leading role in developing the CBC framework outlining how the new curriculum is to be implemented across the education sector (ibid).

The Teacher Service Commission (TSC) also supports the MoE as an independent commission established under article 237, subsection 1–3 of the 2010 Kenyan constitution (Government of Kenya, 2010). As the body, responsible for teachers, the TSC plays a central role in Kenya's education. It collaborated closely on the development of the NCP with the MoE and KICD. In supporting education reforms, it has also been involved in the implementation and supervision of the CBC and teachers' competency development (KICD, n.d.).

2.3. Historical background of education reforms in Kenya

Since Kenya's independence, numerous commissions, committees, working groups and task forces have highlighted the country's education goals and recommended ways of improving education in the country.[1]The current education reforms have taken place against some of these foundations laid out by the earliest crafters of the education system in Kenya. Before the latest curriculum reforms, the 8–4–4 education system had been in place since 1985 (Eshiwani, 1990; Kabita & Ji, 2017). The 8-4-4 system was made up of 8 years of primary education, 4 years of secondary education and 4 years of university education and was preceded by the 7-4-2-3 system (ibid). Although the structure of education stayed the same, the system experienced numerous challenges and revisions to the curriculum were made in 1990, 1992, 1995 and 2003 (Kabita & Ji, 2017).

[1] An in-depth historical review was examined but not included in the thesis due to space constraints. This review included examining previous education commissions including the Ominde Commission of 1964 which informed the goals of education post-independence, the Gachathi and the Mackay commissions, and the Koech commission in 1999, were reviewed.

By the early 1990s, declining enrolment and primary education completion rates indicated faults in the 8–4–4- system with over 100 million children having no access to schooling (Eshiwani, 1990; Kitainge, 2004; M'mboga, 2021; Ngugi et al., 2015). By 2000, issues of access, equity and quality were repeatedly being raised by stakeholders, as well as the density of the curriculum content, the system's orientation to examinations, the high ratio of learners to teachers, the scarcity of teachers as a result of poor training, and limited in-service teacher training, rapid implementation of the system limiting building appropriate support systems, and inadequate ongoing professional support (Akala, 2021; Kitainge, 2004; Schweisfurth, 2013).

Various measures were applied to address the challenges in the system and tailor education to the country's development goals. In January 2003, with a new government in place, free primary education (FPE) increased access to schooling, with the gross enrolment rates (GER) rising from 99.6% in 2000 to 107.6% in 2005 (Abuya et al., 2015; Oketch & Rolleston, 2007). In 2007 the government launched Vision 2030, a comprehensive development plan for the country to achieve by 2030 based on three pillars – economic, social, and political – with education under the social pillar and aiming for globally competitive high-quality education, training, and research

(MPNDN, 2012). Emphasis is also put on the link between education and the labour market; the need to create entrepreneurial skills and competencies; and the need to strengthen partnerships with the private sector (MPNDN, 2012). In 2010 the new constitution included many implications for the education sector. For example, articles 20 of the Bill of Rights state that 'every person has the right to education' and prioritise access to education for vulnerable groups and individuals such as women, older members of society, persons with disabilities, children, youths, members of minority or marginalised communities, and members of particular ethnic, religious or cultural communities (Government of Kenya, 2010).

The changes to the country's goals and vision required a review and realignment of the education sector. Section 2.4 discusses the curriculum reform process and the factors influencing the change.

2.4. Determinants of curriculum change

One key result of the realignment of the education sector was the change from a knowledge-based to a Competency Based Curriculum. 'A competency-based curriculum focuses on the knowledge, skills and abilities of students, which allows for self-paced progress and provides students with the support they need to succeed' (Mauki et al., 2020:3). Under a CBC, students work at their own pace, relying on teaching staff for the development, articulation and assessment of knowledge skills and abilities related to each area of study (Amunga et al., 2020; Mauki et al., 2020).

The new curriculum transfers the focus from the attainment of knowledge to its application, with an emphasis on outcomes rather than processes (Mauki et al., 2020; Ndungu, 2021). Competencies are the intrinsic qualities a learner possesses, combining skills, knowledge and capacity and defining how the learner applies the skills they have acquired (Ndungu, 2021). A curriculum is seen as relevant if it adapts to changing societal needs, to current needs and to the aspirations of the nation, as stated in various policy documents (Mauki et al., 2020). A state's education curriculum is often aligned with the government's priorities, using it as a political instrument (Fataar, 2006).

Literature on curriculum change has highlighted that curriculum decisions are often viewed as technocratic or bureaucratic processes and not democratic in nature involving public debate (Wheeler-Bell, 2017). As a result, curriculum decisions have often been made by a small group of bureaucrats and political elites who often view the purpose of education as means to preparing learners for higher education or for the labour market (ibid). However, there are often struggles over what curricula should be in place, with previously marginalised groups pushing back against systems that have historically excluded them from decision-making processes. Opening up curriculum development processes to democratic engagement increases the buy-in and legitimacy of national curricula (ibid).

Numerous factors informed the decision to change the Kenyan curriculum and the development of the National Curriculum Policy to guide curriculum reforms. At the national level, research suggests that the curriculum reforms were influenced by different evidence sources (Kabita & Ji, 2017; KICD, 2017; MoEST, 2015c, 2015b, 2018), including a 2009 summative evaluation of basic education, the report from the Odhiambo Taskforce set up in 2011 to facilitate the realignment of education to the 2010 Constitution, a report from a Technical Committee on Curriculum reforms

set up in 2014,[2] and a 2016 needs assessment of the education system, conducted by KICD (KICD, 2017; MoE, 2018).

2.5. The National Curriculum Policy

The National Curriculum Policy was developed in 2015 as part of the Jubilee government 2013–2017 manifesto and was a flagship of Kenya's Vision 2030 (MoE, 2015b). It was developed by a technical committee composed of MoE, KICD, and a variety of stakeholders in the education sector including international consultants and the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), with the latter providing financial and technical support (ibid). The National Curriculum Policy documents that:

> Global trends in education and training are shifting their focus towards programmes that encourage optimal development of human capital. Proponents for this change argue that

[2] The report of the summative evaluation of education in Kenya and the report of the Technical Committee on Curriculum reforms, are not publicly available.

> unless young people's skills are developed for work, they will be ultimately excluded from active participation in their societies. In line with the global trends, Kenya needs to align itself to this paradigm shift in education (MoE, 2015b:7).
>
> The vision is to nurture every learner's potential to produce citizens equipped with relevant and quality knowledge with national values and social competencies and to equip them with twenty-first century skills and competencies. (MoE, 2015b:7)

It goes on to list twelve objectives based on curriculum change, assessment criteria, resource mobilisation, curriculum governance and management, public-private partnerships, the harmonisation of the national curriculum with regional and international standards and providing country-specific curriculum content. Global trends and changes in education and training that require increased human capital development, and previous policy documents drafted since the 2009 summative evaluation are presented as the rationale for the policy reform (MoE, 2015). Its alignment to the global discourse of education for economic development and ideologies of human capital development suggest otherwise (Tabulawa, 2003, 2013).

The policy document outlines strategies for the development of a curriculum that nurtures creativity and innovation, improves access to technical and vocational education and training, and harmonises with regional and global trends. It states the need for curriculum reform and a shift to curricula that specify minimum standards of achievement of competencies at all levels of education and identifies the need to establish and implement a CBC to achieve the country's education goals. To realise this, the policy proposes a needs assessment to inform the development of the CBC and its framework, syllabuses and support materials, and awareness creation among all its stakeholders (MoE, 2015b).

As a key goal, the government committed to fostering the regional and international mobility of workers and harmonising curriculum standards within the EAC. The policy highlights the importance of benchmarking the national curriculum against international best practice to support the government's regional and international cooperation objectives. Strategies for achieving this include cooperation with other EAC countries to develop regional curriculum standards, harmonisation of the Kenya National Qualifications Framework (KNQF) with those of other EAC member states, and alignment with UNESCO's International Bureau of Education

(UNESCO-IBE) standards (ibid). What is implied is education as a driver for economic development prioritising a global outlook of what education should be and not so much for social justice (Milligan, 2011a; Tikly, 2019a).

To actualise the new curriculum, the Basic Education Curriculum Framework was drafted in 2017 outlining curriculum reform including the structure of education, the competency-based subjects and skills to be offered, pathways to either art and sports science, social sciences, science, technology, engineering and mathematics, and examination criteria (KICD, 2017). The Basic Education Curriculum Framework highlights that the 2009 summative evaluation, the Odhiambo Task Force report and the needs assessment identified needed curriculum changes (ibid). With a framework for implementation in place in 2017, an early-years CBC pilot was set in motion.

The CBC pilot was a two-phase process. The first phase, in 2017, involved 470 schools, with mid-term monitoring in March 2017 and an end-of-term evaluation in October 2017 (KICD, 2018b, 2018a). Evidence from the first pilot led KICD to posit that a nationwide pilot was necessary to ensure a smooth launch of the proposed curriculum. Hence a national CBC pilot was rolled out in January 2018 covering all stages up to and including to Primary Grade 2 across all schools.

Monitoring studies of this pilot in March and September 2018 led to the conclusion that schools, parents, teachers and support officers were ready for the official launch of the Early Years CBC in January 2019 (KICD, 2018b). The pilot and nationwide implementation of the CBC went ahead based on curriculum designs rather than on a syllabus, indicating the rushed nature of the CBC reform process. The reports from the pilot studies are not publicly available, limiting public participation in the implementation of the CBC.

In 2018, the National Curriculum Policy was revised. A comparison finds similarities between the 2015 and the 2018 versions with a few exceptions. First, the 2015 policy indicates that the curriculum review started in 2014, when the government started a consultation on the preparation of a policy framework, resulting in the 2015 policy (MoE, 2015b:2).

Drafted by a different Cabinet Secretary for Education, the 2018 National Curriculum Policy makes no mention of the technical team set up in 2014 or that the policy drafted in 2015 was a product of its recommendations (MoE, 2018). This omission is likely because the 2015 National Curriculum Policy was based on recommendations of Sessional Paper No. 14 of 2012 which had not been ratified in Parliament and which according to opposers to curriculum reforms like

KNUT, did not provide the legal basis for curriculum reform. The 2015 policy specifies that the National Curriculum Policy is part of the Jubilee Party 2013–2017 manifesto, a statement also omitted from the 2018 revised policy likely to distract from the political underpinnings of curriculum reform (MoE 2015b, 2018).

The various stakeholders involved in developing the 2015 policy are acknowledged in the earlier policy document but omitted from the 2018 revised version (MoE, 2015b, 2018). The omissions from the 2018 revision appear to indicate an effort not to emphasise when the policy was originally developed and which stakeholders were involved, and to tie in with the political goal of aligning with the Jubilee Party manifesto. The publication of the national curriculum policy in 2018 makes it appear that the nationwide rollout of the CBC curriculum in 2018–2019 was guided by the revised policy.

Since the introduction of the CBC there has been discussion of whether the reforms are best suited to Kenya's situation. There has been much debate about what comprises CBC, its feasibility, and its suitability for Kenya (Heto et al., 2020). A national curriculum is not just a collection of ideas

on how to organise an education system in a country but is supposed to reflect the current situation of the country and its shared goals (ibid).

The curriculum shows how curriculum developers understand the needs of the society and what they see as the long-term solutions to meeting those needs. Kenya's curriculum reforms focus on the country's goal of becoming regionally and globally competitive by improving the skills and competencies of learners (MoE, 2012, 2015a, 2015b, 2015c). These goals, however, appear to be politically driven, as envisioned by the 2013–2017 Jubilee Party manifesto. The CBC may not reflect the needs of society, as national, institutional, and professional cultures may not be supportive of it (Tabulawa, 2003; Schweisfurth, 2015). Evaluations of CBC implementation in Tanzania and Zambia found that most teachers were not knowledgeable about what CBC is and as a result did not implement it effectively in schools (Komba & Mwandaji, 2015; Mulenga & Kabombwe, 2019). The motivations behind the needs assessment may have hindered the type of evidence gathered, assessment of society's needs, and adequately tailoring of the education reforms to the context.

2.6. Summary

This chapter has presented the contextual setting of this research, outlining the overarching country context including Kenya's geographic location, governance structures and education system. A discussion of the history of the education sector has shown the key changes, including education commissions and task force assessments of the reforms required in the sector.

The key determinants leading to the development of the National Curriculum Policy including the summative evaluation of education in 2009 and the task force report on the realignment of education have been discussed briefly as key factors informing the development of the national curriculum policy and will be discussed further in Chapter 6 and Chapter 7. The factors that influence policymaking outside of evidence have also been discussed, laying a foundation on which the objectives of the research can be assessed in the next chapters.

Factors including political interests, national education policies, global agendas and resources have been shown here to inform policy change. The key stakeholders involved in education policy development in Kenya have also been presented at a high-level, together with the central role of the different government institutions. The central role of the MoE and its semi-

autonomous organisations, including the KICD, has been illustrated. Partnerships with bilateral and multilateral organisations and the role these play in financing different government activities has also been discussed. This presents a suitable starting point for understanding another key objective of this research: which key stakeholders influence education policymaking in Kenya. Chapter 3 presents an in-depth review of the literature around policymaking, centring on influences on education policymaking, the use of evidence and the factors that enable or hinder its use in the development of education policy.

Chapter 3: Literature Review

3.1. Introduction

This thesis addresses three areas of education policy development: the influence of evidence and the enablers of and barriers to evidence use in education policymaking, the factors other than evidence influencing education policymaking and the stakeholders influencing education policy. Following this framework, this chapter begins by presenting a brief definition of policy development and the policy cycle. Next it presents the key literature on education policy, focusing on relevant contextual influences including politics, globalisation and the effects of neoliberalism and international policy actors on national education policies. A critical discussion of the literature on education policy actors, their distinct roles in education policy and how their individual interests affect policymaking follows, in which I show how changes in contextual factors affect the composition of the education-policy actor group and the resulting effects on the policy itself. Next, I discuss the extent to which evidence influences education policymaking. A review of the literature on evidence use focuses first on how evidence is generated, and which

policy actors are central to this, and then how evidence is used in policy--development and the enablers of and barriers to its use.

3.2. A note on policymaking

Policy is a series of socially constructed enactments comprising text and practice, involving policymakers at various levels (Ball, 2012; Tikly, 2019b). The policy development process is made up of four phases: agenda setting, formulation, implementation and evaluation. Setting the policy agenda is the first step where issues are either viewed as requiring significant policy intervention or are neglected completely (Walt et al., 2008).

There are various theories of policymaking that have primarily been researched in the field of politics. For instance, the rational perspective sees policymaking as a linear, data-driven process in which solutions to problems are chosen systematically, including looking at the cost benefits of policy choices. The political perspective on policymaking sees policy as regulating conflict over the distribution of scarce resources in ways that secure the legitimacy of the system, with interest-

driven, power-based interactions between actors that have a wide range of views and resources and compete and cooperate to influence the outcome (Malen & Knapp, 1997).

Policy actors often borrow education policies from other countries and adapt them locally (Ball, 2012; Ball et al., 2017; Broad, 2006; Crossley et al., 2005; Mundy & Murphy, 2001; Mundy & Verger, 2015; Schweisfurth, 2006; Tabulawa, 2013). Spreen (2004), notes that examining policy borrowing is useful in that it provides an analysis of educational policy making within an international context by mapping out the different ways in which international social and cultural ties, political and economic relationships, democratic imperatives and shifting roles between global and local participation all influence policy decisions (Spreen, 2004:101). Four methods of policy borrowing are identified in the political research literature: attraction, negotiation, imposition, and hybridization (Harber, 2017; Phillips & Ochs, 2003, 2004). Policy attraction stems from the work of David Phillips (1989, 1993, 2004; cited in Edwards, 2013:25) who developed models of cross-national attraction from research on how policy-makers in England have looked to Germany on education reform ideas. From this perspective, policy-makers in one country seek to employ policies implemented in another country (Phillips & Ochs, 2003). Hence, policy attraction is the

result of a voluntary attempt to emulate policies of another nation and is seen to occur as a result of conscious decision making, with the receiving country being the one initiating the policies emulated (Phillips & Ochs, 2003; Edwards, 2013). Notably however, policy adoption can occur through coercion by international organizations (Edwards, 2013).

Policy negotiation from the perspective of educational national reforms focuses on the tension between agency and structure. Archer (1984, cited in Edwards, 2013:29), argues that there are three phases of educational change: internal initiatives, political manipulation and external transactions. Internal initiatives are driven by national groups outside the dominant system who are typically opposed with the current policy directions and who then engage external references to negotiate with the government (ibid). With political manipulation, groups with political power can create and implement laws that typically have not been developed by local policy specialists (ibid). Political manipulation involves significant policy negotiation. In the external transactions stage, policy makers face increasing scrutiny from education professionals and they are therefore forced to internalise, shape and reconfigure policies to fit understanding and contexts. In the end,

as a result of this three-stage negotiation process, it becomes unclear what the initial justification for education reforms is i.e. whether external or internal in origin (Edwards, 2013).

Imposing a policy involves international actors and transfer of policy from developed to developing countries supported by – often international – aid and other organisations. Hybridization avoids dividing global, national, and country relationships (Edwards & Klees, 2012; Harber, 2017). Importantly, borrowing what are seen as best practices in education policy without questioning them when transferring them to a different country can create challenges, including rejection by national policy actors and difficulties with implementation (Crossley & Watson, 2003).

Policy borrowing is frequently a highly visible act, particularly when there is a desire for legitimacy. However, not all policy borrowing is publicly acknowledged and borrowing can sometimes be silent with international influence and best practise often be unacknowledged (Waldow, 2009). Policymakers may want to maintain the public perception that education policy for example is primarily the result of rational processes. Legitimising reforms and strategic

choices through reference to other countries' practises may not politically advantageous (Waldow, 2009).

3.3. Evidence use

'Evidence' has been mentioned numerous times in this research without explicitly discussing how researchers define it. Evidence can be proof that something previously unconfirmed is fact; it can support a belief; and it can be witnessing testimony in a court of law (Davies et al., 2000). Irrespective of how it is interpreted, evidence can be seen, anybody can check it, and most people agree on what it says, even if the interpretation is disputed. The literature on evidence-based policymaking is wide. Evidence is seen as essential in public policymaking to guide the decision-making process, avoid harm and achieve crucial social policy objectives. This view follows the rational policymaking perspective, which assumes that policymaking is a linear process that uses evidence to select the best plan of action to address the challenge faced. Education policymaking is in fact far from a rational process following a linear route (Parkhurst, 2016, 2017).

A distinction is made in the literature on the ways that research can be directed for policymaking (Becker & Bryman, 2012; Nutley & Webb, 2000). Policy-oriented research can be both research for policy and research on policy. Research for policy focuses on informing the various stages of the process as the policy is formed and until it is implemented (Becker & Bryman, 2012; Nutley & Webb, 2000). Research on policy is concerned with how problems are defined, agendas are set, decisions are made, and policy is formulated, implemented, evaluated and changed (Nutley & Webb, 2000: 15).

Examining research for policy helps to understand research on policy. In keeping with the research for policy narrative (see Chapter 2, Chapter 6 and Chapter 7), I discuss and illustrate how research for policy was gathered by completing a review of secondary data collected for this thesis including the 2009 Summative Evaluation of Primary Education, Sessional Paper No. 14 of 2012 on Reforming Education and Training Sectors in Kenya, the report of the National Technical Committee on Curriculum Reform and the draft National Curriculum Policy of 2015, and KICD's needs assessment of education in Kenya. The factors influencing research on policy, including

research conducted in other countries, the interests of policy actors and the political agenda of the government, will be discussed in Chapter 6 and Chapter 7.

On examining the research for policy that went into developing Kenya's National Curriculum Policy (NCP), the roles of different policy actors and the ways in which they influence evidence use in education policymaking was evident. The role of local research is to inform public debate about the kinds of education needs that may be relevant, the factors that affect those needs, and how progress can be measured (Tikly, 2011).

Evidence-based policy and practice (EBPP) is about not only producing relevant and useful knowledge but also ensuring that it is taken up in policy development. This is a widely-held position among evaluation practitioners and social science researchers many of whom argue that without support, evidence is rarely used in policy development, and this has resulted in many initiatives promoting the use of research and EBPP (Alkin & Taut, 2003; Bamberger, 2004; Becker & Bryman, 2012; Nutley et al., 2019; Parkhurst, 2017; Taut & Alkin, 2003). Research use is considered to lie along a continuum that ranges from simply raising awareness of research findings by changing knowledge, attitudes and understanding, to making direct changes to

policy decisions or service delivery (Becker & Bryman, 2012; Nutley et al., 2019; Parkhurst, 2017). Overall, the use of research is seen as iterative.

However, research use studies have often been found to fall short in examining changes in knowledge, attitudes and behaviours that may come about as a result of using research (Kirkhart, 2000; Nutley et al., 2019). Research on evaluation use specifically, has also identified that research can either be used or misused (Christie & Alkin, 1999). To understand evidence-use beyond how evidence can explain changes in either knowledge or behaviour, concepts of research use that is either conceptual or instrumental have been proposed (Alkin & Taut, 2003; Cousins & Leithwood, 1993; Fleischer & Christie, 2009; Greene, 1987, 1988; Nutley et al., 2019; Taut & Alkin, 2003).

Given the complexities of assessing knowledge utilisation and its use, a lot of evidence use research has focused on contextual issues (Cousins & Leithwood, 1993; Cousins & Simon, 1996). Assessing predictors of evidence use patterns, should not neglect to assess the interpersonal and political context as these factors are powerful in informing evidence-use (Cousins & Leithwood, 1993; Cousins & Simon, 1996; Alkin & Taut, 2003). Highly rigorous and credible research may not necessarily have an impact due to varied and potentially powerful organisational constraints and

mitigating factors such as policymakers' and decision-makers' values and bias for a particular policy decision (ibid). A countries political system will affect whether public actors are willing to utilise evidence, but even in democratic countries public actors may avoid any sincere use of evidence to uphold their own policy (Jones et al., 2009).

Parkhurst (2016), goes on to discuss how cognitive bias also limits evidence-use. Biases of evidence-use are argued to emerge from different sources including from social group or from individual's intuition. Hysterical thinking may lead to numerical errors while identity protective cognition may be caused by polarised political debates (ibid). Such biases pose significant challenges, hindering objective decision making, therefore perpetuating flawed policies. Through understanding the origins of biases and implementing target strategies, institutions can move towards more effective and objective evidence-use, and enhance decision-making in various sectors (Parkhurst, 2016).

Researchers and evaluation practitioners have developed various strategies that can be used to encourage and increase evidence use by policy makers (Jones et al., 2009; Nutley et al., 2019; Young et al., 2014). For instance, the research and policy in development (RAPID) team at the

Overseas Development Institute (ODI) has since 2004, recommended for practitioners working to increase evidence in policymaking, to consider context, evidence and links (CEL) (Jones et al., 2009; Young et al., 2014). The RAPID approach recommends that researchers consider how contextual factors including the political and economic context will inform whether public actors will be open to evidence use (Jones et al., 2009).

Understanding evidence specific factors including credibility, how evidence is packaged and whether it goes against public actor's own knowledge of the context in which they work, also influence use (ibid). The links between policy and research communities in terms of the networks, relationships and power dynamics between them and then considering external influences including cultural and economic variables will help to tailor strategies for evidence use in policymaking (Jones et al., 2009; Young et al., 2014).

Nutley et al. (2019) have proposed five key mechanisms for promoting evidence use in policymaking similar to those of Young et al., (2014). They propose considering interaction, social influence, facilitation, and reinforcement, defining dissemination as the process of circulating or presenting research findings to potential users (Nutley et al. 2019). Tailored dissemination efforts

can increase conceptual research use and may also encourage more direct instrumental use where they enable the discussion of findings. Interaction is the process of developing stronger links and collaborations between the research and policy communities (ibid). Interactive approaches such as partnerships that encourage more communication and links between researchers and practitioners or policymakers have been found to enable actors to adapt and test research findings in their local context, which has been found to support conceptual and, in some instances, instrumental use (ibid).

Social influence relies on influential actors such as experts and peers to inform individuals about the research and persuade them of its value (ibid). Social influence is underpinned by social learning theories that suggest that behaviour may be changed by the attitudes and behaviours of significant others (Cousins & Leithwood, 1986, 1993; Cousins & Simon, 1996; Shulha & Cousins, 1997). Such opinion leaders influence the beliefs and actions of their colleagues and are a major tool in the social influence approach to evidence-based practice (Cousins & Leithwood, 1993; Cousins & Simon, 1996). Social influence strategies encourage research use but have a limited impact on whether research findings are actually used in policymaking. Facilitation is the process

of enabling the use of research through technical, financial, organisational and emotional support, and has been found to support the implementation of research-based decisions and programmes (Cousins, 1996, 2003). Reinforcement uses rewards and other forms of control to reinforce appropriate behaviour for instance towards a specific way of policymaking that required benchmarking against best practise (Jones et al., 2009; Nutley et al., 2019).

Different approaches have been found to be more successful in different sectors than in others. However, in education policymaking for instance, interactive approaches to promoting evidence-use have been found to be useful in pushing policy makers to see the value in evidence informed policymaking (ibid). Research has found however that during policy formulation, development and policy change, it is, difficult to be precise about the nature and degree of influence that research plays in informing policy and practice. Research can make a contribution to both policy and professional practice, even if it is not linear or direct (Becker & Bryman, 2012; Clarke, 2001).

The context in which policy actors and researchers work can be more influential than evidence in policymaking. Research has shown that policymaking involves trade-offs between policy actors and social values that compete for dominance. To understand how evidence is used in education

policymaking it is important to look not only at evidence itself but also at the contextual factors and actors involved in the policymaking process (Becker & Bryman, 2012; Parkhurst, 2016, 2017). Additionally, political contexts will influence knowledge utilisation and its effects on research use and should not be neglected when assessing evidence use in (Cousins & Simon, 1996: 2). These factors are discussed in Chapter 3.3 that follows.

3.3.1. The influence of evidence in education policymaking

Literature on education policy making highlights that government agencies often seek to serve a few well-organized interests even if those interests are not aligned with the needs of the wider community (Lubienski et al., 2014).

It is argued that the assumptions made are often challenging in terms of the connection between policymakers' intentions, the interventions that are actually implemented and the intended outcomes (ibid). However, despite these challenges, better evidence and evidence-use is seen to have the potential to improve how policymakers address societal problems. In education policy, this has often been seen as assessing what works in teaching, leadership, governance, and

curriculum (ibid). However, conflicts often arise in determining who decides what to measure, how to measure it and where there is contradicting evidence, which one to go by (Lubienski et al., 2009). Therefore, these issues of policy and evidence have carried political implications when it comes to education policymaking. Additionally, the evaluation of education interventions has historically been informed by politics, shaping institutions over time and fuelled by technological innovation (Lubienski et al., 2014).

Technological changes have contributed to shaping the interaction between education policy and evidence. IT has democratised the production and dissemination of evidence, leading to improved access to information. It has also led to conflicting perspectives and interpretations (Lubienski et al., 2014). Barriers to information production and consumption have also been lowered, leading organisations to promote evidence in support of their own views, interests and agenda. Increased technological change leading to easier access to evidence has also meant that smaller, previously marginalised groups can now organise and bypass established institutions in identifying and advocating for evidence to support their policy agenda's. This has led to a more

polarised political landscape where professional expertise is in conflict with the ability of consumers to access and rely on evidence that matches their own political perspectives (ibid).

Technology has also enabled the dissemination of information in ways that bypass traditional gatekeepers, which has important implications for the types of education research that is widely disseminated. There has been an increase in the number of websites and blogs that are widely used to disseminate information. Furthermore, the media is increasingly being used to communicate evidence and to inform new approaches and to move the opinions of a larger audience to inform policymaking. In education, the recent production of advocacy documentaries represents a new approach to informing and moving the opinions of a larger audience to help inform policymaking (Lubienski et al., 2014).

One of the ways that institutions have dealt with shifts in information production and consumption has been to establish new organisations that facilitate the process. The increase of specific types of policy interventions in education policy highlights the tension between using rigorous research evidence on the one hand and embracing policies that are widely perceived to be common-sense solutions to persistent problems in public education on the other. Notably,

there has been a rapid spread of popular education policy approaches such as 'Education for All' that have been popularised by intermediary organisations working in the space between education policymaking and traditional methods of evidence production (Lubienski et al., 2011).

Evidence-generation for policy in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA)

Linked to factors influencing education policymaking, education policy shifts resulting from SAPs imposed on Sub-Saharan African countries in the 1980s, resulted in a shift in public spending for higher education and limited the public funding available to universities (Lebeau, 2008). Market-led principles dominated education provision and universities were pushed towards corporate and entrepreneurial ways of working and expected to raise funds by increasing their tuition fees (ibid). This limited the role of universities in producing locally led research in SSA that can help to inform local need and be applied to national policymaking (Zeleza, 2002: 22). The author argues that the research priorities of many universities in Africa have prioritised carrying our research and partnering with credible international universities to build their reputation and to legitimise the research they conduct (Zeleza, 2002).

Lebeau (2008), has noted that research is only one of four roles that higher education institutions such as universities play in societies. Universities are viewed as centres for shaping national values and ideologies, forming the social class and determining elites in society and also where skills are built, and the labour force developed (ibid). Research however is often viewed as their primary role but one that is shared with specialised national intuitions that are responsible for evidence generation (Lebeau, 2008; Parkhurst, 2017; Pawson, 2006). Also, there are multiple civil society actors who participate in policy making and in generating evidence in efforts to influence policymaking such as NGOs. Parkhurst (2017) also notes that public actors will often use research and evidence generated from specialised government institutions that produce research specifically to drive public policy. Universities are therefore not the primary mechanisms of evidence production in SSA that could influence policymaking as their role in this, has been further weakened (Zeleta, 2002; Lebeau, 2008).

Some researchers in SSA have however argued that the diminished role of universities in Africa to produce locally led research that could inform public policy is another symptom of the neoliberal state (Boshoff, 2009; Thomas, 2018; Zeleza, 2002). Boshoff (2009) in examining research

generation in Africa, found that even when African scholars conduct research, a limited amount of independent research is done with 80 per cent of Central Africa's research papers for example, produced with an outside partner and 35 per cent with former colonial powers.

International journals for instance where SSA may desire to publish their research, uphold standards that, consciously or unconsciously, exclude contributions from SSA (Zeleta, 2002). Weak internationalisation on the part of researchers in co-authorship may fail to challenge knowledge norms and African researchers are more willing to make significant changes to their work to publish in an international journal (Zeleta, 2002; Boshoff, 2009; Thomas, 2018). With such existing tensions between potential collaborators and SSA researchers, there is knowledge imbalance that exists with global research taking centre stage in influencing knowledge around social issues and public policy (Zeleta, 2002). Critical scholars are needed in both the Global North and the Global South to resist the conditions and collaborations that favour scholarship from developed states not just from universities but also from institutions that through their evidence shape global development discourse (Boshoff, 2009; Thomas, 2018).

The influence of non-state actors on education policymaking has shifted the role of universities as stated earlier and how evidence is used in policymaking. NGOs and think tanks, for example, have been found to influence policy through research and its dissemination, targeting policymakers' legislative and regulatory activities and affecting public opinion through the media (DeBray-Pelot et al., 2007; Lebeau & Sall, 2011; F. Rizvi & Lingard, 2010).

The generation and promotion of evidence by international organisations for use in policymaking is another important aspect that must be taken into consideration when assessing evidence use. Evidence is used to shape perceived policy problems and their solutions, and to determine policy direction. The World Bank has a strong reputation as a thought leader and knowledge hub, and its research on education is perceived as persuasive and has influenced world opinion and shaped policy for decades (Broad, 2006; Mundy & Verger, 2015; Rose, 2003; Verger, 2009). For instance, the push for human capital development and the World Bank's rate of return analysis has shaped cost cutting and privatisation measures taken across SSA (King et al., 2007).

The research and knowledge the Bank produces is just one strand of the evidence used to shape education policymaking, based on its influence on the global education agenda as discussed

above (King et al., 2007; Robertson, 2009, Lebeau & Sall, 2011, Shahjahan and Madden, 2015). Its research has also been found to influence other bilateral aid agencies and multilateral development banks, which follow the development priorities that it sets out (Broad, 2006).

Lebeau and Sall (2011), note that international development organisations have various mechanisms at their disposal with which they use to influence policies. These mechanisms, similar to the resources proposed by Compston (2009), include national reports, comparative reviews, sponsorship of conferences and workshops, technical expertise, financial dependency or compliance expectations. Through the evidence they generate, for example through comparative thematic reviews of Higher Education, the World Bank and OECD have been found to shape national policies which is evident in the language used in the policy reports produced. State actors rely on international development organisations to give them up-to-date information about trends in education development (Lebeau and Sall, 2011; Shahjahan, 2016).

The World Bank often plays a critical role in disseminating evidence and claiming to provide technical expertise in developing and middle-income countries to guide policymaking (Lebeau and Sall, 2011). Verger (2009) shows that low-income countries are more willing to incorporate

the policy advice and recommendations put forth by International Development Organisations than by the technical experts from middle-income or developed countries.

World Bank policies and external loans in Africa highlight power imbalances between the International Development Organisations and the nation-state policy actor. Resource-dependent countries are more likely to be influenced by the World Bank's policies (Shahjahan and Madden, 2015). In Africa, literature has shown how the World Banks policies and loans, have influenced policies around higher education financing. The World Bank recommended a change toward increased HE privatisation, decreased HE public funding, the implementation of tuition fees, and increased HE sector efficiency, which like most African countries, Kenya implemented.

Finally, International Development Organisations use, or are used, as tools of influence depending on the power imbalances between them and, the nation-state actor. This interaction is also informed by the nature of dependence of the state-actor on the International Development Organisations for financial and technical resources, and the local structures and policies of the state. An analysis of policy documents and research reports in Kenya show that they reflect the

concepts of economic growth, human capital, democratic economy, and labour markets usually found in World Bank and the OECD's publications (Milligan, 2011; Shahjahan & Madden, 2015).

State and non-state actors' roles in policymaking have transformed the state's authority over how policies are allocated to ensure that citizens see them as legitimate. One of the main goals of public policy is to ensure that citizens accept the values it embodies. A government is therefore likely to use evidence in ways that will help to legitimise its policy decisions and increase citizen's buy-in to them. In this the media plays a more significant role than ever before (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010:22). Political scientists and communication scholars have long researched the role of the media in the policy cycle. Media attention is episodic giving more coverage to some issues than others and aligning with policy making activities. The media coverage on a policy issue also shapes what the mass public believes, forming public opinion and engagement, through its focus on key issues, which then determines what are considered key issues and the direction of the issues that the public is concerned with (McCombs & Shaw, 1972, cited in Russell et al., 2016:3). The media also problematizes policy and attaches meaning to it in ways that are understandable, and it is

therefore a key player in determining what and how the public thinks about political issues and whether or not to engage in political issues (Crow & Lawlor, 2016; Russell et al., 2016).

Governments that want to influence a policy agenda will use the media to influence citizens (Binderkrantz et al., 2015; Russell et al., 2016; Thrall, 2006). The media reports information expressed in mainstream government debates, and public officials are often seen as more reliable sources of evidence than other actors and therefore are reported on most often in (Gronke & Cook, 2007; Thrall, 2006). With access to a wider audience through the media, public actors have access to a wider audience and can use evidence to shape the narratives around policy amendment.

3.4. Factors other than evidence influencing education policy

3.4.1. Global education policy movements

The connection between global, regional, and national, education policymaking is not always linear, and it can be difficult to see what forces are influencing policy change (Chisholm, 2005). Ball (2013) suggests that understanding international policy contexts can help with understanding national education policies and the emergence of a global education policy.

Education is seen as a valuable tool for addressing many of the economic and social challenges facing societies today, and education policy and the multiple determinants that go into education policymaking have been widely researched. Curriculum reform and policymaking, for example, do not follow the predictable path of formulation-adoption-implementation-reformulation (Chisholm & Leyendecker, 2008; Jones & Sumner, 2011). Policy issues can take years to become public policy priorities requiring legislative or executive action, and they may develop and then stagnate (Lubienski et al., 2014). The development of Kenya's National Curriculum Policy in

Kenya was not a linear process and has been developed over an extended period beginning in 2009 when the summative evaluation of education was completed.

Education development is a diverse and challenging issue in Sub-Saharan Africa due to the diversity of its societies and the national and international social, economic, and political structures that influence education change (Bjork, 2004; Chisholm & Leyendecker, 2008). Education policy shapes and is shaped by social relations, including those based on class, race, ethnicity, and gender (Tikly, 2019c, 2019b).

Education researchers have assessed the influences of Western political ideologies such as modernisation, neoliberalism, and capitalism on the borrowing of education policy in Sub-Saharan Africa (Rizvi & Lingard, 2006, 2010; Tabulawa, 2003, 2013; Tikly, 2011a, 2019a, 2019b). Western ideologies have been found to inform the ways in which societal problems are perceived and education policy solutions are developed to address them (Ball, 2012; Lingard & Sellar, 2013; Rizvi & Lingard, 2010). In many African countries education is idealised as a panacea for economic challenges and a prime solution for the eradication of poverty (Tabulawa, 2003, 2013; Tikly & Barrett, 2011; Schweisfurth, 2011, 2015, 2013; Tikly, 2019c). Western neoliberalism has

pushed for education development policies in Africa to focus on increasing the human capital that it sees as necessary for individual and national development (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010; Tabulawa, 2003, 2013; Tikly et al., 2003).

Tabulawa (2003, 2013) argues that the goal of Western states is to further their own political norms and interests by influencing how African governments are organised and how their economies work via the human capital development approach through education is self-promoting, believing that increasing development by increasing human capital will lead to democracy and free-market economies (Tabulawa, 2003). Research in developed nations has indeed found links between higher education and public support for democratic government (Evans & Rose, 2012). Although the context in which this research was carried out is different from that in other Sub-Saharan Africa countries in terms of political ideology and schooling, Kenya's increasing education completion rates, even at the primary school level, may result in increased support for democracy (ibid). In Kenya, the government has taken steps to increase access to primary education through the free primary education program started in 2003, and now there is a policy seeking a 100 per cent transition to secondary education. In keeping with global discourse, Kenya

places primary and secondary education at the centre of development and poverty eradication (Milligan, 2011).

The human capital approach poses numerous challenges and has been strongly criticised as an approach to developing education in Sub-Saharan Africa (Tikly, 2011; Tabulawa, 2003, 2013). For instance, its input-output model assumes a linear relationship between education's inputs, processes, and outcomes (Tikly, 2011). We know, however, that learner characteristics, enabling inputs, educational processes, policy actors and multidimensional, context-dependent relationships affect education policymaking, as discussed in Chapter 2 (Barrett & Tikly, 2012; Tikly, 2011a, 2011b). The human capital model proposes a one-size-fits-all solution to the education needs of a diverse group of learners in a variety of environments. Human capital theory's concern with educational inequality contradicts market-led solutions proposing choice, competition, decentralisation, and local accountability in education increase inequality (Milligan, 2011; Tikly & Barrett, 2011). Human capital theory's concern with educational inequality contradicts market-led solutions proposing choice, competition, decentralisation, and local accountability in education increase inequality (Milligan, 2011; Tikly & Barrett, 2011).

Despite evidence that the human capital approach may not be best for Sub-Saharan Africa countries, researchers such as Tabulawa (2003, 2013) argue that Africa's less-industrialised nations remain peripheral, dominated by core industrialised Western states that enforce their own interests on them (Chisholm & Leyendecker, 2008; Tabulawa, 2003, 2013). The resulting power imbalance negates their ability to negotiate for their preferred policies, development, and political ideologies. It is argued that Western states maintain the colonial nature of the core state, extracting from the peripheral state to further their interests (Chisholm & Leyendecker, 2008; Tabulawa, 2013), and to further their political interests in African countries there has been an increased reform of the latter's education structures in ways that will create more democratic societies via learner-centred methods such as the competency-based curriculum.

Learner-centred education is participatory, democratic, and inquiry-based, and can be implemented using various models that differ only in the amount of autonomy learners are given (Tabulawa, 2003; Schweisfurth, 2015). The competency-based curriculum model emphasises what learners can do with their knowledge. The competencies that it is assumed to produce – human capital in the form of knowledge, skills, and learner attitudes – are linked to discourse on

good-quality education that proposes moving away from teacher-driven instruction to learner-driven teaching (Tromp & Datzberger, 2021). This curriculum is expected to enhance countries' competitive advantages across the globe (Mulenga & Kabombwe, 2019; Ruth & Ramadas, 2019; Tromp & Datzberger, 2021). In Kenya, the competency-based curriculum is also intended to offer skills that match employers' requirements (Ruth & Ramadas, 2019).

Western states spread learner-centred education (LCE) by funding educational projects and consultancies via international development organisations such as UNICEF, UNESCO, DFID, the World Bank, and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) (Tabulawa, 2003, 2013; Schweisfurth, 2015). LCE has emerged as a model of good educational practice, and its strong endorsement by these strong advocates has led to its acceptance as the basis for curriculum reform in Africa (Schweisfurth, 2015). It is expected to limit authoritarian practices in schools and redirect learner' minds to liberal ways of thinking, in line with the political conditions seen as necessary for free market economies: democratisation (Chisholm & Leyendecker, 2008; Tabulawa, 2003). Tabulawa (2003, 2013) argues that aid agencies justify LCE teaching methods in

superficial, non-political terms that are often portrayed in educational and cognitive terms such as pedagogy and improving learning outcomes.

However, learner-centred education is politically and economically driven and is not value-neutral, and Tabulawa (ibid) argues that the curriculum reforms advocating for LCE in Africa should be assessed with this in mind. The political nature of the LCE reforms in Africa will limit the extent to which the goals for education in Africa are met (Chisholm & Leyendecker, 2008; Schweisfurth, 2011, 2013, 2015). While aid agencies and UN organisations such as UNICEF, UNESCO, and the World Bank view LCE as a policy discourse offering improvement in teaching and learning globally (Schweisfurth, 2013), research has shown that global education policies do not always translate as intended in the national context (King, 2007, 2017; King & Rose, 2005; Milligan, 2011; Rose, 2006; Schweisfurth, 2011).

In Kenya for instance, education policies proposed by development partners have often been decided in the absence of local participation, limiting their alignment with local priorities (Milligan, 2011). King (2007) questions whether education development strategies that tackle poverty by linking education and training with work and employment are a 'Kenyan policy or

policy for Kenya,' meaning that policies can be applied to Kenya but are limited in reflecting local realities (King, 2007: 359). This has been seen in previous policies in Kenya, including free primary education (FPE) in 2003 and free secondary education (FPE) in 2007 (Abuya et al., 2015; King, 2007; Lucas & Mbiti, 2012; Milligan, 2011). FPE, for instance, aimed to improve access to, equity in, and the quality of education, but its results were limited as far as improving the gender gap and the enrolment of learners from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, suggesting that barriers to schooling go beyond the cost (Lucas & Mbiti, 2012; Muyanga et al., 2010).

It is no surprise therefore that LCE policies in Kenya such as the use of the competency-based curriculum have been problematic. Applications of LCE in Africa have faced many challenges such as problems with definition, inappropriate transfer and poor implementation, including failing to prepare teachers for the curriculum reform (Komba & Mwandaji, 2015; Schweisfurth, 2006, 2011, 2013a, 2013b; Suleiman, 2020). The political nature of LCE reforms and the multiple stakeholder interests involved in curriculum reform has often led to rapid and over-ambitious policymaking. Policy development on LCE in Africa has been unrealistic because it has not provided the necessary communication, support, and monitoring strategies (Schweisfurth, 2011).

As discussed in Chapter 2, the curriculum-reform process in Kenya indeed took the path of rapid implementation and the support systems needed for successful implementation was limited.

Research on LCE in Africa has shown that contextual factors can also limit the system's achievement of its expected democratic goals. Discussing LCE reform in Sub-Saharan Africa, Tabulawa (2013), Schweisfurth (2013), and Chisholm and Leyendecker (2008) all raise the effect of local cultural and contextual realities on education reform. For LCE to be successful in Sub-Saharan Africa cultural change is necessary, and this will take a long time as long-standing forms of social interaction, including hierarchies and formal interactions in the classroom, go against the liberal nature of LCE (Tabulawa, 2003, 2013).

Chisholm and Leyendecker (2008) argue that policymakers often ignore these local cultural and contextual realities, probably blinded by the promise of the social goals attached and international interests at play. This is likely to have been the case in Kenya's development of the National Curriculum Policy, where the decision to reform the curriculum was taken without contextual evidence on how variables such as culture can affect the success of LCE.

LCE approaches such as Kenya's competency-based curriculum expect that schools will be able to promote social mobility, national harmony and responsible citizenship and prepare learners for the 21st century (Chisholm and Leyendecker, 2008). However, evidence has shown that this is unlikely. It is argued that because policymakers in Africa view education as a one-stop solution to a multitude of social, economic and political challenges they often fail to develop specific ways to deal with singular challenges such as national harmony and prefer to bundle them up with the goals for education (Chisholm & Leyendecker, 2008). Tabulawa (2003, 2013) suggests that rather than a one-size-fits-all approach, curriculum reform in Sub-Saharan Africa could benefit from a sociocultural approach that tailors the curriculum to the culture of each country.

To understand the convergence in education policy in the form of curriculum reform in Africa, researchers have looked at exactly how education policies move beyond national boundaries, arguing that neoliberal economic policy has caused the mobilisation and spread of education policy and practice across the world (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010; Ball, 2012; Ball et al., 2017; Tikly, 2019b).

3.4.2. Education and the neoliberal state

The role of neoliberalism in education policy development is a recurring theme in the literature. Tikly (2019b), for instance, argues that patterns of education in Africa have been deeply influenced by neoliberal reforms. Neoliberalism challenges the post-independence view of the state as the main vehicle for development. Globalisation and neoliberal influences have changed the nature of international relations and increased the number of international actors involved in national education policymaking (Ball, 2012; Tikly, 2015; Tikly 2019b), resulting in increasing fragmentation of education policy and practice (Mundy & Verger, 2015; Ball et al., 2017). This has particularly been caused by the influence of international organisations on global education agendas and of business and philanthropic actors on the formulation and reformulation of policy (Ball, 2012; Broad, 2006; Menashy & Verger, 2018; Mundy & Murphy, 2001; Mundy & Verger, 2015), and has led to global interdependencies regarding how education policy and practice is developed (Ball, 2012).

Like the neoliberal economic model, the good governance agenda that emerged in the 1990s as an economic model of how Western governments relate to African countries also contributed to

the rise in the number of international policy actors involved in national policymaking (Tikly, 2019b). Governance – the existence of a few interconnected structures operating in a predictable way in accordance with accepted rules and conventions to address a variety of political and administrative issues (Pinkney, 2009: 154) – has moved beyond control by and through recognisable formal institutions such as legislatures, cabinets, and the civil service. A significant amount of power has been transferred from these institutions to a variety of consultative and semi-autonomous national bodies, especially in the West, reflecting an increasingly complex governing process (ibid). The range of decisions to be made is wider and it is more crucial than ever to maintain legitimacy by involving civil society (ibid). The increase in neoliberalism and the good governance agenda has changed attitudes towards Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) since international development agencies started to use them to implement welfare programs in postcolonial Africa (Tikly, 2019b). As a result, their number increased rapidly in Africa, providing a safety net legitimising the neoliberal state in which international financial institutions determine development policies (Beyer, 2007; Tikly, 2019b). Pinkney (2009), examining the role of NGOs in Africa focusing on Uganda, Tanzania and Ghana, states that as

the number of international NGOs grew in Africa so too did NGOs, operating with considerable financial support from donors and focusing on education service delivery and advocacy.

These NGOs make up for shortages in the provision of education and hold the government accountable for its quality. NGOs' legitimacy in relation to the state is complicated by their dual role, which on the one hand makes them adversarial to the government (ibid). However, NGOs do not always choose between providing services and advocacy, as these goals are not always separate (Rose, 2011). They find ways to balance service provision against advocating for change, working with rather than against the government to achieve their goals, using various strategies based on the strength of the governmental policy context, the degree of formality in their relationship with the government, and how much they depend on funding (ibid).

3.5. The changing nature of policy networks

Many researchers have written on the global movement and spread of education policy and practice (Chisholm, 2005; Chisholm & Leyendecker, 2008; Crossley et al., 2005; Schweisfurth, 2011; Tikly, 2011a, 2011b, 2019b). As discussed in section 3.2, lasting colonial structures (Tikly, 2011, 2019a; Tikly & Barrett, 2011), market-driven neoliberal drivers and globalisation (Tabulawa, 2003; Schweisfurth, 2015; Tikly, 2019a) are some of the factors influencing education policy. Pinkney (2009) and Tikly's (2019b) discussions of the good governance agenda have highlighted the changing nature of education development and the increasing number of NGOs working in the space. The good governance agenda has highlighted the changing nature of education development and the increasing number of NGOs working in the space.

There are gaps in the literature regarding how education policy ideas and practices move across national borders. A few education researchers have begun to look at how policy actors interact in ways that lead to policy change (Ball, 2012, 2016; Ball et al., 2017; Ball & Exley, 2010; Exley et al., 2011; Lingard & Sellar, 2013) and have found that education policies and values promoted by national governments are strongly influenced and determined by policy actors from beyond their

national borders (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010). Shiffman (2008) adds that there is a distinction however, between visible and hidden participants in policy development, with legislators, ministers and stakeholders from donor agencies being more visible and in charge of deciding policy agendas, whereas civil society stakeholders, researchers and career civil servants playing a less visible role (Shiffman, 2008).

The increasing presence of international consultancy firms, transnational institutions, think tanks, NGOs and professional associations, the increased number of international conferences, and the perception of multilateral agencies, philanthropists and consultancy firms as technical experts have changed the nature of global education policy (Ball, 2012; Ball et al., 2017; King et al., 2007; King & Rose, 2005; Mundy & Murphy, 2001; Peck, 2003; Rose, 2006; Shahjahan & Madden, 2015).

Researchers including Rizvi and Lingard (2009), Exley, (et al., 2011), Shahjahan and Madden (2015) and Menashy and Verger (2018) see examination of education policy actors and the ways in which they interact to form policy networks as a key step towards understanding the global changes in education policy.

3.5.1. International development organisations

Research on the influence of aid agencies and UN organisations on education policy and reforms at all levels of education (Tabulawa, 2003, 2013; Tikly, 2003, 2019a; Crossley et al., 2005; Schweisfurth, 2006; King et al., 2007; Verger, 2009; Rizvi & Lingard, 2010; Lebeau & Sall, 2011; Ball, 2012; Shahjahan & Madden, 2015; Shahjahan, 2016) has found that the World Bank, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the United Nations International Children Emergency Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) are some of the most notable actors shaping global education policy. The World Bank, for example, is one of the most powerful international organisations in education development and one of the biggest international funders of education for development in low-income countries (Mundy & Verger, 2015).

The role of international organisations, and particularly of the OECD, UNICEF, and UNESCO, in global education development is discussed in the literature (Schweisfurth, 2006, 2015; King et al., 2007; Lebeau & Sall, 2011; Ball, 2012; Shahjahan & Madden, 2015; Shahjahan, 2016). Like the World Bank, the OECD and the UN organisations have financial, technical and knowledge resources

that make it possible for them to influence global agendas for education development and to influence corresponding national education policies and reforms (ibid).

Lebeau and Sall (2011), Shahjahan and Madden (2015) and Shahjahan (2016) have conducted research on international organisations' influence and converging global education policies in global higher-education policymaking. While many of the authors mentioned in this review (e.g., Chisholm and Leyendecker (2008), Schweisfurth (2015), Tabulawa (2003, 2013) and Tikly (2003, 2019b) who in my view base their research on basic education and wider discussions around education policymaking, research on global higher-education policymaking has shed light on how international organisations shape policymaking in Sub-Saharan Africa at all levels of education.

In what seems like a more neutral way of viewing the impact of international organisations, Shahjahan and Madden (2015), with a focus on the World Bank and the OECD, consider that international organisations may not push national education policy in any specific direction. They argue that nation-states converge, and policies are shared at the global, regional, and national levels due to numerous factors including changes in the economy, for instance during the 2008

global fiscal crisis, changes in policy networks, and shared demands in national systems. They note that international organisations such as the World Bank and the OECD, although powerful in shaping education policy, operate alongside numerous other policy actors that contribute to policymaking themselves from within these organisations.

NGOs and experts in higher education, for example, influence policymaking, and should not be overlooked. However, Shahjahan and Madden (ibid) mainly focus on international organisations' relationships with more-developed countries such as the OECD member-states. This paints a picture of global education policymaking that is gentler than, say, Tabulawa's (2003, 2013) argument that international organisations impose education policies on Sub-Saharan African countries to serve their own self-interests. Shahjahan & Madden (2015) note that the nature of negotiating on policy may differ depending on the power dynamics between the nation-states and international development organisations involved and the policy actors' resource dependencies.

As Tabulawa (2003, 2013) and Tikly (2011, 2019a, 2019b) also argue, the World Bank's policies and external aid to Africa via structural adjustment plans are acknowledged to have increased

the resource dependency between African countries and international organisations (Shahjahan & Madden, 2015), which has led to education policy shifts in Sub-Saharan Africa geared to the World Bank's leaning towards market-driven economies and market-led education approaches. The World Bank has been a key driver in reductions in higher education, public spending, privatisation, and the implementation of tuition fees with a focus on building a workforce for economic development (Lebeau, 2008; Shahjahan & Madden, 2015). Lebeau (2008), consistent with Shahjahan and Madden's (2015) proposition, comments on how the World Bank can be influenced by other international development organisations and external pressures influencing education policy change.

Notably the push for Sub-Saharan Africa to institute tuition fees for higher education was met with a considerable backlash, including from UNESCO, as reducing public spending in higher education may result in cost-recovery measures that could limit the quality of higher education and the public good it is intended to achieve (Lebeau, 2008: 142–143). Changing views on the public-good objectives of higher education provisions, particularly in South Africa, and policies to remedy historical inequalities through both equity and economic development also in South

Africa, shifted how from the period 2002 the World Bank spoke about the goal of higher education in Sub-Saharan Africa (Lebeau, 2008: 143).

The World Bank's new narrative on higher education for public good advocates for a humanist and social-capital-building approach (ibid). International organisations such as the World Bank highlight innovative policy developments, establish common definitions, and contribute to the working vocabulary that describes what higher education should be (Lebeau & Sall, 2011). This shift was not without its challenges, which are too many to mention here, but one thing was clear: widespread inequality in education and many social and gender gaps had formed over the years as a result of reduced public spending and the privatisation of higher education in Sub-Saharan Africa (Lebeau, 2008; Robertson, 2009).

International organisations have shaped and used the language of development to influence global education policy. Through what has been termed the 'crisis talks and opinion formation that emerged in 2002–2004, the World Bank influenced how higher education problems and their solutions were viewed globally (Robertson, 2009). African countries implement these policies

unopposed; the World Bank's discourse is now one of reforms to address the knowledge-gap crisis (Robertson, 2009; Lebeau & Sall, 2011; Tikly, 2019b).

Hence the era of the knowledge-based economy emerged, with the World Bank pushing for a knowledge-for-development approach to higher education applicable to all levels of education, and centred around four pillars (Robertson, 2009; Tikly, 2019b): an economic and institutional regime that pushes for the use of existing and new knowledge and the development of entrepreneurship (Robertson, 2009: 8) ; enhancement of an educated and skilled population that can generate and share knowledge; an efficient innovation system in terms of policy actors such as research centres, universities, think tanks, and NGOs that can use global knowledge and adopt it to local needs; and information and communication technologies to communicate, share and process information effectively (Robertson, 2009: 8).

By presenting development discourses such as 'knowledge for development' as the only truth, language is used as power (King et al., 2007). This has certainly been the case in education for economic development, universal primary education (UPE) and education for all (EFA), and approaches such as the sector-wide integrated approach to education development, which the

World Bank advocates, are powerful and have been widely accepted as a reality (King et al., 2007; Milligan, 2011; Colclough, 2012). This is often evident in Sub-Saharan Africa and at the national level in two ways: in the programmes implemented, and in the language of national education policy documents.

Kenya, for example, has dedicated and followed education development aligned to EFA, UPE, free primary education (FPE) and the sector-wide approach (SWAps). Colclough (2012a) and Colclough and Webb (2012) point out that the SWAp now common to education planning in Kenya was taken up in 2005 through the Kenya Education Sector Support Program (KESSP). SWAps are a trend that started in the 1990s, spearheaded by the World Bank and advocating for a more sectoral vision of education to ensure that individual subsectors, especially in basic education, function effectively (King et al., 2007). The influence of international development organisations on policymaking in Kenya is clear here.

Chapter 2 has discussed how the development of Kenya's National Curriculum Policy involved national policy actors, consultants, and international development organisations such as USAID, UNESCO, UNICEF, and the OECD (MoE, 2015a, 2015c). Trends in curriculum reform in Kenya

and the implementation of the competency-based curriculum suggest that the aid agencies and development organisations played a supporting role in policymaking. Although not apparent in the contextual discussion laid out in Chapter 2, research on education policy in Kenya and aid agencies' part in it has revealed an unbalanced relationship between public policy actors and aid agencies (Colclough, 2012a, 2012b; Colclough & Webb, 2012). A review of the 2012 draft National Curriculum Policy speaks to global development narratives in its stated goals for curriculum reform, including enhancing technology and innovation, producing citizens equipped with relevant and good-quality knowledge, and enhancing human capital to align with global trends. In assessing global influences on the 2007 free secondary education policy in Kenya Milligan (2011) points out the policy document's emphasis on global trends and its similarities with international educational discourse such as its focus on human capital, and suggests that policymakers are looking outward, rather than inward to what is important for Kenya. In assessing global influences on the 2007 free secondary education policy in Kenya Milligan (2011) points out the policy document's emphasis on global trends and its similarities with international

educational discourse such as its focus on human capital, and suggests that policymakers are looking outward, rather than inward to what is important for Kenya.

Studies have shown that to succeed in meeting its objectives, education policy in developing countries such as Kenya should move away from the influence of international development actors and base its policymaking on national dialogue, consultation, and debates (Tikly, 2011, 2019b; Tikly & Barrett, 2011). As has been argued elsewhere, whilst the idea of a knowledge economy is intuitively appealing to policy makers, it can often operate rhetorically as a panacea for solving economic crisis that has its roots in Africa's position in relation to the global economy and unequal social relations ~~of~~ (Tikly,2019b). The propositions of a knowledge economy stand in contrast to the realities of many in SSA who have limited incomes obtained from subsistence agriculture and the informal economy (ibid). It should be a matter for the state and its government and interest groups such as teachers and teacher unions, non-governmental and community organisations representing parents, and other groups with a stake in education (ibid). Education researchers have suggested that the education policies of countries that have successfully joined the global economy match their own national priorities and outcomes of

education with the changing needs of the job market (Green et al., 2007). This is made possible through intergovernmental dialogue (Rose, 2011a; Tikly & Barrett, 2011; Tikly, 2011; 2019b).

3.5.2. Civil-society groups

At the national level, policy actors include public and private actors, and international agreements and national policy have formalised community participation (Rose, 2003; Compston, 2009). Political advocacy in education has evolved nationally, leading to the inclusion of many private policy actors including lobbyists, advocacy coalitions, grassroots community organisers, philanthropists, and religious groups that lobby on many political and contentious education issues (DeBray-Pelot et al., 2007; Pinkney, 2009; Tikly, 2019b). As discussed in section 3.2, NGOs have played an increasing role in education in Sub-Saharan Africa (Rose, 2011a; Pinkney, 2009) and are widely accepted by international organisations not only for their service provision but also for representing the needs of marginalised people and giving them a voice in policymaking spaces from which they would otherwise be excluded (Anheier, 2021; Beyer, 2007). NGOs' support for policy decisions they approve of, gives such policies, and the process of producing

them, legitimacy, as NGOs are seen as representing marginalised groups (Beyer, 2007; Pinkney, 2009). They often work with and are funded by international development organisations, for example generating evidence and making recommendations on development needs with the UN's Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) (ibid). Their collaboration with and financial dependence on international development organisations constrains many NGOs' interests and have been found to act as means through which foreign aid is channelled in the neoliberal state (Lang'at, 2008; Pinkney, 2009). Rose (2011) points out that NGOs must balance their relationship with national governments carefully if they are to gain access to the national education development space and take part in public action and achieve their goals. This requires building a relationship with the government over an extended period and being flexible enough to ensure the relationship's success. Rose (2009) points out that as NGOs depend on their funders for continued financial support, they can over-report the success of their programs, and that evaluations that criticise NGO provisions may implicate the government, which can threaten the relationship.

The colonial period in many Sub-Saharan African countries left behind religious organisations, particularly the Church, which is a central actor in education policymaking (Kamaara, 2000; Sabar_Friedman, 1997; Tikly, 2019b; Tikly et al., 2003). Before independence Christian and Muslim religious organisations were prominent in education provision and the colonial rulers used them as tools to spread their ideologies. Since independence religious groups such as churches have continued to run a substantial proportion of the independent secondary and primary schools in Africa (Tikly et al., 2003; Tikly, 2019b). In Kenya, the Church continues to play a significant role in education provision and policymaking (Sabar-Friedman, 1995; Kamaara, 2000). At independence in 1963, 90 per cent of Kenya's primary schools were affiliated to the Anglican Church, the official church of British colonial power, which also provided vocational training and health and many other welfare services (Sabar-Friedman, 1995).

Even after the Kenyan government took over many of the public services previously provided by the Church, the latter continued to be seen as a powerful civil-society actor. The first president of Kenya described its role post-independence:

The Church is the conscience of society. If we do wrong and you keep quiet, you shall answer for our mistakes. (Sabar-Friedman, 1995: 492)

Financially independent, with a network of many civil-service organisations and access to the media, the Church was seen as the country's moral compass. With its position in society informally set by Kenya's first president, it stood its ground speaking out against the oppressive second government (Gitari, 1991; Sabar-Friedman, 1995) and has played a key role in pushing for multiparty politics, transparency and democracy in Kenya (Sabar-Friedman, 1997; Kamaara, 2000). Today its strong influence on education development and policymaking continues (Sabar-Friedman, 1997; Kamaara, 2000; Tikly et al., 2003; Tikly, 2019b).

3.6. Summary

This literature review has discussed the debates around policymaking in the education sector and the influences on education policy including the use of evidence in policymaking neoliberal practices, and the role of stakeholders in policymaking. It has discussed how policies move globally, highlighting how international organisations shape education policymaking discourse and influence national education policies. Different stakeholder groups in the education policy network have been examined with a focus on civil society, including NGOs and religious organisations and the latter's part in shaping Kenya's education policy, highlighting their strength as civil-society actors and their role in advocating for democracy in Kenya.

This review has shown how global processes and policy actors influence what evidence is generated and in turn how this evidence is used to inform national level education policies. In the following chapters policy network analysis is used to examine the education policy stakeholders' interests and involvement in the development of the National Curriculum Policy; how resources are exchanged, how stakeholders' power plays a key role in Kenya's education

policymaking; stakeholder interactions that influence education policy development, as discussed in this chapter.

Chapter 4: Theoretical Framework

4.1. Introduction

In this thesis assessing the development of Kenya's National Curriculum Policy in Kenya, theories of evidence use are integrated into an overarching theoretical framework of policy network theory in order to examine evidence use in education policymaking. Drawing primarily on the contextual background and policy process discussed in Chapter 2 and stakeholder interviews, the focus of this thesis is on understanding how Kenya's National Curriculum Policy was developed. My assumptions on how the National Curriculum Policy was developed are drawn from Compston (2009), who outlines a policy network model of policy change that proposes a way to examine direct and indirect influences on policy change. This analysis does not rely heavily on the content of the National Curriculum Policy itself but rather on the factors that influenced the curriculum reform process, the extent to which evidence was used, and the key actor networks involved how their participation influenced policy change.

Goals and in applying policy network theory and evidence-use approaches this research follows an interdisciplinary path combining approaches outside education research, as studies have suggested that it is common for educational researchers to create communities of practice that go beyond the disciplinary lines (Tikly, 2015a). It is hoped that this will contribute to the ongoing efforts of policy and education scholars to address and understand education policymaking in lower-middle income countries such as Kenya.

The decision to use policy network theory was not easily reached. First, I categorised the types of theory applicable to this research as relating to either policy development or evidence use. I focused on policy development rather than specifically education policy development, assuming that policy development follows a similar process and can therefore be applied to education (Meyer & Rowan, 2006; Tikly, 2015b). I examined social science theories on policy development including actor network theory, the advocacy coalition framework, organisational institutionalism and theories of power (Tikly, 2015). I examined social science theories on policy development including actor network theory, the advocacy coalition framework, organisational institutionalism and theories of power. For theories on evidence use I reviewed Kirkhart's, (2000)

theories of evaluation influence and of communicative action. Theories on complexity (Szekely & Mason, 2019) and the policy agora (Brown, 2014a, 2014b) seemed to fall at the intersection of policy development and evaluation use, which I also reviewed. It was difficult to identify a single theory that was applicable to both evidence use in policymaking and the other two foci of the research: which stakeholders and what other factors influence education policymaking in Kenya. I found that theories such as organisational institutionalism, which has been applied in the field of education to examine how institutions are formed and maintained at the school level and how globalisation has affected institutions (Fenwick, 2011; Meyer & Rowan, 2006; Raffnsøe et al., 2019), did not allow examination of how states' and state agencies' objectives and interests work, as Meyer and Rowan also point out (ibid). Organisational institutionalism has also been applied to the analysis of evidence use in institutions such as the European Union, and to show how institutions interact more with actors internal to such institutions than with external actors (Højlund, 2015). This theory was not applicable to research on the influences of stakeholders both in and outside government.

The theoretical discussion begins in section 4.2 with an introduction to policy network theory and an analysis of its application to education policymaking; section 4.3 discusses the application of policy network theory to understand policy change, including propositions about how networks are formed; how resources influence policy change; network actors' policy preferences; network strategies used to influence policy change; perceived problems and solutions; network rules and norms; indirect influences on policy networks; and external factors influencing policy change.

Section 4.4 presents the literature on evidence use and focuses on the theories of instrumental, conceptual, legitimising, information use, and strategic uses of evidence applied in this thesis; section 4.5 presents the integrated policy network model of evidence use in policy change as developed and applied in this thesis. A critical discussion of the limitations of the theory in relation to evidence use in policymaking follows.

4.2. Policy network theory

Policymaking is a process in which many actors cooperate to make decisions, the implementation of which depends on the interactions among all of the actors. Policy network theory tends to draw

attention to the interdependence of actors in policymaking, arguing that a lack of focus on such interdependency will lead to poor results (Compston, 2009; Ball, 2012; Verger et al., 2016). Public policy in policy networks is determined the exchange of resources between actors and their preferences, strategies and perceptions of problems and solutions, rules and norms that are specific to the policy network (Compston, 2009:1).

This approach provides an effective method for understanding policies and evaluating outcomes. There has been an increase in research on policy networks, influenced by the realisations that numerous actors are involved in policy choices and that governments are unable to make decisions unilaterally without considering the constraints, preferences, and resources of other social actors (Compston, 2009; Ball, 2012, 2016; Galey-Horn & Ferrare, 2020). Policy networks are made up of policy communities founded on the basis of shared conceptions of social problems and their solutions (Compston, 2009; Ball, 2012, 2016), in which new thinking about what counts as good policy is articulated and validated. There are various dimensions and features of which policy networks are discussed in the literature (Dowding, 1995; Forrest, 2003; Rhodes, 2007), including inter-organisational cohesion, accessibility, and trust generation (Forrest, 2003).

Marsh and Rhodes, (1992) define a policy network as a continuum with a limited number of actors and a clear hierarchical relationship, composed of different types of networks formed on the basis of stability, inclusiveness and power relations between them. A policy network is made up of a set of actors who exchange resources in an effort to influence policy outcomes via both formal and informal channels (Compston, 2009; Galey-Horn & Ferrari, 2020). They operate through different forms of contact with each other, but the nature of the relations between members is not the same in every case. To define policy actors, the theory posits that networks are made up of individuals who act as representatives of organisations. Policy network theory identifies organisations as policy actors and categorises them as state or public actors, and private actors.

As opposed to Marsh and Rhodes (1992) position on the hierarchical nature of policy networks, there is an increase in relationships involving mutuality and interdependence as opposed to hierarchy and independence (Compston, 2009; Rizvi & Lingard, 2009; Ball, 2012). Particular knowledge and ideas flow and gain legitimacy and credibility through policy networks (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010). Influencing policy outcomes in the wake of globalisation for instance, has seen the media emerge as a significant policy actor (Rizvi & Lingard, 2009). As has been mentioned,

the media is strategically used within a policy network to influence and legitimise policy beliefs that support reform (Galey-Horn & Ferrari, 2020).

4.2.1. Resources

There has been a lot of political science research on what constitutes political resources. For the purposes of this research the resource typologies outlined by Compston (2009) are applied. In the context of policy networks, a resource is anything that is controlled by policy actors, is desired by another actor, and can be transferred or exchanged in ways that are relevant to policymaking (ibid). Resources can belong to public actors alone, i.e., policy amendment and access; both public and private actors, i.e., veto power, information, cooperation with implementation, resources to the courts and political support; or private actors alone, i.e., private investment and fluid funds (Compston, 2009:26).

These are the resources considered in Compston's (2009) model and may not comprise an exhaustive list. These resources are owned by the specified actors before resource exchange takes place, after which different policy actors will be in possession of different resources. For example,

private actors may have the policy amendments they want, and public actors may have got what they wanted, e.g., political support. For the purposes of this research, these groupings of resources are applied when assessing actor relationships during the development of the National Curriculum Policy, and each is discussed in more detail below. Policy network theory goes further and discusses the differences between enabling resources and tradable resources. Public actors such as the Government of Kenya have, as stipulated in the constitution (GOK, 2010) and discussed in Chapter 2, the legal authority to develop education policy. The government trades not this legal authority but policy with the actors they exchange resources within a policy network. Legal authority therefore is an enabling resource.

4.2.2. Policy amendments

Policy amendments as a tradable resource means a change in the choice of policy instrument selected in the direction desired by the actor with whom resource exchange is happening. Policy network theory posits that public actors prefer not to amend their preferred policy options and they will only do this when they feel there is a need for resources that they do not have or if they

can get those resources from somewhere else. In the case of the National Curriculum Policy for example, the government may have had enough political support for the policy decision and therefore they may not have needed to make policy amendments when pressured by actors such as KNUT as discussed in Chapter 2. This would not have been the case if they did not have political support.

4.2.3. Access

Access is a resource that only public actors can give. Access to policymaking includes being put on the mailing list for relevant government communications and documents; two-way communications with public actors; inclusion on relevant advisory committees; and the opportunity to submit arguments with the expectation that they will be considered (Compston, 2009:28). Access is a very valuable resource for private policy actors because it gives them information about what public actors are working on and the opportunity to communicate their own arguments to them. Public actors have the power to grant or deny access to policymaking processes and can choose who to include. In Kenya, as discussed in Chapter 2, the constitution

mandates public actors to provide access to policymaking processes and requires policymaking to be a participatory process involving citizens.

Various enabling resources, such as a reputation for giving good quality, reliable information; being responsible and trustworthy; possessing organisational resources including external consultants and having a relationship with and being known by key official shall increase the likelihood of a policy actor being given access to policymaking. If a policy actor does not have access to policymaking processes however, this does not mean they cannot influence policy amendments using direct action, such as by going through the courts. Policy actors who control access may use exclusion from access as a threat or punishment during policymaking (Compston, 2009). Chapter 2 has discussed how the National Curriculum Policy was drafted by a small group of actors that formed the National Committee on Curriculum Reforms. The Committee was formed to go ahead with planning curriculum reform even when the sessional paper, framed from the Odhiambo Commission's recommendations, was not passed by parliament, in an example of limiting access to policymaking, as a way of excluding actors who opposed the curriculum reform.

4.2.4. Veto power

Policy actors who have veto power can use it to halt policy decisions unless the policy is amended. Veto power is a tradeable resource that public actors other than those with the power to make policy decisions may threaten to use if their preferred policy amendments are not made. Depending on the strength of their tradable resources, both public and private actors, for example an actor whose cooperation with policy implementation is crucial, can be granted veto power.

4.2.5. Information

Policy network theory holds that information can be used as a resource in three ways: actors with information that only they control can exchange it for policy amendment; information can influence policy decisions directly without the exchange of resources by changing the policy preferences of public actors who have the legal authority to make policy changes, which implies that resource dependency on its own may only be one aspect of how policy is changed; and if resource exchange takes place during policymaking, information may result in policy learning which can change the nature of resource exchange and the policy decision that is made, because

information used in this way may change the policy preferences of policy actors. For example, in the process of developing the National Curriculum Policy, as discussed in Chapter 2, evidence from benchmarking studies is said to have informed policy amendments and may have changed the nature of the resource exchange that took place and ultimately informed actors' policy preferences

4.2.6. Cooperation with implementation

Cooperation with implementation is a resource that policy actors can exchange for policy amendment. This is an important resource, because without cooperation with implementation, developing the policy is useless. When actors have the power to challenge implementation, public actors are incentivised to exchange policy amendments for cooperation with implementation. Curriculum reform processes for instance require political support and legitimacy to facilitate its implementation. In the case of the National Curriculum Policy the TSC, which is responsible for teacher management, is an important actor required for cooperation with implementation as it is teachers who deliver CBC in schools. For cooperation with implementation to be a tradeable

resource, policy actors need to assess the presence of specific enabling resources including whether the policy actor is involved as a member of relevant implementation structures, as in the case of the TSC which provides teachers; whether the actor has the technical and organisational capabilities to implement the policy; and whether the policy actor would be able to take strategic action and disrupt the policy's implementation if acceptable compromise is not reached. Public actors other than those making the relevant policy decisions can have the enabling resource of legal authority over part or all the implementation process, allowing them to make policy decisions despite a lack of cooperation with implementation.

4.2.7 Recourse to the courts

Public and private actors in a position to go to court to delay or block policy decisions or policy implementation find in this a resource that can be traded for policy amendments. With the curriculum reforms in Kenya for instance, a constitutional petition to the courts in Ang'awa v. CS Education (2021) stated 'The government's approach to re-imagine the education system and replace the 8-44 curriculum was defective, unprocedural and has consequently left many gaps in

the country's curriculum reform process' made in 2021. Arguments were brought forth against the petition, but the court ruled against it then and it is still under review(GOK, 2021b) .

4.2.8. Political support

Political support is a tradeable resource that can take many forms. First, private actors may be in a position to mobilise or refuse to mobilise the public with regard to policy proposals. This can include strategies such as media campaigns, strikes, petitions and demonstrations, financial resources, alliances and coalitions with actors holding similar views, and organisational resources with a big membership providing the enabling resources. The importance of the media is particularly useful in increasing political support. Favourable media coverage of a particular policy grows as the issue becomes politicised and media coverage expands, increasing the proportion of the electorate who is aware of it and its potential electoral impact. This temporarily increases the media's resources on the issue, increasing the influence of journalists, media magnates, and public opinion on policy decisions.

Second, public actors can try to get private actors to approve a policy even if they do not need their political support or where political support is not an issue. This may be done to legitimise a policy because the enabling resource for such private actors may be the good public reputation that public actors seek.

Third, public actors such as members of the political executive depend on the support of other politicians to remain in office. The government needs the support of the legislative body, ministers need the support of the President, and the President needs the support of the party. This interdependency means that each can trade their political support for or against specific policy amendments.

Fourth, public actors can work directly with voters on policy issues that the public are interested in. Public actors may deal with voters directly by making policy amendments intended to increase their voter support. The public's enabling resource is their vote, awareness of the policy issue, and a political party that prefers policies that are similar to their own preferences than those of the government.

The importance of public political support as a tradeable resource depends on how much public actors need or want it. Those with significant political support may not need to trade policy amendments, whereas those that need more support are likely to trade policy amendments for more. The type of political support that a policy actor can give or withhold also depends on the type of actor. The President, for example, has the power to support, promote, demote or dismiss ministers.

Private actors such as businesses and trade unions can also use political support as a resource by voicing or withholding their support or by directly threatening or engaging in direct action such as media campaigns and demonstrations. The government's support of private interest groups depends on their size, their capacity to deliver on commitments and threats, the perceived impact on voters as a result of the actor's opposition, access to the mass media and pre-existing popular support (Compston, 2009:31).

4.2.9. Private investment

Government is responsible for economic development but does not control the investment needed to ensure this; they depend for instance on taxes and investment from private business and loans. For private actors, such as businesses, decisions about the location and type of private investment can be used as a tradeable resource where threats not to invest can be effective in pushing for policy amendments. However, these threats are only effective if the government believes the threat will be carried out if they refuse to give relevant business actors what they want.

4.2.10. Fluid funds

Fluid funds are financial resources that can be transferred and used as a tradeable resource to bribe politicians to amend policy; traded as contributions to a campaign for specific policy commitments; or exchanged for other enabling resources such as expertise and lobbying services.

Resource dependency in policy networks

Policy network theory argues that a variety of actors linked by common interests with regard to a policy exchange resources to pursue their shared interests, acknowledging that cooperation is the best way to achieve common goals. The ideas of power dependency and resource exchange between policy actors are central to policy network theory. Resource dependency describes one policy actor wanting or needing something another policy actor has. Such an exchange is unlikely if one of the actors in the relationship would not benefit from it, although it need not be of equal value on both sides and one actor may benefit more than the other (Compston, 2009:19).

For instance, a public actor in a strong position can secure cooperation from a private actor in exchange for small policy amendments but may be required to make large policy amendments in exchange for minimal support from a private actor in a stronger position (Scharpf, 1978, cited in Compston, 2009:19). Resource-dependent relationships are also described in terms of how important the resource received is to the actor relative to the total resources needed, and the ease to which the resource could be replaced from other sources (ibid).

A network's impact on public policy is a function of the relative power of its members, which depends on their resources and how these are exchanged. Policy networks form based on the interdependence of various actors. Administrators need political support, legitimacy, information, coalition partners against bureaucratic rivals, and assistance with implementation, while interest groups want access to policymaking, policy implementation, and concessions to their interests. This leads to resource exchanges that may in time become institutionalised as policy networks – strategic alliances forged around a common agenda of mutual advantage through collective action, with policy actors only participating in such an interaction if they expect to benefit from it (Compston, 2009;).

Resource exchange relationships exist between policy actors both public and private in different types of policy networks including policy communities and issue networks, as discussed below.

4.2.11. Issue networks and policy communities

Policy network theory refers to actors and relationships involved in the policy process and forming either a policy community or an issue network (Atkinson & Coleman, 1992; Marsh &

Rhodes, 1992; Dowding, 1995). In an issue network, heterogeneous groups develop around a shared interest related to a policy issue (Marsh & Rhodes, 1992; Forrest, 2003), in an effort to influence policy to their own perceived advantage.

These networks normally involve a large number and range of actors with unequal power, positions and resources. Issue networks are less stable, integrated or institutionalised than policy communities. Government-interest group relations have been found to share a high degree of instability because their relations are not institutionalised but depend on ad-hoc policy communities set up by government to invite the involvement of various policy actors with recognised vested interests in the outcomes (Marsh & Rhodes, 1992).

Access to an issue network changes significantly, with conflict often present. Some of the participants in the issue network have limited resources. Power in issue networks is unequal, reflecting the unequal resources and access (Marsh & Rhodes, 1992). The concept of the issue network sheds light on a policymaking process that is fragmented and filled by a wide and unpredictable number of participants, as in the development of the National Curriculum Policy

in Kenya. Issue networks focus on the relationships between individuals in micro-level policymaking (Heclo, 1978, cited in Atkinson and Coleman, 1992: 159).

In policy communities, the frequency of interaction is often of high quality and the membership values and outcomes are constant over time. Policy communities' members share basic values, and they all have resources. The basic relationship between actors in a policy community is one of exchange and the members' power is balanced, although one group may dominate (Marsh & Rhodes, 1992). For example, the development of the first draft of the National Curriculum Policy, discussed in Chapter 2, involved a policy community of MoE and KICD actors that were appointed to the National Committee on Curriculum Reform in 2014.

Whether part of an issue network or a policy community, policy network actors hold different positions and play different roles. Two types of actors and their membership of networks are discussed in the literature: those involved in day-to-day policy discussions and actions, and those whose activities are less prominent in the network and who link with other members less frequently. Actors that are more involved have knowledge of the policy issue under discussion. They construct a policy discourse together and end up forming a discourse community (Howlett,

2002). Less prominent actors form knowledge-based groups of stakeholders who participate in exchange relationships with each other based on a specific interest, forming an interest network (ibid).

Policy networks are fraught with politics, power struggles and individual and organisational interests. Policies emerge through power struggles between different interest groups (Dowding, 1995). Unlike Dowding's (1995) stance on power struggles, Leifeld and Schneider (2012) argue that in policy networks politics is not merely power-driven but also resource dependent. Political organisations seeking to achieve policy-related goals take the transaction costs into account when considering who to approach and how easy it is to reach potential (Leifeld & Schneider, 2012). However, if a state is interested in balancing organised interests, it should promote civil-society groups that cannot afford to take part in the inner circle of sectoral politics. Not doing this, risks one coalition becoming more influential in the political process than others because its members are well-connected, which can skew the political outcome in their desired direction (ibid).

There are seven dimensions of policy networks: the number and type of actors involved; the function of the network; the structure and pattern of relations between actors; the degree of

institutionalisation of policy; power relations; and the strategies used by network members (Compston, 2009). The relationship between network members is based on resource interdependencies, with each actor wanting something from one or more actors and is prepared to exchange something of their own to get it. In the policy network, there are assumed rules about how the network works; for instance, if a government wants to achieve a particular policy goal with minimum conflict, it can secure assistance from groups with the development and implementation of the policy in exchange for granting them access to the policy process (ibid).

Today countries have to adapt to multiple social, economic and political changes including globalisation, sector specialisation, decentralisation, increased social organisations and civil society, forcing governments to open government policy formulation and planning processes to accommodate the wide array of interest- and citizen groups (Ball et al., 2017; Han & Ye, 2017). Ball et al. (2017) argue that the increasing flow of global education policy has significant implications for education policy research, which should address the flows, networks, movements and structures of education policy and address new policy spaces and practice and

that focusing on the nation-state alone is not enough and it is important to also examine the role of multilateral and bilateral agencies and NGOs (Ball et al., 2017).

Various authors examining education policy networks argue that in many countries the policy network approach has been adopted and applied to assess various interest groups to allow more bottom-up than top-down policy and planning processes (Ball & Exley, 2010; Exley Braun, & Ball, 2011; Ball et al., 2017). Policy network theory has been used to increase understanding of how government officials and social activists interact in the power-negotiation and consensus-building phases of the education policymaking process (Ball & Exley, 2010; Exley Braun, & Ball, 2011; Ball et al., 2017). Education researchers have used policy network theory to assess the growing roles and influences of emerging education policy community actors such as Edu-businesses, think tanks, philanthropists, and international organisations because of globalisation (Exley et al., 2011; Ball, 2012; Han & Ye, 2017). As discussed in chapter 3, the global mobility of education policies has increased the influence of international organisations in determining national education policies. In trying to explain the global mobility of education policies, Dale and Robertson (2012) focus on the influence of international organisations, including the World

Bank, UNESCO and the OECD, on the determination of global education agendas. Mundy and Verger (2015), examine the increasing role of the World Bank in education policy and development, and DeBray-Pelot, Lubienski and Scott (2007) state that to the increasing number of actors in education policymaking adding that political advocacy in education has evolved nationally to include a wide array of actors including lobbyists, advocacy coalitions, grassroots community organisers, philanthropies and religious groups, who lobby around many political and contentious education issues.

4.3. Applying policy network theory to policy change

Much has been said in political science research about what leads to policy change (Taylor et al., 1997; Malen & Knapp, 1997; Howlett, 2002). Most policies made by governments are a continuation of past policies and practices (Howlett, 2002), and even what may look like new policy initiatives are usually versions of existing practices; this type of policymaking is the most common. Ball et al., (2017) notes that education policy is never developed in a vacuum – new policies are formed from the foundation of older policies ensuring continuity and change as

reforms are introduced. Policy change can be pragmatic in nature, and this is another way of policymaking and involves periods of stability and incremental change affected by times of rebellion and resulting in spurts of change in policy dynamics (Nelson, 1984, cited in Howlett, 2002:241). Policy change can be rapid or slow (Howlett, 2002). In Compston's (2009:31-51) policy networks model of policy change, policy change consists of changes in policy instruments and their settings, changes in the content of official decisions that choose policy instruments and their settings.

Six propositions should be met in policy network theory to explain policy change (Compston (2009). First, the need for a policy decision is a precondition for the other propositions. Second, policy actors need to be present as individuals or groups with resources that can be traded. Third, policy actors should have their own policy preferences. Fourth, a perceived policy problem and policy solution. Fifth, based on each actor's tradable resources, policy actors design strategies to maximise their chances of getting their preferred policy preference. Sixth, incentives regulate the behaviour of the policy actors and the interactions between them (Compston, 2009). For policy

change to take place, policy is amended based on resource exchange, changes in the resources, preferences and strategies of the policy network members, or changes to formal rules and norms.

In the resource-exchange policy network model, a public actor such as the Government of Kenya, which has exclusive decision-making authority and a lot of resources, needs fewer resources from other actors, and therefore fewer policy modifications are necessary in exchange. Other actors with more resources to trade are more likely to obtain substantial policy concessions in exchange for them, while a loss of resources increases the likelihood of the public or private actor concerned securing less-favourable policy decisions.

If a public actor can offer more policy changes it can be assumed that this raises its chances of getting the resources it wants from other policy actors, but at the cost of policy decisions away from its own policy preference. On the other hand, a public actor offering fewer policy changes, decreases its chances of getting the resources it wants. By allowing more access to policymaking processes, public actors increase their chances of getting some of the key resources – for example information or support – from other policy actors that might have been difficult to get otherwise. With information, in particular, this would lead to better-informed policy. Increased access also

means that more actors can persuade public actors that their policy preferences would be mutually beneficial. When an actor gets the power to veto policy decisions, or when the range of policy areas over which an actor has veto power grows, this makes other actors, especially public actors who want policy decisions to get past this veto, more likely to give it the resources it wants. On the other hand, if an actor loses the right to veto policy decisions, or the range of policy areas over which it has a veto shrinks, public actors have less reason to make policy concessions to that actor.

Information is important in explaining policy change. Where information is traded directly for policy amendment, an increase in the value of this information for the relevant public actor would be expected to increase the significance of the policy concessions they are willing to make in order to obtain this information, and vice versa if the value of this information decreases.

4.3.1. Policy preferences

Changes in the policy preferences of a policy actor who has significant tradeable resources may change the terms on which resources are exchanged, and even the content of the policy. Changes

in the preferences of public actors can also influence policy decisions when a public actor makes a unilateral decision based on its pre-existing policy preferences without considering the views of other policy actors and without an exchange of resources.

4.3.2. Strategies

Policy network theory argues that public policy is determined by independent policy actors who exchange resources and who prefer specific policies. The strategies used for this are the communication of preferences and associated arguments; the deployment of resources, offers, threats and promises; and other actions necessary for network members to ensure the communication of their policy preferences and deployment of resources.

The communication of preferences and associated argumentation may result in policy change if it convinces a public actor that what one desires would also be beneficial to that public actor. Private actors must decide whether they will focus on using information and argumentation to persuade public actors or employ more conflictual strategies. The communication of preferences

is not independent of resource exchange, as resource exchange to gain access to the policymaking process is likely to play a significant role in facilitating any persuasion that occurs.

Network members must make strategic choices about how they use their resources. For public actors' decisions about how to use their resources include deciding whether to allow access and make policy changes. Private actors must decide whether to use important 'information' as a bargaining chip and if so, what information, when, and to what end. Actors who can prevent policies from being put in place, go to court, or give or retract political support must decide if, when, and how to so. Private actors such as multinational companies have to choose the circumstances in which they will offer new or threaten to withdraw existing investment.

Strategies do not always remain the same, even if a specific strategy may have led to the actor's expected policy outcome; for instance, a change in an actor's strategy can change the nature of the resource exchange enough to change the content of the policy decision in the direction of that actor's policy preferences. Effective strategies include better use of information, offers, and threats, and better choices of coalition partners or media strategy. A less effective strategy is likely to lead to policy decisions that are less in line with the relevant actor's policy preferences. In

Kenya's reform to the competency-based curriculum, for instance, the government used the media to gain political support for its preferred policy.

Policy actors can use different strategies to influence policy change, including modifying the relative weight given to cooperative and oppositional strategies, changing their strategies' institutional targets, adopting or abandoning strategies designed to alter the distribution of resources in a network, and selecting which other actors, if any, they wish to form an alliance with. Public actors in particular, can switch between unilateral and cooperative strategies, and when they choose cooperation can include a wide range of actors or just a few for the exchange of resources. Their strategies for trying to manage networks can also differ.

4.3.3. Perceived problems and solutions

Policy network theory argues that changes in how problems and solutions are seen are also direct causes of resource exchange. Policy actors' ideas about problems and how to solve them obviously limit the range of policy options network members can think about, so changes in how policy problems and solutions are perceived can lead to changes in the policy alternatives chosen

and the range of possible policy preferences. This can lead to changes in actual policy preferences, which can change the terms of resource exchange enough to lead to a different policy decision than would otherwise have been made. Policy network theory posits that changes in how people think about problems and how to solve them are not direct causes of changes in resource exchange.

Public actors' strategies can also affect how other policy network members see problems and their possible solutions. This is true if the public actor is able to manipulate the range of perceptions within a policy network by, for example, preventing the exclusion of actors with different views, bringing in new actors, preventing the exclusion of ideas, bringing in new ideas, and encouraging actors to think more deeply.

Changes in how actors see problems and how they can solve them can affect resources if they change what people want from each other. The modification of what is seen as a problem or thought to be a solution to a problem affects policy preferences and, through preferences, strategies; for example, if a policy actor finds out that what they saw as a solution doesn't work,

they may shift to a different solution, which can lead to a different policy goal and the use of a different strategy in a process of policy learning (Compston, 2009).

4.3.4. Rules and norms

Members of a network can only interact in certain ways if they follow the rules and norms that were set up to make their interactions positive. These define what actions and interactions are expected, allowed, and not allowed, establish and maintain norms of honesty and reciprocity, routines and procedures, and give each network member a specific role.

For their interactions to run smoothly, network members must consider the preferences of other members, and must respect their non-negotiable areas regarding policy options. By limiting legitimate actions, informal norms may limit policy actors' political strategies. Changing rules and norms can affect their strategies by limiting the acceptable options. Positive and negative incentives attached to institutionalised rules increase or decrease the payoffs associated with particular strategies and their probability of being chosen by self-interested actors.

This means that in some cases, changing rules and norms are likely to lead to different policy results by changing how resources are traded. For example, as discussed in Chapter 3, Kenya started to receive increased aid after the NARC government took office and mutual cooperation over implementation, evaluation and reporting was agreed by government and aid agencies together. However, this mutual cooperation rule changed when aid agencies lost their trust in how funds for the KESSP were managed, arguably resulting in changes to the rules and norms within the policy network and resulting in the aid agencies opting to control the implementation of programs and management of aid in Kenya (Colclough, 2012a; Colclough & Webb, 2012).

Changing rules and norms can be a powerful strategy, not only for private actors such as aid agencies but also for governments, to control access to influencing their policy preferences. Although in most countries formal rules are present these are often observed selectively while informal rules are more influential (Fritz, Kaiser & Levy, 2009). The strategies of public actors can change rules and norms by bringing in new players and leaving out others, setting up or changing organisational arrangements such as consultation procedures and advisory bodies, and changing interaction rules such as how decisions are made.

4.3.5. Exogenous changes to policy networks

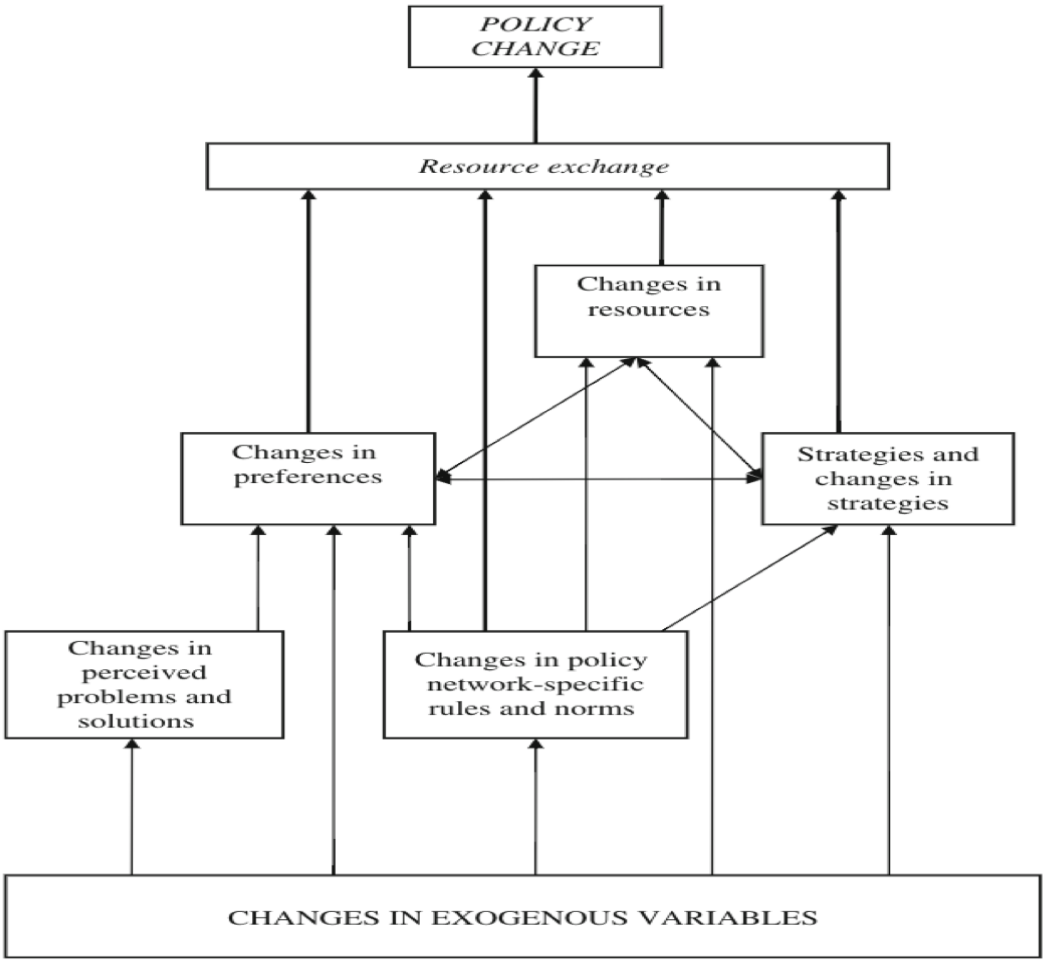
Changes in resource exchange are attributed to changes in network members' resources, preferences and strategies, as well as in network-specific rules and norms. In almost all cases, changes to each of these five independent policy network variables can cause changes in the others. Exogenous factors, defined as perceived and actual changes in reality other than the five-policy network independent variables can result in changes in these variables, leading to resource exchange and policy decision changes.

Externally imposed legal changes to public actors' powers and responsibilities, government changes, economic events, scientific and technological developments, and disasters are examples of exogenous variables. Globalisation, for example, can bring in new political actors from other levels of governance and weaken or remove national-level public actors' legal authority, reducing their ability to offer policy amendments, grant or deny access to the policymaking process, or exercise a legal veto on policy decisions. Creating, splitting, merging, reorganising, or abolishing departments and agencies can alter their legal powers to grant policy concessions, grant or deny access, or exercise a legal veto. Finally, reorganisation that changes how public policy is

administered may affect political actors' ability to implement policy, and scientific and technological advances outside the nation-state may change policy actors' perceptions of problems and solutions and policy preferences.

Finally, the importance of favourable media coverage of a particular policy grows as the issue becomes politicised and media coverage expands, increasing the proportion of the electorate who is aware of it and its potential electoral impact. This temporarily increases the media's resources on the issue, increasing the influence of journalists, media magnates, and public opinion on policy decisions. Compston's (2009) policy network model of policy change as illustrated in Figure 4.1, indicates the pathways expected to lead to policy change:

Figure 4.1: Policy Network model of Policy Change



Source: (Compston, 2010:50)

4.4 Theories of evidence use

This thesis assesses how actors go about advancing their interests, their influence in politics and the institutions legitimised and authorised to be involved in shaping policy, shedding light on how evidence is generated, negotiated, and used as a resource in the process. Research has shown that evidence has the potential to influence policymaking at each stage of the process, and that different evidence may be required at different stages (Dhaliwal & Tulloch, 2012; Sutcliffe & Court, 2005). Research on evidence use has tended to focus on evaluations as evidence, and on whether such studies are used in policy processes; it has also found that evaluations are used in different ways. Evaluation use is defined as the application of evaluation results and processes (Fleischer & Christine, 2009), or as any application of evaluation processes, products or findings to produce an effect (Cousins & Simon, 1996; Hojlund, 2015; Nutley et al., 2019). Five uses of evaluations are discussed in the literature: the first three relate primarily to instrumental use, in which decision-makers use the findings to modify the object under evaluation in some way (Shulha & Cousins, 1997; Greene, 1988; Rich, 1977; cited in Fleischer & Christine, 2009); conceptual use to help staff understand their programme in a new way.

Symbolic use has varying definitions (Leviton & Hughes, 1981; Greene, 1988; Weiss, 1998; Alkin & Taut, 2003); it can be taken to mean the ability to persuade important stakeholders that a programme or organisation values accountability; or to take form when an evaluator is hired to evaluate a programme to legitimise a decision made prior to commissioning the evaluation (Fleischer & Christine, 2009). Owen and Rogers (1999, cited in Hojlund, 2015:55) suggests that symbolic and *legitimising* use are different, with symbolic use the process of conducting an evaluation as a symbolic act to add to the stature of the decision-maker, the programme or the organisation concerned, and legitimising use the use of evaluation findings to legitimise decisions already made and confirm that they are correct.

Process use has been described as a type of evaluation use that explains the cognitive, behavioural, programme and organisational changes that result from engaging in the evaluation process and learning to think evaluatively (Patton, 2003:230). Current debate, however, does not consider process use as a type of use at all but rather as a form of knowledge acquisition in itself. Research has shown that learning is made up of two interacting components; knowledge acquisition and accumulation, and behaviour acquisition and modification (Fleischer & Christine, 2009).

Evaluation process, as another domain of use, is related to behaviour acquisition and modification and can occur either instrumentally or conceptually. In comparison to process use, *findings* use relates to knowledge acquisition and accumulation as a result of the evaluation. The use of evaluation findings can be instrumental, conceptual or symbolic/legitimising.

Strategic evaluation use is another type of evaluation use discussed in the literature, differentiated from symbolic and other forms of use in that it is not intended to secure organisational or programme legitimacy. Strategic use is intended for advocacy in relation to decision-making or policymaking (Weiss, 1992; Pröpper, 1987: cited in van der Knapp, 1995:211). While in legitimising evaluation use, the evaluating organisation seeks to justify the programme or policy being evaluated, strategic evaluation use holds that an evaluation system involves other actors with an interest in using the evaluation to back the legitimacy of their own position and political arguments. In addition to instrumental, conceptual, legitimising, and symbolic uses, the evaluation literature also proposes the use of evaluation as a source of information, which usually takes place before other forms of use (Alkin & Taut, 2003).

In keeping with Fleischer and Christine's (2009) position on evaluation use, to assess the influence of evidence in the development of Kenya's National Curriculum Policy this study considers evaluation use as the use of evaluation findings or evaluation process in policymaking. There is little in the literature on the possible links between instrumental use, conceptual process use and findings use (ibid). The present research attempts to assess these potential links by reviewing interviewees' perceptions of the extent to which evidence was used in the development of the National Curriculum Policy. The types of use applied to assess evidence use in this research are outlined in *Table 4.1:*

Table 4.1: The ten evaluation use types

Process uses Refers to evaluation use during the process of the evaluation and usually involves the preliminary findings	*Findings* uses Use of evidence after the generation of evidence has ended. Usually refers to the use of the findings and recommendations of a report.
Instrumental: evidence is used to change the organisation or program. Conceptual: the process of evaluation is used to create new conceptual knowledge. Symbolic: use to legitimise the organisation responsible for generating the evidence. Information: The evaluation is used to acquire information. Strategic: evidence generated is used for advocacy.	Instrumental: evidence findings are used to change the organisation or program. Conceptual: process of evaluation is used to create new conceptual knowledge. Legitimising: evidence is used to legitimise the programme or policy. Information: The evaluation is used to acquire information. Strategic: evidence generated is used for advocacy.

Source: (Hojlund, 2015:166)

4.5. Integrated policy network-evidence use model

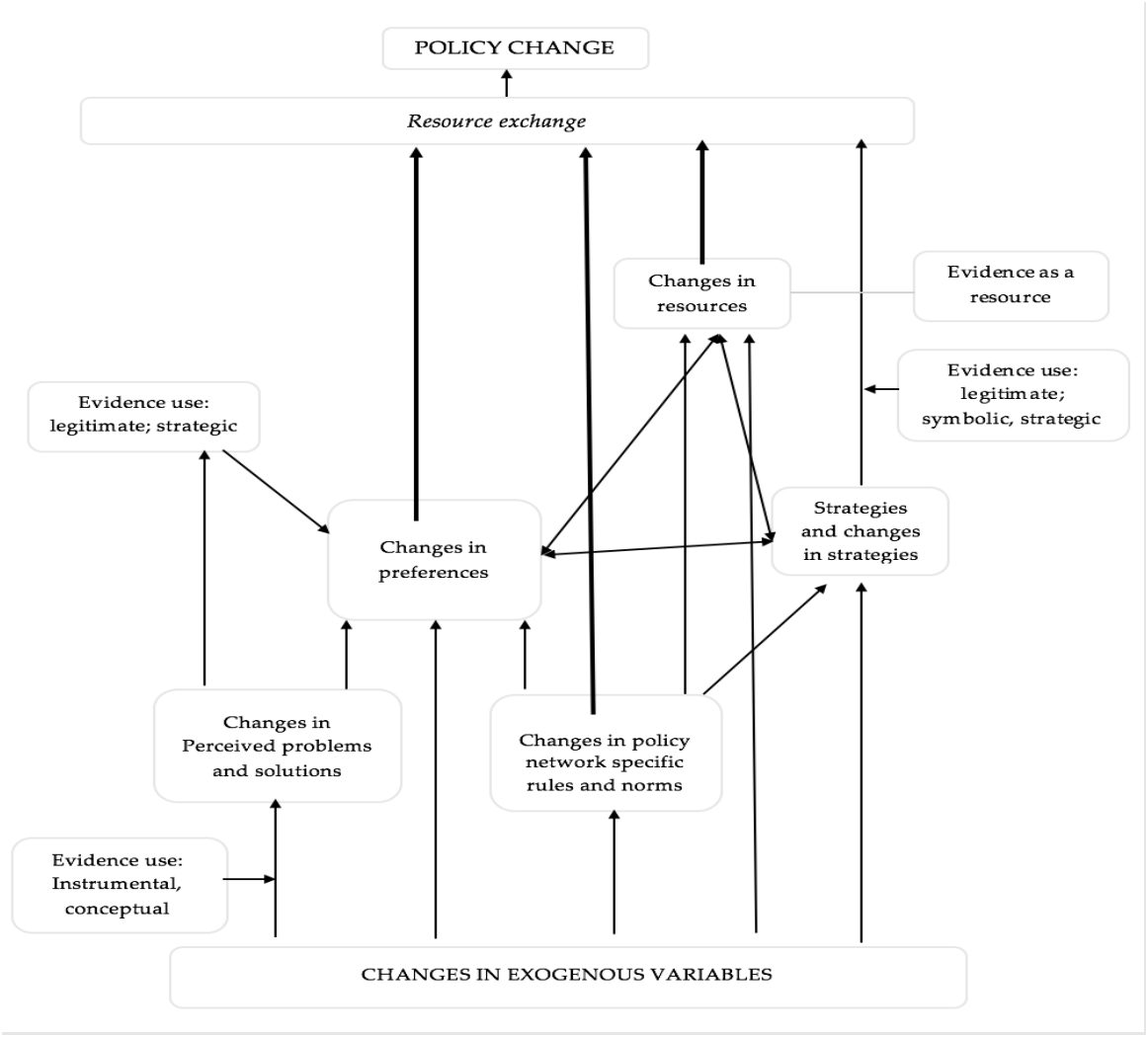
This research applies evaluation-use theory to widen the scope beyond simply focusing on evidence use in the development of Kenya's National Curriculum Policy (NCP). It considers as evidence not just findings and process but also knowledge acquired through research on education programmes, learner-centred approaches, education policy changes and the implementation of the competency-based curriculum in Africa, as discussed in the literature review. I focus on the instrumental, conceptual, symbolic, legitimising, strategic and information uses of evaluation evidence by integrating these types of use into policy network theory, where I propose that evidence use is a resource that can be exchanged between network actors. I propose that evidence applies to information as a resource posited in policy network theory, as discussed in Chapter 4.2, which can be used by actors and exchanged for policy amendments and to influence policy decisions by changing the way in which resources are exchanged by facilitating policy learning, because evidence can change actors' policy preferences.

I apply the typologies of evidence use as they relate to strategies and changes to strategies to influence resource exchange for policy change; changes in exogenous variables; changes in

perceived problems and solutions; and changes in policy actors' policy preferences. Figure 4.2. illustrates the integration of evidence-use theories in the policy network model of policy change used for this research. In integrating evidence use into the policy network model of policy change, changes in exogenous variables lead to instrumental use by policy actors and inform the changes in their perceptions of problems and their solutions. I argue, for instance, that global evidence on the importance of using technology in education could lead to instrumental evidence use followed by changes to the perception of problems and solutions. This may lead to changes in the way development partners conceptualise development programmes globally, and the evidence to support their perceived problems and solutions may then be used in legitimate and strategic ways to influence changes to national policy preferences. I propose that in the integrated model evidence can be used by policy actors as a strategy or as part of strategy change. Used in this way, evidence may be employed as an enabling resource in legitimate, symbolic and strategic ways of communicating policy preferences, strategies and changes to strategies, to influence the deployment of resources, threats and promises, and in ways that support the communication of policy preferences and deployment of resources. In this way, for instance, evidence may be used

strategically to communicate policy preferences and the associated argumentation, and to advocate for political support from opposition groups.

Figure 4.2: Integrated policy network-evidence use model



Source: (Mugo, 2022)

The integrated policy network model of evidence use in policy change is used to address the overall research question: What was the role of evidence in the development of the National Curriculum Policy in Kenya?

4.6. Limitations of policy network theory in evidence-use research

One of the main gaps in the present application of policy network theory is due to most current research focusing on developed states and policy networks in general policymaking, and not specifically addressing the education sector. However, some scholars, including Exley, Braun and Ball (2011), Ball (2012, 2017) and Ball and Junemann (2012) have attempted to engage in global education policy mapping using policy network theory by including developing countries in their research on how global education policy has travelled and been reproduced and reconceptualised in individual countries. The present research contributes to knowledge about the use of policy network theory to track education policymaking in African states such as Kenya.

Another challenge of policy network analysis is its impact on understanding policy processes. There has been debate on whether networks matter as a significant means of increasing

understanding, predicting and explaining policy outcomes, or whether the methodology is more descriptive and limited in analytic power (Dowding, 1995). Dowding (ibid) argues that the links between subsystem structures and policy outcomes is difficult to prove. Compston (2009) finds that although policy network theory has been used to explain policymaking, its power to explain policy change is limited, and it is better at explaining policy stability. Policy network theory is thought suitable for classifying relationships between local groups and government where group interest was thought to be achieved after an exchange of information between the two. Policy network theory, however, is argued to be suitable for assessing the implementation and effects of a policy by analysing resource exchanges among relevant actors and establishing the network's structure (Compton, 2009).

Policy network theory has often been used descriptively to reveal which actors are involved in policymaking. To do this, Fritz, Kaiser and Levy (2009) argue that it is important to map the institutions and stakeholders as well as analysing informal institutions involved. They note that mapping institutions provides clear understanding of the setting in which stakeholders operate and how this shapes their interests and incentives. Mapping allows the identification of

counterparts in areas of new, expanding operations in a sector and the identification of potential allies for change (Fritz et al., 2009). The policy network analysis approach can be more useful with a move away from the descriptions and classification of policy networks to show how the composition of political systems affects policy outcomes (Dowding; 1995, Howlett, 2002). In an attempt to both describe the policy network and move beyond the purely descriptive aspect of policy network analysis, this research illustrates and describes the organisational networks and stakeholders present for the development of the NCP and seeks to identify what other elements and factors relating to the interactions between network members influenced the policy change. Illustrating the network actors helps to answer the second research sub-question: Who are the stakeholders shaping or influencing education policy development in the context of competency-based education in Kenya? This research posits that the factors influencing policymaking, such as globalisation, economic development, regional harmonisation and neo-liberal forces, as discussed in Chapter 3's literature review, relate to actor and organisational interests, and argues that these interests determine different actors' policy choices, as explained by policy network theory. This helps to answer the first research sub-question: What factors influence education

policy development in the context of the National Curriculum Policy in Kenya? Integrating Compston's (2009) policy network model will help to answer the overall question guiding this thesis: What was the role of evidence in the policy development of the competency-based education system in Kenya?

4.7. Summary

This discussion has shown how policy network theory is used in this research to assess how education policies are developed, and the influence of evidence in this process. Policy network theory, the overarching framework used in this study, allows assessment of the factors influencing education policymaking in Kenya and sets the foundation not only for the identification of the actors working in the education policy community but also, using descriptive SNA, qualitative interviews and document analysis, for the specification of the relationships between different actors and how resources are exchanged to further groups' interests.

Policy network theory provides a model for assessing how changes in resource exchange are influenced by changes in network members' resources, preferences, and strategies, as well as network-specific rules and norms and then changes in policy. Changes in exogenous factors have also been shown to influence the ways in which policy actors 'perceived policy problems and solutions, preferred policies, and strategies for resource exchange change.

Policy network theory provides a way of assessing evidence use and supports the assessment of the contextual factors and stakeholder interests in policymaking. Policy network and evaluation-

use theories are integrated in this study to assess evidence as a resource in policy networks, and the use of evidence as a way of influencing perceived problems and solutions and changing policy preferences and the nature of resource exchange between the policy actors.

Next, the factors affecting policy change are assessed through the lens of the integrated policy network model of evidence use, showing the influence of factors such as politics, global and regional interests, and national policies. The processes involved in the different stakeholders' evidence exchange and negotiations to meet their varying interests are shown, and the enablers and barriers to evidence use are discussed. By taking an interdisciplinary approach using policy network theory this research contributes to knowledge about evidence use in policymaking and specifically education policymaking, and the application of network theory to the assessment of education policy.

Chapter 5. Methodology

5.1. Introduction

This chapter gives an overview of the research approach and sets out the empirical work of the thesis. The methodology selected aims to reflect the research project's intention to examine what factors influence education policy development and the extent to which evidence is used in policy making. The overall methodology takes a case-study approach with a concurrent mixed-method design. Qualitative methods are employed to assess the factors that influence education policy development, and the extent to which evidence is used, and descriptive quantitative social network analysis is applied to assess the stakeholders that influence education policy development in Kenya

This chapter begins by outlining the case-study approach used. Section 5.2 discusses the research paradigm; section 5.3 outlines the mixed-method design in more detail; section 5.4 discusses the research setting, and section 5.5, the sampling strategy, the sample selected that took part in the research, and the sample that was selected but declined to participate. Section 5.6 outlines the

methodological considerations employed for the qualitative strand, including how the data was collected via interviews and how it was analysed thematically, the documents selected and analysed for this research and how data is triangulated for analysis, and section 5.7 presents the collection and analysis of the descriptive quantitative data using social network analysis methods. Section 5.8 goes on to discuss the ethical considerations, and 5.9 brings the chapter to a conclusion.

5.2. Research paradigm

This research uses a mixed-method research paradigm. The research paradigm or the researcher's worldview is the set of ideas that informs the researcher's decisions about the methodology to be used and how the data will be interpreted. It specifies shared understandings of conducting research and is informed by four philosophical elements: epistemology, ontology, methodology and axiology. Epistemology describes how knowledge is formed; ontology describes the nature of reality; the methodology is the processes involved in conducting the research, and axiology reflects ethical issues and research quality (Creswell, 2009).

These four sets of shared understanding are important for this research investigating the process of education policy development through document analysis and stakeholder responses. A pragmatic mixed research paradigm has been selected rather than qualitative or quantitative methods alone. Pragmatism supports mixed or multiple methods in social research (Denzin, 2012). In this research, qualitative and quantitative approaches are used concurrently for the purposes of merging the results to explore the deeper and broader factors that influence education policy development, the extent to which evidence is used in such development, and the stakeholders that form part of the policy community in Kenya. The qualitative part of the study was the primary method used, supporting the exploration into and deeper understanding of the stakeholders' responses and documents analysed, while the quantitative research provided the opportunity to descriptively highlight the education policy network involved in the establishment of CBC in Kenya.

The emphasis on qualitative research in mixed methods designs is not limited to experimental studies. An "exploratory sequential" design is one type of mixed methods design in which mixed methods research begins with a qualitative arm which frequently forms the direction of the entire

study (Creswell et al., 2003). In this design, qualitative research, such as in-depth case studies, exploratory interviews or focus groups, or detailed observations of a setting, is followed by a quantitative component (ibid). The weighting of this research relies more on the qualitative strand, with descriptive quantitative analysis used to answer the specific aspect of the research question relating the stakeholders that make up the policy community in Kenya. Whereas the literature includes qualitative research into education policymaking in Kenya, the quantitative social network analysis undertaken in this study has not been used before to assess Kenya's education policy community. Pragmatism was chosen for its flexibility to explore the qualitative and quantitative strands together.

The pragmatic paradigm made it possible to access information that could not be captured using only one approach and allowed for the triangulation of data to verify the information gathered through stakeholder interviews. Triangulation using multiple data source increases the validity of qualitative research and is also used in this research. Triangulation ensures that a qualitative study is not at risk of being accused of being from a single source or investigators' bias (Bowen, 2009). Triangulation is especially important when completing research that includes elite

interviews, such as those with policymakers, to obtain a more complete picture of the situation being investigated (Natow, 2019). This is especially useful when the research area is politically sensitive (ibid).

Elites are described as individuals who hold or have held a powerful position that has provided them with unique knowledge from a perspective of privilege (Morse, 2019; Natow, 2020; Petkov & Kaoullas, 2016). Elites are viewed as either specific stakeholders in society who are worth studying on their own or as the custodians of insider information that can support in building causal narratives or write oral histories (Morse, 2019). They can represent many different spheres of life including business, politics and other key institutions. It is argued that for elites, power is exercised and not necessarily possessed and it can therefore pass through numerous individuals (Mason-Bish, 2019). This is especially important when assessing policy where the elites interviewed may change their roles and no longer have influence over the policy under discussion (ibid).

Interviews with elites such as the policymakers in this research, have been found to bias findings in that self-serving statements, misinterpretations or elusiveness is often experienced. Hence,

using multiple sources of information through triangulation can help to reduce bias by corroborating findings and providing additional information except from one source (Natow, 2019). Therefore, while completing research analysis, data can be triangulated in a variety of ways. Data can be triangulated by gathering information from different time periods, locations or perspectives (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Natow, 2019). I used data triangulation in this research to reduce the bias that can be common when interviewing policy actors around a politically contentious issue such as the development of the NCP in Kenya.

One of the ways to triangulate data which I employ in this research, is interviewing people who have different viewpoints and have varying level of power. I interviewed policy actors who had been directly involved in the Odhiambo Task Force in 2011 as discussed in Chapter 2, in the development of the National Curriculum Policy in 2015 and in 2018, policy actors who are not directly involved in policy development such as education activists and actors who were publicly opposed to curriculum reforms such as teacher unions. I also used multiple data sources including the analysis of documents which were used to complement the interview data, to gain a wider understanding of the process that went into the development of the NCP.

5.3. Research design: A mixed-method case study

The case-study has historically been the preferred method for research into evidence use. Assessing the use of evidence is arguably difficult, because researchers' access to organisations in the field of evaluation use is often limited, hindering the gathering of quantifiable data from them. Assessing evidence use is more qualitative than quantitative, relying on the researcher or interviewees' judgement, and quantification is often difficult (Cousins, 1996, 2003).

Research has shown that using more than one research design can provide theoretical frameworks that explore more than one thing (Walton et al., 2020). Using an intersecting mixed-method and case-study approach is useful for exploring the underpinnings of both the policy network theory and the theories on evidence use and their applicability to answering the research questions. Walton et al. (2020) state that defining the use of the case study and mixed method designs as intersecting suggests that both approaches are equally employed in a study. An intersecting framework brings the two methodological approaches together and applies them both to a single case (ibid).

Employed on its own, case-study research allows the researcher to focus on real-life situations and assess them directly as they unfold. Case-study research also allows for in-depth investigation of different theories. Prior development of the theoretical propositions that will guide the data collection and analysis is useful, as case studies often result in many different variables (Yin, 1994). The case-study design is suited to the aims of this thesis, as it supports analysis of the process that went into developing Kenya's National Curriculum Policy leading to the implementation of the CBC in 2018. By supporting the investigation of different theories in depth, and given the theoretical underpinnings of this research, the case-study design facilitates analysis of the variables that influenced Kenya's policymaking process.

The case study is described as a stable, bounded system that operates in a coherent and systematic way and whose features can be observed and defined in time and space (Boblin et al., 2013; Stake, 2005). Yin (2003) notes that a case study is an empirical investigation assessing a contemporary phenomenon in its real-life context, and that case studies can investigate the complexity of cases and their environments, allowing the assessment of complex social occurrences as well as the complex contexts in which they take place. Flyvbjerg (2006) adds that case studies are context-

dependent and provide tangible understandings of social phenomena and all their associated complexities.

In line with Stake (2005), this research views the case study as a stable system with features that can be defined in space and time. The case-study approach is used here to assess not only the social phenomenon researched but also the external context influencing the social area under investigation. To answer the first research questions about the factors that influence education policy development, the stakeholders in the policy community and the enablers and barriers to evidence use in policymaking, the case study is used in an explanatory way. These research questions focus on different factors that influence policymaking and evidence use, describing it while trying to explain it. The case-study design is useful for defining the focus of this research and understanding the contextual setting and complexities that went into developing the National Curriculum Policy discussed in Chapter 2.

Stake (2005) identifies three types of case study; intrinsic, instrumental and collective. The intrinsic case study involves the study of an object itself to better understand it; the instrumental case study involves assessing an instance of a case study instrumentally to shed light on the area

under study. The collective case study investigates multiple cases to assess social phenomenon. This research employs an intrinsic case study to reveal the process of the development of the National Curriculum Policy and the influence of evidence in this development.

Case studies are strong on increasing understanding of the case itself and how it relates to its environment and are well-suited to assessing complexities to answer 'how' and why' questions (Flyvbjerg, 2006). This design can also lead to deep knowledge of a specific case and all its features, for instance its internal processes and institutions. Case studies are not intended to gather generalisable knowledge, nor to represent a sample; they are generalisable to theoretical propositions and not to populations (ibid). While external validity for the case study is not high, it has strong internal validity (Flyvbjerg, 2006). The construct or conceptual validity of case studies has been found to be high, and they are considered a good way to test social science concepts because they go into the chosen phenomenon in depth (Becker & Bryman, 2012; Flyvbjerg, 2006). Hojlund (2015) highlights another important feature of case studies: their ecological validity. Ecological validity allows the research design to be applied to the real world and exists if the data subjects and practitioners find the research findings relevant and reliable.

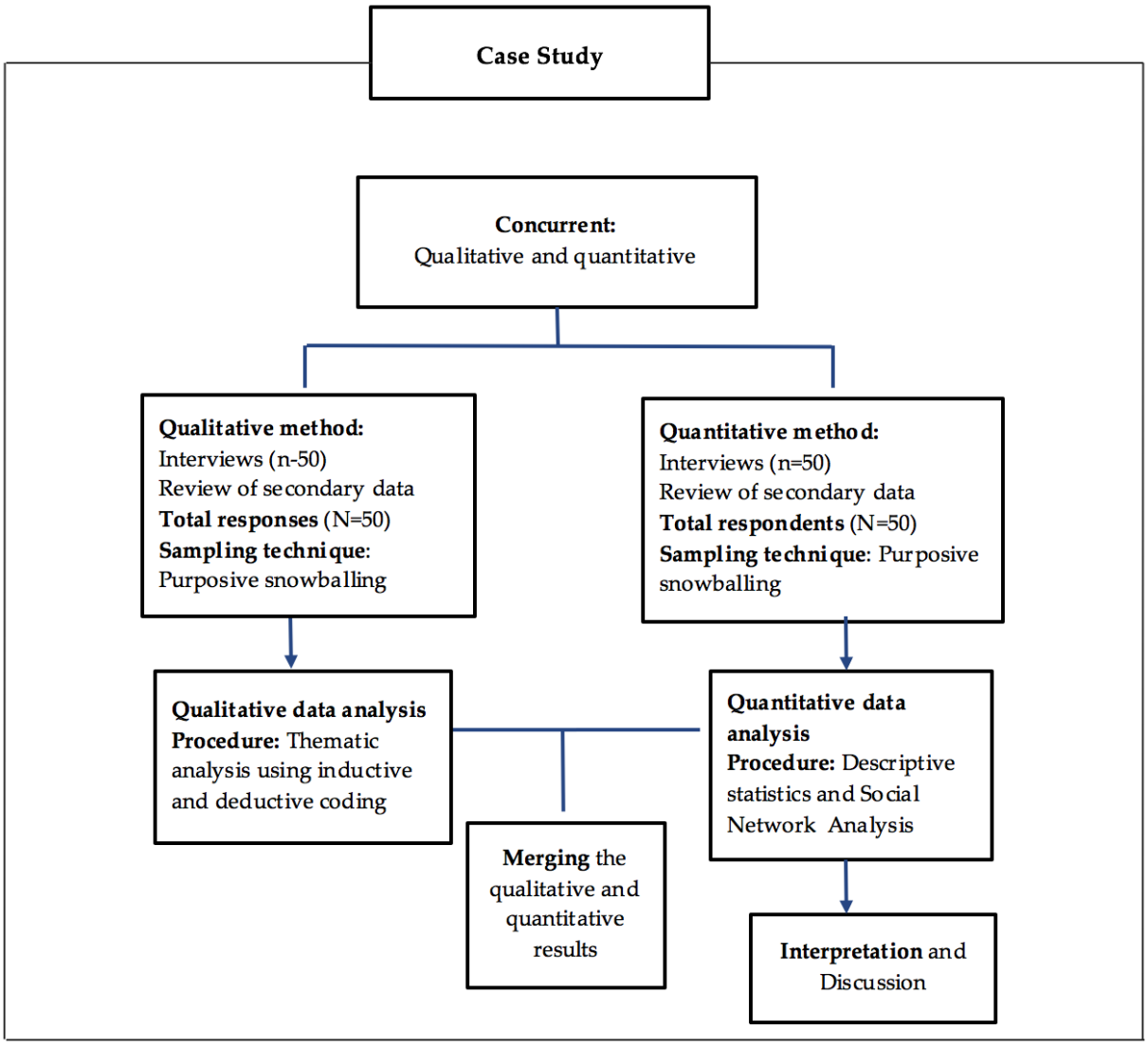
Ecological validity is important in the present research as it relies heavily on data from education policymakers in Kenya. While case-study research can be carried out using both quantitative and qualitative methods, it has historically been viewed as a qualitative approach (Creswell, 2009).

As a stand-alone research approach, a mixed-method design relates not only to how the data is collected but also to the use of multiple perspectives and theories to understand a particular phenomenon (Johnson & Christensen, 2019). There are different types of mixed-method design, with three commonly used in education research: convergent parallel, explanatory, and exploratory sequential design (Suleiman, 2020). Creswell (2009) states that convergence design, sequential design and instrument-building mixed methods have been used in education policy. Mixed-method approaches used in the study of evaluations have primarily involved the use of triangulation, integrated, embedded and expansion (Greene & Caracelli, 1997).

As mentioned, the concurrent mixed-method design intersects with the case-study approach in this research. With the concurrent mixed-methods design, data is collected and analysed at the same time, with either the qualitative or quantitative method being secondary to the other. Using this combined approach as illustrated in Figure 5.1, the qualitative aspects of the study are

the primary methodology used, with the quantitative methods which are descriptive in a secondary role. Prioritisation of qualitative methods will allow me to explore not only the factors that influence education policy-development processes but also the influence of evaluations in relation to evidence-based policymaking, an area that has yet to be researched in relation to education policy development in Kenya. An in-depth qualitative approach also provided description of the contextual setting of evaluation use in policy development in Kenya and an explanation of the underlying determinants of the process. The quantitative study supports specification of the policy community in Kenya through a descriptive analysis of social networks.

Figure 5.1: Mixed methods used



5.4. Research settings

This research was conducted between 2019 and 2020, when MoE began to roll out the CBC curriculum countrywide. During this period community dialogues were held, bringing together different stakeholders to discuss education reform in Kenya. The dialogues were held systematically through MoE and also through civil society organisations that brought different education activists together.

Data collection for the study was completed between December 2019 and June of 2020 and stakeholders representing different organisations within the education policy community participated in this study. The main setting for the interviews was the offices of the stakeholders, including those of MoE, KICD, KNUT and KUPPET. However, COVID-19 restrictions at the time of data collection meant that some of the interviews had to be conducted online. All the respondents were based in Nairobi and were selected based on the organisations that they represented, which were themselves selected based on respondents' views of which stakeholders make up the policy community in Kenya and official KICD documentation outlining which

mandatory stakeholders should be included in the development of Kenya's curriculum (KICD Act, 2013:13).

The unit of analysis for this research is organisations and individuals, clustered into groups according to type. Important stakeholders in the process leading to curriculum change in Kenya including those involved in the 2009 Summative Evaluation of Education, the Douglas Odhiambo Task Force, the 2014 National Technical Committee on Curriculum Reform, and the drafting of the National Curriculum Policy in 2015, all discussed in Chapter 2, were sampled, as were well-known education activists in Kenya, identified by the researcher at education community dialogues in 2019.

5.5. Sampling strategy and procedure

A two-stage non-probability purposive sampling technique was used, first purposely identifying organisations to be included in the research, and then applying the snowball sampling approach. Based on the literature, key informants were identified and drawn from networks considered specifically relevant to the policy process (Perkin et al., 2005). These networks included the policy

community of actors within and outside government who are highlighted integrated with policy processes. Stakeholders in global public policy networks, the epistemic community, knowledge networks such as academic bodies, communities of practice, and advocacy networks were also included, as were stakeholders from private-public policy networks such as civil and business networks also playing a part in policy communities (Perkin & Court, 2005). In the first stage, secondary data, including the 2013 KICD Act, the Basic Curriculum Framework, and the Task Force report on the realignment of the education sector to the constitution of Kenya, which helped to identify organisations and stakeholders to be included in the sample, were reviewed (Odhiambo Commission Report, 2012). I also identified key stakeholders and organisations by reviewing media reports and following the publicised key discussions on curriculum reforms. This first stage helped to identify 13 organisations and stakeholder groups for inclusion in the sample, as presented in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1: Interviewee Groups

Stakeholder	**Frequency**
Government stakeholders	1
Ex-government stakeholders	1
Civil society organisations	1
Education activists	1
Teachers' unions	1
Donor organisations	1
Kenya Secondary Schools Heads Association	1
Publisher associations	1
United Nations/International non-governmental organisations	1
Universities	1
Kenya Private Sector Alliance	1
Media	1
Teacher training college representative	1
Total	13

Once the organisations were identified, specific units within them were selected for inclusion in the study; for example, the Kenya Private Sector Alliance has 20 sector boards, among which the education sector board was identified for this research. In the government, the Ministry of Education, Ministry of ICT, KICD, the Centre for Mathematics, Science and Technology in Education (CEMASTEA), KNEC, HELB and the Parliamentary Committee on Education were among the organisations sampled. Specified individuals were identified within each organisation to be approached for interview in the second stage of sampling.

In the second sampling stage the snowballing technique was used to identify key informants. Snowball sampling is a form of purposeful sampling that involves locating a few key players who meet the criteria established for participation in the study. In these early key participants' interviews they are asked to refer other potential respondents for interview. As new participants are identified the snowball gets bigger and provides richer information (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Snowball sampling provides a sequence with which to approach all those nominated until saturation is reached. It is limited, however, in that the sample is biased by the slant of the stakeholders originally approached, and there is not always time to complete the rolling (ibid),

and therefore a predetermined sampling frame indicating possible samples to be included is also useful.

The initial point of contact for the research, drawn from the researcher's own network, helped to identify a key education advisor working very closely on the education reforms at the time of data collection. This one point of contact provided a list of potential names and organisations for inclusion in the research, from which a log listing possible individuals to be contacted and possible organisations to include was created. The log made it easier to request interviewees' support to access their networks within the potential organisations identified.

Interviewees were also selected not only based on their involvement in Kenya's 2012–2019 education reforms but also if they represented the wider education community and had knowledge of education policy development in the context of the CBC. It was expected that the stakeholders involved would have experience and knowledge of the CBC's development process as well as the processes of wider education policymaking in Kenya. Importantly, some individuals were selected not based on their organisational affiliation but because they had been part of the reform process and had moved to another organisation or retired.

Reaching interviewees was done through multiple channels including introductions from interviewees, emails sent by the researcher requesting an audience with the stakeholder and providing information about the research, telephone calls and direct messages sent via professional Social Media platforms. A total of 90 stakeholders, were identified for interview using the methods outlined above and, more than 1 stakeholder was identified within some organisations and participation was open for all who agreed to participate within the same organisation. This list of stakeholders, shown in Table 5.2., was then logged and categorised specifying type of organisation, number of respondents who were approached in this research and the number of respondents who did not participate.

Table 5.2: Recruitment by type of stakeholder

Organisation Type	**No. of individuals contacted**	**No. of individuals who accepted**	**No. of individuals who declined**	**No. of Non-respondents**
Civil Society	6	4	0	2
Donor Organisation	2	2	0	2
Education Activist	8	5	0	3
Government	36	24	2	10
INGO	2	1	0	1
Media	2	1	0	1
Private sector association	1	1	0	0
Publishers	3	1	0	2
Religious Organisations	2	0	1	1

School Association	5	1	1	3
Technical Assistant	3	0	0	1
Trade Union	8	4	0	4
UN Agency	3	2	1	0
University	9	4	0	5
Total	90 (100%)	50 (55.5%)	5 (5.6%)	35 (38.9%)

Out of the 90 stakeholders identified for this research, 55% agreed to participate. The largest number of respondents were from government who accounted for 40% of the sample and who included cross-ministerial and Parliamentary stakeholders as specified in Appendix F. Of the respondents: 40% were female and 60% were male; 74% were senior-level staff, 16% were mid-senior level and 10% were retired. Of the 40 stakeholders that did not participate, 5.6% were reached and responded to either an email or telephone call but declined to participate and 38.9% did not respond.

I further categorised stakeholders as specified in Table 5.3, into whether they had been directly or indirectly involved with the curriculum reform process. As has been mentioned earlier, it was important to include stakeholders with direct involvement with the curriculum reform process as well as those not directly involved but who make up the wider education policy community. Of the stakeholders who participated in this research, 54% had direct involvement with the curriculum reform process whereas 46% were not directly involved but form part of the education policy community and provided valuable contextual information on the factors that influence education policymaking in Kenya.

Table 5.3: Respondent involvement with curriculum reforms

Involvement with CBC	**Interviewed**	**Not interviewed**	**Total**
Direct	28 (56%)	14 (35%)	41 (45.5%)
Indirect	22 (44%)	26 (65%)	49 (54.4%)
Total	50 (100%)	40 (100%)	90 (100%)

Numerous attempts were made to reach the remaining 40 stakeholders that did not participate and especially those with who had been identified as having direct involvement in the curriculum reform process and been particularly influential in the process. I identified 14 stakeholders that would have been important to speak to including: 1 UNICEF stakeholder; 2 KICD Directors; 3 Independent Consultants that provided technical assistance to the reform process; the Chairperson of the Parliamentary Education Committee; 2 Directors at MoE; General Secretary, National Council of Churches of Kenya; 2 Civil Society Stakeholders; 1 Stakeholder from Council of Catholic Priests; the Chairperson, Taskforce for Effective Curriculum Reforms Implementation.

Unfortunately, attempts to reach these stakeholders through emails, repeated telephone conversations and direct introductions were unsuccessful. The use of intermediaries to vouch for the credibility of the researcher and to overcome respondent resistance specifically with elite interviews, has been shown to increase access, trust and to build rapport (Petkov & Kaoullas, 2016). However, even when using intermediaries that well known to some of the respondents, it was still challenging to gain access.

Notably, one key stakeholder that repeatedly came up as important to education policymaking in Kenya, are religious organisations. Continuous efforts were made to try and interview representatives from religious organisations were unsuccessful, hence findings on the role of religious organisations are reported from the perspectives of other interviewees and mention of their role in secondary documents. The curriculum reform process was a very politicised process and at the time of data collection various stakeholder groups including education activist and trade unions were in opposition of it and this coupled with the COVID-19 pandemic, may have contribute to the reluctance of stakeholders to participate. Appendix G specifies in more detail which stakeholders were reached but did not participate.

Sampling strategy for documents

A purposive sampling strategy was also used for the sampling of documents (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Documents were selected based on how they relate to the objectives of this research and specifically to the 3 sub-research questions; What influences education policy processes within the context of developing competency-based education in Kenya; Who are the stakeholders influencing education policy within the context of competency-based education in Kenya; What

are the enablers and barriers to using evidence for shaping education policy in the context of developing competency-based education in Kenya.

The documents for secondary data analysis were gathered from online web searches and asking key informants after the interview process, to provide any relevant information that would help in answering the research questions. The number of documents to be included in the study could not be determined at the start of the research as what could be included were only those available online and provided by respondents (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

5.6. Qualitative strand

A qualitative approach was used for deeper exploration of the three research subjects; the influence of evidence in policymaking and the enablers of and barriers to evidence use, the factors other than evidence that influence education policy development and the stakeholders who make up the education policy community in education policymaking. Qualitative research views knowledge as 'fluid, dynamic and changing over time and place, and [it] is not appropriate to generalise beyond the people being investigated' (Johnson & Christensen, 2019:67). A semi-structured interview schedule was organised to gather qualitative data from and interact with the various respondents. The qualitative approach provided a good point from which to start to understand Kenya's overall process of education policy development, and an opportunity to understand the many perspectives of the different stakeholders involved in education reform and gain insights into their various experiences and interactions with other stakeholders in the policy community.

5.6.1. Qualitative data collection methods

An interview guide was developed for the semi-structured interviews used to gather feedback around the main research question and the three sub-questions. These face-to-face and virtual interviews were conducted over a four-month period using a semi-structured schedule to guide

the conversations (see Appendix C). The interview schedule used 14 open-ended questions to elicit discussion of the respondents' views on the factors that influence education policy development, the main stakeholders in the education policy community, and the factors that influence evidence use. The design of the interview schedule was informed by the theoretical framework guiding this research and by the conceptual framework. For instance, in policy network theory, resource exchange between network stakeholder's influences policy processes; therefore, the respondents were asked, for instance, what factors influence education policy development processes in Kenya and why. The questions encouraged the interviewees to provide their views based on their own experience of education policy development in Kenya. The interviews were recorded to capture accurate information during the data collection, helping to limit errors during the data analysis.

Data collection of documents

Documents in the form of minutes from meetings, committee reports, task force reports, brochures, letters and speeches, were included in the qualitative strand of the research. Specifically, I sought to gather documents, in the form of evaluation and research reports, that

had contributed to education reforms and to the drafting of the National Curriculum Policy and, documents that would explain the processes that had informed the policymaking process, reports from the different education taskforce and committees and documents that would help to identify the stakeholders in the education policy community in Kenya. A final list of thirty-four documents, detailed in Table 5.4., were included in this research.

Table 5.4: Documents analysed

Type of Report	**Availability**	**Frequency**
Basic Curriculum Framework, 2017	Publicly available	1
Committee report	Private	1
Communication Brief	Private	4
Communication flyer	Private	1
Conference report	Private	1
Evaluation reports	Private	6

Type of Report	Availability	Frequency
Evaluation Reports-Report on the needs assessment of CBC, 2016	Publicly available	1
Letters	Private	3
Meeting agenda	Private	1
Meeting Minutes	Private	1
Policy (NCP, 2015)	Publicly available	1
Policy (NCP revised, 2018)	Publicly available	1
Post-meeting Report	Private	1
Research Report	Private	1
Sector plan report, Basic Education, 2013/2014-2017/2018 Volume 1, 2015	Publicly available	1
Sector plan report, Volume 2: Operational Plan, 2013-2018, 2015	Publicly available	1
Sessional Paper-No. 14 of 2012	Publicly available	1

Type of Report	Availability	Frequency
Speech	Private	6
Task force Report-Realignment of education (Odhiambo Taskforce)	Publicly available	1
Grand Total		34

Most of the documents reviewed (79%) and included in this study are not publicly available and were made available for this research anonymously. Only 7 documents selected for inclusion were found online including: The revised National Curriculum Policy, 2018; The Taskforce report on the re-alignment of the education sector to the constitution (Odhiambo report); Sessional paper No. 14 of 2012 on the realignment of the education sector to the constitution; The Basic education Framework, 2017; Basic Education Sector Plan and Operational Plan; The report on the needs assessment for school curriculum in Kenya, 2016, which was made publicly available after the data collection and analysis phase of this research.

The documents received and included in this research are by no means a comprehensive list of what could have been included as what was included is only what was made available and subjective to what respondents were willing to share. Bowen (2009) notes that research which involves document analysis tends to be limited by what is available and its quality.

Documents for the purposes of research are often difficult to retrieve and access can be deliberately blocked, a challenged faced in this research (Yin, 1994). Biased selectivity was also a challenge, explained as the incomplete collection of documents where only those aligned with corporate policies, procedures and the agenda of the organisation, are made available for research purposes (ibid). For example, only one report was made available from the stakeholder dialogue with parliamentary members, whereas there are many mentions in other texts, that community dialogues were completed with various other stakeholders. However, "when documents are being used for verification or support, even a few can provide an effective means of completing the research" and are strong in that unlike interviews, documents are not reactive (Bowen, 2009:7).

5.6.2. Qualitative data analysis

Qualitative research centres around finding patterns, with the researcher searching for regularities and associations between various aspects of the data. Qualitative data analysis can help to explain such patterns in the data (Bernard & Ryan, 2010). The important part of qualitative analysis is the breaking up of the data – i.e., documents and interview transcripts – to classify it in new ways through coding.

Qualitative data analysis can be inductive or exploratory and may include theoretical or research-based concepts or assumptions about the way classifications are developed (Hojlund, 2015). Bernard and Ryan (2010) states that it is important to build assumptions from tacit knowledge or research and then explore the associations between such assumptions. Miles and Huberman (1994) suggest the following steps for qualitative data analysis: data reduction, data display, and conclusion. The data is first reduced to a point where it can be meaningfully communicated to the reader to account for the analytic processes used; the data is then displayed practically and visually to illustrate patterns any in it that the reader can relate to the findings of the research.

A key asset of qualitative research is its proximity to the observed phenomenon (Hojlund, 2015). Qualitative research is also good for collecting people's meanings, perceptions and assumptions about a given phenomenon. Miles and Huberman (1994) highlight a weakness of qualitative research: the lack of standardised processes in the field limits replicability and therefore reliability, because the methods used for data reduction, classification and analysis are not usually reported (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The data reduction and classification processes are usually chosen subjectively by the researcher.

Data validity and generalisation

Various methods can be used to address this problem of unreliability. For intercoder reliability, multiple coders review the same data, validating the results found with the interviewees or by triangulating the findings with other data analysis and documents (Hojlund, 2015). While this is considered the most effective way of increasing reliability, it requires a significant investment of time and resources. As discussed in Chapter 5.2, triangulation is the primary way in which the validity and reliability of data was ensured for this research.

The generalisability of qualitative research – that is, the extent to which findings are applicable to other populations or samples outside the research (Bernard & Ryan, 2010) – is also limited, as views expressed in narratives, interviews and secondary data such as documents can vary. The strength of case studies, however, is not in their ability to generalise but in their ability to increase understanding of a specific case and in this case, the curriculum reform process in.

It is important to note that I chose to reduce the data gathered from interviews by focusing on the three research questions guiding this study and generating codes as they related to what I wanted to investigate. It was important to do this for various reasons. For one, the politicised nature of the curriculum reform process meant that various respondents brought to the discussion their personal and professional views on policymaking in Kenya which could have resulted in a wider scope than was intended. Secondly, investigating the stakeholders involved in policymaking resulted in numerous themes which could have also widened the scope of this research. For instance, some respondents noted issues on corruption, colonialism and the history of religious organisations in Kenya, areas of which in themselves could form the basis of future research.

Document Analysis

Where data from documents is used in research, these documents should not be assumed to be accurate and complete recordings of what has occurred, and their content should not just be cut and pasted into the research report (Bowen, 2009; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Therefore, to reduce and classify the data from the selected texts, I first established the meaning of each document and how it would contribute to answering the research questions.

To do this, it was important to assess each of the texts that I choose for completeness, whether they completely or partially reported the areas of focus for this research, how representative they are and their credibility (ibid). I established that the texts selected varied in their completeness but together presented a clear picture to answer various aspects of the research. However, that as the texts analysed were all government sources, their representativeness and credibility may be bias to creating a positive view of the government. In light of this, a discourse analysis of the documents would have provided insight into the ways in which language is used in the texts to explain the social context of education policymaking in Kenya (Cardno, 2018). Discourse analysis may have also supported in assessing 'the underlying meanings and power relationships that can

be attributed to the text-in-use' (Cardno, 2018:635). However, for this research, content analysis as opposed to discourse analysis was useful in retrieving the meaning from the documents and comparing the actual text with the feedback from interviews rather than on the use of language within the text. Content analysis was also useful in supporting a deeper understanding of the processes that went into developing the NCP and informing curriculum reforms as well as understanding the context within which policy-making happened (Cardno, 2018). Additionally, by focusing on content analysis, I was able to identify not only the apparent details in the documents but also what was concealed. For instance, the comparison of the 2015 draft NCP with the revised 2018 NCP highlighted differences in the text as discussed in Chapter 2.

The documents analysed supported in bearing witness to past events especially because interviewing participants that were involved first hand in some of the earlier policymaking processes such as the summative evaluation of education or the Odhiambo Task Force was not always possible. I then categorised each document as indicated in Table 5.4, and specified which research area it would contribute to (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

Table 5.5: Document Analysis & Research Area

Type of Report	Factors influencing the development of the NCP	Factors influencing the development of the NCP and the stakeholders in the policy community	Stakeholders involved in policymaking	Factors influencing the development of the NCP and the influence of evidence	Factors influencing the development of the NCP, Stakeholders and the influence of evidence
Committee report					1
Communication Brief				4	
Communication flyer		1			
Conference report		1			
Evaluation report				1	5
Evaluation Reports-Report on the needs assessment of CBC, 2016					1

Letters (to UNICEF and to Religious organisation's)		2	1		
Meeting agenda	1				
Meeting Minutes		1			
Policy (NCP, 2015)					1
Policy (NCP, 2018, revised)					1
Post-meeting report					1
Basic Education Curriculum Framework		1			
Research Report		1			
Sector plan report, Volume 2: Operational Plan, 2013-2018, 2015					1
Sector plan report, Basic Education,					1

2013/2014-2017/2018 Volume 1, 2015					
Sessional Paper-No. 14 of 2012					1
Speech	5	1			
Task force Report-Realignment of education (Odhiambo Taskforce)					1
Total	**6 (18%)**	**8 (23%)**	**1 (3%)**	**5 (15%)**	**14 (41%)**

From the categorisation of documents, I found that the highest number of documents, 41%, supported in answering all 3 research questions, and the rest were instrumental in answering either two or one of the research questions.

5.6.3. Qualitative content analysis

Content analysis was used for the analysis of interviews and documents in this research. Bryman (2012) describes qualitative content analysis as an approach to assessing text that emphasises the role of the researcher in the construction of the meaning of and in texts. Qualitative content analysis is the process of identifying aspects of a text for its explicit and implicit meaning. There are four types of qualitative content analysis: cross-case, thematic, grounded theory, and simple. The grounded theory approach is usually seen as an inductive theory-generating methodology, whereas the other forms are seen as relevant to answering 'how', 'why' and 'when' questions. Content analysis involves numbers and the counting of ordered classifications, categories or data breakdowns, and it quantifies texts. It is useful when it comes to answering questions about existing theoretical constructs. Qualitative content analysis is also used for the qualitative interpretation of text with quantitative elements.

Qualitative content analysis can reduce large amounts of qualitative data to manageable categories that can be analysed quantitatively. Categories emerge from the data and on

recognising the importance of understanding the meaning of the context in which the item being analysed, and the categories derived from it appeared (Mayring, 2000). This method of analysis is a four-step process: first, the data is reduced and categorised into meaningful units; second, patterns are identified in the text; third, the results are verified against other explanations, contradictions or outliers in the data; and lastly, the data is displayed to provide a breakdown of the researcher's categories and interpretations (Mayring, 2000).

Mayring (ibid) stresses the structuring of qualitative content analysis, arguing that in terms of classification and categorisation it allows for quantification of the data. Categorisation and classification can be done deductively using an existing theory, where the analysis in classifying the data is evaluated, altered and the text recorded. In inductive qualitative content analysis, the categories and classifications are generated not from existing theoretical assumptions but as they emerge from the text under analysis (ibid).

The principles used to analyse the interview data collected from the 50 respondents and from the thirty-four documents selected are based on qualitative content analysis, coding and analysing the data using ATLAS Ti, a data-management tool for the organisation and analysis of qualitative

data. The interviews were analysed with a view of the Policy Networks Theory which is the existing theoretical frameworks used in this research alongside the theories on evidence use discussed in Chapter 4, and through a policy network theory lens, as well as the conceptual framework of evidence use described in the literature.

The qualitative data analysis began in this study with validating the accuracy of the gathered information, transcribing the data, reading through all the data transcripts and then coding the data using Atlas.ti. The coding process began with the analysis of six randomly selected interviews, which allowed initial identification of themes emerging from the data and the development of the codebook. These six interviews were then categorised into stakeholder groups; i.e., Ministry of Education, civil society, trade union, Teacher Service Commission, etc. Some of the interview categories included more than one interview; in others, such as publishers, the media and Teacher Training Colleges, there was only one interview. Categorisation by stakeholder group allowed triangulation of what one group said compared to another. An initial list of 80 codes was generated using inductive and deductive coding. Based on this initial code

list, coding was completed for the rest of the 44 interviews, adding additional codes inductively where necessary.

After, I had completed the coding of interviews, I applied the generated codes to the analysis of documents, using the same content analysis methods. I used the documents to look for similarities and differences within the different documents and to compare with findings from the interviews. I also used documents to track changes and developments and to identify changes in the curriculum reform process. The analysis of documents also supported in idenitifying the recurrent themes associated with the factors that led to the development of the NCP and the curriculum reforms. Overall, findings from the interviews were triangulated with each other as well as with documentary data.

The quantitative data was coded concurrently with the qualitative coding process, with a final total of 329 codes. The codes generated not only addressed themes relating to factors influencing policy development and evidence use but also captured themes relating to stakeholder relationships. For instance, I asked respondents to name the stakeholders they worked with within and outside their department. The Deputy Director of Policy at the Ministry of Education,

for example, listed the stakeholders with which the department works closely both in the Ministry of Education itself and externally, e.g. donor organisations. These specific codes were listed as 'Ministry of Education Actor Relationship' (e.g. MoEActorRelat_UNESCO). The same process was repeated for all the interviews, and this provided a significant number of codes for stakeholders in Kenya's policy community network. Codes were also created for stakeholders mentioned as being directly involved in Kenya's education reform process; for example, two ex-ministry interviewees had been directly involved in the policy change for the new education system, and were able to tell me which other stakeholders had been involved. I therefore created another set of codes named 'Competency Based Curriculum Stakeholders Involved' (CBCStakeholderInvoved_GPE). This allowed me to generate codes for stakeholders in Kenya's education policy community who were directly involved in the education reform.

I then categorised the codes into code groups, which helped to organise the codes and identify the general high-level theme of the set of codes (see Appendix H). A total of 39 code groups were developed containing 329 codes, some of which relate to more than one code group. Atlas.ti allows the generation of code hierarchies and relationships; grouping the codes allowed me to

categorise them for the analysis and discussion, and to discuss similar themes alongside each other.

5.7. Quantitative strand

Social science research has evolved from assessing whether individual characteristics and outcomes occur more often in groups to assessing the interdependence of individuals and the importance of relationships to explain social phenomena (Thompson, 2004). The actions of social actors such as policymakers have been found to be influenced by how they are socialised and the fact that they share 'meanings, purposes, knowledge, understandings, identities and conventions' with the people with whom they interact (Crossley, 2010:1,7). Social network analysis (SNA) aids understanding of these patterns of interaction (Borgatti et al., 2009; Borgatti & Foster, 2003; Scott & Carrington, 2011).

In Social Networks Analysis (SNA), these patterns and interactions form networks defined as a 'set of socially relevant nodes connected by one or more relations,' where the nodes are individuals or organisations (Marin & Wellman, 2011:2). SNA provides a theoretical perspective

as well as a set of techniques with which to consider the complexity of social interactions and the interdependence of their actors (Marin & Wellman, 2011). The key feature of SNA and what makes it different from other methods of research is the explanation of actors' behaviours in relation to their relationships. The aim of SNA is to analyse relationships, information and/or resource flows among people, organisations, and political entities, and the ways in which these connections affect behaviour (Borgatti et al., 2009).

From a network point of view, modern political decision-making cannot be adequately understood from an exclusive focus on formal political-institutional arrangements (Christopoulos, 2006, 2008). Policies are increasingly formulated in informal political infrastructures outside conventional channels such as legislative, executive and administrative organisations. Contemporary policy processes emerge from complex actor constellations and resource interdependencies, and decisions are often made in a highly decentralised and informal manner (ibid). According to Perkin and Court (2005), social network analysis can help to identify the central individuals, teams and units in policymaking; information breakdowns; bottlenecks;

isolated individuals; and opportunities to increase knowledge flows across functional and organisational boundaries.

SNA can also help to identify where the efficiency and effectiveness of existing formal communication channels need strengthening; raise awareness of the importance of informal networks and how to increase organisational performance; leverage peer support; highlight ways of improving innovation and learning and of refining strategies between network members (Perkin & Court, 2005).

Because of the complexity of education policy development in Kenya and the involvement of a variety of stakeholders in policymaking, development of the country's CBC is suited to the application of SNA, which could provide deeper understanding of the stakeholders' engagement in the development of education policies. SNA has previously been employed to study decision-making, actors and processes in Kenya, and most of all in research in the health sciences and agriculture and into nomadic communities (Jessani et al., 2016; Kenny et al., 2021; Ngaruiya et al., 2015). A study by Jessani, et al., (2016) using SNA to explore academic research into policy networks in Kenya's public health found that it was unique in its ability to identify how different

actors' activities and relationships place them in unique positions to influence policymaking. To the best of my knowledge, no study has yet used SNA to explore Kenya's education policy network.

The quantitative strand of this research was embedded in the overarching qualitative strand in order to gather specific feedback on the second evaluation question: Who are the stakeholders influencing education policy within the context of developing the National Curriculum Policy in Kenya? The quantitative methodology followed an SNA approach, seeking insights through the lens of policy networks theory.

5.7.1. Quantitative data collection

Social network approaches that apply a quantitative approach gather data in numerical form and transform it into matrices, graphs and statistical measures in order to analyse the structure of the network. Using quantitative approaches, the researcher collects data about all the possible relations within the population and employs the standard criteria for SNA analysis to ensure that all relationships and network actors are captured, including relationships that are not easily

identified (Crossley, 2010). Quantitative network analysis reduces relational data about network actors and their relationships to a numerical format, making it possible to handle large data sets that aid the understanding of complex phenomena. The development of mathematical and statistical software such as UCINET facilitated the rise of quantitative SNA research that maps and visualises large data sets (Borgatti et al., 2009). Quantitative SNA makes it possible to systematically analyse the positions, constraints and opportunities of the relationships between network actors, and can provide a good starting point for more in-depth exploration of the network (Crossley, 2010).

Although traditional SNA is largely based on the quantitative measurement of formal network properties, this has some limitations. Relying only on quantitative SNA methods can mean that the network is only represented in abstract terms, and because it aims to simplify how the network is depicted, large amounts of empirical information which can help with understanding the social aspects of the network are not considered (Crossley, 2010; Marin & Wellman, 2011). For instance, Crossley (ibid) states that relationships between actors are not just present or absent, and their position in the network cannot provide conclusive information about their importance,

performance and strategic behaviour. Although SNA has traditionally relied on quantitative methods, researchers advocate qualitative approaches (Crossley, 2010; Merrin & Wellman, 2011).

Qualitative SNA offers a deeper understanding of the network, focusing on the content of ties and relationships via interviews, ethnographic observation and content analysis, providing context for the quantitative network measure. Qualitative measures can help to clarify why and how different nodes in a network hold their positions (Luxton & Sbicca, 2021). A range of qualitative methods can be integrated to SNA to better describe the structural components of social networks, including probing participants further about their social networks during interview (Luxton & Sbicca, 2021). Qualitative case studies are particularly suited to gathering detailed knowledge of an event, experience or situation as they allow the collection of personal information from a small group of individuals to provide deeper understanding of network actors (ibid). Crossley (2010) highlights how open-ended interviews are a prominent element of the mixed SNA methodology due to their usefulness in collecting interpretive data on actors to illuminate hidden details of social networks. Marin and Wellman (2011:21), state that network data can be collected from observations, archives, historical materials and trace observations of

electronic communications. Merging quantitative and qualitative SNA creates a more complete picture of how respondents characterise structural aspects of networks such as clusters and connected individuals (Luxton & Sbicca, 2021).

This research used quantitative and qualitative SNA to gather insights into actor relations in order to investigate inter-organisational networks. The structure of inter-organisational relations arguably influences agendas, resource exchanges and policy decisions (Berthod et al., 2017), and therefore assessing these is useful for this study. The initial intention was to gather qualitative data using an open-ended interview schedule and then to administer an in-person or online questionnaire to the same respondents for the quantitative strand of the research. However, due to the nature of the respondents and difficulty accessing policy actors, many of whom were high-ranking government officials, it became clear that gathering data from them twice would be impossible. Structured survey questions were therefore included in the qualitative interview schedule and a semi-structured data collection tool was used to gather information from respondents at the one point of contact. Using the semi-structured interview guide I recorded

information from 50 respondents about which stakeholders they had frequently interacted with during the development of Kenya's education reform policies.

Archival secondary data provided by respondents and publicly available information from online archives and public websites were used to extract further data about network actors and their relationships. This allowed the collection of whole-network data, an approach in SNA that asks people, and in this case their organisations, who they share a particular relationship with (Marin & Wellman, 2011).

It is important to identify the type of network data – whole network or ego network data – is to be collected at the start of an SNA. Whole networks take an overview of a social structure by focusing on all nodes rather than looking at the network surrounding one particular node (ibid). They begin with a list of included nodes and then add information on the presence or absence of relationships between each pair of nodes. Assessing a whole network usually involves analysing more than one relationship between nodes (Marin & Wellman, 2011:19).

Egocentric network data focuses on the network surrounding one node, which is called the ego. Information on nodes that share the chosen relations with the ego and on relations between these nodes is assessed. Ego network data can be analysed from whole network data by choosing a focal node and assessing only the nodes connected to the ego (ibid). In addition to assessing whole network data, the present study also assessed ego network data to highlight the key stakeholders involved in education policymaking; for example, the Ministry of Education and the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development.

When gathering data for the social network analysis I asked respondents about the frequency of their interactions with the different organisations with which they have relations and the strength of the relationships between these organisations, which clarified the types of network tie involved. Marin and Wellman (2011) note that once a network type and relevant relations have been identified it is important to decide how the relations between nodes will be measured. Measuring relations between nodes can either be directed or undirected, and binary or valued. Directed ties go from one node to another and may be reciprocated or move in only one direction, while undirected ties exist between two or more nodes in no particular 'direction.

Both directed and undirected ties can be measured as binary ties – i.e. they either exist or do not exist between nodes – or as value ties that can be stronger or weaker, exchange more or fewer resources, or have more or less frequent contact, and can be given a score to indicate the strength of the tie (ibid:21). Marin and Wellman note that which type of tie to measure is a pragmatic choice based on the available data, expected methods of analysis, and anticipated theoretical pay-off. This research measured directed binary ties and used qualitative information to explain the value and strength of the relations between nodes.

5.7.2. Quantitative data preparation and analysis

Serrat (2009) lists the various steps for conducting a social network analysis: identify the network of individuals and units to be analysed; gather background information to understand specific needs and issues; define the objective and clarify the scope of the analysis; formulate the hypothesis and questions; develop the survey methodology; design the questionnaire; survey individuals to identify the relationships and knowledge flows between them; conduct the using

a tool to visually map out the networks; and finally, review the maps and the problems and opportunities that came to light during the interviews (Serrat, 2009).

5.7.3. Network specification

In SNA research the data collected is about the nodes and relationships within a network. The actors within the network are defined as nodes, which can represent individuals, organisations, political actors, states or entities (Marin & Wellman, 2011). The data collection on the nodes includes identifying the relevant actors and obtaining information about them. The second type of network data is the relationships, or ties, between each node. These may be formal or informal and take a variety of forms including collaborations and friendships (ibid). In SNA, the process of defining the actors and the relationships between them is called boundary specification. This is considered an artificial construct, and capturing all the possible nodes in a network is not possible. Defining network boundaries in a way that is justifiable to the research question is one of the main challenges in network analysis (Weishaar, 2013). In the study of policy networks,

specifying the network's boundary is particularly important because policy networks are fluid, complex and difficult to understand (ibid).

According to Laumann et al. (1992, cited in Weishaar, 2013: 92), there are three ways of addressing the problem of network boundaries, which can be used in combination:

Attribute-based: This approach considers only actors with a specific formal position as part of the network. For instance, studies applying an attribute-based approach may identify a population or naturally occurring cluster such as an organisation, and then investigate every individual in that population.

Relation-based: This begins with a small set of actors that are deemed key players within a population of interest, and expands to others that share a particular type of relation with them.

Event-based: The event-based approach includes all actors that participate in a key event or activity as nodes in a network (Laumann, et al., 1983, cited in Weishaar, 2013:92). When using this approach, it is important to select events carefully and justify them in order to allow for some

level of generalisation. Weishaar (2013) notes that event-based approaches have been used in the study of policymaking.

It is important to consider practical restrictions, including feasibility, manageability and access, that can influence the specification of network boundaries. Weishaar (2013), notes that previous research has focused on a select number of actors within a wider network due to the challenges of gathering data from policy networks.

The network specification for this research includes both an event-based and a relation-based approach. The relation-based approach was used first. It was evident from a review of policy documents relevant to the curriculum from process that MoE and KICD were central actors in education reform policy development. I identified the relevant directorates and units in each institution and included them as nodes. I then expanded the number of actors, based on interviews with MoE and KICD stakeholders, which helped me to clarify and carefully choose events for consideration. Initially the choice of events during the policymaking process was arbitrary as the focus was initially on the overall process of policymaking that went into Kenya's

curriculum change. However, the key informant interviews clarified that a few key events had facilitated the education reforms.

The event-based approach involved identifying actors that had been involved in the processes leading to the curriculum reforms and the development of the CBC. The actors included were involved in significant events that led to the development of the National Curriculum Policy in 2010–2018, including the revision of the Kenyan constitution in 2010, the summative evaluation of the previous curriculum, and the Odhiambo Commission report in 2012. The event-based approach helped me further define the scope of the network and analyse a specific network that could be assumed to include all of the organisations with an interest in education policy development in Kenya.

5.7.4. Converting textual into relational data

After applying the relation-based and event-based approaches to support specification of the network boundary and collecting data from stakeholder interviews, documents and public websites, the gathered data had to be converted into a format that could be analysed using

network analysis software. The following sections describe how nodes, attributes and relationships were defined for the purposes of this research.

5.7.5. Nodes

The name of the organisation that each interviewee represented was registered as a node. As the main focus was on organisational stakeholders, the interview responses of two individual stakeholders – an activist not affiliated with any organisation, and another who had previously worked at a teachers' college – were excluded: A total of 148 nodes were included in the final analysis.

5.7.6. Attributes

Each organisation identified was assigned an acronym and attributes to identify it. One of the main attributes assigned was type of organisation; e.g. government institution, local NGO, NGO, multilateral or bilateral organisation, religious organisation, teaching institution or private-sector institution. Categories were created for organisations identified through the interviews as most

influential in education policy development. Egocentric actors were also identified, and the main organisations that related closely with the ego were identified and categorised.

5.7.7. Relationships

Public relationships were identified in the one-to-one interviews with stakeholders when a representative of organisation mentioned a partnership, collaboration or other type of relationship with another organisation that had been part of the education policy reform processes. I reviewed the websites of all the organisations interviewed for this research and used Google to search for indications of a connection with any other organisation that had been part of the policy process, making a list of the partners of each organisation identified in this way.

I then developed an Excel matrix and coded the data as binary data, with 1 where one or both organisations mentioned some type of relationship and 0 where neither mentioned a relationship. When an actor spoke negatively about another actor in the network their organisations were categorised as not collaborating with one another and therefore having no relationship. Because the data did not make the direction of the relationships clear I decided to assume the data as

undirected data. All the relationships were equal where if a relationship was identified from one organisation to another the same relationship was assumed from the other organisation as well.

5.7.8. Statistical data analysis

Social networks can be analysed at the network, group or individual level (Valente, 2010; Marin & Wellman, 2011). Network- and group-level analysis provide insights into the overall structure of the network or of one or several groups within the network. When assessing the network, the focus is on the entire network and the relationships between all network actors. When the focus is on groups, a subset of nodes and their links are assessed (Marin & Wellman, 2011). Identifying and analysing selected actors can shed light on the positions, constraints and opportunities of individual network actors (Christopoulos, 2006, cited in Weishaar, 2013:100). A whole network level and individual organisational measures were calculated.

To begin this analysis, the overall policy network of all the organisations identified as part of the education community in Kenya included some not directly identified as playing a direct role in the education reform. The main aim of this analysis was to determine the size, composition,

homogeneity, heterogeneity and proximity of the network. Next, the nature of the relationships within the policy network were analysed using measures that included assessing the type of tie and the nature of the public relationship identified. To assess the nature of the relationships, feedback from the one-to-one interviews was used to explore the content and quality of the relationships and the resulting constraints or opportunities for the network actors.

After analysing the whole network, it was divided into groups to assess the key actors identified. Analysis of both the whole network and the stakeholder interviews allowed me to make an informed decision on how to split the network into groups. As the focus of the research is specifically the development of CBC reform policy, I decided to focus on subgroups of actors that interacted frequently during the policymaking process. Two main subgroups were isolated; government and non-government actors. The subgroups were analysed, and their size, composition, density, centralisation, and core-periphery correlation compared. Assessing the size of the network allowed me to focus on the number of nodes it contained. According to Real and Hasanagas (2005, cited in Weishaar, 2013:102), the size of a network can represent the number of political actors who can be mobilised on a particular issue; it also affects the potential political

capacity or power of a group. In smaller networks, there is more likely to be trust and a sense of responsibility between actors (Real & Hasanagas, 2005, cited in Weishaar, 2013:102).

The extent to which the group is composed of nodes with particular characteristics illustrates the diversity and level of heterogeneity of the networks. Network density is described as the ratio of observed ties to possible ties (Marin & Wellman, 2011). It highlights the level of complexity and cohesion of a network or a group and is dependent on the network's size. Bigger networks have been found to have a lower density than smaller ones. In smaller, denser networks the degree of social control can be high because members' capacity to establish relationships is limited (ibid).

However, members of dense networks are likely to be well-connected, with many opportunities to communicate and disseminate information, and have been found to feel a sense of cohesion and solidarity (Luke & Harris, 2007). The centralisation of the network, which is a measure of the extent to which it has a hierarchical or centralised structure (ibid), was also assessed. Centralisation indicates the distribution of power within a network or group, with highly centralised networks dominated by one or a few actors. The central actors of highly centralised networks are able to make decisions authoritatively and quickly disseminate information, leading

to high network efficiency (ibid). Finally, analysis of core-periphery correlation allows comparison of the density within the core network with the density of its periphery (Weishaar, 2013). Networks of organisations or small communities usually highlight a core-periphery pattern made up of a central group of densely connected individuals and a larger group of actors less closely connected to the core group and to each other (Weishaar, 2013).

All the analysis was conducted using R-Studio software, which is used in quantitative analysis including network research. After completing a descriptive SNA analysis, graphical depictions of the whole network as well as the group networks were created to highlight the important findings. The same software was used to generate the graphical illustrations of each policy network assessed, with different colours used to focus on different actors.

5.8. Ethical considerations

As this study involved an independent research project that included collecting and analysing primary data, it was important to obtain ethical approval for it from the University of East Anglia. In 2019, towards the end of my first year of my PhD project, I submitted a completed self-audit checklist (provided by the university – see Appendix A) and a research risk assessment form (Appendix A) to the Research and Ethics Committee at the UEA's School of International Development. A participant information sheet (Appendix D) and participant consent form (Appendix E) was also submitted. Besides the university's ethical clearance, which was successful, I was also required to obtain a research licence from the National Commission for Science Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) to conduct research in Kenya. The NACOSTI application required the submission of the research proposal, the interview questions, and the same consent and ethical clearance forms. I received a 12-month NACOSTI licence (Appendix B).

Confidentiality is a central ethical concern in academic research and requires the researcher to guard against any potential harm that might ensue if research participants are identified. According to Smith (2006), elites are generally assumed able to guard themselves against any

possible harm that may be caused by the information they disclose, and as their views on a subject are usually already publicly known, the risk of disclosing their identity is considered low (Smith, 2006). However, due to the contentious and political nature of the development of the National Curriculum Policy and the curriculum reforms in Kenya and, the considerable opposition from groups such as teacher unions that made this publicly known, as well as groups within the government whose views may not be publicly known, I anticipated that the interviewees might be concerned about being identified. This concern became even more apparent when I interviewed some respondents within and outside of government who even though they gave their consent to be interviewed, were very weary and fearful of answering questions. Some government interviewees were especially careful to give more positive responses to the questions asked, only discussing more sensitive issues and providing feedback on their personal views, once I turned off the recording. I also found that for respondents affiliated with institutions outside the government, but which are considered allies, the respondents tended to be positive in the ways they answered questions and in keeping with the official government narrative on the curriculum reform process. With respondents who were known to oppose the curriculum

reform process, such as the education activists interviewed, I found that they were less concerned with anonymity or having their views made confidential as many of their views were already publicly known.

During the data collection phase for this research, the 'Taskforce on Enhancing Access, Relevance, Transition, Equity and Quality for Effective Curriculum Reforms Implementation' was in the process of completing its mandate of supporting and facilitating the implementation of CBC. Many of the stakeholders and stakeholder institutions which were sampled for this research, were part of the taskforce. This added another challenge to accessing respondents for this study as the conflict of interest and the requirements for non-disclosure of information expected of task force members, limited their willingness to be interviewed.

To address some of these challenges, I ensured participants that the information required for this research would not be related to the work of the task force and to the implementation of CBC but rather on the process that went into the development of the National Curriculum Policy. Where respondents who were part of the Task Force were unwilling to be interviewed, I requested an interview with another respondent from their organisation, which they were willing to provide.

I however, found it interesting that even when respondents were anxious about the interview and even after I had provided them with the option to stop the interview at any time, all the respondents chose to continue. The respondents who did not seem comfortable with the interviews, however, were not forthcoming with information and it helped to have secondary data and the views from a variety of stakeholders to triangulate the research findings.

One other challenge I faced during the interviews was having respondents ask me who I had previously interviewed and what information other respondents had provided. Respondents were sometimes curious about who I had spoken to and would sometimes make their negative feelings about other stakeholders and stakeholder institutions known. I had to be careful not to disclose any information about who I had spoken to and not to disclose what had been said by which stakeholder. When asking for referrals to other potential respondents to interview, I was deliberate in asking respondents who they felt would be other suitable respondents for the purposes of the research or I asked if they knew any stakeholders from institutions that they work with. I found that because of the political nature of the curriculum reform process, I had to be careful not to appear biased to any group or institution by listening to respondents more than I

spoke and being unreactive to the information provided. I was also careful to turn the interview recorder off when asked to by respondents and no information that was given off the record was included in this research. I also made the decision to anonymise all participants by giving them pseudonyms. No information that could lead to the identification of any individual has been published for example, information pertaining to their specific position or to the directorate or department within the MoE that they work in. I also gave each respondent a number when reporting direct quotations from interviews.

Additionally, each respondent was provided with a copy of the informed consent form, which outlined the confidential nature of the research. Each was assured that their participation was entirely voluntary and asked to sign the informed consent form where the interview was conducted in person, or for verbal consent if the interview was held virtually. I was careful to protect the respondents and protect against harm by being the only person with access to the data and ensuring that all data was coded, protected and stored in accordance with EU data-protection laws. As many of the interviews conducted involved government respondents, it was important to use the proper communication channels in the various government departments. This often

involved an email to the Director General or head of the department requesting permission to interview a specific individual, attaching the university's ethical clearance form and NACOSTI certificate. As a result, I gained permission from senior officials to gather data from their subordinates to reduce conflict.

In a further effort to ensure the confidentiality and anonymity of research respondents, one option considered was to ensure the final research output is not available for public access. I strongly considered this option, not only out of concern for respondents but also a concern for any potential backlash I would receive as a researcher. However, in August of 2022, Kenya had a change in government and the United Democratic Alliance (UDA) led by the previous governments Deputy President Dr. William Ruto, came into power. CBC was considered the previous President, Uhuru Kenyatta's legacy project and one of the main campaign pledges of the UDA government was to abolish CBC and to re-instate the previous 8-4-4 system (Muchunguh, 2022). Later, this pledge was redacted instead promising a hybrid education system to avoid the costs of further reforms and to avoid further confusion in the education sector (Muchunguh, 2022). In September 2022, the newly elected president appointed the Presidential

Working Party on Education Reform (PWPER) with the mandate of addressing public concerns out the implementation of CBC and the need to reform the entire Education sector in accordance with the UDA, Kenya Kwanza Education (Government of Kenya, 2023).

The new government has been marked by what Alter and Zurn (2020:566) term as backlash politics, which 'combines a retrograde objective, extraordinary claims, demands and tactics, and a threshold of influencing public discourse so that the movement's objectives and/or tactics become normalised features of politics. The change in Kenya's government has led to institutional reshaping, promises to abolish the previous government's policies, goals and tactics that defy dominant narratives and strategies to shape public discourse to achieve its objectives (Alter & Zürn, 2020).[3] The change in government has affected some of the ethical considerations

[3] The PWPER recommended reforms to the previous CBC structure including ensuring that Pre-Primary, Primary school and Junior School managed as one institution and for KICD to reduce the number of learning areas that has been initially proposed (Government of Kenya, 2023). In a bid to put in place goals and tactics that defy dominant narratives, the UDA government developed a new Finance Bill (Finance Bill, 2023) which has meant changes to numerous tax laws. The government has also introduced what is termed the 'Hustler Fund' a digital inclusion programme to increase the financial inclusion of marginalised individuals and to small and medium sized enterprises (United Democratic Alliance, 2022).

previously held for this research. For one, I have found that institutional change has meant that many of the respondent that were in the part of the government at the time of data collection, have since left. This makes it harder to identify the research respondents and also makes it more unlikely that those respondents would be concerned with being identified. As noted by Mason-Bish (2019), institutional change results in elites changing their roles and in the case of the development of the NCP, this has likely meant that many of the interviewees in this research may not have the influence or power over the policy or curriculum reform process in Kenya.

Secondly, the new government previously stood in opposition of the curriculum reforms and the education policy decisions that were made by the previous government. Therefore, it is unlikely that some of the sentiments held in this research that also may indicate opposition to the curriculum reform process would result in any backlash for the respondents or for the researcher. As a result, it is the researcher belief that making the final research output publicly available may not be necessary as the risk of harm to participants or to the researcher has been greatly reduced with the new government in place.

5.8.1. Reflexivity

Qualitative research requires the researcher to reflect on their role in the study and how their background, culture and experiences potentially shape their interpretation of data (Creswell & Creswell, 2022). Researchers should identify the biases, values and personal background, for instance gender, history, culture and socio-economic status that inform the interpretations formed during the research. Reflexivity involves a discussion of past experiences with the research problem that ties the researcher to the study, and a commentary about how these experiences may shape interpretations made during the study. These experiences, for example, may bias the researcher towards certain themes or lead them to seek out evidence to support their views. It was therefore important for me to be self-reflexive throughout my research process (ibid).

When interviewing elites, Smith (2006) argues that reflexivity should mean that researchers question assumptions about power relations. The literature has shown that researchers can become preoccupied with issues of access and power when seeking to interview elites, that they neglect what actually occurs during an interview (Mason-Bish, 2019). It is important to consider

how what is termed the 'elite delusion' affects the research and to use critical reflexivity as a tool to challenge perceptions of positionality (ibid).

The consideration of insider/outsider status is related to issues of positionality in research. In general, researchers have frequently argued that having an insider status can provide numerous benefits such as access, rapport, and impact. Outsiders may make different observations and investigate topics in greater depth than an insider may overlook. It is important as a researcher to be reflexive on insider/outsider status throughout the research process, and how this may in fact be flexible (Mason-Bish, 2019; Smith; 2006).

Researchers may take on a variety of roles that must be balanced throughout the research process. The literature on elite interviewing has emphasised the need to overcome the respondent's reluctance to participate in the project or their reluctance to disclose the required information (Adler & Adler, 2003). In this regard, the insider/outsider status is dynamic because identities are' situational,' and participants' levels of reluctance or openness may vary depending on the role that the researcher takes on.

My perceptions of education policymaking in Kenya and the extent to which evidence informs the process have been shaped by my personal experiences. Additionally, my perceptions of interviewing government stakeholders specifically, has been shaped by research that focuses on how to manage interviews with elites as well as my experiences interacting with government stakeholders in Kenya. After completing a master's degree in Programme monitoring and evaluation in 2013, I worked as a monitoring and evaluation officer in an education development NGO from the year 2014-2016. In this role, I had the opportunity to work closely with various government education departments including the department of Basic Education, higher education and Technical Vocational and Training (TVET) and to conduct numerous monitoring and evaluation studies commissioned by the government. My role as an evaluator exposed me to many practical lessons that could only be learnt through work experience, for instance how to negotiate access with government stakeholders. However, it also helped me to understand that evidence use in education policymaking is not always a linear process and, in many instances, evidence is rarely used. It was from this experience that I became curious on the extent to which

evidence is used and specifically the use of findings from evaluation studies commissioned by ministries of education.

I believe this understanding of the education sector and my role as a monitoring and evaluation practitioner, enhances my awareness, knowledge and sensitivity of many of the challenges, decisions and issues faced in enhancing evidence use and will support me in working with the data in this study. I bring knowledge of working with education government departments and NGOs to generate evidence through programme evaluations. Specifically, I will focus on the role of evidence in the curriculum reform process, the influence of factors other than evidence and the role of stakeholders. Due to my previous experiences as a monitoring and evaluation practitioner, I acknowledge that I bring certain biases to this study. Every effort will be made to ensure objectivity; however, my biases may still shape the way that I view and understand the data that I collect.

I began research with the perspective that there is limited and indirect use of evidence from programme evaluations in shaping education policies. I also started off with the perspective that national politics has the strongest influence on which policies are made. My biases however,

proved instrumental in ensuring that I did not take participant responses at face value but that I continued to seek a holistic understanding of the research area by triangulating data sources, including the voices of different types of stakeholders; those considered 'insiders' and government allies in policymaking and those considered outsiders, for example, education activists.

The document analysis also contributed to reducing my own bias, and greatly contributed to substantiating feedback from the interviews. My initial views on the political nature of policymaking were highlighted by participants in their responses to interview questions as well as during data collection, where I experienced: hesitation from some respondents to speak to me; bias towards positive responses from many government stakeholders and off the record responses on the political nature of curriculum policy reforms. My analysis of the data involved both prescribed deductive codes and inductive coding which helped me to generate themes directly from the data and which were based on participant responses and data from documents. I ensured that I understood the evidence use literature and the policy networks theory at the start of the data collection and analysis process which also reduced my own biases as this helped me

to understand that different types of evidence use exist and different factors contribute to policymaking as discussed in Chapter 4.

5.8.2. Accessing and interviewing policy actors, power and transparency

Research on decision-makers has been shown to be important (Ball, 2012, 2016; Selwyn, 2013). Interviews with political actors, for example, have been found to contribute to knowledge and understanding of policymaking, and why they make the decisions they make (Ostrander, 1993). However, gaining access to both public and private policy actors for interviews can be challenging (Petkov & Kaoullas, 2016).

Policy actors' limited availability and difficulty accessing political elites can derail research into policy and put pressure on interview conditions (Morse, 2019; Natow, 2020; Petkov & Kaoullas, 2016). To avoid this as far as possible, careful planning and preparation are necessary at the start of the research process (Weishaar, 2013). Therefore, I began my research with a situational analysis of the education policy community in July and August of 2019, although at this point, I did not collect any data as I had not yet received ethical clearance from the university to do so. At the time the Kenyan government was rolling out its nationwide CBC pilot and holding several public consultations to gather stakeholders' opinions of the curriculum reform. There were many

media reports on the reform process, including articles about KNUT and several other education advocacy groups' oppositions to the change. In August 2019, the government held the 3rd National Conference on Education, further facilitating stakeholder engagement in the curriculum reform process.

I was in a unique position to observe all of this as it unfolded and to attend the education conference and two public consultation forums. As a result, I was able to identify some of the high-level public and private organisations in the education policy community that played lead roles in the development of the National Curriculum Policy. I compiled an initial list of about 80 such organisations and grouped them according into government public or non-government private policy organisations. Reviewing publicly available information and government reports such as the Odhiambo Commission Report and information about the Commissions' members helped me to identify individuals to recruit for my research.

Once I had received ethical clearance allowing me to recruit and interview policy actors, I put considerable effort into contacting education-sector stakeholders with whom I had established good relations, as a starting point from which to gain access to other policy actors and I took the

time needed to build good relationships with gatekeepers. When discussing interview appointments, I provided clear, transparent and consistent information about my study, the interview process, and how the findings from my research would be used. I was accommodating when booking interview dates, times and venues, and was always available to respond to any concerns that interviewees raised, including questions about their anonymity. The COVID-19 lockdown added to the already-difficult task of accessing policy actors. It led to cancellations and postponement, and many interviews had to be conducted online. The pandemic meant that I had to be persistent in requesting interviews and flexible in accommodating interviewees' preferences. Elite policy actors are more difficult to access than other groups and are more likely to avoid subjects they do not want to discuss and respond to questions with their organisations' official views rather than personal experience (Weishaar, 2013). They are also more likely to steer and dominate the interview, manipulate the research results, and negotiate terms and conditions regarding the interview process (Ostrander, 1993), creating a power dynamic. The researcher's autonomy to analyse and interpret the data and report on the research can be a way to exercise power, especially in the later stages of the research (ibid).

As the curriculum review was highly politicised, I acknowledged that as my interviewees might find themselves discussing sensitive issues they may not want to be identified. I needed their consent to participate, as outlined in the ethical review form (Appendix A). To reduce any potential harm to the participants and increase transparency, I was careful to provide them with detailed information about what my research sought to achieve and information about myself, my supervisors, and my institutional affiliation. I requested that they sign an informed consent form agreeing to a recorded interview, and asked if they would like to remain anonymous. As per the ethics form, I told each interviewee how I would ensure that the interview recordings would be inaccessible to anyone but me and would not be shared or used for purposes outside this research. I encouraged them to contact me with any questions and provided my supervisors' contact details in case they wanted to raise any concerns with them.

At the start of each interview, I went over the aims of the research, requested permission to record it, and told them they could opt out at any time. I conducted the interviews formally, remaining focused on the study purpose, although this could be difficult when an interviewee was eager to discuss wider education policy processes and challenges, or deflected my questions to avoid

responding. It was sometimes hard to build trust and to create a rapport with those interviewed online during the pandemic, limiting the nature of the information they were willing to share. Some interviewees were more forthcoming about their experiences of the policy process after recording stopped at the end of the interview. However, with experience the interviews became easier as I learnt to clarify the purpose of the research at the start of each one.

Early in my data collection, after a few interviews I realised that certain policy actors had formed alliances while others were being side-lined, depending on whether they supported or opposed the curriculum reform. I also found divisions between some policy actors who represented a similar organisation. This made me careful not to mention other policy actors to whom I had spoken, even if an interviewee asked, realising that associating me with a particular group might bias the interviewee's responses and divert the interview.

Overall, the respondents seemed satisfied with the interview process, the information I provided, and my approach to interviewing. Many allowed me to reach out to them if I had any clarifying questions. In terms of power in interviews with elite respondents my experiences were all pleasant and characterised by mutual respect. However, many government actors were unwilling

to share information if it might present the government in a negative light and appeared to present their organisational views from the same script, avoiding giving their own views.

5.9. Summary

This chapter has discussed the use of a mixed-method case-study approach, including the qualitative and quantitative approaches used for this research that provide a valuable way to analyse education policymaking processes in Kenya. Discussion of the qualitative approaches used has provided a systematic approach to the analysis, with exploration and explanation of the various factors that influence education policymaking and the enablers and barriers to evidence use in policymaking. The chapter has explained how SNA can be used to provide insights into complex policy networks.

The data sources and the approach to the qualitative content analysis and SNA, and how these methods were combined for the study, have been discussed. SNA is well suited to exploring a policy network in education policymaking in Kenya and can be used to map, test and examine the engagement of stakeholders and collaboration among policy actors. The use of a mixed-method design and SNA can increase understanding of the engagement, collaboration and supporters of the education reforms. The approach used allows the plotting and analysis of the engagement of the wider education community in Kenya, including business representatives and

trade unions and their interactions with decision-makers. This research provides a practical example of combining mixed methods using quantitative and qualitative methods in SNA with the case-study approach and is a valuable contribution to the literature on research methods, SNA, policy networks, stakeholder engagement and education policymaking in Kenya.

Chapter 6: The Influence of Evidence in the Development of the National Curriculum Policy and the Enablers and Barriers of Evidence Use

6.1. Introduction

This chapter addresses the first sub-research question: What is the role of evidence and the enablers and barriers to using evidence for shaping education policy in the context of developing the National Curriculum Policy in Kenya?

It applies policy network theory and an integrated policy network model of evidence use in policy change to the findings from the interviews with stakeholders and evidence from the secondary analysis of documents to explore and answer this question. The chapter first presents what constitutes evidence as it relates to the development of the National Curriculum Policy (NCP), including the different types of research and evidence generated for the policy process. Enablers of and barriers to evidence use in the development of the NCP as well as in the policymaking process outside of the development of the NCP, are then presented, focusing on factors related to three elements of evidence generation: government, researchers, and methodologies. The chapter

concludes by showing that if the barriers to evidence use are adequately addressed, its part in policymaking will be enhanced.

6.2. Evidence use and the National Curriculum Policy

The government gave KICD a mandate to develop the curriculum, including conducting research to inform the process, for which it conducted a summative evaluation of basic education in Kenya in 2009 and a national needs assessment of education in 2016. When asked how evidence was used in curriculum development, one KICD interviewee replied:

> We carry out needs assessment, curriculum monitoring activities and then mid-term and end-term evaluations, and we use this to inform programme areas and develop new areas of learning and changing implementation. (Interviewee 7, KICD)

The respondent implies that the government considers the generation of evidence to support decision-making and guide education policy important and uses evidence instrumentally to identify policy problems and determine the solutions and then to modify programme

implementation. Evidence use is seen as instrumental when decision-makers use the findings to modify the object under evaluation in some way (Shulha & Cousins, 1997; Leviton, 2003).

In fact, there was a narrative common to many government interviewees, including those from MoE, KICD and KNEC, that the evidence KICD gathered from the 2016 national needs assessment informed the development of the National Curriculum Policy and the decision to change the curriculum:

> KICD had to conduct a needs assessment, and they did this around 2012 or 2016. So, they did a study and went around the country to find out the views of the citizens to find out what challenges existed in 8-4-4. (Interviewee 48, KNEC)

The needs assessment found a gap between the knowledge that learners were being taught and what they were able to demonstrate:

> The needs assessment supported the need for a competency-based curriculum where learners are evaluated on what they are able to show they can do and not only what knowledge they have learnt. (Interviewee 30, MoE)

At first glance the reported use of the findings from the needs assessment seems to have been instrumental, directly informing the development of the National Curriculum Policy. Interviewee data also suggests that the needs assessment may have helped policy actors to understand the education system in new ways via conceptual use of the findings (Leviton, 2003), clarifying their ideas and opinions about Kenya's education needs and steering them towards learner-centred education as a way of ensuring that students can demonstrate their competencies in different areas of learning. The government interviewees believed that the needs assessment's recommendation that Kenya changed its curriculum to the CBC had informed amendments to the country's education policy and led to the development of the National Curriculum Policy.

A review of the needs assessment report specifies the importance of understanding Kenyans' expectations as the basis for curriculum reform (KICD, 2016b). The objectives of the assessment were to establish the need for curriculum reform, determine competencies for all levels of learning, determine strategies for identifying learners' talents, and identify the desired learning pathways for a competency-based curriculum. The needs-assessment findings suggest that the

previous curriculum had been too academic and too examination-oriented and had been ill-equipped to facilitate learning practical skills (KICD, 2016b).

It also highlights how graduates lacked entrepreneurial skills, increasing their risk of unemployment. To address these shortcomings in education the needs assessment argues that Kenyans wanted the previous curriculum reformed, particularly in terms of the desired competencies, subject areas, identification of talent and talent-nurturing strategies, and pedagogical approaches, resources and assessment. 'At the societal level, Kenyans need the curriculum to be reformed to enhance peaceful societal co-existence, contribute to economic development and to negate social vices such as corruption, tribalism and insecurity to bring unity and cohesiveness' (KICD, 2016b:5). The 2016 needs assessment report has stated that citizens wanted curriculum reform to increase innovation by learners, problem-solving skills and self-reliance in order to improve the individual and the nation (ibid).

Citizens also expressed a desire for a curriculum that would support the identification and nurturing of learner talents, and suggested learning approaches that encourage collaborative learning at all levels (KICD, 2016b). The needs assessment further indicated Kenyans' desire for

a curriculum structure offering several learning pathways after secondary school (ibid). It argued that the Kenyan curriculum needed reform at all levels to conform to the Kenyan Constitution of 2010 and Vision 2030 (ibid). Consideration of research from 'reputable bodies such as World Bank, UNICEF and UNESCO, and following regional and global best practice to incorporate twenty-first-century skills were also recommended (ibid).

Although according to KICD a needs assessment to determine what a revised curriculum would look like, is argued to be the first step in the curriculum development cycle, followed by policy formulation and curriculum design (KIE, n.d), this was not carried out until the decision to change the curriculum had been made. Still, many policy documents, including the Basic Education Curriculum Framework (KICD, 2017) and the report from the CBC pilot (KICD, 2018b), state that the needs assessment provided evidence supporting curriculum change and informing policy development.

However, a review of the draft National Curriculum Policy (NCP) document as discussed in Chapter 2, indicates that the NCP was first developed as early as 2015 before the completion of the needs assessment. The content analysis of the NCP document revealed the narrative in the

policy that it was developed because of the summative evaluation of education completed in 2009, the Odhiambo Task Force report of 2012 and the report of the National Committee on Curriculum Reforms. A review of the summative evaluation of basic education highlights that the suggestion for a needs assessment of education was recommended as early as in 2009.

Summative Evaluation of Education

A review of the 2009 summative evaluation of education report made available for this research, specifies that the evaluation revealed that primary education was mostly achieving its objectives, including instilling numeracy, literacy, and communication skills in pupils, and recommended the creation of a framework for the early identification, placement and nurturing of talents (KIE, 2011). The 8-4-4 curriculum content addressed the goals of nationalism, patriotism, and national unity, but its actualisation of these values and provision of the practical skills necessary for economic development were limited (ibid). It recommended teaching specific subjects around the history of the country and citizenship, to promote patriotism. The integration of technological innovation and entrepreneurial skills into the curriculum was another important recommendation (ibid).

The summative evaluation found that achievement of the curriculum's objectives of secondary education was limited by 'broad subject content, inadequate support materials and high pupil-teacher ratios' (KIE, 2011:106), and recommended a needs assessment to review the challenges of secondary education. The evaluation found a mismatch between the relevance of secondary education and the needs of Kenyans. Subjects taught at secondary level were found to be appropriate, but an emphasis on theoretical learning offered insufficient practical skills. The creation of patriotic Kenyans was also seen to be hampered by the optional offerings of historical, government and religious education (ibid).

The secondary curriculum was deemed inadequate to address learners' interests and aptitudes, regional diversities, and special needs. KIE recommended revising the curriculum to meet the needs and interests of all learners based on a framework for the early identification, placement and nurturing of talent, and compulsory teaching of moral education, history and citizenship. A needs assessment to 'establish excessive overloads and inadequacies in the curriculum and relevance to the job market' was also recommended (ibid). The secondary-school education curriculum was seen as not equipping learners with the skills required to meet the goals of Vision

2030, and a review of the curriculum to align it to the Vision was advised (ibid). The summative evaluation of secondary education pointed to the need to gather more evidence via a needs assessment as the basis of a curriculum review (ibid).

The government's public communications department has stated that evidence from the 2009 summative evaluation was a key determinant of the curriculum reforms. A review of a background report on the curriculum reform agenda for the nation' (KICD, 2016a) , the report of the needs assessment, the Basic Education Curriculum Framework and the reports of the pilot of CBC, highlight a consistent narrative that curriculum reforms were informed first and foremost by the 2009 summative evaluation of education (KICD, 2016a, 2017, 2018a; MoEST, 2012, 2015b, 2015c). The CBC reforms took into consideration some of the recommendations from the 2009 summative evaluation, as evidenced in the Basic Education Curriculum Framework (KICD, 2017). To address relevance, for instance, the new curriculum acknowledges the need to advance practical skills and integrate technological innovation and entrepreneurship. Another key component of the CBC is the identification and nurturing of learners' talents, encouraging them to pursue specific pathways aligned to these (ibid).

While the summative evaluation recommended a curriculum review, it did not specify a complete change across all levels of education. Its findings highlighted systemic challenges including overcrowded classrooms, lack of infrastructure, a high learner drop-out rate, poor completion rates, and gender disparity. Despite the CBC reforms, these systemic challenges still hinder the proper enactment of national curriculum policy and achievement of the national development goals. Rural and poor schools are especially at considerable risk of being left even further behind due to the inaccessibility of resources required to implement the new curriculum (Waweru, 2018). Failing to address these systemic challenges risks learners from low-income backgrounds moving into low-earning careers, perpetuating the country's social inequality (Akala, 2021; Waweru, 2018).

The recommendations issued from the summative evaluation of education in 2009 appear to have been used as a way to legitimise the development of the National Curriculum Policy and the curriculum reform process, but not necessarily to inform the agenda set and decisions made.

Global Evidence informing National Policy Development

However, other factors besides national education needs and the contextual evidence, also inform policy problems and their preferred solutions. Global evidence and trends in education are one source of input for Kenya's education development agenda and amendments to its national education policy. For instance, global technological and scientific trends in teaching and learning informed Kenya's Digital Literacy Program (DLP), which aims to integrate information and communications in education by providing laptops and e-learning content to early-grade learners and was introduced by the Jubilee government as part of its wider agenda on taking office in 2013.

Evidence on global education trends is also considered important to education policy in Kenya, and is used to inform new programmes in education:

> There could be information that is trending across the globe in education that we might want to adopt. Once we gather this information, it may inform us of something that we want to address in the curriculum, like new technologies, maybe in teaching

> mathematics or teaching sciences. Then we write proposals and seek funding for programs. (Interviewee 7, KICD)

This quote describes KICD's mission to gather evidence of global changes in education and use it to address national education needs identified by exercises such as midline curriculum reviews, as per KICD's government mandate.

Evidence from global benchmarking studies was used to inform Kenya's curriculum change and align the country with regional and global education trends. World Bank, TSC and KICD interviewees stated that benchmarking studies of CBC reforms in Israel, Belgium, the UK, South Africa, Japan, Singapore and Canada, among other countries, had influenced Kenya's education policy direction and informed it of the requirements for successful CBC implementation:

> We had consultations in South Korea, Vietnam and China, and they told us that it took them 15 to 20 years for the competency-based education curriculum to stabilise, so this process will take time to be successful in Kenya. We feel that if the government

> gets the early years correct and teacher preparedness is addressed, then the process will be easier. (Interviewee 18, World Bank)

In 2014, a Technical Committee on Curriculum Reform, primarily comprising MoEST and KICD stakeholders, was set up to initiate a review of the curriculum (MoEST, 2015c) and collaborate on the development of a new National Curriculum Policy Framework. A review of the report from the Technical Committee on Curriculum Reform, also highlights the importance of global benchmarking evidence. Evidence gathered by the Committee to support decision-making on curriculum reform used secondary research and also confirmed that benchmarking studies centred around global and regional education perspectives and aligning with these.

The Committee reflected on the emphasis of UNESCO's Education for All agenda (EFA) regarding the need for learners to acquire twenty-first- century knowledge, skills, attitudes and values for sustainable development (MoEST, 2015c), and cited the International Labour Organisation (ILO) advocating for skills training through labour market programmes to reduce the economic costs caused by under-skilling (ILO, 2012; MoEST, 2015c). The World Bank's argument that reforms in education should target wider curriculum areas based on skill-centred

approaches and knowledge from non-academic sources was also brought to bear (World Bank, 2014, cited in MoEST, 2015a:12). From the World Bank's perspective, achievements in education and training should be based on curricula that can evolve to facilitate the growing opportunities for youth (ibid).

Similar to feedback from interviewees, the report of the Committee also highlighted that the Committee benchmarked Kenya against the education structures and competencies required for learning for life in countries including Canada, England, Malaysia, Ghana, China, Singapore, Finland and South Africa (MoEST, 2015c) , and found it necessary to restructure and reduce the duration of each level of education, reduce wastage, and leverage the inclusion of a variety of skills and competencies in an inclusive curriculum (MoEST, 2015c:13). The Committee report notes:

> Most countries (e.g., Singapore, Malaysia, Korea, Japan and Finland) that have succeeded in transforming secondary education to contribute to human resource demands for economic growth have struck a good balance between technical, vocational and general subjects. They also ensure that these subjects build on foundational skills developed in the

> primary education level and smoothened the school–to-work transition by emphasising transferable skills. These skills, in addition to catering for a wider range of interests and abilities, promote division of labour and specialisation. This enables these nations to exploit their resources more effectively. (MoEST, 2015c:21)

A comparison of Kenya's labour force with those of South Africa, Mauritius, China, and Rwanda revealed a decline in Kenya's skills competence due to education gaps, supporting the need for education reform (ibid).

The Committee report also noted that evidence from evaluations of Education for All (EFA) and the new global education development considerations after 2015 were reviewed, noting, among other factors, that education should consider a focus on competencies and skills for the future, academic achievement beyond cognitive skills, and knowledge and skills for decent work through technical and vocational secondary and tertiary education and training (MoEST, 2015a). UNESCO research (2012, cited in MoEST, 2015c:15) recommending secondary education emphasising transferable, vocational, and technical skills to prepare learners for further education and the labour market is also referenced. UNESCO's suggestions of the most significant

core subjects for the holistic growth and development of learners are also evidenced by the Committee for consideration in national curriculum reform (MoEST, 2015c).

The above quotes and illustrations from document analysis suggests that findings from the benchmarking exercises were instrumentally used to directly inform the new Kenyan curriculum, including preparing teachers to deliver it. The benchmarking exercise findings helped to identify the knowledge and skills required to ensure sustainable development (MoE, 2015a) (see Chapter 2). In keeping with the integrated policy networks model, the evidence gathered revealed changes in external education trends that informed policy actors' perceptions of Kenya's education policy problems and solutions during the development of the National Curriculum Policy. Some interviewees also spoke of challenges and tensions arising from comparing and adopting international benchmarks of CBC experiences, and how these were not addressed in Kenya. Research has also shown that developing countries that align their education to more-developed countries risk increased education inequalities, due to human and resource constraints (Akala, 2021).

In line with the literature on policy borrowing, the benchmarking studies said to have informed curriculum reforms in Kenya highlight how policies are borrowed or imposed despite contextual differences. Ruby and Li (2020) note that even when the enabling environment is fundamentally different, policymakers often look to high-performing school systems for examples of best practises that could be replicated. Finland's outstanding PISA test results for example, have prompted increased attention of the country's schools and educational policies. Finland has come to be seen as a global education leader worthy of imitation by both developed and developing countries (Ruby & Li, 2020). It is also important to note, that education policymakers have also been found to 'cherry pick' policies which can take the form of choosing a comparative nation to legitimise a practise to choosing a product or practise. The choices made are usually deliberate, even if they are motivated by ideology rather than evidence of effectiveness (Winstanley, 2012).

The National Committee on Curriculum Reform established a pathway for curriculum reform including the development of a guiding policy framework. the Committee advised curriculum reforms to a competency-based curriculum and restructuring of the levels and duration of

education to include two years of pre-primary, six of primary, three of junior secondary, three of senior secondary and a minimum of three years of post-secondary education (2-6-3-3-3) (MoEST, 2015c). The curriculum reforms also advocated for maximisation of the benefits of vocational subjects.

The Committee went on to propose a plan for rolling out the new curriculum, including KICD conducting a needs assessment survey in 2015 and the steps to be taken for the implementation of the new curriculum in 2017 (MoEST, 2015c). It proposed involving stakeholders such as teachers' unions, parents' associations and faith-based organisations in the development of a policy framework to guide curriculum reforms (ibid). In 2016, a National Steering Committee on Curriculum Reform made up of a majority of government stakeholders and representatives from UNICEF, private schools associations, Trade Unions and civil society organisations, was set up to implement the recommendations from the National Technical Committee on Curriculum Reforms, including guiding the development of relevant policies, frameworks and guidelines for curriculum reform.

Two things happened based on the National Technical Committee's recommendations: A National Curriculum Policy was developed in December 2015 and; KICD conducted a needs assessment of the education sector in 2016.

Based on the timeline of activities that went into drafting the National Curriculum Policy in 2015 as evidence from the National Technical Committee on Curriculum Reforms Report, it is unlikely that the findings from the needs assessment were used either instrumentally or conceptually to inform the development of the National Curriculum Policy; rather, its evidence was used strategically to legitimise decisions on curriculum reform that had been taken as early as 2009, and symbolically to make the government appear to value accountability (see Chapter 4). If this is the case, it is also likely that the assessment's recommendations deliberately pointed to the need for curriculum reform and legitimised the draft National Curriculum Policy developed in 2015 (Chapter 2), which the government was then able to make publicly available as the revised National Curriculum Policy of 2018.

Policy networks theory posits that 'public policy is mainly determined by resource exchange among interdependent actors with distinctive policy preferences' (Compston, 2009: 40). A review

of secondary texts and KICD and MoE interviewee evidence points to the nature of the government's dependence on aid agencies' resources, which gave the latter the power to communicate and advocate for their policy preferences, USAID as early as 2009 and UNICEF doing so as early as 2014 and reduced the government's independence in the curriculum reform process. As discussed in the literature review, UNESCO and UNICEF consider learner-centred education such as the CBC best practice for high-quality education, and openly promote it globally (Ball, 2012; Schweisfurth, 2013, 2015). Donor agencies such as FCDO and USAID have also advocated learner-centred education (Tabulawa, 2003, 2013). USAID's and UNICEF's desire for Kenya's move to the CBC may have incentivised it to finance the needs assessment so that the government could use its findings strategically to advocate for policy change and had the necessary evidence base on which to legitimise its National Curriculum Policy in the face of opposition from actors such as KNUT (see Chapter 8). Theories on the use of evidence posit that it is employed strategically in advocacy in policymaking and to back political positions (Weiss, 1992). Financing the needs assessment was therefore a means to an end for UNICEF that also helped to increase citizen buy-in.

As stated earlier, the 2009 summative evaluation of basic education, recommended a needs assessment to inform the curriculum revision. In fact, KICD sets out its curriculum development cycle as an eight-step process: 1. needs assessment; 2. policy formulation; 3. curriculum design; 4. development of curriculum support materials and syllabus preparation and approval; 5. preparation of curriculum implementers; 6. pre-testing and piloting; 7. national implementation; and 8. monitoring and evaluation. However, in this event the needs assessment was conducted after policy formulation (KICD, 2017). However, in 2012, in the absence of the needs assessment the Odhiambo Commission recommended a change of the curriculum to the CBC and by 2015 the draft National Curriculum Policy was developed. Only in 2016, was the needs assessment of education completed. Arguably, factors associated with globalisation, such as aid agency and development partners' global education policy preferences and global evidence supporting these (see Chapter 7), informed the development of the National Curriculum Policy.

Although national evidence and findings from the needs assessment were useful, according to government interviewees, it is probable that its instrumental and conceptual use was limited, and

it was rather employed in legitimising, symbolic and strategic ways to ensure that the already-developed National Curriculum Policy was implemented:

> The needs assessment was not used. It showed that 70 per cent of head teachers were okay with the idea of CBC, but it was clear that they didn't know what CBC is exactly. But the government had already decided they were doing CBC. (Interviewee 12, former KICD staff member)

The needs assessment found gaps in the curriculum reform process which appeared not to have been addressed in the face of the government's agenda. As has been mentioned earlier, numerous curriculum reform challenges affect the successful implementation of learner-centred education (LCE) in Sub-Saharan Africa, including a lack of conceptual and practical understanding among teachers about what is expected (Schweisfurth, 2011) (see Chapter 3).

Arguably, the findings of the needs assessment could have informed the implementation of the CBC and guided best practice for a successful uptake. However, it appears that the assessment was carried out not so much to inform as to legitimise the process of curriculum reform. As a

result, CBC in Kenya may not have been adequately tailored to meet the contextual needs and available resources. It appears that the decision to change the curriculum did not plan for sustainability through teacher and administrator support, public participation in implementation, and planning for monitoring and evaluation (Datnow, 2006). An audit of what is needed such as the resources and infrastructure at all levels to support curriculum change may not have been adequately considered. As a result, the reform process led to tensions between the ambitious goals of the curriculum policy, and the realities on the ground (Ball, 1998). For instance, research has shown that changing the assessment culture in Kenya may present some difficulties. For KNEC, which has spent decades improving its summative assessment tools, a rapid transition to assessing learning outcomes differently may be challenging. A complete change of its system would be required, as well as of the country's examination culture, which sees examinations as a tool for identifying learners suitable for further study and the job market (Heto et al., 2020; Akala, 2021).

Despite these tensions and the potential pitfalls of the CBC, the reform process went ahead as planned for by the 2013–2017 Jubilee Party's manifesto (MoEST, 2015b) with evidence gathered

and stakeholder participation employed in legitimising ways. To promote public participation, three national conferences on curriculum reforms were held between 2016-2019, aiming to include citizens' input into the reform process, reflect on the basic curriculum framework, reflect on the achievements of the CBC pilot, increase understanding of its approach, explore learner inclusion in various regions, and agree on an implementation roadmap (KICD, 2019). The analysis of secondary and primary data gathered from this research indicates that the Jubilee government completed the development of the National Curriculum Policy leading up to the implementation of CBC within the specified period (see Figure 6.1).

Figure 6.1: National Curriculum Policy Development Timeline


CURRICULUM REFORMS IN KENYA: TIMELINE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM POLICY
2009
Kenya Institute of Education (KIE), Summative Evaluation of Education
2010
Development of the new Constitution
2011
Odhiambo Task Force
2012
Sessional Paper No. 14 of 2012 recommending curriculum reform
2013
Jubilee Government Elected 2013-2017 includes plans for education development
2013
KICD established under KICD Act 4 of 2013
2014
National Technical Committee on Curriculum Reform established
2016
National needs assessment conducted by KICD
First National Conference on Curriculum Reforms
2015
Report on the National Technical Committee on Curriculum Reform recommending CBC
2017
Basic Education Curriculum Framework developed
Pilot of Early Years CBC
Monitoring and evaluation of Early Years CBC pilot
Draft National Curriculum Policy developed
Second National Conference on Curriculum Reforms
2018
Revised National Curriculum Policy
2019
National pilot of CBC at all schools up to primary grade 2
Early years CBC Nationwide
Monitoring of nation wide pilot
Third National Conference on Curriculum Reforms

Numerous challenges were identified as hindering the government's use of evidence in the development of the National Curriculum Policy and to guide curriculum reforms including politics, lack of cooperation between different ministries, lack of structures to facilitate evidence use, research access challenges, evidence bias among government stakeholders, data fatigue, and limited sharing of evidence between government departments.

6.3. Barriers to evidence use within government

6.3.1. Politics

Political barriers to evidence use were mentioned by most of the civil-society actors and education activists interviewed, who stated that politics over-rode evidence use in policy development. The government used various strategies to manage and manipulate evidence from research studies to suit its political goals and did not make the results of its evidence-collecting exercises such as

the benchmarking study, the nationwide education needs assessment and the summative evaluation of basic education publicly available:

> Making evidence publicly available may illuminate challenges in the education system which may paint the government in a poor light and undermine its legitimacy. (Interviewee 25, KSSHA)

The government's lack of transparency about the findings from the research it generated affected civil society's ability to engage with the policy process:

> We have no knowledge of what evidence the government has, and this prevents civil society from playing a strong advocacy role and it weakens our role. (Interviewee 47, education activist)

> [When the government does make evidence publicly available, it] often provides information that will not show the actual education challenges faced to maintain a positive reputation with citizens. (Interviewee 26, civil-society organisation member)

Maintaining a positive image before its citizens and showing that it is meeting its political manifesto is important to the government. Where there is a political bias towards developing a new policy, or making significant changes to a system, evidence that appears to contradict the intended policy direction is ignored:

> For something like curriculum reform, you can't leave that to politics. You need a scientific way of determining how you do it, and how you will roll out your curriculum. The bigger issue of how we rolled out CBC was the politics, because it was close to an election year. The curriculum was rolled out faster than it should have been because the government did not want any bad publicity showing that they had said they would change the curriculum but did not do it. (Interviewee 27, MoICT)

Although research is known to be important, ensuring that the government's priorities are adhered to is key, which may mean not using evidence:

> We have to carry the government agenda. The government agenda is quite crucial, particularly when you are a government employee. Research is informative but it is

> upon us to advise stakeholders that as much the evidence indicates one thing, this is the agenda. (Interviewee 30, MoE)

The government can reject evidence generated by groups outside government that could undermine it. Evidence generated by civil-society organisations that points out challenges in the education system is not received favourably, even if the challenges presented need to be addressed:

> If evidence seems to be criticising or telling the government that they are not doing their work they tend to be defensive and ignore, it because the default mode of the government is to defend itself – even where evidence shows that things are very wrong. (Interviewee 17, civil-society organisation member)

An education activist interviewee pointed out that a person who has gathered negative evidence then has the difficult experience of justifying it as genuine. The government prefers evidence generated by its own institutions, such as the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS) and the Kenya Institute of Public Policy Research and Analysis (KIPPRA). According to civil-society

actors the government may use its own data not because it is the best, but because it can trust its own institutions to report based on shared organisational views and to stick to the intended message, painting the government in a good light.

USAID and UNESCO interviewees both stated that education policies in Kenya are often not based on evidence but rather driven by individuals with the power and authority to do so. A civil-society stakeholder held the same view:

> We have depended and operated on roadside declarations for a very long time. A cabinet secretary or a minister would be somewhere and asked something and they make a pronouncement on it, and it is supposed to become policy – [this is how it is] implemented. With no basis. (Interviewee 26, civil-society organisation member)

Numerous government interviewees pointed out the political nature of the curriculum reform process, emphasising that not even the Cabinet Secretary could stop it:

> When the then Cabinet Secretary for Education tried to derail the curriculum reforms […] you could see what happened. She was even transferred to another ministry, and immediately replaced. (Interviewee 5, KICD)

The dismissals of the Cabinet Secretary after publicly speaking against curriculum reforms points to the importance of political support as premised by the policy networks theory. According to the policy networks theory, the importance of public political support as a tradeable resource depends on how much public actors need or want it and the President, for example, has the power to support, promote, demote or dismiss ministers. In this case, the support of the Cabinet Secretary for curriculum reforms to continue was seen as unnecessary and seemingly detrimental to the process, which led to her dismissal.

Various government staff, civil-society and education activist respondents explained that an independent education consultant funded by UNICEF had conducted an evaluation of the curriculum reform process and concluded that Kenya was not ready for a CBC. The Cabinet Secretary for Education announced this result in the media, generating nationwide confusion about whether the CBC would be implemented or not, because according to the Cabinet Secretary

teachers had not been adequately prepared. A few days later the Cabinet Secretary announced that the reform would go ahead as scheduled, and shortly after this she was replaced, further showing that the government's, and indeed the President's, wishes take priority in decisions about the implementation of policies even if there is evidence to show that such policies are not ideal. The fluid and ever-changing government workforce also limits the extent to which evidence is used, resulting in loss in institutional knowledge and changed priorities and requiring different evidence to meet the new priorities:

> Like you see the laptops project for instance – it was not based on any evidence or how to do things right. During every election [....] every president who comes has their priorities, which are in the manifesto, and these priorities change a lot of things in education. (Interviewee 26, civil-society organisation member)

Government stakeholders argued that political goodwill influences the extent to which evidence is used in policy development. If this is lacking or low, policy change or development will be limited despite evidence of its inherent challenges:

> For […] any policy change there is a political angle to it. The issue to do with political approval or buy-in or goodwill comes in. So, you can have all the evidence you want, and you can come up with very good policies, but if there is no political buy-in – if you do not have political goodwill so that you [can] get the resources you require, then you cannot […] implement whatever policies you want. (Interviewee 50, MoE)

NGO interviewees indicated that their work involved lobbying and evidence advocacy as a strategy to engage with the government and increase evidence use. Involving government stakeholders throughout the evidence-generation process is another important civil-society strategy that groups use to increase evidence use in the development of education policies. Most of the civil-society interviewees and education activists felt that politics played a bigger role than evidence in informing education policy, although one noted:

> We try to get to a point where there is recognition that evidence does not need to work against politics. It can work with politics. (Interviewee 17, civil-society organisation member)

6.3.2. Lack of synergy between different ministries

Various government interviewees specified that the lack of cooperation between different ministries, with different MoE units working in silos, limits the use of evidence in education policy development. This applies not only within MoE but also between different education commissions such as the Teacher Service Commission (TSC), and between public research institutions such as universities:

> One area that we need to improve is coordination of research within the government. We are not 100 per cent in consuming all evidence produced by the different departments. (Interviewee 30, MoE)

MoE is responsible for all education matters in Kenya except for the management of teachers, which is mandated to the TSC. The latter was formed following the 2010 Constitution, which gave it its own powers, unlike previously, when teacher management had been the responsibility of Ministry of Education. Interviewees perceive the ways in which the MoE and TSC work as

resulting in significant confusion about how evidence is generated at the school level, and what decisions can be made based on such evidence:

> The most challenging factor in the education sector is actually the control of teachers to make sure that they deliver in the classroom. The TSC is in charge of the teachers, and if we find any problems, we cannot punish the teacher in any way. We have to go through the TSC, and we are working in parallel. My biggest issue is that it is so difficult to communicate with them. You can write a letter to the TSC on an issue, and you never get replies. (Interviewee 23, MoE)

Another MoE interview experienced significant challenges with disseminating information within the Ministry which limits the use and sharing of evidence:

> Another thing I will say is that one of the problems that we have with the MoE is dissemination of information.... Information is not getting to the people at the right time, and to be honest I can't tell you what is going on in the next Directorate unless perhaps if I have a friend there. I might not even be able to tell you what is happening.

> You see we have a problem giving information to each other, even here at headquarters. (Interviewee 28, MoE)

From the perspective of other interviewees, the lack of synergy between different ministries is driven by competition for financial resources between them, which further reduces the opportunities for evidence sharing and use. (Interviewee 22, USAID)

Coordination between the Ministry of Education and public research institutions such as universities is also weak. This is a significant barrier to evidence use, with evidence produced by universities not easily available to the government:

> We have not perfected our coordination yet so that we can link to universities. You see, the conventional way is where research is actually coordinated and consumed so that when we see a gap or a problem, then the same research should be able to advise us whether or not the only solution is policy. But you see now, contrary to that, we see a gap which could be solved in any other way, but we rush to say that the best thing is policy. So, those are the things that we are trying to work on now. (Interviewee 30, MoE)

An interviewee from CEMASTEA stated that while passing along evidence to different stakeholders within the government is easy, taking responsibility for its use is not, and the lack of a framework of how evidence should be used in education policymaking is a big barrier to its use.

6.3.3. Challenges in accessing research

Another significant barrier to evidence use that is discussed widely in the literature is policymakers' lack of access to relevant evidence. Although various government stakeholders said that evidence was generated for and used in the development of the National Curriculum Policy, some MoE interviewees reported difficulties in accessing it from, for instance, public universities (Interviewee 30, MoE)

It was interesting to find that while MoE complained of limited access to evidence generated outside government, civil-society groups experienced a similar problem: with lack of access to government-generated research a significant barrier to its use as evidence in advocating for policy

change. Various civil-society stakeholders argued that government findings from research conducted for the curriculum reform and the new curriculum pilot were not publicly available.

A UNESCO interviewee also stated that access to government-commissioned research was limited but did not give a reason. The government is unlikely to make evidence public if it portrays it negatively or outside the policy change narrative, as discussed in section 6.3.1. Government and civil society are therefore unable to scrutinise whether evidence has been used to select the best solutions for Kenya's public policy issues.

However, MoE find it difficult to validate and use the overwhelming amounts of available evidence on education generated by many groups, including NGOs, in Kenya:

> There is so much evidence gathered that in some cases, in my own assessment it is not possible to utilise the entire evidence base available. We also cannot just trust all of this data that people give. How will we know what is true and what is not true? (Interviewee 40, MoE)

Not knowing whether evidence is credible can deter policymakers' use of it (Dhaliwal & Tulloch, 2012). A lot of evidence is generated not with the intention to influence policy processes but rather to meet the intended goals of the organisation collecting it. For instance, many civil-society organisations generate and report evidence to meet their funders' requirements. Therefore, although there is an abundance of evidence that could be useful for education policy development, much of it does not reach the government directly.

The government's use of evidence is prevented by its lack of structures for generating, collating and sharing evidence:

> You have to create favourable formats for your research, because the government may not have the time and capacity to sit for hours to process [it], and it has to be related to what they need. (Interviewee 17, civil-society organisation member)

Reports that are easy to review and align with policymakers' evidence needs and the policy development process would considerably improve the government's use of the present.

6.3.4. Bias towards certain groups

Education policymaking differs from policymaking in other sectors for various reasons: first, every policymaker involved has directly experienced education, and this shapes their opinions and informs their approach to education policy; second, the many actors involved bring multiple views and experiences to policies and perspectives that could be considered expert opinion; third, almost the whole of society has personally informed opinions about education; and fourth, the necessary financial investment in public services is accompanied by a demand for high accountability (McLaughlin et al., 2016).

In Kenya, citizen's voices offer a strong source of evidence that should be used in determining policy direction. However, as discussed, the government is not comfortable with civil-society organisations that speak out against it, and although the Ministry of Education seeks to engage all relevant actors in policy decision-making it has a tendency to exclude those that disagree with its views:

> So, they have tried to involve stakeholders, but they have not engaged effectively with all the stakeholders. Like you see what they are doing now with the teachers – they are happily engaging [with] one part of the union and closing the doors to KNUT, which I don't think is a good strategy. (Interviewee 17, civil-society organisation member)

It is significant that government interviewees agreed that although civil-society groups are very vocal about policy, whatever evidence they may produce they cannot stop the policy-making process. Research has shown that policymakers are drawn to special-interest groups that help them advance their own policy agendas, and do not include negative evidence in policy development.

Public participation also has potential for evidence generation. According to Jones, Datta and Jones (2009), while it offers a crucial and important perspective, as local understanding is key to effective programs, citizens' voices can be excluded by a power imbalance between government and citizens that can lead to their participation being used merely for show. In Kenya, the

government favours certain interest groups that it sees as generating credible evidence, which considerably limits further public participation.

Public participation was limited in the development of the National Curriculum Policy. Numerous civil-society and development-partners' interviewees stated that parents of schoolchildren were not adequately involved in the process:

> Parents were not fully involved, and to some extent I say that KNUT was not fully wrong in raising the hell that they were raising – and as I said, it was rushed. (Interviewee 8, UNESCO)

MoE interviewees stated that the needs assessment, which was inclusive in gathering citizens' views, found that parents were dissatisfied with the previous education curriculum and wanted a competency-based curriculum. However, this may not have been a true representation of public views as the decision to reform the curriculum had already been made, and the needs assessment aligned itself to this. It is probable that the participation of groups opposing the introduction of the competency-based curriculum was limited.

The interview data show that the use of evidence is largely determined by the stakeholder with the most influence on a policy direction. KUPPET respondents argued that as the government had the most influence and power in its turn towards the competency-based curriculum, it influenced the extent to which evidence was used:

> You know, a government which has not accepted technocrats to do their work and has not accepted other stakeholders as useful will still be very edgy. So, for example you may poke holes at a policy and get shut out. So, when you get NGOs like Elimu Yetu and others who want to question whether there is quality education, nobody wants to give them a hearing. (Interviewee 33, KUPPET)

The government prefers research generated by international actors: the idea of research as generated in the Global North, with those in the Global South merely its consumers and 'native informants' was raised by one of the education activists. This is also widely discussed in the literature on the politics of evidence generation. Furthermore, global evidence is not assessed to see if it fits the national context:

> We do not think dynamically, and that is why our education is the way it is. When civil servants are presented with evidence from abroad, they just swallow it without thinking of our context and listening to detractors and supporters alike. They do not have a robust education conversation when these policies come – they just believe these guys because they are from abroad. (Interviewee 2, education activist)

The view that locally generated evidence is not as credible as that gathered internationally is a strong barrier to the use of the former. KICD and MoE stakeholders reported an attraction to international education trends and global education agenda, with suspicion about the credibility of evidence generated locally. This preference for research and evidence from overseas is problematical as it may not meet the needs of citizens and education policy in the Global South. However, addressing this barrier to evidence can also enable evidence use, as discussed below.

6.4. Researcher challenges

6.4.1. Researcher characteristics

The literature has shown that researchers' lack of expertise can be a significant barrier to evidence use. For example, research on evaluation use considers evaluator factors – the personal characteristics and actions of the evaluator, e.g., their political sensitivity, credibility, commitment to and rapport with users and their willingness to involve them (Davies, 2004) – important determinants of the extent to which evidence is used, as shown in the present case study:

> The first challenges are with the researchers themselves. Sometimes we are not thorough enough to make sure that both the process and the product are unquestionable. (Interviewee 33, KUPPET)

MoE interviewees also pointed out that questions about researcher expertise have obstructed evidence use in past education policy development:

> Unfortunately, the university people that we had contracted did not have experience in curriculum development, so their report was not focused and was not able to help the curriculum developers revise their curriculum in specific areas. So, as the research unit, we wanted to moderate it but it became a little challenging although of course we revised it for them to look like it can be used, but we requested the curriculum institute to do a kind of summative evaluation which was done in 1999. (Interviewee 9, MoE)

Some civil-society interviewees admitted that many civil-society organisations do not seek to ensure that their research is credible and reputable. At Uwezo, for instance, there is an understanding that the government requires accurate evidence representing the situation under review:

> The government cares about the veracity of the evidence because they also know that there are so many people doing this research and we do not all have equal capacity to generate rigorous evidence. When a policymaker is going to use your advice to make a decision they are [staking] their reputation and the safety and success of the program they

> are going to implement on your evidence. So, they really want some level of assurance that that evidence is sound, and that it may be able to stand if they base an important decision on using it. (Interviewee 35, civil-society organisation member)

Another evaluator factor is the extent to which researchers take policymakers' practical real-world conditions into consideration (Dhaliwal & Tulloch, 2012). Much research that is generated is not useful in the changing and dynamic world of policymaking. An education activist reported that university researchers may have personal motives for generating evidence and, although not all research is useful for policy development, may not prioritise the generation of evidence to influence education policy development. It is therefore important to consider what research characteristics may hinder or enable evidence use in education policymaking.

6.4.2. Improper dissemination of research findings to government

TSC, KUPPET and one civil society interviewees reported gaping challenges in the way in which evidence is disseminated and made available to policymakers. The way evidence is disseminated to the government can enable or hinder its use. KSSHA respondents stated that ensuring that the

government is the first stakeholder to see their research findings is crucial to ensuring that their evidence is received positively, increasing the chance of it being used. MoE interviewees confirmed that the way evidence is communicated to the government influences how it is received and the extent to which it is used. If evidence is communicated in a negative way, attacking the government, it will immediately dispute it:

> Sometimes a researcher can also be […] punitive against the government and may not be really fair […]. Sometimes researchers are limited with information and rush to conclude. They may not have all the information and do not know what the government has done, and then they rush to conclude that the government has not done something. This will not be received well. (Interviewee 30, MoE)

It is important to package research evidence so that it speaks to the different levels of and varying interests within the government. Another MoE interviewee considered that while Kenya has some of the best researchers, particularly in education, the way their evidence is packaged and communicated affects how the government receives and uses it:

> Researchers have evidence on what works and what is needed, but the government is a bureaucracy. This bureaucracy requires that you package your ideas in a manner that will be acceptable both to the decision-makers and to the political class, and I think that is where we have a challenge. So, then most of our ideas stay put in our lockers and on our shelves or in our computer desktops and folders, and they never get to see the light of day. (Interviewee 40, MoE)

The idea that evidence should be packaged in a manner acceptable to the government was also raised by the World Bank interviewee, who stated that from the Bank's perspective, research should not be decided on and conducted in a silo without consultation with the government. It should be conducted with the client and the user of the report in mind, its findings should be directed and focused, and its recommendations should be easy to implement:

> The results of research cannot always be used by experts such as curriculum experts because they are not specific, and they are not focused. So, it makes it difficult to apply them to anything. (Interviewee 9, former MoE staff member)

Building relationships with government stakeholders was mentioned as a factor that enables evidence use. Without a well-managed prior relationship between the research organisation and the government, even properly packaged and communicated evidence may not be well received or used, as civil-society, World Bank and KUPPET actors strongly claimed:

> We have a lot of receptive officers in the government, and some are still very difficult to deal with, so sometimes it boils down to the relationships […] between civil-society players and researchers, and policymakers or policy implementers. (Interviewee 33, KUPPET)

Identifying government stakeholders who are able to make decisions also affects the reception of and extent of evidence use in policymaking. Civil-society and trade union interviewees maintained that the right government stakeholders – and not only those with the power, status and authority to make political decisions but also stakeholders in charge of policy implementation – should be targeted as a way to increase evidence use:

> You talk to the Minister but if the technocrats are not convinced, they are going to undermine what you said to the Minister. They will state that you did not consult them. (Interviewee 35, civil-society organisation member)

Lubienski (et al., 2014) have found that academic research published in peer-reviewed journals is still inaccessible to many education policymakers. The authors argue that if traditional university and think tanks want to have more influence through the evidence they generate, they should communicate their work to policymakers, advocates, and the public. Research has shown that preliminary findings produced by Think Tanks and organisations such as National Research Councils, often do not actively seek a dissemination strategy (Lubienski et al., 2014).

From these discussions, it is clear that the generation of credible and reputable evidence is not enough; the way it is then communicated to the government and relationships between researchers and government stakeholders also influences the extent to which it is applied in policy development. Other barriers to evidence result from the nature of the evidence-generation process, discussed below.

6.5. Challenges in evidence generation

6.5.1. Time, resources and limited education research

The time-consuming nature of generating evidence is adequately addressed in the literature. The time it takes limits the government's motivation to commission research and affects the quality of the evidence produced, even by the government itself (former KICD stakeholder). Time also affects evidence use because research is not always available to policymakers when it is needed:

> We cannot always wait for evidence to be available, or for us to start conducting research, to engage in policy change. (Interviewee 45, education advisor)

Even if research is available when the government requires it, it may be some time before it is used in policymaking. Evidence has implications beyond individual ministries and affect national budgets. As a result, it can take time before its recommendations are used in policy, and researchers may feel that policymakers do not respond to the evidence they have provide or use it to influence policy in a timely manner (Leviton & Hughes, 1981; Valovirta, 2002; Weiss, 1988), which can create mutual mistrust.

Human resources also must be considered when engaging research activity. For MoE, the generation and synthesis of evidence requires substantial human resource capacity and may necessitate the training of personnel to conduct credible, good-quality research.

6.6. Summary

This chapter has discussed how factors within and outside government and specific to the evidence-generation process can impede the use of evidence, and the conflicting reports on the value placed on national evidence – the needs assessment – in influencing policy change in the development of Kenya's National Curriculum Policy. The influence of global data on the National Curriculum Policy has also been discussed, illustrating how evidence is used in legitimising, conceptual and strategic ways to uphold certain policy actors' preferred policies. This discussion provided a foundation from which to discuss barriers to evidence use. Within the government, these were identified as stemming from political factors that often take precedence when governments aim to achieve their manifesto and maintain a positive reputation with the population. Political factors have been shown to affect the extent to which evidence, even if it identifies possible policy gaps, is used. The lack of coordination between different ministries and conflicting teacher management roles of the TSC and MoE have been explained. Difficulties in accessing research have been shown to limit the government's knowledge of what evidence is available, while the excessive amount of evidence on education that has been generated makes it

hard to identify which of all of it is relevant and applicable. The government's bias towards specific stakeholder groups and preference for global research and researchers that do not portray it negatively have been discussed. as evidence generators and data fatigue, hinder the extent to which evidence influences education policy in Kenya.

Researcher or evaluator factors, including expertise, political sensitivity and rapport with users, also influence the extent to which evidence is used. Researchers' motives and the target audience for their evaluation affect whether their evidence will be used in policymaking. How evidence is packaged and communicated to the government to promote its use in policymaking is important in terms of how policymakers summarise evidence reports for easy access; it is also important to select stakeholders with decision-making ability to communicate evidence gathered. Constraints to the generation of evidence caused by time and financial and human resources can impede the use of evidence in education policymaking. The time-consuming nature of evidence generation limit the amount gathered and its availability for use. The time it takes from research generation to the use of its findings should also be borne in mind, as evidence may not always be available when needed or may be used not when it becomes available but at a later stage in policy

development. Finally, human resource constraints can limit the amount of evidence generated and made available for evidence use.

Factors other than evidence influence how policies and developed including how policy agendas are set and what solutions are preferred. In Chapter 7, the factors other than evidence and the stakeholders in the education policy community are discussed.

Chapter 7: Factors that influenced the Development of the National Curriculum Policy

7.1. Introduction

This chapter addresses the second sub-research question: What other influences other than evidence inform education development within the context of the National Curriculum Policy in Kenya?

It applies policy network theory to the findings from analysis of the interviews with stakeholders about the factors that they perceive as playing a key role leading to the development of the National Curriculum Policy which guides the curriculum reforms in Kenya. Data from document analysis is used to complement stakeholder feedback. The analysis highlights four main themes, which are used to categorise the various factors influencing the curriculum change. The discussion here presents these four key themes: the national education policies that influenced the curriculum reform; the key factors behind national political influences on the education policy process; global influences; and the effects of power and resources in determining how public and

private policy actors participate in policy processes. The chapter concludes by showing how these four factors intertwined to influence education policy development processes through the lens of policy network theory.

7.2. National education policies

The Kenyan Constitution of 2010 was one of the key factors informing the development of the National Curriculum Policy:

> The 2010 constitution laid down the procedure on how to come up with the new education policy, including the requirements for public participation. (Interviewee 1, MoE)

Other interviewees felt that the 2010 constitution foresaw what Kenya would need to look like to meet its needs in the coming years. It has curriculum reforms built into it, and the education reform process had to be aligned to these:

> Curriculum reform was built into the 2010 constitution, and it was a requirement. So, by the time the Odhiambo Task Force came on board, Kenyans were already looking forward to curriculum reform. (Interviewee 2, former MoE Staff)

Basic Education Act No. 14 of 2013 was a result of the 2010 constitution. It is the main legislation governing basic education in Kenya. Deriving from Article 53 of the constitution, it promotes free and compulsory basic education in Kenya. Conversations with all the government interviewees revealed that the Act was a steppingstone to the development of the National Curriculum Policy.

The majority of government interviewees highlighted the central role of Kenya's Vision 2030 in the curriculum reform. An interview with a stakeholder who formally worked closely in the development of Vision 2030's social pillar, states that it set out the requirements for education development in the country in 2008, noting that international benchmarking visits were carried out to guide its development:

> The previous president, Mwai Kibaki, went all over the world in 2005. He went to the US, Malaysia, Singapore and to Vietnam, and he was saying [that] as a nation we need our own development vision. So then […] we crafted Vision 2030 and we set out the

> plans for development, including for education. We got a few Kenyans together to do this, and also hired McKinsey [a private consulting company]. (Interviewee 3, former staff, Vision 2030)

It is evident from the above that the countrywide development strategy was influenced by information from the international context. In keeping with policy network theory, the information gathered from international benchmarking studies as discussed in Chapter 6 may have changed how the policy problems were perceived, requiring national-level solutions. It can be assumed that global development processes influenced the policy changes and led to the development of Vision 2030 to address perceived policy problems, including in the education sector.

Changes in national government and political parties also influence the way in which a policy network operates, by changing the rules and norms of the network (Compston, 2009). The National Rainbow Coalition (NARC) government, led by former president Mwai Kibaki, took office in 2002 and was less authoritarian than the preceding government. As a former staff member of the Ministry of State for Planning, National Development and Vision 2030 (MSPNDV)

pointed out, the government was more open to learning from and opening up the national policy environment to global influences. The changed government therefore may also have resulted in changed policy preferences and the political executive's perceptions of education problems and their solutions.

Colclough (2012) notes that Kenya's relations with its donors improved after NARC took office in 2002 because the government was more transparent. This is likely to have led to changes in policy-specific rules and norms, as posited by policy network theory. As a result, the government allowed a wider array of policy actors that may have previously been excluded, including private consulting companies such as Mackenzie, to access the policy development process.

A review of the National Curriculum Policy first drafted in 2015 highlights the nature of donor involvement in national policy development. The 2015 NCP document states that the policy document was developed with the support of UNICEF, which provided financial and technical support (MoE, 2015b):

> When we were starting in 2015, before we could even start the needs assessment, we had no money. So, we tried to approach a number of donors from development partners like the World Bank and UNICEF. The whole curriculum reform process was coming to a budget of 6 billion Ksh ($50 million) and we had to get different donors to finance different aspects of the process. We engaged a lot with UNICEF, and towards the end of 2015 they said they would support the needs assessment. So, you can see that because of the donor support, the process began. (Interviewee 5, KICD)

A review of the summative evaluation of education report also highlights that "the summative evaluation was conducted and finalized with financial support from USAID –Kenya (KIE, 2011)." UNICEF and USAID also financially supported the MoE's facilitation of stakeholder engagement to identify their views on the draft curriculum policy in 2015–2016 (MoE, 2015c). Arguably the information from the summative evaluation of education and needs assessment study, could have been used as a mutually beneficial resource by both public and private policy actors involved in the curriculum reform process. A review of internal communications and letters made available for this research, also highlights how the media was used as an enabling resource

to ensure the legitimacy of the National Curriculum Policy and the curriculum reform process in the face of opposition. Financial support to engage the media was provided by UNICEF and a review of a request letter sent to the agency stated that:

> I wish to express my utmost appreciation for the continued support to the Ministry of Education and in particular your support last year, in the provision of technical assistance for media and communications in the ongoing curriculum reforms. Through your incredible support, the Ministry and its agencies, especially the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development mounted a sustained and well-coordinated communication strategy that helped us to rally the support of all stakeholders behind the curriculum reform. As a result of last year's successful reform activities, the Ministry has now moved to the critical stage of implementing the pilot phase of the proposed new curriculum. This stage requires high-level stakeholder engagement and buy-in, and hence a renewed need for a solid and coordinated communication campaign. (Letter, 2017)

UNICEF Kenya and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), through its Agile and Harmonised Assistance to Devolved Institutions (AHADI), also supported MoEST's facilitation of stakeholder engagement financially once the draft National Curriculum Policy had been developed (MoEST, 2015a). Country dialogues and workshops were set up with the Parliamentary Committee on Education, representatives of the Council of Governors, county executives in charge of education, and other education stakeholders (MoEST, 2015a). These examples display the involvement of global policy actors in national policy-making processes not only in the agenda setting stage, but also in ensuring public participation to increase the legitimacy of the policy decisions made.

According to the majority of interviewees, key national stakeholder expertise is also required to put education legislation and Vision 2030 into effect. As discussed in Chapter 2, Kenya's education policy development process has often begun with the formation of a presidential commission or committee of experts. The central role played by the education commissions was emphasised by a KICD interviewee:

> We conducted a curriculum review based on the recommendations of the 1999 Koech Commission. So, we reviewed the 8-4-4 curriculum and then we sat down to prepare that curriculum in 2000 and rolled it out in 2003. Then in 2007 there was a need to do an evaluation. When we change the curriculum, we usually do monitor, and we keep monitoring, but I think the aspects that we hoped would be addressed by the review in 1999 seemed to be a challenge. When we reviewed the curriculum in 2007 it was clear that although 8-4-4 was to be a practical-oriented curriculum, it was not the case. The hope for 8-4-4 was that if the children are actually taken through practice and we give a lot of emphasis on the practical subjects, then whichever way they go, if they were not able to move on the secondary or had challenges, they could use those skills to start maybe small income-generating activities to sustain themselves and even help them take care of themselves if they were not in school. (Interviewee 15, KICD)

The above quote implies that the stage had been set to change the Kenyan curriculum to the learner-centred competency-based curriculum by as early as 2007 and paints a picture of the country's goal of creating employment by enabling transition into the labour market. Put this

way, the policy decisions taken at the time appear to have been driven by changed perceptions of policy problems and policy solutions generated by national policy actors.

The change of government gave international actors, including donors, increased access to the education policy arena, widening Kenya's education policy network and influencing public actors' policy preferences through a relationship based on resource exchange. Providing increased access to private actors is likely to have improved the Kenyan government's access to key resources such as information and funding, which may have been harder to acquire otherwise. The private policy actors' increased access to the national policy arena would be likely to increase their chances of persuading public actors that their preferred policies would also work for them. The KICD interviewee stated that evidence generated from monitoring and evaluating the curriculum implementation informs policy development. Nationally generated information is therefore seen as a valuable and a key resource that influences government policy preferences and informs policy decisions.

The Douglas Odhiambo Commission came up repeatedly in the interviews as the key driving force that led to the change in the curriculum:

> There was a commission which was developed and it […] emphasised that curriculum change [was] necessary. It was in 2011 that this education committee on education reforms, the Odhiambo Commission, was formed, [and it] was a key driver [of] curriculum change. (Interviewee 5, KICD)

The Odhiambo Commission comprised both public and private policy actors including public actors from the MoE, TSC, Kenya Institute of Education (currently, KICD), Vision 2030, KNEC, public universities, private actors from civil society NGOs and education consultants contracted with the support of Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), USAID and UNICEF. (MOE, 2012)

The need to align the Kenyan education system with the 2010 constitution resulted in the formation of the Commission:

> The constitution informed the creation of the Odhiambo Commission. The constitution spoke of the need to reform the education system, and reforming education needed a task force, and on the basis of that, Odhiambo was appointed. (Interviewee 2, former MoE member of staff)

The Commission made several policy recommendations about how the education system could be aligned with the 2010 constitution and recommended changing to a competency-based curriculum.

> Most of the changes that you are now seeing with CBC came from the Odhiambo Commission. It was from their recommendations that we came up with the system of 2-6-3-3. We actually carried out some study on it and we went out there into the counties, which were at that time districts, to collect data on what different stakeholders would wish to see within the curriculum and within education, and that is how we came up with the new system. (Interviewee 6, former curriculum developer, KICD)

As discussed in Chapter 2, one of the outputs from the Odhiambo Commission was Sessional Paper No. 14 of 2012 which, stakeholders said, is the overarching education framework that informed the development of the National Curriculum Policy.

> We started the issue of the curriculum reform in 2010 but based on the Professor Odhiambo Task Force and their recommendations we agreed that the curriculum

> should be changed and be competency-based. We had begun thinking about curriculum reforms in 2010 but we had not agreed on what kind of curriculum we wanted, and finally around 2012 it was agreed that we need to have a competency-based curriculum. (Interviewee 20, TSC)

Although education policy development in Kenya begins with a participatory process setting the agenda and recommending policy decisions to be made, the formation of the Odhiambo Commission illustrates the government's power to determine who can participate and whose voice is heard in the policy process, and to allow access to the process. Policy actors with relevant information, such as education consultants and those with legitimacy and resources for policy implementation such as NGOs can exchange their resources for a position in the policy process, although participation in a policy network is granted only when the government sees an actor as important to achieving particular goals.

Findings from the interviews suggest that recommendations based on nationally generated evidence such as the Odhiambo Commission play a central role in influencing education policy development in Kenya. In keeping with policy network theory, it can be assumed that the

government valued the information provided by the various actors involved in the Commission. An increase in the value of information it provided may have incentivised the government to grant these policy actors, for example the education consultants, access to the policy process. Such access would have given them the means to put forward their preferences for the curriculum reform and to try to persuade the government that amending policy to include these would benefit both the government and the country as whole.

However, when asked how the Odhiambo Commission's recommendations were arrived at, interviewees did not mention policy actors' interests. A former Commission member and also members of KICD stated that evidence generated by previous education commissions as far back as Kenya's independence in 1963 had influenced the process. The first commissioned report seeking to reform the colonial education system to the new government's system, the Ominde Commission of 1964 appears several times in the data:

> Of course, whenever it comes to education you go back right to the beginning of independence, to the Ominde Commission. For the Odhiambo Commission we referred to all those other commissions because we were trying to look at whether

> there were gaps in recommendations by various commissions that probably have never been implemented, and if there were, what are the likely reasons that they were not taken up, whether they are still relevant today, and what modification would be required. All this documentation that was there before was used. (Interviewee 12, Former KICD staff member)

Policy recommendations in commission reports are not all taken up and implemented; rather, they are reviewed and built upon in the development of new education policies, suggesting that evidence and information generated are only two of the many influences on education policy decisions. While participants saw the commissions as playing a central role in education policy development in Kenya, it was evident from the interviews that the Odhiambo Commission's recommendations and resulting sessional paper were not ratified in Parliament for largely political reasons.

7.3. Politics

Politics is a key influence on education policy development in Kenya. Numerous interviewees stated that political factors strongly influenced the direction of the new education policy. The political factors raised are discussed in the following sections and include those that prevented the Odhiambo Commission's report from being ratified in Parliament, trade union politics and their opposition to curriculum reforms, and the politics of the government of the day.

7.3.1. The politics surrounding the Odhiambo Task Force Report

As discussed in Chapter 2, education commissions and their recommendations have historically influenced education policy development in Kenya. Most interviewees reported that Sessional Paper No. 14 of 2012, developed from the Odhiambo Commission's report, was the main policy document guiding the development of the National Curriculum Policy.

In 2011 as has been discussed in chapter 7.3, the Douglas Odhiambo Task Force was set up to find ways of aligning the education system with the 2010 constitution and Vision 2030 (MoE, 2012; Kabita & Ji, 2017). The task force is seen as a key influence in the decision to change the Kenyan

curriculum. Its assessment acknowledges the findings of the summative evaluation discussed in Chapter 6.2 and highlights gaps in the previous curriculum and the importance of addressing these. To align the education system with Vision 2030's goals, the task force called for a focus on core educational outcomes based on the content of the subject taught and the development of the range of skills and competencies required by learners and teachers (ibid, 2012:60).

A review of the Task Force report highlights that a curriculum focusing on technology, innovation, entrepreneurship and closer alignment to the labour market was advised, similar to the recommendation of the summative evaluation and the Douglas Odhiambo task force suggested reforming education and training in Kenya and advised that the structure of the education system should be more flexible and comprehensive (MoE, 2012). It recommended education and training to foster the holistic and integrated development of individual learners' potential to produce intellectually, emotionally and physically balanced citizens. It also recommended the development of a curriculum reform policy that takes the constitution, Vision 2030, the EAC protocol, international standards and Kenyans' needs into consideration (MoE, 2012). It outlined various potential government strategies and called for major reform of the basic

and tertiary education curriculum and assessment system. It advocated developing a variety of skills and competencies to support Kenya's global economic competitiveness, and a standardised assessment framework that identifies the knowledge, skills and competencies to be assessed (MoE, 2011).

The task force strongly emphasised education in science, technology and innovation, and the integration of vocational and technical skills into the curriculum to meet Kenya's industrialisation goals (ibid). It suggested restructuring the education system and reducing the number of years' pupils spend at each level. The task force suggested restructuring the KNEC to make it able to respond to global assessment trends, assess core competencies and align these to specific levels in basic and tertiary education (MoE, 2012:3). The task force's report resulted in the drafting of Sessional Paper No. 14 of 2012, 'Reforming Education and Training in Kenya (MoE & MoHE, 2012). However, the sessional paper was not ratified in parliament, and it is noted that 'the task force presented their report in a National Stakeholder conference but it was opposed by some on the basis of high implementation costs (MoE, 2015a:16), although various recommendations from

the Odhiambo task force were taken up, including the development of the Kenya National Qualifications Framework Act No. 22 of 2014 (GOK, 2014).

Based on the recommendations of Sessional Paper No. 14 of 2012, MoE began to consider curriculum reform and to put strategies in place to inform such change. However, not all the task force's recommendations were adopted. For instance, its recommendations about transforming KNEC assessment processes have not been addressed (MoE & MoHE, 2012). Recommendations from the task force were used to set the education policy agenda, despite limited stakeholder support and without a ratified framework to guide the education reform. The agenda was set based on the task force's report, and the decision to change the curriculum to CBC was made.

I was curious to discover why the Odhiambo Task Force was repeatedly quoted by interviewees as a central influence in the curriculum change while its sessional paper had not been passed in Parliament. Various reasons emerged: some interviewees, especially government stakeholders, gave the reason as Parliament being in recess, followed by a change of government.

> [After the Odhiambo Task Force Report came out] we had a sessional paper that was not fully adopted by the government – or not really by government, […] it was not enacted by Parliament. Parliament went into recess just before they could adopt the sessional paper. But the Ministry continued using that sessional paper, irrespective of the fact that Parliament had not adopted it. (Interviewee 2, former MoE staff member)

Despite this, the sessional paper continued to be used as the guiding framework supporting the development of the National Curriculum Policy. When I dug deeper however, another former member of MoE stated that the sessional paper was never passed in Parliament because there was no buy-in from technocrats:

> One other, bigger problem was when Odhiambo presented the report to stakeholders, it was like there was a problem between the technical people in government and the Commission. It's like it was not approved by stakeholders. But the Ministry had already approved it, and many documents had started coming from it. (Interviewee 9, MoE)

The interview data clearly shows that policy actors whose buy-in may have been necessary to provide political support for the policy change were left out of the process. This demonstrates the government's ability to give preferential access to policymaking processes, and its power to take unilateral policy decisions despite receiving limited support from various policy actors.

Highlighting just how selective the government was in providing access to some policy actors and not to others, the former member of MoE went on to state that while the Cabinet Secretary for Education was very involved with the Odhiambo Commission, the Commission had failed to include the technical-education stakeholders responsible for policy implementation, and reported directly to the Cabinet Secretary without making direct reference to the technical stakeholders. This contributed to the limited support for the Commission's report:

> The report was developed at a higher level, and so the report was finalised, and it was ready to be shared. This is a report that had not been owned by the Ministry's technical people but was presented to the Cabinet Secretary, and the Cabinet Secretary said it was okay. So, when it came to the presentation of the report to the wider stakeholders, unfortunately the Cabinet Secretary had already been

> transferred. The new Cabinet Secretary did not understand the technicalities. So, then the technical people at the Ministry, the directors, did not attend the stakeholders' meeting, and then when other stakeholders like KNUT and KUPPET and the NGOs like the Elimu Yetu Coalition realised that the Ministry's technical people were not there, they did not support it [either]. (Interviewee 9, MoE)

This statement highlights both the importance of including all stakeholders that can influence education policy development, and the impact of the turnover of political appointees on education policy development.

Stakeholders' interests offer another perspective on the non-adoption of the Odhiambo Task Force Report. The TSC interviewee stated that there the Commission members were forced to produce many iterations of the sessional paper to meet the different stakeholders' interests, which stalled it for several years:

> You know the Odhiambo Report was not adopted, but it recommended that we needed to have a CBC. But now the sessional paper was not approved by Parliament. It kept having regenerations and getting revised. For example, when we started in

> 2012 we took the paper to Parliament and we were told to go back and add something else. Now 2012 ended and 2013 came, and we took it back and we were told to go and do one, two, three more things. So, there were several changes. You know in the education family there are several kinds of interests, so everybody wants to put something in. So, it kept on having those kinds of changes, revisions and all that. (Interviewee 20, TSC)

Despite the lack of stakeholder buy-in and approval of the Commission's report, the sessional paper was used as a guide for curriculum reform. The National Curriculum Policy was developed from the recommendations of the sessional paper in an apparently unanimous move by the government. As there was no parliamentary approval of Sessional Paper No. 14 of 2012 as the guiding framework for curriculum reforms, there was a lot of controversy and dissension about the curriculum change process from key stakeholders, particularly the Kenyan National Union of Teachers (KNUT).

7.3.2. Union politics

The majority of stakeholders interviewed noted that KNUT did not agree with the proposal to change the Kenyan curriculum. Neither of the two KNUT stakeholders interviewed supported the curriculum changes, arguing that the changes were not based on credible evidence and had no legal backing, as Sessional Paper No. 14 of 2012 had not been approved in Parliament:

> Douglas Odhiambo's report with respect to reforming the curriculum was voted down in Parliament at 55 to 25 votes in 2012. So, we cannot talk about being guided by a report that was voted down by stakeholders. The recommendations about curriculum reforms are contained in the government's strategic plan for the MoE 2013–2018, and so this new curriculum is not based on any report or any credible study. It is purely a political imposition. (Interviewee 15, KNUT)

Confirming KNUT's opposition to the curriculum reforms, a former member of MoE noted:

> [The] sessional paper was never adopted in Parliament. Opponents to the reform process, like KNUT, picked that as an issue, that we were not properly anchored in

> the legal framework and the required reform processes. Anyone could go to court and challenge us. (Interviewee 9, former MoE Staff)

Government stakeholders felt that the education curriculum reform did not require a sessional paper to back it up as it had the backing of the Basic Education Act and the Kenyan Constitution. The curriculum reforms began in 2014, and the National Curriculum Policy was drafted in 2015, as discussed in Chapter 2. KNUT continued to oppose the reform, arguing that correct process had not been followed:

> A new curriculum must be guided by a policy framework. Also, there have to be stakeholder consultations where you take the stakeholders through the summative evaluation of the 8-4-4 and the needs assessment report so that they can understand the gaps and what needs to be in place so everyone can approve what has to be done. Then the highest level of policy is Parliament. Parliament debating and approving a law is a key policy process decision, and once Parliament approves it, they will allocate money for legislation to be developed and a sessional paper. The sessional paper we have now was

> developed in 2019 after implementation had started. The policy cannot come at the tail end when you have started implementation. (Interviewee 15, KNUT)

The government had already decided on the policy decision to be made, however, and the Cabinet Secretary for Education was often heard in the media stating that 'the train has left the station' (Interviewee 46, UNESCO), implying that nothing, not even the lack of buy-in from all the stakeholders, was going to stop the reform. One interviewee pointed out that the government side-lines policy actors that do not support their policy preferences:

> You see the government is more comfortable with KUPPET, and so they will involve them. Although I also have a problem with KNUT's approach to union politics, I don't think that should mean that you close the door to them and their team. I think that we should have an open-door policy in terms of building policies in Kenya. (Interviewee 17, civil society organisation)

The 2010 Constitution of Kenya advocates for public participation in policy development processes, as discussed in Chapter 2. However, as the civil-society interviewee said, the government chooses which policy actors are granted access to policy processes. It also appears

that in spite of the provisions for public participation laid out in the constitution, the government has the discretion to change the rules and norms that govern policy processes, including deciding on membership of the policy network to maintain its preferred policy.

As discussed in Chapter 6, the decision to reform the Kenyan curriculum appears to have been driven by the central government, with very little public participation at the agenda-setting and decision-making stages. A review of the report from the high-level dialogue held with stakeholders from Parliament in 2015, highlights that the need for public participation was seen as important to the curriculum reform process (MoEST, 2015a). The report made reference to the Constitution of Kenya and the provision under article 232 (1)(d) for public servants to include citizens in the policymaking process. The active participation of all government stakeholders in encouraging citizens' views and input was recommended by Parliamentary stakeholders to increase the legitimacy of the curriculum reform, with the suggestion that the draft National Curriculum Policy be made public within a reasonable time to allow for citizen participation (MoEST, 2015a). This however was not followed, although there was considerable resistance to the curriculum reforms from education activists and the Kenya National Union of Teachers

(KNUT) in particular. One of the issues was teacher preparedness, with many stakeholders arguing that teachers were ill-equipped to implement CBC. One of KNUT's main complaints was that the curriculum reforms were not based on any legal framework or guiding policy (ibid).

A review of meeting minutes from the second meeting of the National Steering Committee on Curriculum Reforms held in May of 2016, again acknowledged the necessity of engaging and sensitising a wider range of stakeholders on the curriculum reform process, highlighting the centralised nature of the policy development process.

> The committee highlighted the groups that needed to be included in sensitization of the reformed curriculum and capacity development of implementers. One of the most outstanding observations was the need for strategies to engage and sensitize a broad range of stakeholders, including parents, communities, teachers, field officers from the ministry of education and other institutions who are offering support for curriculum implementation. It was emphasised that mechanism must be developed to address the immediate and long term measures that will be taken especially in teacher preparation. (Meeting Minutes, May 2016)

These findings not only highlight how limited public participation was in the development of the NCP but also echo the sentiments of different authors on the challenges of implementation of LCE in Africa- problems with definition, inappropriate transfer and poor implementation, including failing to prepare teachers for the curriculum reform, rapid and over ambitious policymaking, inappropriate communication, support and monitoring strategies (Komba & Mwandaji, 2015; Schweisfurth, 2006, 2011, 2013a, 2013b; Suleiman, 2020).

It is also clear that contested education policy decisions are still made and implemented in the face of stakeholder opposition. Public participation in policy decision-making is tapped into after the policy development stage, perhaps as a means of legitimising policy decisions in retrospect.

The KNUT interviewees stated that the government did not allow citizens to engage in democratic processes, and many of the changes implemented in the education sector have been made to fulfil the government's manifesto at any cost, whether or not such policies are good for the country. To drive this point home, one such stakeholder interviewed pointed to the government's failed laptop project:

> The most challenging thing is limited democratic space for consultation. For the last seven years, there has been a dictatorship and the introduction of many programs in the education sector that are not properly conceived. Look, for example, at the laptop project that came in as a Jubilee Manifesto promise with a lot of high expectations. To date we have got only 1 million laptops supplied to schools with 70 billion spent, and teachers have not been trained and half of the laptops are not in use. (Interviewee 15, KNUT)

A review of a meeting brief from the National Steering Committee on Curriculum Reforms also highlighted a memorandum presented by KNUT in 2017, indicating the unions concerns on the curriculum reform process including: the need for the curriculum policy to be gazetted, communication to teachers to raise awareness on issues of competencies and new learning areas; the need to develop sound communication strategies to share information with the public at each curriculum development stage; adequate training for curriculum developers and teachers; concerns around the high pupil teacher ratio and the effects this will have on teaching

competencies (Meeting brief, 2017). Despite many of these concerns, the curriculum review process continued as strategized by the government.

The interviewees' feedback and evidence from documents suggests that the government employs different strategies to avoid policy amendment and maintain its preferred policies. Perhaps one of these strategies is to limit policy actors' access to the policy development process. Contradicting the KNUT stakeholder quoted above, a former government stakeholder argued that there had been public participation, and that the trade unions had been involved in trying to get the sessional paper approved:

> They were saying that there was no public participation, and so we presented evidence […] from a meeting in 2015 and we can show that KNUT, KUPPET, the Catholics and actually all religious organisations met and discussed the sessional paper then. (Interviewee 9, MoE)

Still, the KNUT interviewees were adamant that public participation had been limited, and that even when it appears to have been included this was only for show:

> The government wants to use the presence of our leaders in policy discussion meetings without necessarily seeking our opinion. (Interviewee 16, KNUT)

Through the policy network theory lens, the government involving policy actors in policy processes but not taking their opposition to its preferred policies on board could be another of its strategies for maintaining its own policy decision. Allowing specific actors like KNUT into the policy process may also have been a strategy for obtaining resources from other policy actors such as donors. Involving opposing policy actors but giving them limited power in policy amendment may have had the twofold effect of creating transparency to attract a wider network of policy actors with the resources required by the government such as donors and allowing the government to maintain its preferred policy.

KNUT interviewees argued that many of Kenya's education policies are pushed forward entirely by political and business interests. The majority of the civil-society stakeholder interviewees agreed on this point and expressed disappointment in the laptop project, stating that political interests are often the guiding force behind education policy development in Kenya.

KNUT also opposed the curriculum reform process because it felt that teachers had not been adequately prepared for the implementation of the CBC. KNUT's central mandate is teachers' welfare, and it sees teacher preparedness for the implementation of the new curriculum as something that should have been done before implementation began. Teacher preparedness was raised by numerous other stakeholders as a big challenge to the development and implementation of the National Curriculum Policy. UNESCO Interviewee 9 said 'There is a preparedness problem. The policy is okay, but teachers are not prepared.' A Kenya Secondary Schools Heads Associations (KSSHA) stakeholder added:

> What we had advocated was the initial training of teachers. This was not taken into consideration. The retooling of teachers was not given adequate time prior to policy implementation. (Interviewee 25, KSSHA)

KUPPET stakeholders also stated that they had raised concerns with the government that teachers were not adequately prepared for implementation of the new curriculum. Both KUPPET and KNUT initially disrupted the curriculum reform process. Despite the challenges with teacher training and teacher preparedness, stakeholders felt that the government, and specifically the

Teacher Service Commission, whose mandate is to support and train teachers, was concerned only with following its own agenda.

This speaks to the political nature of policy development and how, despite the gaps in the policy development and implementation processes, political drivers and actors' interests may supersede the processes required for successful policy development and implementation. A civil-society interviewee noted:

> TSC is not engaging. They are arrogant. They think they know – of course they know that the model is not working, but they just want to push through a government agenda. (Interviewee 35, civil-society organisation)

Despite the challenges raised by both KNUT and KUPPET, KUPPET eventually started to support the curriculum reform process:

> We were convinced that this thing had to take place, and because we had the good will of the Government we gave in. So, we decided to support it because the convincing statement from the experts was that there is no way we are going to be

> left behind as a country with the old system, which has been criticised. Which of course I agree with. (Interviewee 33, KUPPET)

This explains the civil-society interviewees' statements presented earlier in this chapter. KUPPET's cooperation made the government more comfortable about involving it in policy processes. It is likely that because of the nature of resource exchange common in policy networks, KUPPET benefited in some way from an exchange of resources with the government or other policy actors. Perhaps providing resources at their disposal such as information, teachers' political support and cooperation with the implementation allowed KUPPET to put forward policy amendments favouring the Union and its members. For the government, collaborating with KUPPET reduced the strength of its alliance with KNUT and increased the support for curriculum reform with voters. With KUPPET supporting the government, KNUT was the only trade union opposing the curriculum reform. KNUT argued that the process followed in designing the curriculum and syllabus was inadequate. KNUT interviewees felt that the new curriculum had been designed hurriedly:

> …the rest of the stages, like the syllabus design and development of teaching and learning materials, was also hurried, with business interests in mind. (Interviewee 15, KNUT)

Many civil-society interviewees also saw the implementation of the CBC as rushed and the curriculums not properly designed:

> The rush to implementation was politically driven because the President had promised to deliver education reforms by the end of his term in 2017. (Interviewee 35, civil-society organisation)

From KNUT's point of view, the curriculum reform process was not founded on any legislative or policy framework, there was limited public participation, teacher preparation was inadequate, and the development of the curriculum design was rushed. However, various government stakeholders and a civil-society stakeholder had a different idea about why KNUT opposed the change:

> The opposition of KNUT in my opinion was driven by the fact they were going to lose membership to KUPPET because of the Junior Secondary issue. Junior Secondary was to go to secondary school, which was quite predictable, which meant that KNUT, whose membership is primary school teachers, would be cut by two years and lose about 25% of its membership. They would lose this membership to KUPPET when those teachers started seeing themselves as secondary school teachers. (Interviewee 40, MoE)

In the past KNUT, has had a strong voice and been able to influence the direction of education policy with its large membership. The curriculum reform, and especially the development of the National Curriculum Policy, appears to have weakened their voice in opposition, perhaps because the unions did not communicate their policy preferences and negotiate for policy amendments with the government with a united front. While political support is a tradeable resource in a policy network, its significance depends on how much the government wants or needs it, and KNUT's position may have been weakened because the government did not need its political support to go ahead with their policy decision. It is likely that the government used

other strategies to gather voter support and the unions' popularity was affected by doubts planted by MoE about KNUTs motives for opposing the curriculum reform process. It is impossible to know whether the government and civil-society stakeholders are correct about KNUT's motives, or whether they were noble motives raising concern about the challenges of the new curriculum. However, as Tabulawa (2013) and Schweisfurth (2015) discuss, curriculum reforms in Africa have often been carried out quickly and without adequate preparation in order to ensure their successful implementation, so it is plausible that the basis of KNUT's opposition was credible. Interviews with education activists made it clear that the government does not take kindly to opposition. This was confirmed by some government stakeholders who, when asked for their views on some of the most vocal opponents of the curriculum reforms, referred to education activists as 'noisemakers.'

It may appear from the discussion that trade unions' influence on education policy processes is not strong. However, in 2018 the National Curriculum Policy was made available to the public, and in 2019 a sessional paper to guide education reforms was developed and ratified in Parliament. From KNUT's perspective the development of the sessional paper was rushed:

> If CBC was rolled out in 2017, why do we have the sessional paper in 2019? Because when we questioned them, they realised the legal faults and therefore they were trying to correct it. At the policy stage, there should have been a task force made up of professionals in the sector that included and was chaired by a prominent scholar from the university to help with developing all these issues, including the sessional paper. But now there is a taskforce working. What is the taskforce doing when CBC has already been rolled out? (Interviewee 15, KNUT)

In line with the interviewees' arguments, I believe that the government addressed the policy gap as a result of KNUT and other education activists' opposition to the lack of legislation. Although trade unions buying into the process can either drive or hinder the development of education policy, the political agenda of the day seems to have been stronger in leading the education policy change.

7.3.3. Politics and the government of the day

The government of the day, and essentially the President, has the final say on what policies are developed and implemented. A civil-society interviewee said:

> The President promised he would deliver education reforms and curriculum reforms by the end of his terms, so in 2017 there was pressure to make sure it was one of the boxes ticked. (Interviewee 35, civil-society organisation)

Interviewees complained that what citizens want does not seem to matter, insinuating a lack of democracy and strong dictatorial processes in the making of education-policy decisions for the country:

> The politician has the most influence, and when I say the politician, it is just the presidency. Where the President thinks, this thing will go, it will go. What you do does not matter. What you think does not matter. The President is alpha and omega in this arrangement. The President promised he would change the education system. He did not manage during his first term – he has made sure it happened in his second

> term before he goes away. So, it is a political legacy, nothing more. (Interviewee 44, education activist)

Discussion with World Bank interviewees made it clear that the President making policy decisions unilaterally is not unique to Kenya, as they had also witnessed this in other East African countries. The World Bank interviewee stated that because the President also decides on how the budget is allocated, he has a lot of control over what policies are passed: 'Reality hits you between the theory of what you've learnt and how the government operates' (Interviewee 18, World Bank). Statements such as these lead me to conclude that it may not matter what national legislative guidelines are in place to direct policy development processes – for example the constitution, as stated earlier, advocates for public participation – as political power such as that of the President may have the final say in Kenya. This is likely, and is in keeping with the idea that changes in government actors' preferences can influence policy decisions, and the government can make a unilateral decision on the basis of pre-existing policy preferences without considering the views of other policy actors (Compston, 2009: 39)

From the World Bank's perspective, however, working with the government to strengthen its policies once they have already been passed is the best thing to do. on the CBC, for example, as stated earlier, the Cabinet Secretary for Education was repeatedly heard saying 'the train has left the station:'

> Once the government passes the policy, like now for the CBC, the train has left the station whether we like it not – that is the direction that government is taking, and— the best we can do is to work with them, to do evaluations and strengthen what needs to be strengthened, but at the end of the day it is really a government decision. (Interviewee 18, World Bank)

It was also felt that sticking to its manifesto is of primary importance for the government:

> You will find that certain things, however much you want them to be included, the government may not want to include them because they could have political repercussions. The government of the day would want to stick to its manifesto, and that is why some of the things will not be included in a policy. (Interviewee 25, KSSHA)

A former MoE interviewee pointed out that governments have historically been faced with a political dilemma when it comes to education policy decisions. The goal has been for each president to show their education-sector achievements by influencing education output with the political focus on this:

> Quality always suffers, as much as we try to deal with it. Quality always suffers because people out there can easily identify with access, they can easily identify with relevance as opposed to quality, and that has been a problem. (Interviewee 9, MoE)

Political popularity and legitimacy appear to be higher priorities than improving education provision when developing education policies. Many civil-society interviewees believed that political legitimacy plays a key role in determining which education reforms are completed. One stakeholder argued that the focus is on tangible outputs:

> There is a reason why you find that it is so easy for a politician to construct a classroom rather than train teachers. It is because the classroom is visible and they want to use that for political mileage. (Interviewee 26, civil-society organisation)

It was also argued that political appointments often influence policy development processes, and even though an education commission is supposed to be composed of stakeholders selected on the basis of their expertise, this may not always be the case:

> If my appointment is based on who I know as opposed to what I can do, when I am appointed to lead a particular process or commission in coming up with a particular education policy, the first thing I do is to ask my boss, my appointing authority, 'What are your views?' If, for instance during a discussion on what needs to get into the policy, there comes a discussion that is contentious, I will go back to my boss and ask them: 'This is what the people are saying – what is your view?' In other words, I am not driving the process from the technical point of view, as it should be, [but] rather from what my appointing authority would wish to see. (Interviewee 12, former KICD staff member)

This implies that although, as discussed, education commissions play a central role in education policy development, political factors may interfere with the choice of which actors participate and the nature of their participation. This essentially reduces the commission's ability to inform policy

development objectively in the presence of ulterior interests. A civil-society interviewee noted that the stakeholder chosen by the government to represent civil-society organisations in the Odhiambo Task Force was someone sympathetic to the government, and argued that they were chosen to take part in the commission for this reason and did not share the views of civil society overall:

> They chose people who will not think, people who will be told 'This is what the government wants, so find a way of making it happen,' and for that reason when they asked me, I thought 'Appearing before this commission is a waste of my time and would only increase the chances of tainting my reputation. (Interviewee 35, civil-society organisation)

However, from the perspective of some stakeholders the problem is not so much the lack of democracy as the fact that political will is necessary for policy change to happen:

> Education is very political – that is what people do not understand. That there is not much that you can do without political will. (Interviewee 12, former KICD staff member)

The interview data points to the strong influence of national politics in education policy development in Kenya. In line with policy network theory, the government uses politics as a resource to determine the rules and norms of the policy network, including which actors will be granted access to the policy process. Political will appears to be a factor that incentivises the government into reviewing policy problems and seeking what it perceives to be appropriate solutions. Where there is political will more policy actors may be granted access to the policy process. However, interviewees considered that the centrality of politics in education policymaking limited public participation and compromised the democratic process.

7.4. Global education influences

When asked, what informs national educational policies, interviewees from the MoE and the World Bank suggested that the government has unilateral decision-making power over what policy decisions are made and that it made the decision to develop the National Curriculum Policy.

> From where I sit, once the government passes a policy, that is the direction the government is taking, and so the best we can do is to work with them to do evaluations and strengthen what [needs strengthening]. (Interviewee 18, World Bank)

The evidence of the World Bank interviewee also suggested that the Kenyan government has full autonomy in the policy development process, with the World Bank participation limited to sharing its resources such as its cooperation with the implementation. Also, while it may appear from these statements that the Kenyan government decided to reform the curriculum unilaterally and independently of resource exchange with other actors, policy network theory would suggest that the Bank's participation was incentivised by some advantage, because policy actors only participate in interactions from which they will benefit themselves.

The World Bank and the Kenyan government would be unlikely to maintain a relationship from which neither benefited. The evidence from the World Bank interviewee displays the relationship of resource exchange between them, the Bank providing expertise in policy implementation, evaluation, knowledge and financial support, and Kenya providing access to the policy process, allowing the Bank to negotiate their preferred policy amendments to meet their global development goals. Government stakeholders' feedback about the benchmarking visits and studies hint at a deliberate attempt to learn more about competency-based curriculums than any other type of curriculum:

> It was politics, and also some people had been taken to Arusha and trained on CBC by UNESCO, so they probably had some allegiance to their benefactor. After the training, they actually developed a community of practice for CBC in 2009. Tanzania and Rwanda were already implementing CBC at this time as well. (Interviewee 10, former KICD staff member)

This suggests that the government's preference was for CBC reforms, and is consistent with policy network theory. The implementation of the CBC in other East African countries and the

regional agreement to harmonise education in the East African Community, presented external factors that changed the responsibilities of government. As a result of these changes new policy actors, for instance regional actors such as the East African Community, had a role to play in Kenya's education reform, weakening the authority of national public actors and thus reducing their ability to amend policy (Compston, 2009).

Contrary to this argument, the information obtained from benchmarking could have also altered policy choices by convincing various government actors to change their policy preferences and choose the CBC reform and development of a National Curriculum Policy. To investigate whether this was the case, I asked interviewees whether any other choices had been considered before this specific policy direction was taken. I sought a clear picture of why this direction was chosen and what informed the decision to move from the 8-4-4 curriculum focusing on specific subjects to a learner-centred competency-based curriculum focusing on students' needs and interests and measuring their competencies:

> I know the government looked at over 20 CBC curriculums, and frankly speaking, […] we told them 'It does not matter. What matters is for you to define your benchmark for each grade and for each critical subject.' (Interviewee 18, World Bank)

This suggests that the World Bank's own preference is for a learner-centred curriculum in any form and indicates their expertise and resources as technical and knowledge experts regarding what works in curriculum reform. It appears that this expertise was perceived as valuable by the Kenyan government, incentivising it to provide the Bank with access to the policy development process.

The UNESCO interviewees considered the curriculum reform overdue, as UNESCO's International Bureau of Education (IBE) recommends a curriculum review every five to ten years and Kenya had not reviewed its curriculum for over 30 years:

> A curriculum is to be reviewed every 10 years, so […] 8-4-4 began in 1989, and that was a whole 30 years – it was long overdue. (Interviewee 8, UNESCO)

A conflicting view of UNESCO's perspective argues that its advocacy for the use of learner-centred curricula such as the CBC, not only in Kenya but also in other African countries, was the reason behind Kenya's curriculum change:

> The issue of a competency or skill-based approach was the 'in thing' the world over, and we had international organisations such as UNESCO and UNICEF and all those kinds of organisations trying to support some of the third-world countries or developing countries into thinking the skills-based or competency kind of approach, with regard to the curriculum, is the best. (Interviewee 12, former KICD staff member)

This argument seems plausible, as many African countries including Tanzania, Rwanda, Ethiopia, Ghana and Zambia are all using a CBC curriculum, suggesting the influence of bilateral and multilateral actors on national education policies. A preference for a skills-based curriculum also suggests that global economic factors influence what private actors want national governments to do in the area of education policy to meet the market's labour needs. Changing

economic factors bringing about changes in Kenya's economic goals led to changed perceptions of education policy problems and their solutions (Compston, 2009).

The country's need for 21st-century skills aligned to global standards was also said to have influenced the development of the National Curriculum Policy:

> Twenty-first-century skills is a global perspective, and at this point in time that is the emphasis globally which influenced us. (Interviewee 7, KICD)

> I think our needs in Kenya influenced policy development. Like now the need for us to be relevant in the twenty-first century led us to this change. (Interviewee 21, KUPPET)

Consistent with policy network theory, global scientific and technological developments influenced the Kenyan education policy actors' perceptions of problems and solutions and altered their policy preference for CBC reform:

> Global trends influence our policy changes. Kenya does not want to be left behind when everyone else is moving with the bandwagon. (Interviewee 8, UNESCO)

For Kenya to align itself with global scientific and technological advances it will require twenty-first-century skills such as competency in STEM and IT skills. This would be facilitated by education development through curriculum reform and would increase access to the national and global labour markets.

While it could be assumed that the Government of Kenya, incentivised by the prospect of economic development through education policy reform, provided resources such as access and policy amendments for private actors such as UNESCO, UNICEF and the World Bank in exchange for access to information, global markets and private investment. In fact, disputing their influence over the policy development process, a UNESCO interviewee stated:

> No, we did not inform policy change, we only provided technical support. When the government says, they want to do a policy we identify technical experts and we put them in government to work with the team. (Interviewee 8, UNESCO)

The KUPPET interviewee highlighted the assumption that Kenya's education policy needs are synonymous with global trends, suggesting that this reliance on aligning with global trends would further weaken the legal authority of national policy actors, reducing their ability to deny

private actors access to the policymaking process or exercise a legal veto on policy decisions. In keeping with this argument, unlike the World Bank stakeholder's view it is likely that the Kenyan government aligning with global trends meant that it did not have autonomy in the policy decision made to reform the curriculum.

Not all interviewees agreed that the need for twenty-first-century skills was a motivation for the education policy reform in Kenya:

> Even when they say twenty-first-century skills, it makes no sense. The Kenyan education system has always been aligned to industry. All they want is for us to be workers and this is the priority – it is not about skills. (Interviewee 2, education activist)

From the perspective of national private actors, underlying factors other than the intention of equipping Kenya with twenty-first-century skills influenced the education reforms. For the education activist quoted above, factors including business interests and political factors, discussed further in Chapter 7.3, are key influences.

International education agreements and development conventions such as the 1990 Jomtien Declaration committing to education for all and the sustainable development goals, also had a key role in influencing national education policy reforms. Kenya has signed and ratified most international treaties, declaring its commitment to the provision of education as a human right:

> International conventions like Education for Sustainable Development influenced the decision [to go] for CBC, which was now the key thing. We have now moved to the Sustainable Development Goals, so we also had to move in those conventions; Kenya is a signatory to all of them. (Interviewee 7, KICD)

All the civil-society interviewees agreed that the UNESCO and UNICEF are big influencers of global development goals and advocate for national policy changes to align to these and provide technical- information- and implementation-level financial support to help countries reach these goals.

Alignment of national education policies with international conventions was confirmed by one of the two UNESCO interviewees, who described seeing National Education Sector Support Plans (NESSP) aligned to Sustainable Development Goal 4 (UNESCO, 2015):

> I think one of the key things that we did, and I think that it has not been done before, is with the SDG 4 and the Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA). When the Ministry finished drafting the National Education Sector Support Plan (NESSP) we had a full week of consultation with them: 'This is your NESSP, and this is what you propose, and these are your targets.' We then opened the SDG 4 and opened CESA and then we went through the three documents to see how [they] are aligned [and] if you ask me from where I sit, I sat in those forums and I think we have a very brilliant technical capacity at the national level. We had very minimal changes to make at the NESSP. (Interviewee 46, UNESCO)

Additionally, as discussed in Chapter 6.2, the Technical Committee on Curriculum Reforms considered evidence from country evaluations on the achievements of the MDG goals for education and considered UNESCO recommendations for education in drafting the National Curriculum Policy in 2015. A review of the 'curriculum reform roadmap 2016-2024' highlights one of UNESCO's influence in the curriculum reform process by specifying the governments 'engagement on development of instructional materials for competency-based curriculum in

collaboration with UNESCO-IBE between January and December 2016 with a budget of 2 Million Kenyan Shillings' (MoEST, 2015c).

The above statements illustrate not only how international conventions influence national policy development processes but also the resource-exchange relationship between the Kenyan government and multilateral organisations. For UNESCO, this increases their ability to bring policy preferences and decisions into line with its own global education goals.

The African Union played a central role in setting the agenda for Africa's education. From the perspective of the Ministry of Education and civil-society interviewees, the African Union's agenda and regional East African community goals are key factors behind the national curriculum change. However, one stakeholder felt that the African Union agenda has been strongly influenced by the international community, including the European Commission:

> The idea to shift to the CBC was actually presented to the heads of states at an AU meeting somewhere in Addis Ababa some time back. [If you read 'Tuning Africa: Tuning and Harmonisation of Higher Education: The African Experience'] you will

> find the kinds of competencies that were being proposed. This was proposed, and this research was presented to the African Union Conference and was funded by the European Commission. It is from there that African countries started thinking about competencies and CBC, and that was in 2013. (Interviewee 25, KSSHA)

Although the research discussed by the KSSHA stakeholder focuses on the harmonisation of higher education in Africa, many of the competencies it proposed match those of Kenya's CBC, for example increasing the capacity of learners to use innovative and appropriate technologies, critical and innovative thinking, and increasing communication skills and environmental consciousness (Onana et al., 2014). In fact, a review of the 2012 Odhiambo Task Force report, pointed out that the East African Community (EAC) partner states have moved to a common policy of harmonising their education systems and training curricula, which has resulted in a shift from standard curriculum design to CBC and assessment approaches. The task force advocated for a revision of the examination-oriented Kenyan curriculum to focus on the assessment of skills and competencies, supporting alignment with the East African Community (MoE, 2012:61).

This demonstrates the influence of international organisations and regional goals on the development of Kenya's National Curriculum Policy, which is likely to have increased the government's dependence on resources provided by international actors such as funding and information, and by regional actors such as access to markets.

As discussed, many African countries are implementing the CBC. Tanzania, for instance, has used it since 2005 and Rwanda since 2015, demonstrating their alignment with the shared continental education agenda. However, many such countries are experiencing challenges with its implementation:

> Many of the African countries today are trying to implement the CBC. Many of them, but they are facing challenges. They are talking of the same thing as Kenya – that the teachers are not prepared and the curriculum design is not ready. We do not know where we are heading with this and the unions across different countries have not supported the curriculum change, but governments are moving forward with it. (Interview 25, KSSHA)

UNESCO proposes a process to be followed when undertaking curriculum reform (IBE-UNESCO, 2017) with many factors for consideration when gauging a country's readiness, one of which is teacher preparedness. Although the KSSHA comments and UNESCO-IBE (2017) recommendations relate to policy implementation and not the processes that go into policy development, this is still relevant. Numerous interviewees complained that the Kenyan government had not taken steps to properly prepare for the CBC reforms when the policy decision was made, and that elements of its implementation such as teacher preparedness had not been properly considered:

> But look at how the teachers are being trained! A small sample of teachers is trained to then go and cascade the training. That is very wrong. It is now [in 2020] that they are looking at reforming the teacher training curriculum. But when they finished the policy, they put the cart before the horse. The implementation was done before the policy was even validated and launched – but that is beside the point. When they started, they needed to have also started reforming the teacher-training curriculum, you see. (Interviewee 46, UNESCO)

This suggests that the curriculum was not only changed because a country's curriculum should be reviewed every five to ten years; if that had been the case, the recommended curriculum reform process suggested by UNESCO-IBE would have been followed. While, consistent with policy network theory, UNESCO's relationship with the Government of Kenya appears to be one of resource exchange in the policymaking, it is clear that the government did not want to amend its policy to ensure that the country was prepared for the curriculum reform. From a policy networks standpoint, the government's reluctance to amend its policy may have been due to it believing that it already had the resources necessary to continue with curriculum reform.

Civil society, education activists and KNUT interviewees argued that the government acceded to business interests in their decision to change the curriculum. A KNUT stakeholder argued that the previous Kenyan curriculum had worked well; it had been developed over a long period of time and cannot be compared to the education systems of other East African Community countries. From their perspective, the change to the CBC curriculum was unnecessary:

> Business interests. They have a lot of business interests. The conglomerates of international organisations are forcing the country to change so that they can have a

> lot of business in terms of consultancy and creating a market for their goods, with book publishers and ICT software. Because the flagship here is that CBC will be digitally driven. Digital ICT manufacturers seem to be pushing for this, and it seems that CBC has been imposed on poor third-world countries who have no choice. (Interviewee 15, KNUT)

Another stakeholder pointed to the influence of tech actors working through philanthropist organisations such as the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to influence government policy preferences (Interviewee 2, education activist). Other interviewees felt that besides business interests, decisions on national policy are made beyond Kenya's borders, and some policies have negative repercussions for Kenyan society. A civil-society stakeholder and some of the education activists I spoke to saw a deliberate drive to develop university education in Kenya more than any other level of education, creating an elite society that marginalises those who cannot access such an education:

> These international organisations have a lot of say. Many of the things we do here are decided very far by other people. There are many examples that one could give. Like

> when we say that university education is getting more per-capita funding – much more than anything else. That is as a result of many World Bank studies and the push for higher education, which at some point caused a lot of disservice to us because then they are creating an elite society of the few people, and a whole mass of ignorant people. So, you never get to develop. (Interviewee 26, civil-society organisation)

This suggests that the Kenyan government's financial dependence on the World Bank allows the Bank to negotiate its policy solutions despite the risk of negative societal outcomes from such solutions. Perhaps the national government also chooses to follow a certain policy path to gain resources such as market access from policy actors. Access to regional and international labour markets would help the country achieve its wider national development goals associated with Vision 2030, for instance. As a result, certain contextual challenges that may arise from a specific policy preference may be compromised for the sake of attaining bigger development goals.

Studies advocating for higher education development by the World Bank were confirmed by the World Bank interviewee. They did not suggest that this research sways countries' policy decisions, but rather that the Bank provides the research to guide ongoing policy development

processes. The interviewee did not mention the impact of higher education and the possible elitism created in society as a result:

> We generate knowledge if we feel there is a gap. Like now, the government is embarking on reforms in higher education. We generate relevant knowledge and we look at what is happening globally in higher education in terms of quality assurance, relevance [and] health-care financing, and then we share this information with the government to inform whatever policies and strategies that they want to take. (Interviewee 18, World Bank)

Despite the World Bank interviewee's reluctance to admit it, it is likely that the Bank's informational and financial resources put it in a unique position to incentivise national governments' resource-dependent policy preferences. Further highlighting the role of international institutions, an education activist interviewed argued that Kenya is still operating by the old colonial system, including in its development of education policy, taking orders from the British government which also dictates national policies:

> There is one article I read where they were saying that the British Council has been involved in the whole curriculum reform process. However, Britain has been involved in our education system since before and after independence. We also decided to follow their national economic choice to be capitalist and not to care about human beings. We never changed our education philosophy. We have not made our education policy about citizenship and humanity. That is why the international people keep coming and changing and being too involved in our education system. (Interviewee 2, education activist)

The majority of civil-society interviewees that I spoke to held the premise that Kenya may still be under colonial influence. One saw the privatisation of education under colonial rule expanded after independence with the adoption of SAPs and neoliberal economic policies, as discussed in the literature review, creating enormous challenges for Kenya's education (Interviewee 30, education activist).

Another civil-society interviewee stated that Kenya has not protected itself adequately from the influence of international organisations in its education policy development process:

> More-powerful nations are an economic entity, and just like human beings it is innate in them to try and influence others, so it is up to us to try and protect our space. Otherwise, others will always want to influence us. (Interviewee 25, civil-society organisation)

These debates highlight the potential of neoliberal economic policies to influence national education policy and international governments' lingering post-colonial extractive relationships with developing countries.

> Any time you find donor money, you just need to dig deeper, and you will find [the extractive influence] there. There is something that they are trying to do that will be of benefit to their side. The thing is, once you ask a government employee, because you are talking about the person that pays their salary they will tell you that only the Kenyan government is fully in control over what it chooses to do. But to be honest the government does not have autonomy over donors. It has never happened, and it will never happen. (Interviewee 22, USAID)

However, both KICD stakeholders interviewed expressed the importance of Kenya not being left behind as the world changes, and therefore global trends must influence the country's education policy development. Their arguments align with policy transfer literature (Chisholm, 2005; Phillips & Ochs, 2003; Schweisfurth, 2006, 2013; Tikly, 2011), which discusses the 'convergence of policy and practice throughout the world' (Priestley, 2002:122). Despite the civil-society interviewees' position that international organisations have a considerable say in Kenya's education policy development, like the KICD stakeholders they too felt it important for Kenya to work in collaboration with other states:

> But you see there are a lot of benefits also in working together, because if, as Kenya, we were to only think of our own and produce our own then we would never grow beyond what we are. But if we are eyeing the regional market and so on, then we have to collaborate. That is how politics works, not just education. But education is a big part also of the global economic and political system. (Interviewee 26, civil-society organisation)

It is clear from the data that external factors including globalisation, scientific and technological advancements and regional harmonisation agendas have opened up Kenya's national education policy arena, resulting in more participation by both public and private international policy actors including regional governments and bilateral and multilateral organisations in the development of education policy. Together these national and international public and private actors form a policy community within which new thinking about what counts as good education policy is articulated and validated. In line with this thinking, findings from the interviews have shown how resources were exchanged and incentives offered between various policy actors to influence the policy solutions found and decisions on the development of the National Curriculum Policy to lead curriculum reform in Kenya, as well as the key tensions about whether curriculum reform was the best policy direction for Kenya to take, including the mismatch between business and international actors' interests and the needs of Kenyan citizens.

7.5. Resources and power

Controlling resources is one way for the government to maintain its centrality in education policymaking. Resources are key to policy development and implementation; interviews with stakeholders revealed that resource constraints greatly influenced the CBC policy development process and have hindered or slowed education policy reforms over the years. Although the official implementation of the National Curriculum Policy began with the pilot in 2017, the policy development process began in 2009:

> The National Curriculum Policy was not developed in 2018; we started developing [it] in 2014. The request to change the curriculum started in 2009. We were not able to do an implementation because of funding, because it is a national thing and takes a lot of money. Close to 60 million – and the Exchequer does not give us a lot of money. (Interviewee 5, KICD)

The limited resources available for education development create a power dynamic where policy actors with tradable resources are granted increased access to the policy process, giving them a platform from which to influence policy preferences and push for amendments in their favour.

Power among policy actors, determined by their resources and the extent to which these are valued by government, is a key factor in policy development. In keeping with policy network theory, these resources also include non-tradeable resources offered by the government such as access, policy amendment and veto power, and resources offered by private policy actors such as information, cooperation with implementation, political support and private investment (Compston, 2009). The Kenyan government's power to direct policy lies in its control of the Treasury and allocation of sizable budgets, democratic legitimacy, legislative power to determine policy, and monopoly of the use of force. Its political legitimacy, deriving from being elected to office, gives the government the power to make decisions on behalf of the citizens of Kenya.

Private policy actors also have power that can be leveraged to negotiate for their policy preferences. The power of trade unions such as the Kenya National Union of Teachers (KNUT) lies in its control of the education teaching force and ability to mobilise critical political support for a policy. KNUT's large membership has previously afforded it a significant say in education policy decisions. However, as discussed, the curriculum reform process divided policy actors over the perceived policy problems and solutions. As a dissenting voice regarding the

government's preferred policy solution, KNUT's access to the policy process was limited and its power can be assumed to have diminished in the case of this specific policy. It is also evident that the government decided to go ahead with the curriculum reforms despite the union's public opposition, indicating its lack of dependence on KNUT's resources and thus further reducing the latter's power.

Donor organisations' power lies in their ability to finance education policy in Kenya and help meet national financial shortages. Financial shortage in Kenya has made it dependent on donors for funding for its education policies and programmes:

> Like now, the budgeting process is going on for 2020/21 and items on the budget are not only policies but many [other] things in the Ministry. But you see the basket from the top is small, so they have to decide what to fund. So even sometimes it can happen that they will fund something and then something happens like COVID, and then you check on the computer and find no funds have been allocated. You have to then look for other ways of completing your work. (Interviewee 30, MoE)

However, whereas resource availability or shortage is a factor in determining government's decision to give actors access to the education policy network, the way in which the government uses resources will inform actors' choices on whether to offer the resources they have. UNESCO and former KICD interviewees discussed how numerous instances of corruption have influenced how financial resources from donors and development partners are made available to Kenya, affecting the country's autonomy on the education policy:

> Donors experienced high levels of corruption in Kenya, and this really discouraged them and development partners from channelling their money through the government. (Interviewee 46, UNESCO)

Due to corruption, donors have begun to channel their funding for education programmes in Kenya through international NGOs rather than directly to the government, giving the donors even more power in the education policy process and implementation:

> When donors want to support the ministry, they prefer to use NGOs who are accountable to them. Research Triangle Institute (RTI) was brought in by USAID because they lost money by giving money for Free Primary Education (FPE) through

> the Kenya Education Sector Support Program (KESSP). So, Kenya stopped receiving direct funding from some Governments including DFID and USAID. The money is given to the Government for a program but they will get an expert to implement it. (Interviewee 12, former KICD staff member)

Power dynamics resulting from resource control among policy actors was a key influence in the development of the National Curriculum Policy.

7.6. Summary

This chapter has shown that there are multiple influences on education policy development, although it is not clear whether one particular factor played the central role in the development of the National Curriculum Policy. The interview data make clear that from the start of the Odhiambo Commission to the development of the National Curriculum Policy, the reform took several years to evolve.

My findings on the first research question about the factors influencing education policymaking in Kenya reveal that national-level policies, politics and international influences are key factors. The resources available to different policy actors are also important, and further, they create power dynamics between different actors in the education policy network.

The policy community and issue networks that formed around the curriculum reform process are also of key importance. This chapter has illustrated how within this policy network, the relationships between the different actors influenced the policy change and how the rules and norms were determined or changed. Policy actors' strategies for ensuring that their preferred

policies were upheld, their interests, and the ways in which resources were exchanged or withheld all contributed to the development of Kenya's National Curriculum Policy.

Chapter 8: Education Policy Stakeholders

8.1. Introduction

This chapter addresses the third sub-research question: Who are the stakeholders influencing education policy within the context of developing the National Curriculum Policy in Kenya?

It presents findings drawn from descriptive network analysis that illustrate the main policy actors in Kenya's education policy community, identified via stakeholder interviews, documents provided by interviewees, and analysis of publicly available information. Although policy actors are individuals acting on behalf of their organisations, it is convenient to identify these organisations as actors when analysing policy networks (Compston, 2009). In keeping with policy networks theory, I categorise the organisations identified for this analysis as either public or private actors. National and regional state institutions are public policy actors and are authorised to make policy decisions. Private policy actors are interest groups such as trade unions and employer organisations. The descriptive social network analysis maps out the interactions and collaborations between different public and private policy actors.

The chapter begins by discussing Kenya's wider education policy community. Next it identifies and discusses the five-key public and private policy actors in the development of the National Curriculum Policy and their interactions, collaborations and power relations: MoE, KICD, bilateral and multilateral institutions, UN agencies, and NGOs. Interview data is used to explain how other policy actors including NGOs, trade unions, publishers and religious organisations, interact with the above. Findings from qualitative thematic analysis support the identification of the main policy actors and provide deeper understanding of the relationships and interactions between policy actors across the network.

The interview data is used to explore how actors directly or indirectly influenced the development of the National Curriculum Policy, and policy networks theory clarifies the structures, institutions and actors influencing education policy development in Kenya and reveals the power relations between actors and how their resources determine their influence on policymaking. The chapter concludes with a summary of the findings from the descriptive social network analysis and emphasising the main policy actors influencing education policy in Kenya.

8.2. Kenya's education policy network

Thematic analysis of the interview data, a review of secondary data received from interviewees including the National Committee on Curriculum Reforms report, and web searches on the various organisations to which stakeholders are affiliated helped to construct the education policy network. Findings from the thematic analysis indicated that this community is made up of different stakeholders connected directly or indirectly via others in the network. Thematic analysis of the interview data produced a deeper understanding of the nature of the relationships between the actors and their varying amounts of power and influence in the development of the National Curriculum Policy. The education policy network included NGOs, donors, UN organisations, religious organisations and trade unions.

When asked, which stakeholders have the strongest influence in education policy development, the majority of interviewees named religious organisations, donor agencies and NGOs, TSC, the President, publishers, parliament, KNUT and MoE's semi-autonomous organisations including KICD and KNEC. However, asked which make up the policy community in Kenya and the extent of their influence, they mentioned trade unions including KUPPET, the University Academic

Staff Union (UASU), education activists, civil-society organisations, teachers, learners, teacher training institutes, and teacher associations such as the Kenya Secondary School Heads Association. At the regional level the African Development Bank, the East African Regional Bloc and the African Union were mentioned. Interestingly, in contrast to the literature most national policy actors made no mention of the role that international development organisations and aid agencies play.

Analysis of the interview data found that some stakeholders, including bilateral and multilateral organisations, MoE, publishers and religious organisations, exert the greatest influence over others in the policy community and in education policy development. The influence of religious institutions is historical in education in Kenya and is well-documented in the literature. Interviewees from MoE policy Directorate, KICD, and civil society indicated that because the profit margin on teaching and learning materials is very high, publishers' influence on education policy is driven by their profit-making agenda.

While stakeholders such as publishers have a strong influence in the education sector, others such as parents and teachers have less influence in education policy development, although the Kenyan National Union of Teachers (KNUT) has considerable influence over other stakeholders in the education policy community. As Kenya's biggest teachers' union, according to the interview data its influence on teachers created a lot of conflict during the curriculum reform process. The relationships between the above key stakeholders and how their interactions inform education policy change are discussed in the following sections of this chapter.

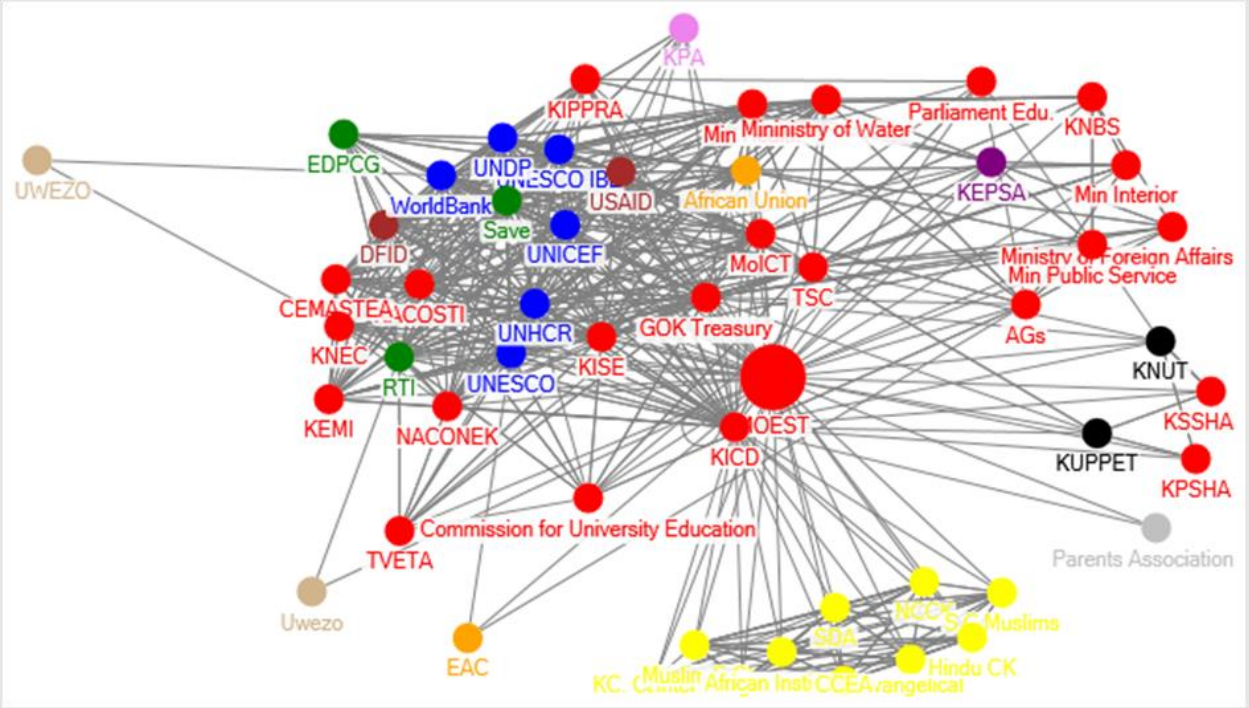
8.3. Ministry of Education

To understand the stakeholder network and their relationships with MoE, the interviewees were asked to name the organisations they worked with directly and those that they felt had the most influence in the policy development process. Thematic analysis of their responses revealed the total number of organisations (n=54) working directly with MoE on education policy. To verify the extent of their relationships with MoE a web search was conducted for each organisation, and any mention of collaboration with another organisation on the list on delivering education

programmes, education policy or any other activity was recorded. Descriptive social network analysis revealed relationships between MoE, UN agencies multilateral and bilateral organisations, semi-autonomous organisations, education associations, trade unions and religious organisations, as illustrated in Figure 8.1 below.

These organisations are not by any means all of the stakeholders with which MoE collaborates, but rather those that were mentioned, and as such, they reflect its closest or most valued partners.

Figure 8.1: MoE in the policy network



Node descriptions: Yellow: Religious organisations; Red: Public Institutions; Blue: Donor/UN Organisations; Purple: Private Associations e.g. Parents Associations

The network analysis reveals that the strongest tie in the network is between MoE and KICD, consistent with interviewees' testimony that the mandate for curriculum development lies solely with KICD, although MoE is the main actor connecting many of the other actors together.

For example, the Ministry works directly with religious organisations, including the Inter-Religious Council of Kenya, the Hindu Council of Kenya and the National Council of Churches of Kenya, and connects them to most of the other nodes in the network. Interviewees from MoE and civil society and education activists discussed the influence of religious organisations on what is taught in schools:

> We have religious groups as an interest group. That is why Christian religious education is being taught. I do not believe that we should teach children in school religion. I am a practising Catholic – the Catholicism I practise is what I was taught in. (Interviewee 26, civil-society organisation)

Resource exchange and the power that resource ownership affords stakeholders was also raised in relation to religious organisations. Numerous stakeholders pointed out that because the Catholic Church in Kenya sponsors many schools it is able to influence the education sector:

> They are very strong interest groups. They reach the President. They can tell the President 'This is what we want' and the President can direct the Minister. They are sponsors of most of our schools, so their voice must be listened to. So, we have all these interest groups that influence the policy, sometimes against what is rational. (Interviewee 45, education advisor)

The intertwined nature of politics and religion in Kenya, raised by several stakeholders, is well-documented in the literature (Gitari, 1991; Kamaara, 2000; Sabar-Friedman, 1995; Sabar_Friedman, 1997). The religious affiliation of the ruling president determines which denomination has most power during their term of government:

> Depending on the presidency window, a particular church usually takes that space. During Kibaki's time there no n agenda that was brought by the Catholic Church on

> education that was not acceded to. When Moi was president, the Evangelicals had their space, but they had to line up behind the Anglican Inland Church (AIC), and when Bishop Yego spoke, that was final. (Interviewee 47, education activist)

The central role of UN agencies, particularly UNESCO, UNESCO-IBE, UNDP and UNICEF, in Kenya's policy network, and multilateral organisations including the World Bank and bilateral organisations such as DFID and USAID affect the education sector through their relationship with MoE. When asked, which stakeholders have the biggest influence in education policymaking the majority of government interviewees mentioned the UN agencies and bilateral and multilateral organisations. The significance of resources and the power that they afford these organisations was mentioned in many interviews:

> You have the education development partners like the World Bank, UNESCO, USAID, UNICEF, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), the Canadians, all those big development partners, and because they have a consultative forum, if you are to make an application for funding for some of these education issues they have to approve your

> application, and so they will definitely influence what they are willing to approve. (Interviewee 5, KICD)

The interview data included contradictory findings on where the power dynamic lies in education policy development. When asked whether the development partners come up with policy agenda or influence changes to existing policy, all the ministerial interviewees stated that MoE has autonomy in policymaking and is not influenced by development partners:

> The power dynamic is, we develop the policies in consultation, but the ideas originate from the Ministry – and the development partners would want the ideas to originate from the Ministry. (Interviewee 40, MoE)

Another interviewee stated that although MoE has the most power, development partners have tried but failed to lead on policymaking:

> No, they tried but they did not make it. We had a very strong position as private partners, but we realised that the Ministry had an even stronger position. They were keen to own

> the process, which I really give them kudos for, and so the developing partners were left at the funding level. (Interviewee 28, MoE)

This, as has been shown in Chapter 3, is unlikely. The evidence from the literature review and the overwhelming research that has been done on the role of international organisations has shown just how much they own national education policy processes (King et al., 2007; Lebeau & Sall, 2011; Robertson, 2009; Shahjahan & Madden, 2015; Verger, 2009). However, activists, some ex-MoE stakeholders and one UNESCO stakeholder noted that the international organisations have a direct impact on policy, reinforced by the financial resources they bring to developing countries, suggesting that resource exchange is a strong determinant of power in policy networks, and specifically in this Kenyan context. Indeed, this is confirmed by Milligan (2011) and Colclough (2012) that have examined the role that globally driven development agendas informed the Free Secondary Education initiative and the PE and Kenya education sector support programme (KESSP).

Social network analysis of the stakeholders also revealed which groups in the network have less power. For instance, when asked which stakeholders they work with most closely on policy

development, none of the MoE interviewees mentioned civil-society organisations. One stated that civil-society organisations and other stakeholders are included in the policy process in the public participation phase, which usually comes after a policy has been agreed and developed:

> NGOs and similar organisations will come in during the public participation, and when they come in of course if they have any views then they will bring it in, and it will be considered. Their views are taken care of, and their views are valid. (Interviewee 23, MoE)

Although there are a large number civil-society organisations in the education policy network, government interviewees mentioned only one: Uwezo Kenya. While it is part of the policy network, it does not occupy a central position and has only three connections with others in the network: MoE, KICD and TSC. Uwezo was mentioned by the majority of MoE interviewees due to its role conducting research on the extent to which children were learning in Kenya.

Uwezo, a citizen-led initiative, was started in 2008 to assess the state of basic education in Kenya. Its first annual report in 2012 revealed very low literacy and numeracy among the country's

schoolchildren (Uwezo, 2012) and warned that learners who did not achieve the appropriate numeracy and literacy skills at early-grade foundational levels would be unable to catch up in later years (Uwezo Kenya, 2012). Numerous interviewees noted that MoE did not accept the evidence in Uwezo's report:

> You remember Uwezo? Uwezo kept saying that our children are not reading, our children are not reading – so the government does not accept results that show weakness on its part. (Interviewee 12, former KICD staff member)

Most of the civil-society respondents stated that MoE only began to take note of Uwezo's findings when the World Bank began to refer to its report. This suggests the limited power civil-society organisations such as Uwezo have to shape policy and solutions by exchanging evidence they generate with other actors in policymaking, as policy networks theory posits. On closer review of the Uwezo learning report however (Uwezo Kenya, 2012), it is apparent that the learning research was supported by international development partners including the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, Hivos, Open Society Institute, The Ford Foundation, The World Bank, American Jewish World Service and the Children Investment Fund Foundation. It is likely, as has been

discussed in the literature, that using their toolkit of influence, the report by a national NGO, legitimised the World Bank's policies on foundational learning, without directly taking ownership (Lebeau & Sall, 2011; Shahjahan, 2016; Shahjahan & Madden, 2015).

The extent to which evidence is a resource depends on the organisations generating it. Asked how MoE determines which evidence it will use, some civil society and trade union stakeholders explained that the government is not quick to accept evidence not generated by other government bodies such as the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KBS), or that presents the government negatively:

The KSSHA interviewee stated that if MoE views an organisation or individual as radical it is less receptive to its evidence:

> I may not know how they decide on that and may not really be in the picture, but maybe […] it will depend on who provides the data and how credible. How does MoE view the person? Do they view them as credible enough, or just as radical? Even if it was me, if I

> do not respect you, I will not respect your data. In my view, it will all depend on the Ministry's confidence in whoever is providing the data. (Interviewee 25, KSSHA)

MoE finds the large number of civil-society organisations that conduct research on education and the amount of evidence they generate overwhelming. For many government actors interviewed, particularly those in MoE and the TSC, the use of evidence generated by external sources is greatly hindered by resource and time constraints. The majority of the civil-society respondents mentioned that building partnership with the government and being careful with their wording and terminology when reporting evidence can make the government more receptive to their findings and increase the likelihood of its uptake:

> The other thing that we've done is to use more of a collaborative approach than strict activism. Sometimes when you're shouting out there, with people busy in their boardrooms you achieve [inaudible] you combine constructive street action, but largely, 90 per cent, you must focus on being in that boardroom where the policies are being discussed and being inside the processes. So, we've used a collaborative approach, to the extent that we engage government officials that the Ministry of Education features even

in the study themselves so that they do not get surprised. (Interviewee 49, civil-society organisation)

8.4. KICD

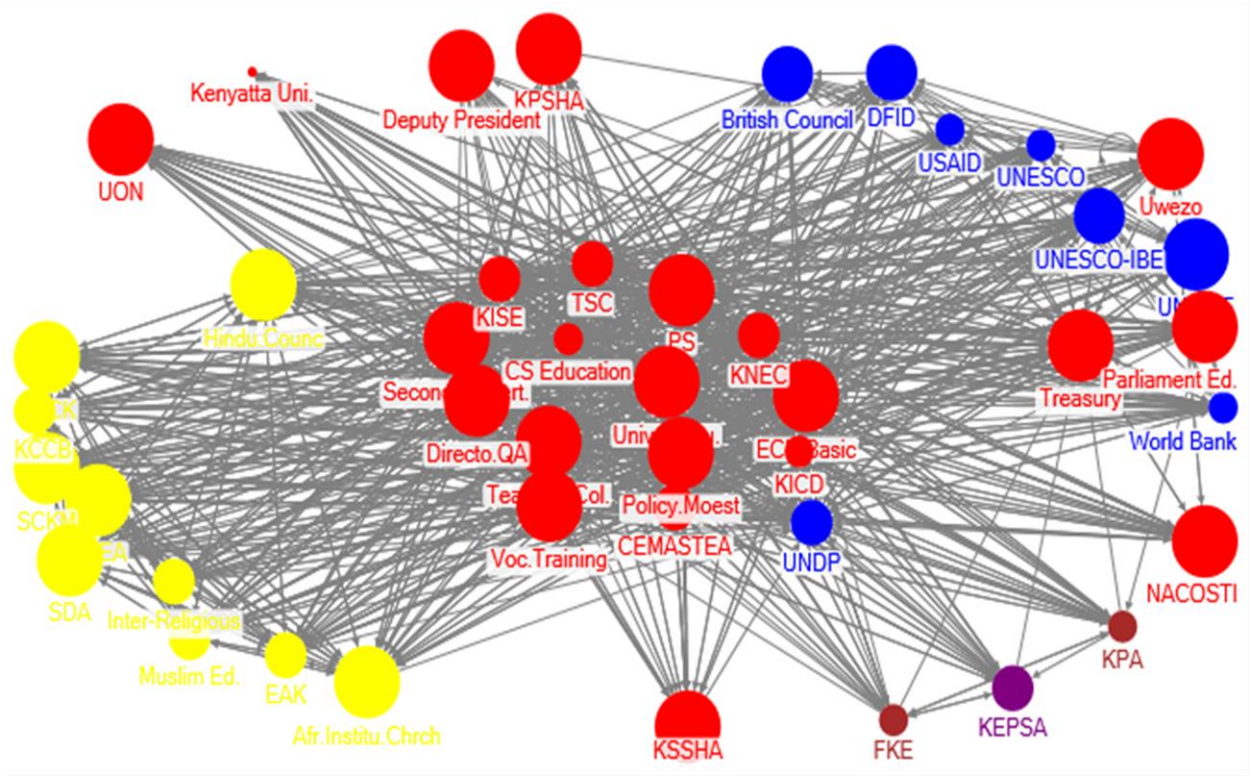
Working in collaboration with MoE, KICD is a semi-autonomous organisation established in 2013 through an Act of Parliament with a mandate to develop the curriculum and its support materials based on research. When asked which policy actors they work with, KICD interviewees began by stating that the curriculum review process begins with monitoring and evaluation, which requires an academic committee made up of members of the TSC, the Treasury, university lecturers from Kenyatta and Nairobi Universities, and KSSHA, which is in charge of approving research.

Asked which stakeholders they worked closely with, they responded with a total of 45 public policy actors within the government and private policy actors such as UN organisations and religious organisations. The information on stakeholder relationships provided in the interviews

allowed completion of the descriptive social network analysis. The KICD stakeholder relationships are illustrated in Figure 8.2.

Again, this list of stakeholders that the respondents mentioned working closely with, does not include all those with which they collaborate. Analysis of secondary data, including the needs assessment and National Committee for Curriculum Reform reports, highlighted a wider network of actors in the KICD network. Figure 8.2 shows the most central, i.e., most-connected stakeholders, including KICD and the other semi-autonomous organisations, and the various MoE directorates. As in the MoE network, the religious organisations are least connected and lie in the middle of the network.

Figure 8.2: The KICD Network



Node descriptions: Yellow: Religious organisations; Red: Public Institutions; Blue: Donor/UN Organisations

Although the Universities of Nairobi and Kenyatta are members of KICD's Academic Committee, which should represent their level of influence within the network, they are the least connected within the network. MoE outlined various limitations to universities' evidence generating-activities:

> You find that even with professors, people are in a hurry to publish in the journals and not necessarily to communicate here, but rush to the journals because […] when you publish, it adds to your credentials, so people are in a hurry to do that. But […] some of those journals, maybe not all, are still now accessible to us – we are still not able to reach them. But we still need to improve on coordination. From my own analysis, we still need to improve coordination on the uptake of research. (Interviewee 30, MoE)

The National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) also has a mandate to generate evidence. like the universities, it has a small degree of centrality in the KICD network and is not well-connected with other stakeholders, implying limited coordination and evidence-sharing across the network on the part of the key evidence-generating organisations:

> We have not perfected the coordination of research yet. You know those are the coordination elements that I am talking about. So, that we can link to universities. The link is through NACOSTI but as I am telling you, these are some of the things that I am seeing that are not going right. (Interviewee 30, MoE)

It is important to highlight the position of research-generating organisations such as the public universities and NACOSTI, because one of KICD's mandates is to conduct research on the education curriculum. It can be assumed that the limited centrality of the research organisations largely limited the amount of evidence they shared during the curriculum reform despite, for instance, the universities inclusion' in KICD's Academic Committee.

Like MoE, KICD stakeholders highlighted the central roles of various multilateral and bilateral organisations and UN agencies, particularly UNESCO-IBE, in supporting the curriculum reform process. Numerous stakeholders stated that UNESCO-IBE offered technical support and expertise regarding how Kenya's curriculum could be reformed and the development of the new curriculum. These organisations were closely related to KICD and other semi-autonomous organisations and were closer to KICD in the network, as illustrated in Figure 8.3. KICD

stakeholders also mentioned that Uwezo had few links to many other actors, further underlining civil society's marginal role in Kenya.

A notable difference between KICD's and MoE's policy networks is the absence of other Ministries in the former. KICD interviewees did not mention inter-Ministerial collaboration in the curriculum reform process, whereas MoE respondents saw other ministries such as the Ministry of ICT and the Ministry of Health in central roles with strong relationships with education actors. Although the absence of other Ministries may not reflect the situation on the ground, the absence of the Ministry of ICT was surprising because ICT is important in schools' implementation of the curriculum.

8.4.1. National private actors: KNUT

KNUT, historically the largest primary and secondary teacher union in Kenya, has in the past negotiated with the government for teachers' salary increments and better working conditions. Its relationship to the government is oppositional, as its primary concern is teachers' welfare. As evidenced in the interviews, KNUT was very influential in the development of the National

Curriculum Policy and the curriculum change. A large number of interviewees noted that it did not buy into the education reforms and felt that the country was not ready for a change of curriculum:

> Remember, the unions were raising issues [about this being] a system that parliament has not approved, and what we are engaging in is an illegal process that somebody can go to court and get stopped. So, although the competency-based curriculum was being implemented, we had to come and work backwards to ensure that what has not been done right is done, and I still believe that we have not done everything correctly, but in the process, this will be corrected. (Interviewee 25, KSSHA)

> Whatever you come up with, if the teachers do not like it. KNUT does not like it. You will continue talking about it, and it is not being implemented at the school level. It is a simple answer. We can continue shouting about it, but if teachers are not on the same page with you, you're on your own. (Interviewee 18, World Bank)

KNUT interviewees felt that their opposition had resulted in the union's marginalisation in the policy development process:

> KNUT is very influential because we are the political voice of teachers, and as the political voice we speak. We represent the very human resource personnel that implement the curriculum. So naturally we are the primary stakeholders. But even though we are the primary stakeholders, the government has […] tried very [hard] to ignore us in many aspects and to bypass us, and also to attack us to target our operations, to target our finances. (Interviewee 16, KNUT)

> But of course, in education as a sector there are the primary stakeholders, the teachers and parents, according to us. Those are primary stakeholders. Teachers and parents. The rest are peripheral, like the churches – those are peripheral. The unfortunate fact is that the peripheral stakeholders have [become] primary stakeholders and vice versa. Those at the centre have been pushed outside. People do that to get away with their policy interests. (Interviewee 15, KNUT)

MoE, KICD, and TSC stakeholders saw KNUT's opposition to national curriculum reform as purely political and strategic, rather than motivated by concern about the country not being ready for a competency-based curriculum. Unlike other respondents, who saw KNUT's role as supporting teachers' needs, the government stakeholders felt that its opposition was due to its fear of losing members, because the fewer primary school years in the new curriculum would reduce the number of primary school teachers:

> You see what happens is this: the teacher's union, KNUT, [played a] part from the beginning on issues of curriculum reform. But at some point, they realised that their interests are not being brought as they wanted, particularly when they realised that Grades 7, 8 and 9 will be domiciled in secondary. They realised that they would lose a big chunk of their people, and automatically as a union when you realise that your interests and numbers are getting smaller you begin bringing issues. But it is not that they were not consulted, it is not that they were not involved. They were involved in every step. (Interviewee 20, TSC)

The TSC stakeholder's statement was echoed by all of the MoE interviewees and the Certified Project and Programme Management (CPPM). However, the extent to which what was said is true of KNUT or the union was marginalised in the policy-development process because it is seen as radical is not clear. Its power appears to have diminished significantly throughout the policy process, and its opposition did not delay or disrupt the curriculum reform at any point.

8.4.2. Private policy actors: The Parents' Association

The Parents' Association is another group that was not central in the network. Evidence from thematic analysis of the interview data highlighted parents' limited influence on the development of the National Curriculum Policy through their Association. This came out strongly from trade-union, activist, ex-KICD and USAID interviewees:

> So, the weakest link in the policymaking arena is the Kenyan parent. (Interviewee 35 education activist)

Although parental involvement is seen as central to the successful implementation of the competency-based curriculum, parents' participation in the policy development process was not seen as effective:

> I would say the participation of people who are going to be consumers of the education system is very important. So, for instance the competency-based curriculum would have been more useful if we had had the grassroots participation of parents from different areas, that would come in and tell the government what they needed. But we tend to have what I would call desktop research that is not informed by what is happening on the ground. So, whatever it is the government comes up with always feels like it is ten years behind what they were supposed to. So, involve people, because this is critical. This is my opinion. I have yet to meet one Kenyan who participated in a baseline survey or any form of survey towards the competency-based curriculum. Four years [the length of time the policy took to complete] is a long time. (Interview 22, USAID)

MoE and KICD stakeholders, however, stated that parents had been central in the decision to change the Kenyan curriculum. They reported that the process of the curriculum reform began with a needs assessment that showed that parents were concerned about their children's learning:

> Parents said 'Our children are not the kind of products that we expected. You bring us a child with a grade A and this child cannot even iron their clothes or prepare their room in the morning, and this is a university student, a first-year or second-year, or in high school. […]' And a number of children were engaged in all these peer influences, drugs and so on. Parents were concerned, society was concerned, and said that it was not what they expected. (Interviewee 5, KICD)

A national steering committee was set up in 2016 to guide the development and implementation of the National Curriculum Policy. Interview data showed that MoE, KICD, and some civil-society organisations saw participation in the steering committee as an indication of participation in the policymaking process:

> This process involved them very marginally. But parents were involved because we had the Parents' Association on the Steering Committee. The other issue is the capacity of how to generate parent representation. (Interviewee 35, civil-society organisation)

Despite the Parents' Association's involvement in the steering committee, the majority of stakeholders felt that parents should have been central to the curriculum reform process because the competency-based curriculum requires parental involvement in teaching and learning. Parents did not appear to be much involved in the process, and as a result many did not understand the concept of competency-based education and the central role that they were expected to play.

8.4.3. Private policy actors: Publishers

Another relationship shared between MoE and KICD is the Association of Kenyan Publishers (KPA), which represents 104 private and semi-autonomous public publishers such as the Kenya Literature Bureau, the Jomo Kenyatta Foundation and the Kenya Literature Bureau. Like the

religious organisations in the network, KPA is a key policy actor. The representation of public alongside private institutions could account for the blurred lines reported by numerous stakeholders in education policy decisions and the resulting lack of accountability for publishers' actions and the education decisions often made in the past to accommodate this group:

> It is the reason that some of the subjects are being offered. Some of those subjects were offered; they should not be there at all. But they are being offered because we have publishers who want to continue selling books. (Interviewee 26, civil society stakeholder)

Private publishers are driven by profit, and this affects teaching, learning materials, the process by which books are selected and approved, and education policymaking as a whole:

> Of course, publishing is a lot of money, because you can imagine if your book is approved to go to a certain class, let us say Class 4, to be the official Class 4 textbook, multiply that by all the schools and all the children in that class, and you have become a billionaire. So, that is why the books that get approved are really corrupt, and

> businesses pay a lot, even [to] government officers – there are payoffs and such, sponsoring. (Interviewee 17, civil-society organisation)

To illustrate publishers' power and influence in education policymaking, an ex-KICD respondent explained the difficulty KICD and MoE faced when they tried to change the policy on the development of education material:

> The KPA is a stakeholder when it comes to education material development, and there is the policy on material development that currently exists, and that is what I was trying to see, whether that policy can be reviewed. Let me tell you [...] that that is one of the most difficult policies to change in education. (Interviewee 12, former KICD staff member)

The KPA plays a central role in bringing public and private stakeholders together. The analysis assumed that none of private publishers in the network shared a connection except through the KPA, which connects them to MoE and KICD. However, public publishers have more than one tie within the network as they are connected to one another and directly to KICD and MoE which

is visible in the network illustration in Figure 8.3, where the connections between the nodes form connected ties between them.

It is unclear whether the power attributed to the KPA arises from the large number of organisations it represents, increasing its bargaining power, or its profits, which can be exchanged as resources for a bigger say in the policy network.

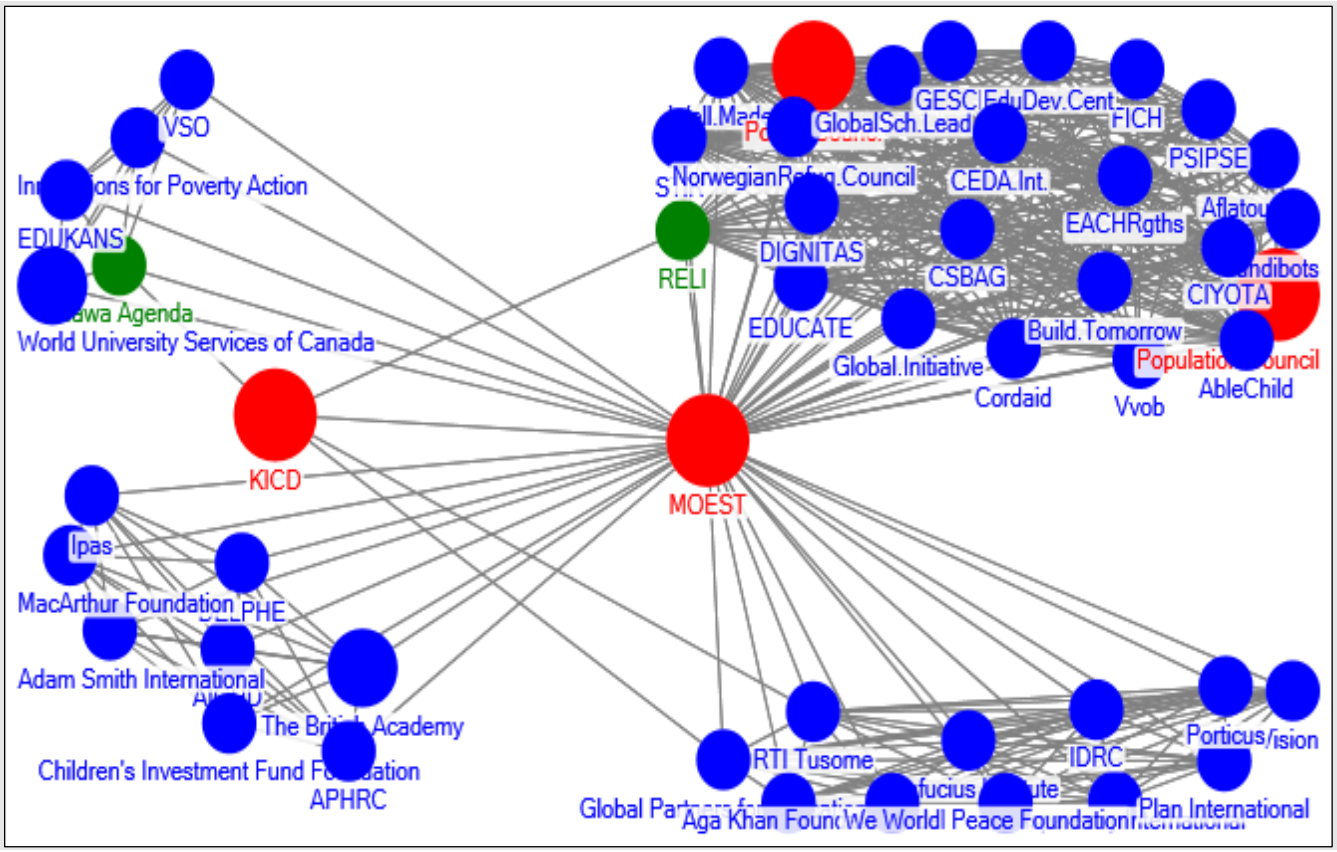
If it is assumed that the strong financial power that the KPA has, the international donors and UN organisations as well as the religious institutions, we can assume that one of the biggest avenues to establishing power in the Kenyan education policy network is finance. Whereas MoE and KICD, the government institutions central to education policymaking, gain legitimacy through their status as public institutions, publishers, donors and religious organisations gained theirs via their financial resources.

8.4.4. Private policy actors: NGOs

To assess the influence of other NGOs in the sector, a secondary analysis was conducted of publicly available web data on the partner organisations of three NGOs that participated in this

study; African Population Health Research Council (APHRC), Regional Educational Learning Initiative (RELI) and the Usawa Agenda; formerly Uwezo. Stakeholders at MoE noted that NGOs and International Development Organisations working in Kenya are required by law to register with the Ministry which implies that every non-state actor working in the education sector has a relational tie with MoE as highlighted in Figure 8.3 below. A total of 67 NGOs, NGOs and donor organisations were identified in the network of the stakeholders that participated in this study. This is not a complete list of all such organisations working in the sector.

Figure 8.3: NGOs in the policy network NGOs in the policy network



Node description: Blue: International NGO's/Philanthropies; Red: Public Institutions; Green: Local

Figure 8.3 illustrates the way in which MoE connects all NGOs and donor organisations working in the sector directly. The ties between different organisations differ, with more connections and more ties between some actors than others. For example, the Innovation for Poverty action lab, `Usawa Agenda and APHRC have few ties, while RELI has more than both the other organisations put together and therefore appears more centrally in the network. As MoE and KICD did not mention civil-society organisations and their partners directly as playing a central role in the policymaking process, we can assume that this reflects their power and position in the policymaking process or that their focus is more on policy implementation than policy development.

Finally, when asked which they perceived to be the strongest stakeholder influence on education policy in Kenya, the majority of interviewees mentioned MoE or the international donor organisations, further highlighting the power dynamic between these. Whereas government officials and most donor stakeholders stated that the government had full autonomy regarding policy and its development, it is clear from the discussion that not all stakeholders shared this view:

> I think for me it is who blesses what on the table and in terms of what, who has a bigger envelope on the table, and of course the World Bank is with their loans. (Interviewee 46, UNESCO interviewee)

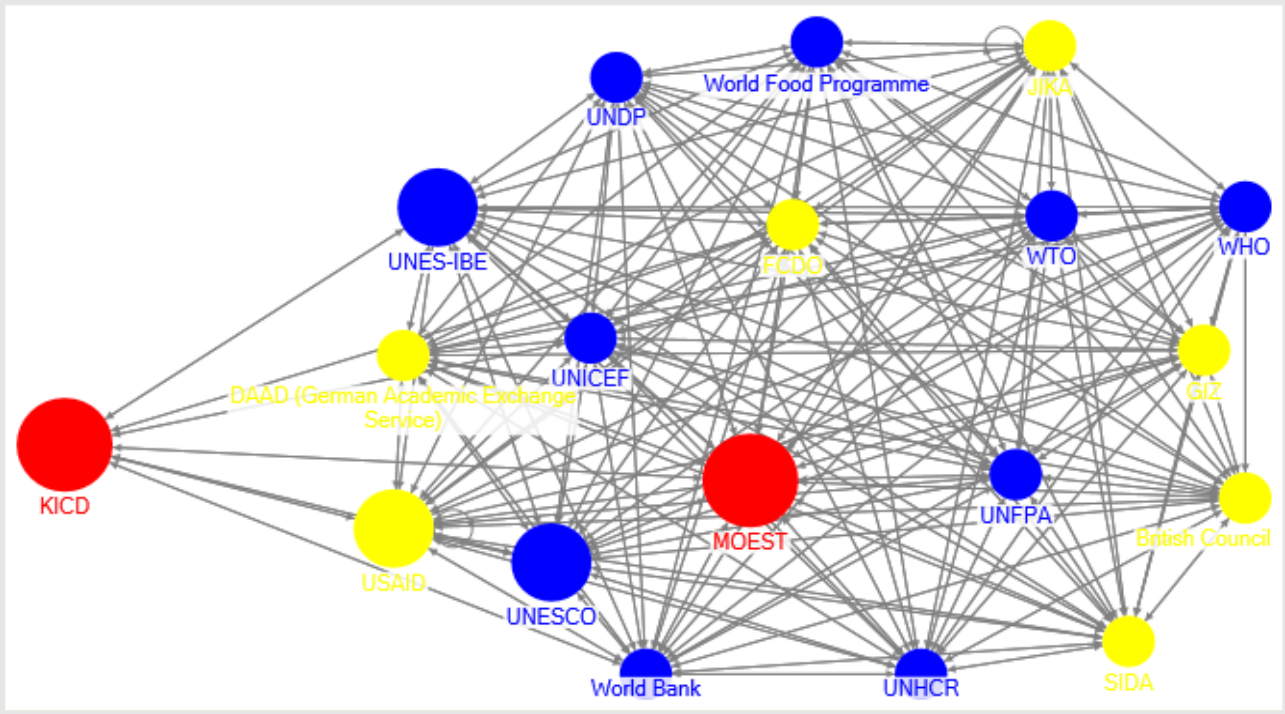
8.5. Aid agencies and development partners

The international community influencing the education system in Kenya is made up of international NGOs, multilateral funding organisations, bilateral government development agencies and UN agencies under the Education Donor Partners' Caucus, which represents the interests of various international key players and works in collaboration with MoE.

Thematic analysis of the data finds that the UN agencies, specifically UNESCO and UNICEF, have a strong influence on Kenya's education policy development. They were the most frequently mentioned international players supporting the country's change to the competency-based curriculum. Interviewees pointed out that international decisions made through UN conventions such as the SDGs have a role in the direction of national education policy. In 2015, when MoE lacked the necessary financial resources to begin the curriculum-change process, various donor

agencies supported various aspects of it financially. The bilateral and multilateral organisations in Kenya's policy community are illustrated in Figure 8.4.

Figure 8.4: Bilateral and multilateral organisations in the policy network



Node description: Blue: UN Agencies/ Development Bank; Red: Government Institutions; Yellow:

Another UNICEF role in Kenya's education policy is in policy communication. The World Bank and UNICEF divided their labour as part of the technical working group tasked to review the policy on instructional materials. Working with other development partners and the government, UNICEF funded the printing and dissemination of the policy. (Interviewee 18, World Bank)

There was consensus among interviewees on the significant role of the UN agencies in supporting the curriculum change. UNESCO believed that the International Bureau of Education's curriculum requirements informed the decision to change the curriculum.

> There is the UNESCO-IBE requirement […] that after every five years the curriculum should be reviewed or reformed. But we had taken over ten years with the 8-4-4, so we needed that change. (Interviewee 8, UNESCO)

The statement from KICD indicates that UNESCO-IBE's standards, which are seen as best practice internationally, are held in high esteem at the local level and translated into policy.

UNESCO's strong influence in the decision to change the education curriculum was mentioned by all the education activists, who argued that the policy decision was not an autonomous to the Kenyan Government one:

> UNESCO came up with it. I do not think there are countries outside Africa implementing it. (Interviewee 12, former KICD staff member)

Although many African countries including Uganda, Rwanda and Tanzania have moved towards a competency-based curriculum, a UNESCO interviewee disagreed about the extent to which it had been UNESCO's idea:

> Well, I disagree it was not UNESCO's whole idea for the competency-based curriculum. However, I know that there is a standard [curriculum review process]. A curriculum is to be reviewed every ten years, so basically when you look at when 8-4-4 began, that was in 1989. That was a whole 30 years. It was long overdue. So, that was not UNESCO's idea, […] curriculum reform was long overdue. (Interviewee 46, UNESCO)

UNESCO's direct role in the development of the National Curriculum Policy is not apparent in the information provided by the government and UNESCO interviewees. However, their provision of technical support to the government was a recurring theme in the data (see Chapter 2). UNESCO offers such support through its different institutes including curriculum support provided by UNESCO-IBE, reviewing and training for the development of National Education Sector Plans, and capacity-building for teachers through the International Institute for Capacity Building in Africa. Interviewees reported that UNESCO had provided technical support to KNEC, KICD and TSC:

> What we did, there is a bureau called the International Bureau of Education, which is managed by UNESCO. We got three officers coming all the way from France to help us recast all the aspects of the curriculum, because they have done the competency-based curriculum in many other places. So, those people came and helped us a lot in making sure that we have aligned our curriculum on what is very key (this is in 2015/2016). We wanted to see how we fit into the global village, so we tailored our curriculum against that too, and for us that was extremely critical. Because we really

needed to understand how the world is reacting to those kinds of things. (Interviewee 20, TSC)

Education activists and some civil-society stakeholders disagreed with this view, stating that the focus on the global in curriculum development failed to consider Kenya's particular issues, such as the differences in resources across schools, although government officials said that a competency-based curriculum is supposed to address these resource constraints by delivering schooling to learners based on the resources available to them and on their competencies.

There is a notion that UNESCO's technical support is a way of legitimising the rigour of implementing the curriculum change process. UNESCO is seen as a source of knowledge on education development, and MoE depends on it for evidence, in exchange for which it is likely that UNESCO sets the policy problems and policy solutions preferred by government:

For me, we have the technical experts that our members need. Like now with this crisis and issues of technology, we have the UNESCO Institute for Technologies in

> Education that is based in Moscow. That is their work, and that is what they do. (Interviewee 8, UNESCO)

This point was confirmed by an interviewee from MoE's policy directorate, who stated the importance of the development partners and the knowledge they provide:

> They have a big, crucial role in our policy development. They support us a lot with funding and with some of the expertise in terms of capacity-building, and in terms of content, you know, bringing the global view. You see we cannot brag that we have travelled the world, but because of the nature of these people's work they have either mingled with colleagues from other countries or they are continuously analysing information from many countries, and so they are able to bring global views to the table which help to advise us as we move on with the process. (Interviewee 30, MoE)

It is clear that the strongest partnership is between UNICEF, UNESCO and the MoE with its various semi-autonomous organisations, as evidenced by the fact that when asked which

stakeholders they work with directly, both the UN agencies and MoE and its semi-autonomous bodies highlighted their partnerships.

Like UNICEF, UNESCO also supports the government with evidence generation. UNESCO supported the government's national needs assessment and was part of the team conducting the education-sector analysis for the development of the National Education Sector Support Plan (2018–2022). Their evidence generation exercises have involved them in monitoring and reporting for the MDGs on education and supporting the Kenyan Government's development of its monitoring, evaluation, and reporting for SDG4 (Interviewee 46, UNESCO).

Whereas the government stakeholders and even the UNESCO interviewee specified the government's autonomy in developing education policy, it is clear that UNESCO develops education standards globally and then supports and supervises their national implementation by providing technical support and finance and collecting data on the success of such policy development and implementation. However, they support local ownership:

> We do not do the work. We come and show you how to do [it] and do [it] with you and then you take the lead in doing that. Because we are careful, and we mitigate the risk of non-ownership. (Interviewee 46, UNESCO)

The World Bank works with UNICEF and UNESCO and also has a leading role in the education sector in Kenya, providing education grants, generating evidence, and contributing technical support and training for MoE and the various semi-autonomous organisations. The World Bank has contributed to training teachers on the competency-based curriculum for the Teacher Service Commission, for instance, offering school-based teacher support alongside the government.

The World Bank generates evidence in areas where it sees knowledge gaps:

> When the government requests something, we generate the evidence, the data on whether it will work, and how it adds value or not, and we respond to them with evidence and data on what our thinking is. It is up to them to take it or not take it, but if [we see that] something is outright not technically sound we do not finance it, and our management, as I said, has a very good working relationship with the government: he explains that we

> have this request, this is what we think, this is the analysis, this is what the evidence is telling us, so it is up to government. (Interviewee 18, World Bank)

This suggest that the government considers evidence generated by the World Bank credible and trustworthy, as confirmed by feedback from KICD and MoE interviewees, who pointed out that the Bank's research goes beyond simply gathering data: it also influences the extent to which local evidence is seen as credible, as exemplified by the previously mentioned case of Uwezo's research reporting low literacy and numeracy among learners, which the government ignored until the World Bank quoted it in its own report.

This highlights the political nature of evidence, and the question of whose evidence is considered credible. As a result of the World Bank drawing attention to the Uwezo report, USAID decided to fund the Tusome literacy programme managed by RTI in collaboration with MoE (Interviewee 9, MoE). Asked whether evidence informs education policymaking, a civil-society interviewee replied:

> Yes, they use evidence. It is interesting that they took a long time before they would accept and cite our evidence, until the World Bank was citing [it] – then they started to cite the World Bank, only to realise that the World Bank was citing what we had done. (Interviewee 17, civil-society organisation)

As a technical partner, the World Bank was reported to have provided support across policy development and specifically for curriculum development. It reports funding technical expertise to support MoE with the competency-based curriculum in numerous ways, providing input into the development of a joint working plan on the coordination of teacher training for the competency-based curriculum for the TSC, KNEC and KICD through CETAL, an American international consulting firm, which signed a contract with KNEC to carry this out. The World Bank stakeholder stated that teacher support, a central part of the implementation of the curriculum reforms, was based on a school-based model benchmarked from Shanghai and Vietnam and sent curriculum experts into Kenyan schools, where teachers were first trained and then expected to train other teachers:

> These are government people. We cannot deploy and we cannot pay because then it is not sustainable. These are the regular curriculum support officers, the regular quality assurance officers, the regular sub-county Directors of Education, who are then immersed in [the competency-based curriculum]. And then we also have what we call the teacher champion: for every peer group, there is a teacher who has been immersed in the competency-based curriculum and they are supposed to provide teacher support for their fellow teachers. (Interviewee 18, World Bank)

Whereas there was positivity in the World Bank and government officials' statements about their positive steps towards teacher training, not all stakeholders shared their views. Officials at the Kenya National Union of Teachers, some civil-society interviewees, two education activists, a former teacher trainer and the interviewee from the Kenya Secondary School Heads Association shared the same concern: that the retooling of teachers to work with the new curriculum had not been adequately carried out. Concern about teachers' readiness to implement the new curriculum was a recurring theme in the data, demonstrating the disconnection between policy development and policy implementation:

> The books are not an issue. […] When you look at the English, Maths and Science books they are actually competency-based. But these are prepared by subject-matter experts and panels who understand the competency-based curriculum. So, you have time to come and train me. As a teacher who has been training differently and teaching differently for ten to fifteen years, I now have to be on the same page with you. You call me for a workshop for two days, a thousand of us, present a PowerPoint on what competency-based curriculum is, and I go back to my class? I will continue to teach the way I have been teaching. (Interviewee 12, former KICD staff member)

World Bank and MoE interviewees noted that the World Bank's technical support also involves supporting different policy-review processes including the Learning and Teaching Materials: Policy and Practice for Provision and the Secondary Education Quality Improvement Program (SEQUIP). The Bank used a MoE consultant for the SEQUIP review:

> Then I also did consultancy for the World Bank. The World Bank was reviewing a policy of the SEQUIP program, so we were able to conceptualise the program with colleagues. (Interviewee 9, MoE)

The World Bank states that it has no part in government policy decisions: once a government makes its decisions the Bank comes in to provide loans (Interviewee 18, World Bank), technical support and evidence-generation but not seek to influence policy. This was stated by Numerous government stakeholders confirmed this; for instance:

> We take our own stand, and then we seek the support from the donor. (Interviewee 5, KICD)

The power dynamic in the relationship between MoE and the World Bank, which is based on resource dependency and resource exchange to ensure policy preferences (see Chapter 6 and Chapter 7), makes it unlikely that the Bank does not seek to influence policy one way or another. In fact:

> It is not a secret that for us to be able to develop and implement our education programs we require assistance from somewhere. We are not generating enough income or enough money as a country to say that we can use our taxes to do

> everything that we want to do, and as a result of this dependence they dictate what we can do with the money. (Interviewee 9, MoE)
>
> If you have somebody funding you, you also need to maintain funding. So once in a while you may need to look at what they are proposing and find ways to adjust your own plans (Interviewee 25, KSSHA).

Contrary to the World Bank's testimony, a UNESCO interviewee pointed out that aid for the government is conditional on meeting pre-set standards of approval of the proposed policies:

> One thing I saw, which is really amazing, is that policy development is attached to funding by partners. For example, before you get money from the World Bank or from the Global Partnership for Education – I don't know whether you know about GPE, which gives a lot of money to governments in middle- and low-income countries, and it is billions and billions of dollars – before you get that money, your policy document must be approved by the development partners. (Interviewee 46, UNESCO)

The end of financial aid was also mentioned in the interviews, with policy development and implementation stopped by the absence of donor funding.

USAID is considered a player of equal importance to the World Bank in the provision of education finance in Kenya. It funds programs in the education and other sectors, and because of the money it provides is reported to influence what reforms are implemented and when.

USAID sometimes works with MoE's staff as education consultants:

> I also consulted for USAID. They wanted the Ministry to develop a technical guide for educational managers on the implementation of educational policies, and they contacted me because I worked for MoE and we were able to develop a guide for educational managers on implementing education programs. (Interviewee 9, MoE)

One of USAID's biggest contributions to the Kenyan education sector has been its funding for the Tusome programme. Tusome was funded by the US government through USAID in response to Uwezo's report on falling early-grade literacy rates in Kenya. USAID hired RTI

International, a US based international NGO, to implement the Tusome programme in Kenya in collaboration with the MoE and manage the funding after changing how it funds MoE programs as a result of corruption and the misappropriation of funds when it was financing free primary education. USAID's self-interest was raised by various stakeholder, some insinuating that funding the Tusome programme involved financial gain for the US Government:

> USAID was here with us running the Tusome program. If you have relatives here, ask them to give you a Tusome workbook – a Swahili or English Grade 3 workbook– and then ask yourself why they are not any different from the books with the stairs– you remember, those books with ladders, where you are stepping on the grades where you are? Those Tusome resources are not any different. But just because the US has money to give, they give you this money and then give you a nice word in Kiswahili, so it is coming from the West, and they even know Tusome, to take teachers to training – but at the end of the day where does the bulk of the money go back to? It goes back to their technocrats, who say that they have come here to support Kenya to implement Tusome. (Interviewee 12, former KICD staff)

However, the overall benefit of the Tusome programme to the Kenyan education system was agreed upon by many interviewees. The programme made it clear, though, that while donor funding can persuade the Kenyan Government to create and implement programmes, when the funding runs out these may not be sustainable (Interviewee 10, former KICD staff).

UNESCO, UNICEF, the World Bank and USAID are the most frequently mentioned donor organisations in the data. However, when asked which donor organisations were involved in Kenya's education policy community, all the institutions highlighted in figure 8.4 were mentioned. Donor institutions are represented by the Education Development Partners Group, which works with the MoE to decide on shared education goals in Kenya. Therefore, while their exact contributions to education policy in Kenya may not be apparent in the data besides the mention of their names, this does not reduce their influence.

8.6. Summary

Analysis of the interview data, secondary data retrieved from interviewees, and publicly available web data on the stakeholders in Kenya's education policy community has revealed a vibrant, multifaceted organisational network. While analysis of the policy community network does not show the relationships between individual organisations, or which have the fewest ties with others, breaking down the policy network into different segments to show how the most central organisations are connected within the network reveals the form of the network itself, the actors within it, and the power dynamics between actors.

Some organisations with few ties in the network have limited power to negotiate for their policy preferences. Most stakeholders interviewed stated that these seemingly weaker organisations should, by virtue of what they represent, be central to the policy process, but are largely marginalised, as in the case of the Parents' Association. However, a lack of connectedness within a network does not always indicate a lack of influence. Some organisations' small number of ties with others in the network does not reflect their power to affect the direction of education policy,

as in the case of publishers and religious organisation. The availability of financial resources gives organisations legitimacy and increases their power to negotiate in policy development.

While the teachers' trade unions should occupy a strong position in education policymaking, the ability of the biggest of these, KNUT, to influence policy is diminished by the government's mistrust of evidence from sources that oppose its policy.

The social network analysis presented here has highlighted the role of organisations in evidence generation, the central role that civil society can play as illustrated by the use of Uwezo Kenya's report, and the barriers to the government's use of evidence generated by sources that it perceives as radical. UN organisations and bilateral and multilateral organisations have an important role not only in policymaking but also in increasing the government's evidence uptake.

There are challenges relating to the generation and sharing of evidence by different types of organisations and its reception and use, such as the government's marginal use and dissemination of evidence generated by traditional research institutions such as universities and NACOSTI

versus its own research, e.g. via KICD, in decision-making about the curriculum reform indicates its scepticism about the value of data generated outside government.

Finally, while the Kenyan Constitution calls for public participation, this is still far from what it should be; for example, trade unions are allowed to participate in policymaking only if they do not disagree with the government; and it is not clear whether the inclusion of organisations belonging to different government committees, task forces and steering committees is a true reflection of public participation.

Chapter 9: Further discussion

9.1. Introduction

This thesis applies policy network theory and the integrated policy network-evidence use model (see Figure 4.2) to assess the factors that influenced education policymaking, the stakeholders in the education policy community and the influence of evidence in the development of Kenya's National Curriculum Policy. It has investigated the process leading to the National Curriculum Policy, including national education policies, politics, global education influences, and actors' power and resources. To assess the stakeholders in the education policy community in Kenya, it has applied descriptive social network analysis and thematic analysis to explore the key policy actors, 'education policy community and their relationships within it, including how the actors interacted to negotiate and achieve their policy preferences. Finally, the enablers of and barriers to the use of evidence in the development of the National Curriculum Policy and in the curriculum reform process have been explored through the lens of the integrated theoretical

model. I have argued that policy actors use evidence as a resource to inform policy problems and solutions, influence policy preferences, and negotiate for policy amendments.

This chapter interprets and discusses the study's findings, integrating the factors, stakeholders and evidence that influenced the development of the National Curriculum Policy, and discusses this in relation to this study and the wider discipline. It also relates the findings to the research objectives, research questions, and gaps that I sought to address. Discussion and interpretation of the findings have been intertwined throughout the empirical chapters 6, 7 and 8: this chapter adds to that and presents a short final discussion.

9.2. Integrating the influence of evidence, factors other than evidence and stakeholders

By assuming that public and private policy actors use evidence to shape education policy problems and solutions and negotiate for their policy preferences, this research has shown the interaction between national, regional, and global education development in informing how evidence is used in policymaking. Policy network theory can be used to explain policy change,

and the integrated theoretical model helps to identify how evidence was used to inform policy actors' decisions during the development of the National Curriculum Policy in Kenya. Policy changes in policy network theory takes place around policy formulation and implementation and involves changes to decisions made by policy actors on policy instruments (Bressers & O'Toole, 1998; Compston, 2009). Many emerging government policies are not new but are a continuation of past policy and practice (Howlett, 2002).

This research has found that Kenya's National Curriculum Policy was developed on the foundations of previous policies and education reform in Kenya. The development of the curriculum policy followed previous policymaking trends centring on enhancing national development that viewed education as a solution to economic challenges (Tabulawa, 2003, 2013; Milligan, 2011; Tikly & Barrett, 2011; Schweisfurth, 2006, 2013, 2015; Tikly, 2019). As discussed in Chapter 2, the development of the National Curriculum Policy involved historical procedures such as the formation of commissions. In keeping with policy network theory, Kenya's government set these up as ad hoc policy communities, inviting the involvement of various policy actors assumed to represent various groups in society with a vested interest in the policy outcome

(Rhodes, 2008). Findings from this research indicate that the Government of Kenya selects actors to participate in such policy communities strategically to achieve its intended policy goal with limited conflict.

The policy instruments selected by actors to inform the curriculum reforms in Kenya also followed existing national trends, leaning towards top-down market mechanisms in which the government develops education policies and sets the objectives to be met at the school level (Hannaway & Woodroffe, 2003; Lin & Miettinen, 2019; Sahlberg, 2006). This market-led approach was a significant feature of the previous 8-4-4 education system in Kenya that created challenges including teaching for tests and a narrowing curriculum, and inhibited teachers' development of new teaching methods (MoE, 2015a). The new curriculum reform process also took a top-down approach to policymaking. The National Curriculum Policy of 2018 was developed via a policy community of the few actors that made up the Technical Committee on Curriculum Reform. The Committee, guided by policy recommendations from the Odhiambo Task Force, drafted the National Curriculum Policy in 2015, proposing, among other things, school-level implementation of competency-based education, assessment methods, and teaching approaches.

Interestingly, this research finds that bottom-up policy instruments were selected in a move away from Kenya's previous market-led approach to education policy (MoE, 2015b; Lin & Miettinen, 2019). The National Curriculum Policy (MoE, 2015b) proposes the use of teachers' expertise and creativity, autonomy in instructional development, and formative assessment of learners in order to tailor teaching to their needs, as well as collaboration between schools and other societal actors including parents to achieve the goals of education (Hannaway & Woodroffe, 2003; Sahlberg, 2006; MoE, 2011; Lin & Miettinen, 2019).

The curriculum policy's blend of top-down and bottom-up approaches indicates the multidimensional nature of education policy in Kenya. At the national level, the National Curriculum Policy (MoE, 2015b) was developed to align with Vision 2030, which sets out Kenya's social and economic development goals and sees education as a tool with which to equip its population with the knowledge and skills they need to make informed choices about their lives, wider society, and provide the human resources required to drive the country's economic and social development (MSPNDV, 2012: 109). The curriculum policy was also developed to align with the Kenyan Constitution's article 20 of the Bill of Rights prioritising access to good-quality

education as the right of every citizen (Constitution of Kenya, 2010). This research has found that according to government stakeholders the curriculum policy was informed by evidence and recommendations from a summative evaluation of Kenya's primary education in 2009, the Odhiambo Task Force's report on the re-alignment of the education sector to the Constitution of Kenya 2010 in 2012, and an international benchmarking exercise.

At first glance it would appear that the National Curriculum Policy (NCP) was developed autonomously at the national level to align with the country's development goals and constitution and using three different approaches to education development: first, the curriculum policy is market-driven, proposing human capital discourse to achieve economic and social development by equipping learners with the skills and competencies that will enable them to become economically productive (Tabulawa, 2003; Tikly et al., 2003; Tikly, 2011): second, it moves away from a focus on economic growth to the rights-based approach to ensure all citizens' right to education and third, it attempts to follow a social-rights-based approach to education advocating a tailored approach informed by citizen's needs and using available resources and a

competency-based curriculum to increase learner outcomes (Tikly, 2011; Tikly et al., 2003; Tikly & Barrett, 2011).

Interviews with government stakeholders suggested that evidence was used to inform these three approaches by shaping what policy actors perceived as policy problems and solutions and influencing their policy preferences. Nationally generated evidence and benchmarking studies played a hand in the tailoring of Kenya's education policy to meet its economic, social, and political needs. Apparently in keeping with social-rights-based approaches, locally relevant research, including the 2009 summative evaluation of primary education, informed the public debate about what constitutes relevant education in Kenya. From this perspective, research to inform education speaks to the development of learners' capabilities, influencing factors including parental involvement, and how learners' achievements are measured (Tikly, 2011; KICD, 2017).

The use of evidence in this way suggests that the development of the curriculum policy was a rational process involving instrumental use of evidence (see Figure 4.2) to identify available

information about Kenya's education problems and possible solutions (Cousins & Simon, 1996; Malen & Knapp, 1997; Nutley et al., 2019).

A deeper examination of policymaking and evidence use revealed that the process was not rational, and government interviewees' assurance that evidence guided the process pointed more to a symbolic use of evidence that was meant to imply that the government values accountability (see Figure 4.2). This study reveals the highly political and contested nature of education policymaking in Kenya, and the involvement of a multiplicity of policy actors each pursuing their own policy interests (Malen & Knapp, 1997; Ball & Exley, 2010). In a closer examination of the national policy actors involved in the development of the National Curriculum Policy, descriptive social network analysis and thematic analysis revealed a vibrant issue network of public and private policy actors, including trade unions, parents' associations, business representatives and religious organisations, that was rife with conflict and unequal power dynamics, all exchanging resources as they negotiated and communicated their policy preferences for or against curriculum reform (Atkinson & Coleman, 1992; Dowding, 1995; Forrest, 2003; Marsh & Rhodes, 1992). The interactions between the national policy actors involved in the curriculum reform highlighted

their interest-driven, power-based motives as they bargained, negotiated, and made compromises, competing, and cooperating with one another to influence curriculum reform (Ball & Exley, 2010; Exley et al., 2011; Malen & Knapp, 1997). The government resisted amending its policy, using various strategies to enforce its decision on curriculum reform. The Jubilee government manifesto's promise to reform the Kenyan curriculum and maintain political support incentivised the government to achieve this goal whether or not the policy selected was implementable or effective (Bressers & O'Toole, 1998; Pierson, 2002, 2004). Once the government had decided what the education problem was, and that curriculum reform was an acceptable solution it was difficult to change its trajectory (Pierson, 2002, 2004). As a result, the extent to which instrumental use of evidence could inform policy even when new social challenges arose was limited (ibid).

The application of policy networks theory has shown that the National Curriculum Policy was developed through the interaction of public policy actors in government with private actors such as education activists, trade unions and NGOs in the power-negotiation and consensus-building phases of policymaking leading up to the development of the policy (Ball & Exley, 2010; Exley et

al., 2011). Opposition to the curriculum reform from the Kenya National Union of Teachers (KNUT) and civil-society groups including education activists became apparent after the Odhiambo Task Force report was rejected in Parliament. This rejection arguably set the stage for the formation of an issue network in which policy actors interacted in support of or opposition to the policy change and negotiated to secure their preferences. The issue network that formed around the development of the National Curriculum Policy illuminated the power struggles, the resource dependency, the power of certain policy actors conferred by the resources they held, and the extent to which the government depends on them for those resources (Compston, 2009).The descriptive social network analysis and thematic analysis found that the issue network formed around national curriculum reforms included numerous public policy actors such as the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD), the Kenya National Examinations Council (KNEC) and the Teacher Service Commission (TSC), with MoE holding the central legitimising position in the policy network. National private policy actors in the issue network included civil society actors from faith-based organisations, the Parents Association (PA), NGOs, business associations representing publishers (KPA) and the private sector body; the Kenya Private Sector

Alliance, that represents private schools in Kenya (KEPSA). Trade unions are also represented in the policy network including the teachers' union's such as KNUT and the Kenya union for post primary education teachers (KUPPET). These actors had varying amounts of power and resources that influenced the extent to which they engaged in resource exchange with the government in exchange for their policy preferences being upheld. Tikly and Barrett (2011) argue that while civil-society advocacy groups, including grassroots campaigns for educational change, NGOs, and religious and community organisations, are effective at promoting social justice in education, learners, parents, and communities are often excluded from the decision-making. Providing a good-quality education requires dialogue, consultation, and debate within the state and between the government and interest groups, including teachers, teachers' unions, and non-governmental and community organisations (Tikly, 2011). This research has considered the nature and extent of 'voice' in educational debates, using policy network theory to examine which stakeholders influence education policy in the context of curriculum reforms in Kenya. The literature on curriculum changes notes that curriculum reform processes have historically been highly technocratic and bureaucratic with limited democracy, often leading to power struggles

between stakeholders (Apple, 1977; Wheeler-Bell, 2017). This research has highlighted that the decision to change the national curriculum and the development of the National Curriculum Policy centred around a small group of bureaucrats that were brought together through the Odhiambo Task Force and the National Committee on Curriculum Reforms which led to push back from stakeholders such as KNUT, who felt that the process had not been participatory. This research has found that push back from groups that felt they had not been adequately involved in the curriculum reform process put pressure on the government which then led them to open up the reform process to a wider network of stakeholders through for instance, national conferences on education as a way to legitimise the process and to increase buy-in. Additionally, evidence including the summative evaluation of education, the national needs assessment and the pilot studies of CBC implementation, have been used in tandem with involving stakeholders in the policy development process after the policy had already been developed. The use of evidence in this was also in efforts to legitimise the development of the National Curriculum Policy overall, the national curriculum reform process.

The nature of the resource dependency between government and private policy actors determines how much the government values the other actor and how much access to policymaking it will grant them. While the government can use the tradable resources at its disposal including access to policymaking and amending policy to negotiate with national policy actors for their policy preferences, this research finds that it resisted national policy actors trading resources for policy amendments, employing both collaborative and restrictive ways of engaging with actors in policymaking to marginalise those opposing the curriculum reform. The literature has shown that non-state policy actors' intense engagement with government can lead to tension, mistrust, and even antagonism as dominant, centralised education ministries seek to maintain control in the education sector, despite being unable to support their own provision effectively.

With limited access to the National Curriculum Policy development process, opposition actors such as KNUT and civil-society education activists took to the courts to try and block or delay the curriculum reforms, as evidenced by the 2021 Ang 'awa v. CS Education court case. Using it as another tradeable resource at their disposal, KNUT and education activists limited their political support for the proposed curriculum reforms, stating in the media that the process was not based

on any legal framework as the Odhiambo report had not been ratified in parliament. Notably, opposers to curriculum reforms such as KNUT, used strategies such as media campaigns, petitions, alliances and coalitions with actors holding similar views, as well as their organisational resources with a large membership of teachers to enable their policy preference.

The integrated theoretical model (Figure 4.2) shows that the opposition to curriculum reforms led to changes in policy-network-specific rules and norms and in the resources, available to policy actors. The Kenyan Constitution expects stakeholder participation. Changes in policy-network-specific rules and norms requiring stakeholder involvement in policymaking were found to lead to resource exchange between the government and other policy actors, apparently providing access to policymaking via strategies such as national conferences on curriculum reform and gathering stakeholder views through public policy dialogue (see Chapter 2).

Interviews with government stakeholders indicated that the Parents Association, NGOs, and religious organisations (Tikly, 2011) had been consulted about the development of the national curriculum policy in keeping with the social-justice approach to education development. The view expressed by civil-society interviewees, however, was that parent's engagement had not

been sought via the National Parents Association to elicit and incorporate their views in the National Curriculum Policy, and teacher and learner involvement was also limited. However, government stakeholders indicated that teachers' input had been enhanced through the involvement of the Kenya Primary School Heads Association (KPSHA) and Kenya Secondary Schools Heads Association (KSSHA), whose views were included in the development of the National Curriculum Policy. In keeping with policy network theory, this research argues that access to education policymaking can be traded by the government and given to certain policy actors such as parents.

This research found that the government engaged with these civil-society actors even when they did not need their political support as a resource, to confer more legitimacy on its chosen policy. The government engaged with civil-society actors such as the National Parents Association to acquire a good reputation in the eyes of the public (Compston, 2009). Indeed, research has found that the government's main motivation for encouraging community participation is extractive and was not necessarily intended to encourage local ownership and accountability (Rose, 2010).

Both private actors in opposition of curriculum reforms and government actors advocating for change, used the media to push their narratives and shape public perceptions around the process. It was observed that to ensure their preferred policy the government strategically used mobilisation techniques and engaged with the media to inform and shape the narrative around the curriculum reform (Compston, 2009; Rizvi, 2006; Rizvi & Lingard, 2006, 2010). According to the literature, the media reports information on mainstream government issues and because public officials are seen as more reliable sources of evidence than other actors, government actors appear more in the media (Gronke & Cook, 2007; Thrall, 2006). This research has found that the government used evidence to shape policy narratives around the curriculum reforms via the media.

The government sought to affect public opinion through the media in various ways, including publicising the implementation of the needs assessment, using this both symbolically, to gain legitimacy for the curriculum reform process, and strategically, to mobilise citizens. When the needs assessment findings were reported, they were used as an advocacy tool to influence citizens' perceptions of the problems and solutions in education (see Figure 4.2). Government

actors were often to be seen in the media declaring that the curriculum reform was informed by citizens' feedback in the needs assessment. The government used the processes and evidence findings strategically to steer policy preferences and legitimise its preferred policy, the National Curriculum Policy. The Cabinet Secretary was often reported in the media stating that 'the train has left the station,' indicating that the policy path now taken would not be changed. As the integrated theoretical model depicts in Figure 4.2 shows, the government also used the media as a mobilising resource with which to discredit opposition actors, branding them as noisemakers and stating that their stance was based on personal interests.

Notably, the government appeared to grant NGOs such as Uwezo East Africa and the Regional Education Learning Initiative in East Africa (RELI) in the policy network access to the policymaking process. According to Pinkney (2009), education service delivery and advocacy NGOs in Sub-Saharan Africa hold the government accountable for good-quality education provision. However, in the case of the development of the National Curriculum Policy, civil-society interviewees indicated that NGOs were found to be working either in support of curriculum reform or in silent opposition, understanding the importance of maintaining a good

relationship with the government. As Rose (2011a) argues, contrary to popular belief NGOs do not always choose between service delivery and education advocacy but balance the two, working with government to achieve their goals via different strategies depending on the strength of government policy, the formality of their relationship with the government, and their funding sources to participate in policymaking.

Indicatively, the side-lining of civil-society actors such as unions and education activists and the carefully balanced relationship between NGOs and the government show that ideologies of democracy are still evolving and growing in Kenya. As stated in the literature review, Kenya is a fairly new democracy that underwent major political change from 2002 to 2013, when the National Rainbow Coalition (NARC) took office, promoting transparency and democracy (Colclough, 2012b, 2012a; Colclough & Webb, 2012). However, the government still follows what has been termed neopatrimonialism, in which power is derived from popular support and the right to rule is ascribed to the individual (Evans & Rose, 2012). It includes limited democratic processes, such as giving citizens choices in education policymaking and allowing them to participate in decision-making.

Democracy as an ideology and the proposed links between democracy and education development have been widely discussed in the literature and throughout this thesis (Evans & Rose, 2012; Tabulawa, 2003, 2013; Tikly, 2019c). The present study finds that a global convergence of policy discourses has influenced national education policy in Kenya, and specifically its National Curriculum Policy.

This research recognises the conflicting views on who has autonomy in education policymaking in Kenya. For instance, government policy actors at MoE and KICD and private policy actor interviewees for this study such as the World Bank and UNESCO suggested that the government takes the lead in policymaking, with aid agencies such as the World Bank playing a subordinate supporting role. Secondary analysis of policy documents including the National Committee on Curriculum Reforms report, the draft National Curriculum Policy developed in 2015, and the National Needs Assessment report, paint a different picture. This research has found that global actors influence national education policies in Kenya, and that evidence generated at the global level shapes national education problems and solutions and national policy actors' policy preferences.

The influence of global education policies and their effect on national policies is reflected in global frameworks such as the Sustainable Development Goals and the Education for All (EFA) agenda, to which Kenya has committed (Rose, 2003, King et al., 2007; Milligan, 2011; Colclough & Webb, 2012; Verger et al., 2018; Tromp & Datzberger, 2021).

Using policy network theory and the integrated theoretical model, this research has demonstrated that due to the resource-dependent relationship between national and global policy actors, with the former more dependent on the latter, the Government of Kenya does not have autonomy in education policymaking.

Policy network theory posits that policy actors are unlikely to interact with each other if neither side stands to gain through resource exchange (Compston, 2009: 19). This research has found that international aid agencies and development partners use access to the policymaking process granted to them by the government to position themselves to communicate their preferred policy preferences and compel the government to amend policy in their favour. International policy actors focus on education development policy that increases access to education through rights-based ideologies, market-driven policies and human capital development to promote democracy

and human rights discourse through learner-centred education (Chisholm et al., 1998; Tabulawa, 2003, 2013; Schweisfurth, 2006, 2013, 2015; King et al., 2007; Tikly & Barrett, 2011; Mundy & Verger, 2015; Tikly, 2011, 2019a, 2019b). Research on education development in Sub-Saharan Africa has highlighted the influence of Western states endorsing a human capital development approach to education promoting democracy and free-market economies that benefits their own markets (Tabulawa, 2003, 2013). Kenya's new curriculum's emphasis on the labour market and preparing learners for the world of work contradicts its goal of encouraging every Kenyan to become an engaged, empowered, and ethical citizen (Akala, 2021). Its labour-centred approach may prevent the CBC addressing other aspects of life and nurturing independent, confident, cooperative, and inspired learners who love learning and are keen to apply their knowledge in order to make constructive contributions as productive citizens' (KICD, 2017:10).

This thesis has used the integrated theoretical model (illustrated in Figure 4.2) to explain how changes in how global policy actors perceive education problems and solutions and their policy preferences in addressing those problems inform the evidence generated to highlight changes in education trends. It proposes that global policy actors use findings from their evidence

instrumentally as a resource to shape global policy problems and their solutions. By driving the narrative around education problems and solutions using evidence, global policy preferences change leading to resource-exchange relationships that result in policy change. This thesis argues that aid agencies and development partners also use the findings from evidence that they generate in legitimate ways to legitimise the policy solutions they propose, and in strategic ways to advocate for their policy preferences. Aid agencies such as the World Bank and development partners such as UNESCO and UNICEF have resources at their disposal including fluid funds, the ability to support national governments with policy implementation, private investment, a global reputation, and relevant information, all of which give them the power to influence national policy. The World Bank, for example, is one of the most powerful international organisations in education development and its biggest funder in low-income countries (Mundy & Verger, 2015). It has a strong reputation as a thought-leader and education knowledge hub (Mundy & Verger, 2015). Armed with their evidence and exchanging their resources within the policy network, global actors are able to both drive global education policy and influence national policy.

Competency-based education has been introduced in Kenya to help the country enter the global arena. This study has shown that the proponents of competency-based education, including UNESCO, UNICEF, and the World Bank, see it as enhancing human capital through the knowledge, skills and attitudes of students entering the workforce to increase their countries' competitive advantage in the global marketplace (Tromp & Datzberger, 2021). Competency-based education focuses on what learners can do with their knowledge, and on measurable, objective outcomes. It is linked to globally held social and political views to development such as citizenship, human rights, social cohesion, and cultural diversity (ibid).

Research has found that as a policy solution to current education challenges, the competency-based curriculum has been driven by the rapid growth of technology, international competition, and new trade agreements – global trends representing the knowledge and information society that informs changes to solutions that call for a focus on practical competencies and skills including innovation, adaptability and technology, to prepare learners for the twenty-first century (Tromp & Datzberger, 2021).

In keeping with this narrative, the National Curriculum Policy, in the language of the competency-based curriculum, establishes that the goal of the curriculum reform is to align Kenya with global education trends:

Global trends in education and training are shifting their focus towards programmes that encourage optimal development of human capital. Proponents for this change argue that unless young people's skills are developed for work, they will be ultimately excluded from active participation in their societies. In line with the global trends, Kenya needs to align itself to this paradigm shift in education. (MoE, 2015b: 7)

The policy document also aligns with the recommended social and political approaches to development:

Nurturing every learners' potential to produce citizens equipped with relevant and quality knowledge with national values and social competencies and to equip them with twenty-first century skills and competencies. (MoE, 2015b: 7)

Research on policy-borrowing and implementation has shown that countries that successfully integrate global policies into their national context align them with their national education priorities and outcomes and changing global trends, the whole facilitated by stakeholder dialogues across multiple levels of society (Chisholm, 2005; Crossley et al., 2005; Harber, 2017; Tikly, 2019b). The narrative of the National Curriculum Policy discussed above implies that it is geared more to global trends than to national needs (King, 2007; Milligan, 2011). This thesis has used descriptive social network analysis and thematic analysis to show that national stakeholders engaged with Kenya's education policy development process in limited ways. From the perspective of the interviewees, certain groups such as learners, parents and teachers were adequately involved. The government appeared to grant access to national policy actors in ways that made it appear to value accountability and to legitimise the policy direction chosen, rather than including national evidence to inform the policymaking. It also changed the rules and norms of the issue network formed around curriculum development and altered its strategies to marginalise and exclude actors opposing the curriculum reform.

Arguably, evidence that contradicted the policy direction that the Kenyan government had decided on was not considered, because the path was already set. For instance, assessments of the use of the competency-based curriculum in other Sub-Saharan African countries such as Zambia and Tanzania have found specific problems with this approach: the majority of teachers were found to know little about the competency-based curriculum and as a result were not implementing it effectively in schools (Komba & Mwandanji, 2015; Mulenga & Kabombwe, 2019).

Many researchers have highlighted the challenges of human capital approaches as a strategy to drive economic development in lower-income countries (King, et al., 2007; Tabulawa, 2003, 2013; Tikly, 2011, 2019b). For instance, it is wrong to assume that educational inputs, processes, and outcomes have a linear relationship, as frequently suggested by the input-output model proposed by aid agencies (Tikly, 2011). Instead, there are complex, multifaceted relationships between learner characteristics, educational processes, and outcomes, which change according to the context under consideration (Tikly, 2011). While global policies imply a homogenization of values and measures in education, historical, cultural, economic, and political conditions in particular contexts affect this (Ball et al., 2012). Rose (2003) and Milligan (2011) report that the World Bank

continues to encourage the drive for human capital theory, determined to show its relevance through cost-benefit analyses of educational spending, even though the theory is out of date and limited.

9.3. Summary

This piece of research has assessed how evidence informs education policymaking, using the development of Kenya's National Curriculum Policy as a case study, and has applied the integrated policy network evidence use model to explore what factors influence education policy, the key stakeholders involved in policymaking, and the enablers of and barriers to evidence use. While it is clear that multiple interrelated factors influenced the development of Kenya's National Curriculum Policy, it is not clear which had the central role or roles. As research, has shown, in the implementation of policies borrowed from beyond a nation's boundaries it can be difficult to identify the multidirectional factors influencing policy adoption when many levels of actors are involved and many events are taking place (Crossley et al., 2005; Compston, 2009; Harber, 2017). This thesis has shown that the development of the National Curriculum Policy (MoE, 2015) was not a linear process informed by nationally generated evidence. Using the integrated theoretical

model, it has suggested that globally generated evidence was used instrumentally to inform education solutions and policies at the national level. Findings from nationally generated evidence are most often used in instrumentally and symbolically to legitimise policy decisions already decided upon and as an advocacy tool to increase political support for such policies. This study has established that the National Curriculum Policy was framed in line with a globally decided discourse giving national policy actors symbolic access to the policy process to legitimise the government's policy preferences. It has also found that the debate about the curriculum policy development in 2015 excluded teachers, parents, and other stakeholders central to the successful implementation of a competency-based curriculum: The National Curriculum Policy echoes global development recommendations rather than local priorities. However, Milligan (2011) contends that policies are contextualised in Kenya at the level of implementation and not at the policymaking stage. Crossley et al.'s (2005) study of curriculum reform in South Africa argues that global, regional, national, and local educational policy development are not always linear, and that international, national, and regional policies can circulate between levels, being reshaped to fit local circumstances. Hopefully, this will apply in the case of the Kenya's National

Curriculum Policy, and it will align with the country's education priorities as implementation of the competency-based curriculum continues.

Chapter 10: Conclusion

10.1. Introduction

Over the last decade Kenya has made significant changes to its education system with the aim of positioning the country both regionally and internationally, developing education policy to trigger and enact its intended reforms, and using these changes as a political instrument by which to achieve the government's goals for the nation. This thesis has discussed the extent to which evidence informs education policy development in Kenya, with a focus on the development of its National Curriculum Policy of 2018 and the many factors that influenced it, including the conflicts and coalitions at the centre of the national political system and global education politics; how evidence was used in the development of the policy; and the central role of public and private policy actors in the process.

It has answered the overall research question: What was the role of evidence in the development of the National Curriculum Policy in Kenya? and the three sub-questions: What is the role of evidence and the enablers and barriers to using evidence for shaping education policy in the

context of developing the National Curriculum Policy in Kenya; What factors other than evidence influence education policy processes within the context of developing the National Curriculum Policy in Kenya; Who are the stakeholders influencing education policy within the context of developing the National Curriculum Policy in Kenya. This chapter summarises the main findings from the research and relates them to the above questions. It discusses the study's methodological contribution, the application of policy network theory in education research and the literature on education policy development, reflects on the limitations of the study, and outlines the implications for education policy, advocacy, and future research.

10.2. Summary of the main findings

This thesis applies policy network theory to assess the barriers and enablers to evidence use, the factors influencing policymaking and the stakeholders involved in the development of Kenya's National Curriculum Policy. It assesses the enablers of and barriers to the use of evidence in education policy processes explored through the lens of policy network theory. I argue that policy actors use evidence as a resource with which to negotiate for their policy preferences. It has

investigated the factors that influenced the policy process leading to the development of Kenya's National Curriculum Policy, including national education policies, commission report, politics, global education influences, and actors' power and resources.

Finally, it applies descriptive social network analysis to explore the key policy actors 'in the education policy community and relationships within it, including how the actors interacted to negotiate and achieve their policy preferences. While it is clear that multiple interrelated factors influenced Kenya's National Curriculum Policy development process, it is not clear which factor or factors had the central role. This study applied policy network theory to show how both public and private policy actors interacted within a policy network in a process of resource exchange in their efforts to influence the policy outcome. In so doing, I have shown how various policy actors used a combination of tradeable resources and especially financial support as in the case of donors, recourse to the courts as used by KNUT, information and the strategic use of the media and denying access to the policy process employed by the government, during the formation of the NCP. To explain the centrality of resource exchange in the formation of the National Curriculum Policy I have discussed the influences of national-level changes in government

politics which took place with the change from the autocratic Kenya African National Union (KANU) Government to the democratic Narc government which resulted in the widening of the policy network; policy actors' preferences, strategies, resources and power; and formal and informal rules and norms, as well as exogenous factors including externally imposed legal changes to the powers and responsibilities of public actors. This research has shown that the development of education policy is not a linear process and can take many years as is the case of the NCP development process which began in 2011 until the policy was initially developed in 2015 and revised and made publicly available in 2018. It has also been shown that policy reforms can take place without the enactment of an actual policy framework because the repot of the Odhiambo Task Force was still used as a foundation for curriculum reforms even if the sessional paper resulting from the task force was not ratified by parliament. Many of the stakeholders interviewed for this research argued that the government's political goals play a strong role in determining how education policy is developed, enacted, and implemented. This thesis has depicted how a government's political goals directly influence its perception of policy problems and solutions, and its preferred education policies despite whether those solutions and preferred

policies are the right fit contextually. As posited by policy network theory, a government uses different strategies to secure its policy preferences and policy amendments, such as upholding policy decisions despite limited stakeholder buy-in.

Globalisation and changes in global education resulting from international conventions and agreements strongly influenced the development of Kenya's National Curriculum Policy and the entire curriculum reform process. My research found that the government of Kenya values global education trends and education systems, and prefers international evidence and research as illustrated with its benchmarking studies in the UK, South Africa, Japan, Singapore, Israel, Canada, and Belgium influencing its decision to change the Kenyan curriculum. What is unclear, however, is what challenges and risks these countries had identified during their implementation of learner-centred education, and how or whether Kenya considered any of them as it reformed its curriculum. I argue that evidence from the benchmarking studies was used symbolically to legitimise an education policy decision predetermined by not only the government but also the country's international donors and development partners. These development partners have played a central role in financing the evidence generation activities including the summative

evaluation of education and the needs assessment of education, which are argued to have informed the development of the National Curriculum Policy which informed curriculum reforms. By applying the policy network theory resource-exchange model, it has been revealed how the Kenyan government conducted evidence-generation activities financed by donors which for them is a direct strategy to ensure their policy preferences.

This analysis has shown the central role of private international policy actors such as multilateral and bilateral institutions in the development of Kenya's National Curriculum Policy. As posited by policy network theory, externally imposed legal changes to the powers and responsibilities of government actors can alter the distribution of resources within a policy network in diverse ways (Compston, 2009: 48). External factors such as globalisation and shared global agendas for education such as the Sustainable Development Goals have brought in new political and policy actors, who appear to have weakened the Kenyan government's legal authority to make autonomous decisions about its National Curriculum Policy. I have shown, for instance, that UNESCO's deliberate advancement of the competency-based curriculum (CBC) in developing countries has seen its implementation in Rwanda, Zambia, Ghana, and Ethiopia, for instance, and

that UNICEF has preferred and advocated for learner-centred education globally. These two policy actors have specifically been shown to have influenced the development of Kenya's National Curriculum Policy.

The examination of the stakeholders that influence policymaking identified numerous public and private policy actors who make up the policy community. The key organisations were identified as parts of central government, including Ministry of Education Science and Technology (MoE), Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD), Kenya National Examinations Council (KNEC), Teacher Service Commission (TSC) and other ministries including the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Interior and coordination of National Government. Private organisations involved included local and international non-governmental institutions (NGOs), trade unions, civil-society organisations, religious organisations, publishers, and education advocates. The education policy community is vibrant and highly populated, with varying levels of influence, resources, power, and involvement in policymaking. This research has highlighted the many private actors working directly with public actors on policy development or indirectly focusing on education service delivery or advocacy. This illustration of the wider education

policy network has also shown the links and relationships between global, regional, and national education policy actors (Chisholm, 2005), the effects of neoliberalism in widening the education policy network, and how the 'good governance' agenda has increased the role of NGOs in the provision of development aid (Tikly, 2019).

Analysis of the wider education policy community in Kenya has revealed that the central government is still the main initiator of education policy development and illuminated the collaborative nature of stakeholders working within government and the strong alliances built with private policy actors in support of the curriculum reform. The actors opposing the policy reforms – mostly previous MoE and KICD employees, education advocates, and the Kenya National Union of Teachers (KNUT) – were found to be polarised among themselves, limiting their collective resources and power to influence policymaking, and were not in close relationships with the central actors with the most influence.

In the descriptive network analysis and illustration of the policy actors involved in developing Kenya's National Curriculum Policy a focus on MoE and KICD's ego networks revealed that they were networks with low density and high centrality between network actors. Analysis of the MoE

and KICD networks found that the main policy actors in the network, who were directly involved in the development of the draft National Curriculum Policy in 2015, showed close ties between MoE, KICD and other public policy actors and, between MoE, KICD and a small selection of private policy actors including bilateral and multilateral organisations, religious organisations and civil-society organisations. Policy network theory illustrates how the government used different strategies to achieve its goals, including choosing which policy actors to collaborate with, developing a draft National Curriculum Policy with a small network of select actors which it then presented to the wider community of the MoE and KICD policy networks, and switching between operating unilaterally and cooperatively by including further actors in resource exchange.

I argue that the intent on achieving its education policy goals despite the fact that the Odhiambo Task Force's report on the re-alignment of the education sector to Kenya's 2010 constitution was not passed in Parliament, the government unilaterally drafted the National Curriculum Policy in 2014–2015 it decided to include multilateral and bilateral organisations that offered it fluid funds with which it could purchase the services of technical consultants who are Kenyan. These

consultants working in a technical capacity to support the Kenyan government with expertise, also pushed their benefactors' development agenda. The government's cooperative strategies included a small number of actors in resource exchange, limiting access to opposition groups such as KNUT and education activists, which it called 'noisemakers.' I also argue that, as premised by policy network theory, the government used a cooperative strategy to allow relevant private policy actors such as the National Parents Association, the *Kenya* Secondary School Heads Association (KSSHA) and the *Kenya* Primary School Heads Association (KPSHA) access to the policy process because they have good public reputations, and their approval would give the National Curriculum Policy more legitimacy. Analysis of the MoE and KICD ego networks and the interview data also revealed how business interests such as publishers and other national private policy actors, including religious organisations, exerted a strong influence on education policy.

Although publishers and religious organisations did not appear to be closely connected to the central policy actors as they had fewer ties (see figure 8.4), their interviews revealed that their

considerable power and resources enabled them to push for their policy preferences through a series of resource exchanges and negotiations.

While the social network analysis revealed the role of national civil-society organisations in the evidence generation, they were not central to the policymaking process and appeared to have limited ties with central public and private policymaking actors. Although allowing them access to policy processes also seemed to be a government strategy to increase the legitimacy of the National Policy Curriculum on the basis of the organisations' good reputations, the government can secure other resources such as evidence, private investment and cooperation with implementation from other policy actors, limiting many civil-society organisations' ability to influence the uptake and use of evidence in policy processes, because if they present opposing evidence they risk being denied access to, and therefore a say in, the policy process.

The government's uptake of World Bank research also increased its uptake of evidence. As posited by Nutley et al. (2019), the social influence of specific actors played an important role in increasing the central policymaking actors' evidence uptake. Acting as opinion leaders, institutions such as the World Bank increased the use of evidence generated by civil-society

organisations such as Uwezo, helping to promote both conceptual and instrumental uses of evidence. The social network analysis approach also revealed that traditional evidence-generating institutions such as universities had limited relational ties to the central public policymaking actors. However, although playing an important role in generating local evidence, Uwezo is funded by the World Bank and the research that it produces does face the risk of being aligned to its interests.

This thesis has explored government barriers to evidence use, political factors, researcher challenges and challenges in generating evidence, highlighting how evidence was generated by commissioned evaluation studies that were primarily conducted by the KICD. Although evidence was generated and evaluation reports such as the KICD's 2016 Needs Assessment Report are available to display it, linking evaluation reports to policies developed is difficult. Although attributing evidence generated to instrumental use, as Nutley et al. (2019) discuss, was difficult, there was evidence of both conceptual and symbolic evidence use. It was evidence from the assessment that numerous factors influence evidence use and mainly; politics, researchers'

challenges and challenges with generating evidence including time, resources, and limited education research.

In the government, a lack of cooperation between ministries, challenges in accessing studies completed by institutions outside government, and the government's bias towards evidence generated by other government institutions all hindered the use of evidence in education policymaking. Politics plays a key role in the extent to which evidence is used as the political intentions of the government and will play a superseding role to the evidence available that can influence policymaking. However, I found that aligning evidence against policymakers' needs may help in mitigating the central role that politics plays.

Researchers' characteristics, including their expertise, political sensitivity, and rapport with users, also influence the extent to which evidence is used in policymaking. Government respondents said that researchers should consider the practical real-life situations in which evidence about a specific situation is to be used at a specific time, as failure to include such factors in an evaluation will hinder its use. It became clear that the way in which research is packaged

and communicated to the government plays an important part in the extent to which government actors, who are central in the education policymaking process, use evidence.

Constraints to evidence generation include time, finance, and human resources. When generating evidence in the form of commissioned research studies or evaluations, allowing too little time may limit the amount of evidence available when needed, which may in turn influence policymaking. Financial and human resource constraints may necessitate their allocation to other areas of the policymaking process considered more important than evidence generation.

The nature of evidence generation and evidence use can be very political. Several of the stakeholders interviewed pointed out when discussing the technical support provided to the Kenyan government by various organisations including the World Bank and UNESCO that researchers in the Global South are consumers of evidence, whereas those in the Global North are evidence generators. The interviewees also revealed that the Kenyan government prefers evidence generated by international organisations and views locally produced evidence with suspicion as anti-government.

10.3. Alignment between the study's findings, aim and objectives

This thesis has assessed the influence of evidence in the development of the NCP and the enablers and barriers to evidence use in policymaking, the factors that influence education policymaking, the key stakeholders involved in the education policymaking process, using policy network theory (Marsh & Rhodes, 1992; Compston, 2009; Ball, 2012, 2016) to examine how public and private policy actors exchanged resources with the government during the development of the National Curriculum Policy. Evidence can be used as a resource available to policy actors to inform perceived policy problems and policy, and to negotiate actors' policy preferences. Policy network theory and theories on evidence use were used to show how policy actors generate and use evidence in symbolic and strategical ways to establish perceived policy problems and policy solutions, negotiate on predetermined policy preferences, and advocate for other stakeholders' approval.

Using a mixed-methods case study approach enabled this analysis of the development of an education policy process, capturing the different stages as they unfolded and exploring the factors that go into policymaking at first hand. As the curriculum reform process was still ongoing

at the beginning of the study it was uniquely placed to access and interview public and private policy actors directly involved.

Using quantitative and qualitative descriptive social network analysis to increase understanding of the formation and dynamics of policy networks by mapping out and graphically depicting actor coalitions in education policymaking, this thesis has shown that policy network theory and descriptive social network analysis are suitable methods for exploring and increasing understanding of education policy processes in developing countries. By exploring the policy network developing the National Curriculum Policy it has highlighted the contested nature of education policy development and the limitations to evidence use in the process.

Most of the stakeholders agreed that the overriding factor influencing education policy development is still politics, specifically the government's political motives and goals and the political interests of private policy actors such as multilateral and bilateral organisations. Although a wide array of policy actors is involved in education policymaking, central government still greatly influences what education policies are developed and which actors are granted access to the process.

This thesis has shown how different approaches can be used to increase collaboration with government stakeholders and increase the likelihood of evidence use. Education policymaking has evolved since the post-independence one-party state when actor participation was limited to being open to public participation and the involvement of multiple actors. However, there is still a long way to go until the education policymaking process includes different stakeholders' views and proper use of evidence.

The findings from the primary stakeholder interview and secondary data gathered have provided responses to all the research questions. Assessment of the policy process as it took place revealed the various factors influencing education policymaking, the key public and policy actors involved, and the enablers of and barriers to evidence use.

10.4. Recommendations

Various recommendations for future research and for consideration in future policy development processes are suggested from this research. For one, it has been shown that the summative evaluation pointed to revising the curriculum to be able to identify Learner talents early, moral

education, history, and citizenship. This, like it is discussed in the literature, implies that education can address more than just education which is likely to be unsuccessful without the implementation of programmes that directly address specific issues in society. Without such targeted programmes, evaluating the achievements made in addressing these issues is difficult. Considering CBC in Kenya intendents to impact competencies such as learner values, moral education and citizenship, this research recommends for programmes and policies relating directly to issues of citizenship and moral education, should be planned for, and addressed as stand-alone interventions and should not be considered requirements of education.

Another key recommendation that came from this research and from feedback from interviewees is the importance for Kenyan policymakers to focus more on National challenges and to be guided by national evidence on the situation on the ground. Evidence from the summative evaluation, the various task force reports, the needs assessment of education and stakeholder feedback highlighted various challenges with the 8-4-4 system including high student teacher ratios, overcrowding in classrooms, shortages in teaching and learning materials and limited

technological advancement, all of which will still have to be addressed despite curriculum reforms, to ensure successful educational outcomes.

This research highlights the barriers and enablers of evidence use in policy making and recommends for the deliberate allocation of resources directed to strengthening the evidence generation systems between the Ministry of education, its semi-autonomous bodies, and other Ministries, to facilitate evidence generation, sharing and programme monitoring and evaluation activities that can inform national policy. Additionally, the curriculum development process calls for monitoring and evaluation (M&E) processes to be incorporated into the system. This research has found that the M&E processes within the MoE are ad hoc and in need of centralisation, and a focus on learning outcomes as a measure of educational success tends to be the bulk of evaluation activities conducted. It is a recommendation of this research, that monitoring and evaluation systems to track policy development processes and policy implementation should be strengthened. One way to do this could be to establish a monitoring and evaluation directorate within the Ministry of Education or to establish such a unit within the Directorate of Quality

Assurance to increase the evaluation and research generation activities that go into informing policy.

This research also recommends for the synchronising of research activities between public and private stakeholders and specifically, the strengthening of collaboration between research generation institutions such as Universities, Think Tanks, NGOs, and Government Ministries. Additionally, working with multiple stakeholders will ensure that up to date data is available for policymaking.

To ensure that research is generated in reliable and valid ways, this research also recommends for research activities be conducted without the interference of political interests that would bias the findings from research.

Having an open data policy on the side of the government will increase the trust that citizens have towards policymakers. If data for example research and evaluation reports generated by the government such as the summative evaluation of education reports were available for public use,

this could potentially increase private and public partnerships and encourage citizens towards a shared vision for education development in Kenya.

This research has highlighted how access to policymaking processes is used as a strategy by the government to ensure its preferred policies such as curriculum reform are upheld and to reduce the likelihood of policy amendment. It has been shown here how public participation was used to legitimise policy decisions that have already been made. However, this research recommends for an increase in citizen representation and participation in education policymaking spaces including in agenda setting.

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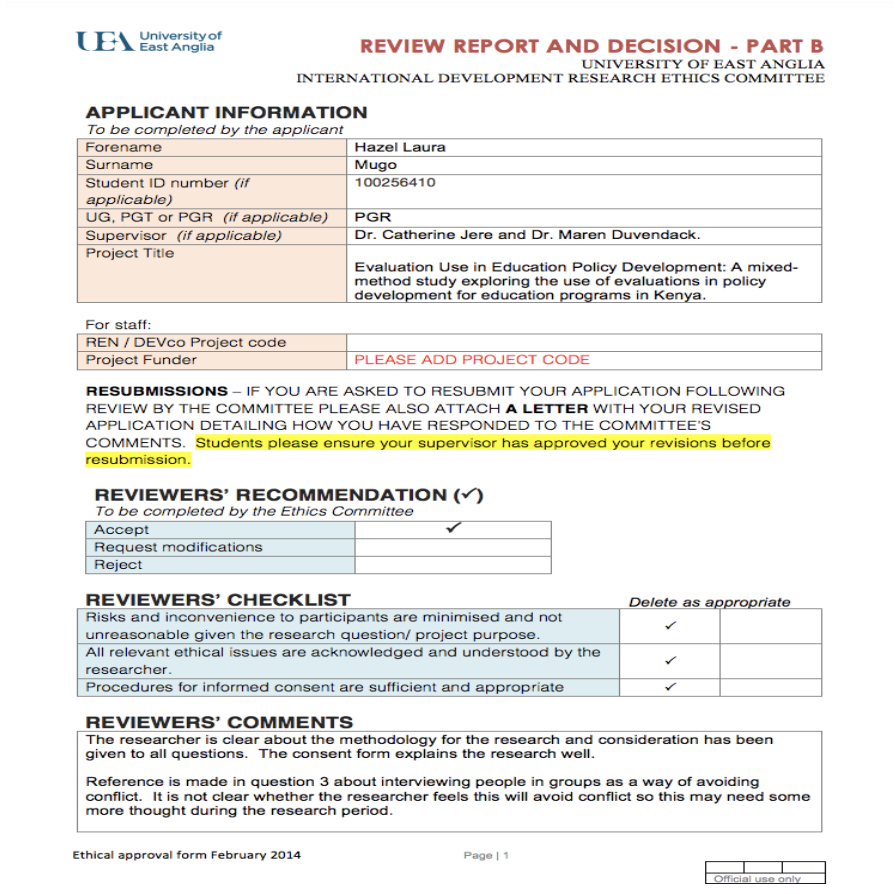
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Appendices

Appendix A: University of East Anglia ethical certificate



UEA University of East Anglia

REVIEW REPORT AND DECISION - PART B
UNIVERSITY OF EAST ANGLIA
INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

APPLICANT INFORMATION
To be completed by the applicant

Forename	Hazel Laura
Surname	Mugo
Student ID number *(if applicable)*	100256410
UG, PGT or PGR *(if applicable)*	PGR
Supervisor *(if applicable)*	Dr. Catherine Jere and Dr. Maren Duvendack.
Project Title	Evaluation Use in Education Policy Development: A mixed-method study exploring the use of evaluations in policy development for education programs in Kenya.

For staff:

REN / DEVco Project code	
Project Funder	PLEASE ADD PROJECT CODE

RESUBMISSIONS – IF YOU ARE ASKED TO RESUBMIT YOUR APPLICATION FOLLOWING REVIEW BY THE COMMITTEE PLEASE ALSO ATTACH **A LETTER** WITH YOUR REVISED APPLICATION DETAILING HOW YOU HAVE RESPONDED TO THE COMMITTEE'S COMMENTS. Students please ensure your supervisor has approved your revisions before resubmission.

REVIEWERS' RECOMMENDATION (✓)
To be completed by the Ethics Committee

Accept	✓
Request modifications	
Reject	

REVIEWERS' CHECKLIST *Delete as appropriate*

Risks and inconvenience to participants are minimised and not unreasonable given the research question/ project purpose.	✓	
All relevant ethical issues are acknowledged and understood by the researcher.	✓	
Procedures for informed consent are sufficient and appropriate	✓	

REVIEWERS' COMMENTS

The researcher is clear about the methodology for the research and consideration has been given to all questions. The consent form explains the research well.

Reference is made in question 3 about interviewing people in groups as a way of avoiding conflict. It is not clear whether the researcher feels this will avoid conflict so this may need some more thought during the research period.

Ethical approval form February 2014 Page | 1

Official use only

UEA University of East Anglia

REVIEW REPORT AND DECISION - PART B

UNIVERSITY OF EAST ANGLIA
INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

REVIEWERS' COMMENTS

Research with policy makers and other stakeholders present no specific risks or ethical concerns associated with working with vulnerable groups.

COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATION

Ethics clearance is granted.

Please take note of the advice offered by the reviewers.

All consent forms should be safely stored and retained if required for future reference.

SIGNATURE (CHAIR OF THE INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT ETHICS COMMITTEE)

Signature	Date
	25.07.19

Official use only

Appendix B: NACOSTI ethical clearance certificate



REPUBLIC OF KENYA

NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE,TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

Ref No: **718699**

Date of Issue: **19/September/2019**

RESEARCH LICENSE

This is to Certify that Ms.. Hazel Mugo of University of East Anglia, has been licensed to conduct research in Nairobi on the topic: Evaluation Use in Education Policy Development: A mixed-method study exploring the use of evaluations in policy development for education programs in Kenya. for the period ending : 19/September/2020.

License No: **NACOSTI/P/19/1440**

718699

Applicant Identification Number

Director General
NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE,TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

Verification QR Code

NOTE: This is a computer generated License, To verify the authenticity of this document, Scan the QR Code using QR scanner application.

Appendix C: Topic guide for interviews

1.	Introduction
	Thank you
	Summary of project
	Outline of interview (time, open questions)
	Ethics (any questions, consent form)
2.	Contextual information
	About the respondent? Experience in the education sector? Experience working in the affiliated organisation? Role? Duration of involvement in the sector?
3.	Involvement of the organisation in the education sector in Kenya

	Engagement of the organisation with the Ministry of Education Science and Technology (MoE)? Nature of engagement with MoE? Time of engagement? Level of engagement (time, resources)? Barriers to engagement? Involvement in education policy development and CBC in particular?
4.	Perceptions of the development of the CBC process
	What other options were considered other than CBC?
5.	Evidence use in Policy making in the context of curriculum change Participant views on the extent to which evidence is used in education policy making in Kenya.
6.	Dissemination of research from the respondents' organisations Ways of dissemination? Challenges in research dissemination? Ways of improving dissemination?

	Decisions on evidence use and participant perceptions of how the government decides on what evidence to use.
	Perceptions on whether policy making should be determined by evidence.
	What other factors other than evidence influence policy making?
7.	Policy making processes
	Participant perceptions on how education policy making can be improved. Participant perceptions of the stakeholders shaping education policy. Perceptions on public participation. Recommendations on improvements to public participation.
8.	Policy networks in the development of the curriculum reform policy
	Own involvement in the education policy network. Specific respondent partners and wider organisational partners Ways of collaboration. Reasons for collaboration. Benefits of collaboration.

	Observations of the wider education policy network and collaboration between other actors
	Exploration of policy network and collaboration. Facilitators and barriers of collaboration. Effect of collaboration on the CBC reform process and outcome. Further comments on collaboration.
	Sector of industries outside of the education sector involved in the education reform process.
	Perceptions of stakeholders that are most influential in the education reform process.
	Perceptions of stakeholders who should have been involved but were not involved
9.	Perceptions on factors influencing education policy development in Kenya Politics? Resources? Public pressure?
10.	Respondents' recommendations on improvements to be made to the education sector

11.	Close of interview
	Further comments
	Follow up
	Check again ethics and level of anonymity
	Ask for support identifying other possible respondents for the research
	Ask for support identifying possible documents for the research
	Thank you

Appendix D: Participant information sheet



Would you like to help me with my research?

My name is Hazel Laura Mugo and I am a PhD student from the University of East Anglia in the UK. My research is looking at the use of evaluations in education policy making in education in Kenya. I want to understand how evaluations are used in policy development for education programs in Kenya, with a specific focus on the ongoing curriculum policy change discussion in the country. My research seeks to highlight the extent to which evaluation is used, the factors that hinder or increase evaluation use and the types of evidence used in the policy cycle. This research will also highlight what other factors other than evidence contribute to policy making, what gaps exist in the policy making cycle and the key stakeholders involved. I aim to do this by conducting interviews with key stakeholders in the policy community in Kenya and if you agree to take part in the research, I would like to talk with you several times over the next 12 months about your experiences and involvement in the policy community in Kenya and in the ongoing policy debate on curriculum change. You are free to decide if you want to talk with me. In addition, the date, time, and place for these meetings would be for you to decide depending on when is most convenient and where is most comfortable. If you are uncomfortable at any time, you can choose not to answer or discuss any questions and you are free to stop the meeting at any time. In addition, please be assured that there are no right or wrong answers, it is an account of your experiences and opinion in your own words that I am interested in. You have my assurance that your name or any information that could identify you or your designation will not be shown in any of the writing which comes from this research. In addition, all the information that you give me will be treated as private and confidential and will not be shown to or discussed with others.

If you feel that you no longer want to take part in the research or if you do not want any or all the information you have given me to be used, then please feel free to tell me at any time.

Questions and Contact Details

Should you have any questions now or at any other time about this research, and your participation please feel free to ask. I can be contacted at: xxxx. You are also welcome to email my supervisor Dr. Catherine Jere who can verify who I am and the nature of my work in Kenya.

Appendix E: Participant consent form

Agreement to participate and have meetings digitally recorded

Respondent's Copy

The research information was presented in written form and read by/to me. Anything I did not understand was explained and all my questions were answered. I understand I can withdraw my participation at any time and any or all of the information which I give before the 1st November 2020.

I, ……. agree/disagree to participate in the study and agree/disagree to have the meetings digitally recorded.

Signature/Mark of Respondent: …… Date: ……

Signature of Researcher: …….. Date: ……

AGREEMENT TO PARTICIPATE AND HAVE MEETINGS DIGITALLY RECORDED

Researcher's Copy

The research information was presented in written form and read by/to me. Anything I did not understand was explained and all my questions were answered. I understand I can withdraw my participation at any time and any or all of the information which I give before the 1st of November 2020.

I, ……. agree/disagree to participate in the study and agree/disagree to have the meetings digitally recorded.

Signature/Mark of Respondent: …… Date: ……

Signature of Researcher/Research assistant: ……. Date……

Appendix F: Interviewee Organisations

Stakeholder	Organisation	Frequency
Government	Ministry of Education	7
	Ministry of ICT	1
	Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development	2
	Centre for Mathematics, Science and Technology in Education (CEMASTEA)	2
	Kenya National Examination Council (KNEC)	1
	Office of the Attorney General	1
	Parliament Education Committee	2

	Teacher Service Commission	1
	Kenya Institute of Public Policy Research and Analysis	1
	Higher Education Loans Board	1
	National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation	1
Ex-government	Retired Ministry of Education/KICD employees	4
Civil society	Interviewee 26, civil society	1
	Interviewee 35, civil society	1
	Interviewee 17, civil society	1
	Interviewee 13, civil society	1

Education activists	Independent Education Activist	4
Teachers' unions	Kenya National Union of Teachers	2
	Kenya Union of Post-Primary Education Teachers	2
Donor organisations	World Bank	1
	USAID/US Embassy	1
School associations	Kenya Secondary School Head Association	1
Publisher associations	Kenya Publishers Association	1
UN/INGOs	UNESCO	2
	Save the Children	1
	Nairobi University	3

Universities (Odhiambo Task Force members)	Kenyatta University	1
Private-sector associations	Kenya Private Sector Alliance	1
Media	Nation Media	1
Teacher training college representative	Muranga Teachers Training College	1

Appendix G: Stakeholders not interviewed

Stakeholder	Organisation	Frequency	Stakeholder Group/involvement in policymaking
Government	Parliamentary Education Committee	1	1
	CEMASTEA	1	1
	KICD	6	1
	NACOSTI	1	2
	NACONEK	1	2
	MoE	4	1
Independent Consultant	Technical Assistant-Consultant	3	1
Teacher Union	KNUT	4	2
School Associations	Kenya Private Schools Association	1	3
	Kenya Primary Schools Association	1	3

	Kenya Secondary School Heads Association	1	3
	Kenya Private Schools Association	1	3
Religious Organisation	National Council of Churches of Kenya	1	1
	Council of Catholic Priests	1	1
Publishers	Kenya Literature Bureau	1	2
	Association of Kenyan Publishers	1	2
Media	Standard Media	1	3
Civil Society	Elimu Yetu-Retired	1	3
UN/INGO	UNICEF	1	1
	World Vision	1	3
University	University of Nairobi	1	3
	Kenyatta University	1	3
	African Leadership Center	1	3

Education Activist	-	3	3
Total		39	

Group 1: Respondents that are directly involved in the policy development process and have information on CBC and or have been directly involved in the development of the CBC policy.

Group 2: Respondents who have information on the policy development process and are into the policy community but do not necessarily have information on how CBC was developed and were not directly involved in the development of the policy.

Group 3: Respondents that are in the policy community policy but do not necessarily have information on the education policy development process or how CBC was developed.

Appendix H: Code groups and number of codes per group

Name	Number of Codes
CBC Curriculum_Challenges	8
CBC Development Process	1
CBC Policy Change Influencing Factors	20
CBC Stakeholder	39
Channels for Evidence-Sharing	6
Sector education challenges e.g., low levels of primary completion	17
Evidence challenges	11
Evidence Decision-making	1
Evidence Use Challenges	1
Factors Influencing Evidence Use	7
Factors Influencing Policy Change	42
Interviewee Names	1

KICD Stakeholders	46
MoE Stakeholders	16
MoE_Policy Directorate Stakeholders	30
Policy Formulation Challenges	12
Policy Formulation Processes	6
Policy Implementation	7
Public Participation	1
Recommendations	3
Research Findings	8
Research Processes	7
Civil Society 35, Stakeholders	3
Stakeholder Relationship Challenges	2
Stakeholder Roles	39
Stakeholders Involved in Curriculum Change	2

TSC Stakeholders	5
Types of Evidence	8
Types of Research	4
Types of Use	4
Civil Society 17, Stakeholder	1
Total no. of Codes	358