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Teacher's Pedagogical Content Knowledge in the Implementation of the History Syllabus and its Impact on Students' Academic Performance in Secondary Schools in Fako and Wouri Divisions in Cameroon

¹ Emilia Abirabe Njenwi, ² Tante Charles, ³ Alemnge Fidelis

¹ PhD Student, Department of Curriculum Studies and Teaching, Faculty of Education, University of Buea, Cameroon

^{2,3} Department of Curriculum Studies and Teaching, Faculty of Education, University of Buea, Cameroon

Corresponding Author: **Emilia Abirabe Njenwi**

Abstract

This study sought to examine the extent to which the implementation of history syllabus influenced students' academic performance in secondary schools in Fako and Wouri divisions in Cameroon. This study was to examine how teachers' attitudes towards implementation of the history syllabus impact on students' academic performance in history in secondary schools, and to investigate how teachers' pedagogical content knowledge impact on students' academic performance in history in secondary schools. The target population of the study was made up of 48295 students and 244 teachers. A sample size of 470 (165 teachers and 305) was drawn for the study. The sampling technique used for the study was purposive sampling technique. The design adopted for the study was a parallel convergent design. This made use of cross-sectional survey and correlational survey. The instruments used for the study were observation, interview and focus group discussion. Experts and key informants validated the instruments. The reliability coefficient was calculated using the Alpha

Cronbach; observation checklist was 0.856, on a scale of 0-1. The instruments were all reliable for the study. Methods of data analysis was descriptive statistics based on frequencies and percentages and inferential statistics in which person product moment correlation was used to test the hypothesis. The study findings reveal that history teachers have a negative attitude towards the implementation of the competency-based history syllabus as such affecting students' academic performance negatively in secondary schools. Secondly, the findings revealed that teachers' use of pedagogical content knowledge has a negative impact on students' academic performance in history in secondary schools. Based on the findings, it was recommended that the Ministry of Secondary Education in Cameroon should empower secondary schools with the necessary facilities to facilitate the implementation of competency-based history curriculum to enhance students' academic performance in secondary schools.

Keywords: Implementation, Competency-Based History Syllabus, Attitudes, History Teachers, Pedagogical Content Knowledge and Academic Performance

1. Introduction

Many countries today are struggling to change their pedagogical practices mainly because of the learning situation and future demands in their countries and the world at large. This had also necessitated the quest for changing of the history syllabus in Cameroon. This is to meet the changes in the world and the demands of the 21st century that requires learners to be exposed to different higher-level skills and knowledge as opposed to the previously offered history syllabus in Cameroon. However, the important of pedagogical content knowledge in the implementation of history syllabus cannot be overemphasized as it helps the learners to acquire knowledge, skills and values based on the desired learning outcomes. The problems facing our secondary schools' history syllabus is not the formulation of policies but the implementation of such policies with respect to the syllabus. The government through the Ministry of Secondary Education and History stakeholders have been doing tremendous effort through professional capacity building, conferences, workshops and provision of other resources both financial and materials to History teachers to facilitate the implementation of the History syllabus. On the other hand, the incongruence between the ideal and the reality of the pedagogical content knowledge in the implementation of the history

syllabus in secondary schools is to improve students' academic performance has been a nightmare in Cameroon.

2. Background to the Study

History curriculum for over the years have evolved from content-based approach, objective-based approach and to competency-based approach. Based on this evolution, one expect that the history students' performance in secondary should be improved as such. On the other hand, it has been the contrary as the performance has been poor and fluctuating. Many stakeholders of education and history curriculum experts of school have been questioning why. By 1996, two history teachers' associations sprang up which were the Southwest Association of History Teachers (SWAHT) and the Littoral Association of History Teachers (LAHT). These two history teachers' associations revisited the history syllabuses and came out with comprehensive syllabus for both the ordinary and Advanced level syllabuses. In the case of the ordinary level history syllabus, this was the first ever revised syllabus for history from form one to form five.

In 1997, the history syllabus was revised in order to fully focus on the secondary examination, which was formerly set up by the ministry of national education. The review of the syllabus of 1997 was occasioned by the need to improve on the quality of education at the secondary and high school levels as stipulated in the national education policy document (curriculum development center, 1996). Concerning the history examination procedures, as stipulated by Cameroon General Certificate Examination Board (CGCEB) of 1997, there were two examination papers to be written in history. Paper one, written for one hour thirty minutes was to comprise of 50 multiple-choice questions (MCQ) taken from Cameroon, Africa and the world history as opposed to structural questions, extract, cartoons and pictures interpretation. Paper two was to comprise of essay questions taken from Cameroon, Africa and World history and to be written for two hours thirty minutes. Cameroon history carries 40% of the examination marks while Africa and World History carry 30% each. Despite this allocation, in terms of topics to be treated, world history still takes an undue toll on the teaching and learning of history (CGCE Board, 1997; Nteh, 2018)^[2, 7]. A manual count of the topics showed that the syllabus is still heavily loaded with World History.

In 1999, the syllabus for ordinary level history was streamlined, topics for forms one and two of the history syllabus were to meet the required intellectual performance of the learners. Besides, another reason for bridging the levels was to Cameroonize the syllabus and make learners know about their country (Nwana, 2000)^[9]. This gave birth to the objective-based history syllabus. From 1997-2012 the objective-based history came into existence. With the creation of the Cameroon GCE board, the history syllabuses were changed towards the end of 1990s into unique syllabuses. The ordinary level history was coded 560 comprising Cameroon, Africa and the world. After testing these syllabuses for a couple of years, the CGCEB, deemed it necessary to change the format of its examinations as from June 2009. The history pedagogic office in the Southwest and Littoral regions conceived the project of establishing a detailed syllabus to provide teachers with a practical and motivational approach that would stimulate students' enthusiasm through a systematic and logical presentation of

the programme. Thus, Southwest and Littoral Association of history teachers took the responsibility to produce a detailed history syllabus into separate brochures. The first brochure covers history-560, syllabus for ordinary level and the second covers history-760, syllabus for advanced level. The two publications were meant to cover the history syllabuses on Cameroon, Africa and the world history and to serve the needs of education planners, teachers, students and candidates reading for the General Certificate of Education Examination in history ordinary and advanced levels.

However, the Southwest and Littoral Association of history teachers were urged by the demanding, exacting and challenges of the new format of examinations by the General certificate of education as from 2009. This was to publish the detailed syllabus which would guide all stakeholders and History curriculum experts on what is expected to be taught and tested. The ordinary level history syllabus was designed in such a way that the periods of public holidays, the sequence tests, revision periods and unforeseen events were taken care of. This was to ensure 100% syllabus coverage. The history syllabus was carefully divided into three major parts namely: Cameroon, Africa and the world. In drawing up the syllabus each of the sections were taught simultaneously, given that there are three teachable periods provided for teaching in each classroom. It was advisable that more efforts were concentrated in the coverage of Cameroon history in the first two years to promote the students' mastery of their country's history. Africa and European histories were taught in forms four and five, while a thorough revision of Cameroon was done in form five.

The syllabus was also drawn in such a way that the slow teachers have the opportunity to meet up with the syllabus demands and adequately prepare their students for examinations. In drawing up the syllabus, particularly at the Ordinary level, where performances in previous examinations have been below average, care was also taken to provide and encourage both the students and teachers with the time to practice the setting and scoring of multiple choice questions (MCQ's). This was meant to improve on the results which were one of the main objectives of the new format of testing.

Even though, the objective-based history syllabus focused on the learners, emphasis was laid only on the learners' acquisition of knowledge. The emphasis was based on stating the objectives that could be evaluated at each instruction. However, the lecture method was still dominating with lengthy note-giving. With the objective-based syllabus, learners could not solve real-life problems in the society. Besides, the structure of the history syllabus was still very broad and it could not still be covered at a given period of time. So many learners failed in history and the few who passed had low grades and because of this failure, competency-based approach was introduced to bringing a solution to the lapses of the objective-based syllabus in the teaching and learning process (Tambo, 2003a)^[11]. The average percentage passed in history from 2014-2021 was 43% in the Ordinary Level. (History Result for General Certificate Examination (GCE) Ordinary Level from 2014-2021; Nyamnjoh, & Akum, 2008)^[8].

The researchers observed from literature that GCE ordinary level History results for the past ten years from (2014-2021), discussion with colleagues, conferences, seminars, workshops and discovered that teachers are not conversant

with the implementation of the history syllabus in secondary schools in Cameroon. The teaching of history is now competency-based, as such history teachers are required to sharpen their mastery, skills and knowledge in the teaching learning process to improve academic performance in secondary schools. However, students' academic performance in history at the Ordinary Level has been fluctuating since when this competency-based approach curriculum was introduced in Cameroon. Many questions have been asked whether this poor performance is because of teachers' factor, students' factor or school related factor. The consequences of this poor performance have led to history students' dropout from school, wastage of time and resources by both the parents and students. The students are stressed up or psychologically tortured when they fail and repeat. This has forced history students in secondary schools to divert from study history to other disciplines. Therefore, this study seeks to teacher's pedagogical content knowledge in the implementation of the history syllabus and its impact on students' academic performance in secondary schools in Fako and Wouri divisions in Cameroon.

2.1 Research Questions

1. How does teachers' attitudes towards the implementation of the history syllabus impact students' academic performance in secondary schools?
2. To what extent does teachers' pedagogical content knowledge in the implementation of history syllabus in secondary schools has an impact on students' academic performance?

2.2 Research Hypothesis

The hypothesis was stated in the null form based on research question two thus:
Pedagogical Content Knowledge in the implementation of history syllabus in secondary schools has no significant

relationship with students' academic performance.

3. Methodology

The target population of the study was made up of 48,295 students and 244 teachers. A sample size of 470 (165 teachers and 305) was drawn for the study. The sampling technique used for the study was purposive sampling technique. The approach for the study was a mixed methods approach. The design adopted for the study was a parallel convergent design. The instruments used for the study were observation, interview, focus group discussion and questionnaire for teachers and students. The instruments were validated by key informants, history teachers in secondary schools, history students in secondary schools, course mates of curriculum studies and teaching, lecturers of curriculum studies and teaching history, test and measurement and the supervisors. The reliability coefficient was calculated using the Alpha Cronbach; observation checklist was 0.856 on a scale of 0-1. The instruments were all reliable for the study. Methods of data analysis was descriptive and inferential statistics. Person product moment correlation was used to test the hypothesis.

4. Presentation of Findings and Discussion

Research Question One: How Does Teachers' Attitudes towards the Implementation of the History Syllabus Impact Students' Academic Performance in Secondary Schools?

The findings reveal that history teachers have a negative attitude towards the implementation of the competency-based history syllabus; reason why it is affecting students' academic performance negatively in secondary schools. Table 1 presents teachers' attitudes towards implementation of the competency-based history syllabus and its impact on students' performance.

Table 1: Teachers' Attitudes towards Implementation of the Competency-Based History Syllabus and its Impact on Students' Performance

	Participants	Responses	Themes
How does your attitude towards the implementation of the history syllabus impact on your students' performance?	A	I am unwilling to engage with the CBA history syllabus because it makes lessons real to the students	unwillingness Reality to students context
	B	Hmm, it is good but not really effective in our classrooms. I do not see the need for this new approach considering the large sizes of our classrooms so I am not really interested.	Class size Teachers lack of interest
	C	The materials to implement competency based history syllabus are not really available, Makes it difficult to engage with the CBA syllabus	Insufficient instructional Materials, Lack of motivation,
	D	It makes the students to be active by participating in class activity	Makes students to be active
	E	It makes the students not to really forget what is taught to them, because every example is taken from their environment.	Makes students not to forgot what is taught
	F	It will take a long period of time for us to adapt into the competency based history syllabus	Long period of time to adapt
	G	There is limited time to implement competency-based history syllabus even though we are still trying our best to introduce it.	Limited time to implement
	H	Class size is a barrier in the implementation of competency based history syllabus	Class size a barrier to implement
	I	I find it difficult to implement competency based history syllabus	Difficult to implement
	J	I am faced with limited time to implement competency based history syllabus in the classroom	Limited time to implement
	K	It makes the students to understand other related subjects	Understanding of other subjects
	L	I cannot really implement competency based history syllabus in the classrooms	Don't know how to implement

Table 1 presents data collected for research question one. Thematically, presentation revealed that teachers' attitudes have a role to play towards the implementation of the history syllabus. This was openly reflecting in the responses of the teachers on the question relating to the teachers' attitudes towards the implementation of the competency-based history syllabus. As far as teachers' attitude is concerned, the study participants (teachers) raised the idea of willingness. In this light, participant A stated that "I am always unwilling to teach". She justified the unwillingness by referring lack of confidence, lack of commitment, and lack of motivation to accomplish a specific task in the teaching learning process expressed by the teacher.

Another theme that came up was class size and teachers lack of interest. In this light, participant B said that "class size refers to the number of students in a given classroom," adding that the smaller the class size, the lesser time the teacher will spend on individual students and the larger the class size, there are more challenges for classroom management. In the same light, participant B reiterated that "teachers' lack of interest is the unwillingness to implement the Competency-Based history syllabus. This can be manifested in teachers' attitudes, body movement, facial expressions and voice intonations".

In relation to Participant C, she affirmed that her attitude towards the implementation of the competency-based history syllabus is as a result of insufficient instructional materials. She opined that "insufficient instructional materials mean that there are inadequate teaching materials to facilitate the teaching-learning process". The participant further said that insufficient instructional materials mean that the instructional materials are not available in the right quantities and quality to ensure effective utilization. Insufficient instructional materials will provide inadequate solution in the teaching and learning process.

Another theme that came up was to make students active. In this case, participant D said that "making students' active implies that they (students) retain information more effectively, thereby enabling increased academic performance. The participant also said that active students also tend to have greater attention spans, better behaviour and can have better overall mental health. Again, the theme of teachers' attitudes towards the implementation of competency-based history syllabus was to make students not forget what is taught. In this vain, participant E asserted that "making students not forgot what is taught simply means engaging them in classroom activities. In other to make students not to forget, the participant said that there are techniques that need to be applied or can help students not forget what is taught to them. These techniques are self-testing, self-explanatory, summarization, highlighting and underlining, key words, mnemonic, imagery and re-reading and questions and answer.

That notwithstanding, participant F also said that it would take long for teachers to adapt to the implementation of competency-based history syllabus. According to the participant, long period of time to adapt "is when the teachers become accustomed to the teaching materials used in the teaching of competency-based history lessons". The participant further said that long period of time to adapt provides a powerful vehicle to improve the teaching-learning process.

Accordingly, Participants' G and J said that there was limited time to implement competency-based history

syllabus, even though the teachers are still trying their best in implementing it. In this light, participant G stated in the interview that limited time to implement competency-based history syllabus means "teaching is confined within a given limit or restricted within a given period of time. According to the time table prepared by the school's administration, the time allocated therein is too limited for the teacher to explain the lesson to the students". In the same light participant J corroborated this idea by saying that limited time to implement competency-based history syllabus "is the amount of time in which the lesson must be completed". These two participants therefore held the view that limited time to implement competency-based history syllabus make teachers face a daunting challenge for teaching students in a time-constrained environment.

Furthermore, another theme that came up was the class size as a barrier to implement the competency-based history syllabus. Here, participant H attested that class size as a barrier to implementing competency-based history syllabus means the average number of students per class". She said that class size can be smaller or larger. According to her, larger class size creates many barriers to effective implementation of the competency-based history syllabus such as inability to provide effective feedback to all the students in class.

Again, the theme: difficulty to implement competency-based history syllabus came up from the participants' interview. In this light, participant I indicated that difficulty to implement competency-based history syllabus means "hard to achieve or implement the competency-based history syllabus". The participant further said that teachers now must teach using the competency-based approach. They have to adapt to the changing method of teaching. This method is a huge challenge for teachers to overcome.

More so, another theme that came up from the participant interview was understanding other subjects. In this light, participant K explained that "it makes students understand other related subjects when implementing competency-based history syllabus in the classroom," thereby demonstrating an in-depth knowledge of history and other related subjects in his or her lesson. Moreover, participant L indicated that 'I do not know how to implement competency-based history syllabus.' The participant said "I do not know," is used when the teacher is not sure about something. She further said, 'I do not know,' which means that teacher has no opinion or idea on how to implement competency-based history syllabus in his or her lesson.

Based on the teacher's interview, teachers' attitudes towards implementation of the competency-based history syllabus and its impact on students' performance has reveals that history teachers have a negative attitude towards the implementation of the competency based history syllabus as such affecting students' performance negatively.

This negative attitude portrayed by the history teachers was generally expressed by the teachers' unwillingness to teach and were also demotivated by large class size. The history teachers more often lack confidence, commitment, and motivation to accomplish a specific task in the teaching-learning process. This teacher's negative attitude manifested itself through their body movement, facial expressions and voice intonations. The teacher's negative attitude was also due to their inability to effectively implement the competency-based history syllabus, which was blamed on the insufficient instructional materials in terms of quantity

and quality. Lack of knowledge on the part of the teachers was another major hindering factor to the implementation of competency-based approach. Teachers needed more time to adapt, to become accustomed to the teaching materials used in the teaching of competency-based history lessons in secondary schools. The lesson time was equally perceived to be too short for the implementation of the competency-based history syllabus. One of the respondents reiterated this by emphasizing that,

“...Teaching is confined within a given limit or restricted within a given period of time to teach history and bring out the competences of the students. According to the respondent, time table prepared by the school’s administration and the time allocated therein is too limited for the teacher to explain the lesson to the students...”

Class size was also another drawback to the adequate implementation of competency-based approach that leads to teacher’s negative attitude. Teachers complained that larger class size creates many barriers to effective implementation of the competency-based history syllabus such as inability to provide effective feedback to all the students in class. It was also argued that, the smaller the class size the lesser time the teacher will spend on individual students and the larger the class size there are more challenges in implementing competency-based history syllabus.

However, teachers’ attitudes towards the implementation of the competency-based history syllabus as indicated by one of the respondent during the interview revealed that:

“teachers with high longevity are very much hesitant to embrace the implementation of the new competency-based history syllabus as compared to the teachers who were just from 1-3 years old into the profession. According to the respondent, teachers’ attitudes (who are new into the profession) had a positive attitude as opposed to those who have served for long, having at least 5 years or more to retirement. They are so adamant to change and equally have strong negative attitude toward the implementation of the competency-based history syllabus”.

The teachers perceived that the new curriculum demanded a lot of time from them and was more complex than the knowledge based curriculum.

The findings of this question support the findings of the study carried out by Paulo (2014) [10] who found out that teachers’ attitudes towards the implementation of the competency-based curriculum is affected by the time allocated for the study and the teaching/learning materials used in the teaching/learning process. Furthermore, the findings revealed that the major challenge for the implementation of the competency-based curriculum was due to the teachers’ resistance to change in the implementation of the competency-base curriculum. The finding of this question is also in line with the study findings carried out by (Kabombwe & Mulenga, 2019) [6].

Research Question Two: To What Extent Does Teachers’ Pedagogical Content Knowledge Impact Students’ Academic Performance in History in Secondary Schools?

The findings for this question were based on teachers’ observation and interview as well as students focus group discussion. Thus, this question had both quantitative and qualitative data analyses approaches.

4.1 Quantitative Presentation of the Findings of Question Two

This was based on the history teachers that were observed in the study using an observation checklist. Table 2 presents what the researchers observed when the history teachers were manipulating their content during the teaching/learning process of their history lessons in the teaching of form five history students.

Table 2: Observation of Teacher’s Pedagogical Content Knowledge and Students’ Performance

Content Knowledge	Observed	Not Observed
Teacher has sufficient knowledge on the subject matter.	100.0% (22)	0.0% (0)
Teacher has a good mastery of the subject matter.	100% (22)	0.0% (0)
Teacher has a deeper understanding about the content of the lesson.	100% (22)	0.0% (0)
Teacher breaks down complex concepts into simple parts.	54.5% (12)	45.5% (10)
Teacher uses clear explanation in presenting content in a systematically organized manner.	54.5% (12)	45.5% (10)
Teacher explains objectives of the lesson at the start of each period.	45.5% (10)	54.5% (12)
Teacher presents lesson in an interesting, motivating and entertaining ways.	59.1% (13)	40.9% (9)
Teacher selects effective teaching approaches to guide students’ thinking and learning of the subject.	72.7% (16)	27.3% (6)
MRA	35.8% (63)	64.2% (113)

Table 2 shows that a proportion of teachers observed indicated that they practiced content knowledge adequately (64.2%). Table 3 presents teachers’ mastery of pedagogy during the teaching learning process.

Table 3: Teacher’s Mastery of Pedagogy

Pedagogy	Observed	Not Observed
Teacher writes legibly on the chalk board.	22.7% (5)	77.3% (17)
Teacher’s voice is heard clearly when teaching.	0.0% (0)	100% (22)
Teacher provides adequate notes to the students.	0.0% (0)	100% (22)
Teacher possesses good time management in delivering content of the lessons.	68.2% (15)	31.8% (7)
Teacher shows enthusiasm in teaching the lessons.	68.2% (15)	31.8% (7)
Teacher encourages students to ask questions during the lesson.	63.6% (14)	36.4% (8)
Teacher asks questions that requires students thinking	72.7% (16)	27.3% (6)
Teacher provides clear feedback on assignment.	77.3% (17)	22.7% (5)
MRA	46.6% (82)	53.4% (94)

Table 3 shows that a majority of teachers observed indicated that teachers practiced pedagogy inadequately (53.4%). Table 4 presents teachers' organisation/coordination during the teaching learning process.

Table 4: Teacher's Organisation/Coordination

Organisation / coordination	Observed	Not Observed
Teacher takes into account different learning style when preparing the history lesson.	13.6% (3)	86.4% (19)
Teacher takes into account students' previous knowledge to plan the activities based on their levels	36.4% (8)	63.6% (14)
Teacher makes sure learning goals are clearly stated for students to understand them.	22.7% (5)	77.3% (17)
Teacher starts the lesson by giving students an opportunity to set their own learning goals.	90.9% (20)	9.1% (2)
Teacher organizes the learning activities into logical stages to fulfil the objectives of the lesson	22.7% (5)	77.3% (17)
Teacher interacts with students through the process of questioning.	90.9% (20)	9.1% (2)
Teacher creates extra-activities for students to work when they have completed their main tasks.	13.6% (3)	86.4% (19)
Teacher responds to student's answers using verbal praising.	18.2% (4)	81.8% (18)
MRA	31.8% (56)	68.2% (120)

Table 4 shows that a majority of teachers observed indicated that teachers did not practice organization/coordination of lessons inadequately (68.2%) as opposed to (31.8%). Table 5 presents students' competence development contextualized to pedagogical content knowledge during the teaching/learning process. This is in accordance with the performance of the history students.

Table 5: Students' Competence Development Contextualized to Pedagogical Content Knowledge

Level of Competency developed	Highly developed	Developed	Not developed
Description of events	0.0% (0)	31.8% (7)	68.2% (15)
Situating of dates, events, and treaties signed	0.0% (0)	31.8% (7)	68.2% (15)
Identifying persons, causes, consequences	0.0% (0)	22.7% (5)	77.3% (17)
Explaining the course of the event	0.0% (0)	36.4% (8)	63.6% (14)
Sketching of map, portraits, cartoons	0.0% (0)	36.4% (8)	63.6% (14)
Listing the causes and consequences of the event	0.0% (0)	27.3% (6)	72.7% (16)
Locating the area of the event	0.0% (0)	22.7% (5)	77.3% (17)
MRA	0.0% (0)	29.9% (46)	70.1% (108)

Based on Table 5, it was dominantly observed that students had not developed competence as contextualized to pedagogical content knowledge (70.1%). In summary Table 6 presents summary of teachers' pedagogical content knowledge.

Table 6: Summary of Teachers' Pedagogical Content Knowledge

Conceptual Components	Observed	Not Observed
Content Knowledge	35.8% (63)	64.2% (113)
Pedagogy	46.6% (82)	53.4% (94)
Organisation/coordination	31.8% (56)	68.2% (120)
Overall pedagogical content knowledge	49.8% (263)	50.2% (265)

Table 6 summarily shows that in total, teachers' pedagogical content knowledge observed was 49.8% (263) and 50.2% (265) was not observed.

Research Hypothesis: Pedagogical Content Knowledge has no Impact on Students' Academic Performance in History in Secondary Schools in Fako and Wouri Divisions

Table 7: Relationship between pedagogical content knowledge and students' academic performance in history

Spearman's rho	Stats	Pedagogic content knowledge	Student academic performance contextualized to pedagogic content knowledge
Pedagogic content knowledge	R	1.000	0.155
	P-value	.	0.492
	N	22	22
Student academic performance contextualized to pedagogic content knowledge	R	0.155	1.000
	P-value	0.492	.
	N	22	22

Testing of the hypothesis as shown on Table 7, it shows that there was a positive, though weak and insignificant, association between pedagogical content knowledge and students' academic performance in history (R=0.155; P=0.492). The hypothesis here stated is then accepted. This therefore implies that pedagogical content knowledge though mildly, contributes to improve students' academic performance in history, thus requiring more improvement on pedagogical content knowledge for it to significantly enhance students' academic performance in history.

4.2 Qualitative Presentation of the Findings of Question Two

This is based on teachers' interview and students' focus group discussion. Table 8 presents the thematic analysis based on teachers' perspective.

Table 8: Thematic-Content Analysis on Teachers’ Perspectives

	Participants	Responses	Themes
How do you demonstrate mastery of subject matter.	A	I present subject fluently	Fluency of subject presentation
	B	I break down complex concepts into simple parts.	Break down concepts and present them from simple to complex
	C	Explain concepts clearly.	Clear explanation
	D	Present content with lesson objectives	Lesson objectives
	E	Present Content in such a way that it appears knowledgeable.	Content appears knowledgeable
	F	I organise content systematically.	Systematic organization of content
	G	Present the content of my lesson from simple to complex examples	Simple to complex presentation of content
	H	Relates concepts to students’ context	Contextual learning
	I	Summarizes lesson and give students notes.	summarized and giving lesson notes
	J	Make summaries and give students notes	Summaries and notes given to students
	K	Organize lesson systematically	Systematic organization of content
	L	Begin with presentation of lesson objectives.	Presentation of lesson objectives.

Table 8 shows how teachers’ pedagogical content knowledge on students’ academic performance has been thematically analyzed. Themes from the responses of the participants (teachers) are interpreted here. The themes include fluency of subject presentation, break down concepts and present them from simple to complex, clear explanation. Lesson objectives, content appears knowledgeable, systematic organization of content, simple to complex presentation of content, contextual learning, summarized and giving lesson notes, presentation of lesson objectives are the main concepts initially considered in this content analysis process. First and foremost, teachers were asked how they demonstrated mastery of their subject matter. All teachers interviewed gave individual reasons on how they demonstrated the mastery of their subject matter. To demonstrate the mastery of the subject matter in history, participant ‘A’ attested that he demonstrated the mastery of the subject matter through fluency of subject presentation. Here, participant ‘A’ indicated that fluency in subject presentation is “what is essential for all teachers to teach without disruptions in the classroom. This is to enable teachers continue teaching without unnecessary pauses and hindrances”.

Accordingly, participants’ B and G opined that they breakdown concepts and presented them from simple to complex. Participant B stated that “breaking down something such as an idea or statement means to separate it into smaller parts in order to enhance easy understanding.

The participant further went to state that he became familiar with the lesson and its objectives before breaking it down into smaller fragments which the learners can easily grasp”. In the same vein, Participant G corroborated this idea by saying that “breakdown of concepts means presenting an activity or task to the learners by starting from simple to complex challenges, thus gradually enabling the learners become successful in the task. This idea is to progress from simple tasks to more complex ones, or from concrete to more abstract tasks”.

These two participants therefore held the view that breakdown of concepts and presenting them from simple to complex provides a framework for learning new knowledge. Any new concepts learnt by the students had to be assimilated in relation to pre-existing ideas, which then would lead to the construction of more elaborate outlines such as from simple to complex.

Another theme that came up was clear explanation. In this light, participant C specified that she implemented clear explanation in demonstrating her subject matter. According to her, “clear explanation is defined as the details or other information that teachers give to make their lessons clear or easy to understand”.

She further stated that it is an act or process of explaining the lesson to the understanding of the learners. According to participant D, she demonstrated the mastery of her subject matter with lesson objectives. She said that “lesson objectives are specific statements of what the learners are able to do at the end of the lesson.” She also stated that the lesson objectives should be brief, clear, have specific statements of what the learners should be able to do at the end of the lesson. This is as a result of the activities that have taken place in the teaching learning process.

Participant E holds that in order to demonstrate mastery of the subject matter, the content of the history lessons had to appear knowledgeable. She further reiterated that for the content to appear knowledgeable means “the teacher knows the subject matter perfectly, hence he/she can effectively teach, explain, illustrate and explain the lesson to the understanding of the learners”. Furthermore, participants’ F and K demonstrated the mastery of the subject matter by systematic organization of the history content. According to participant F, “systematic organization of content means “step by step arrangement of the teaching-learning process in a chronological manner.” Meanwhile, participant K reiterated that “systematic organization of content seeks to place all happenings in the lesson and the order in which they occurred in a systematic order.” These two participants thus held the view that systematic organization of the content provided a frame work for organizing information either from the past to the future or to the future to the past. Any new information learnt by the students had to be organized in a chronological manner before assimilated by the learners.

However, it was also seen that participant H presented the content of the history lesson by providing opportunity for students to share their opinions in the classrooms. According to participant H “contextual learning is a method of instruction that enable students to apply new knowledge and skills for real-life situation”. The participant reiterated that contextual learning takes place when teachers are able to present information in such a way that students are able to construct meaning based on their own experience.

It should be noted that participant I and J also discoursed

that demonstration of the mastery of the subject matter is through summarizing and giving notes to the learners. Participant I “said that summarizing and giving notes are powerful teaching and learning strategies which enable students to know how to summarize and take down notes and help them become more independent learners”. In the same light participant J corroborated that summarizing and giving notes to students is “a process of extracting the main

points from the lesson taught by presenting the lesson in a concise form. This is done in order to make the task of reading and understanding lesson easier for the learners”. However, these two participants held the view that summarizing and giving notes to the students provided a framework for helping students to improve on their writing, reading and speaking skills. Table 9 presents qualitative presentation based on students’ perspective.

Table 9: Thematic-Content Analysis on Students’ Perspectives

	Participants	Responses	Themes
Please briefly tell me how your teacher presents history content during history lessons?	A	My teacher present history content in a systematic and chronological manner	Systematic and chronological manner
	B	Teacher explains content clearly to promote students’ understanding	Promoting students understanding
	C	Teacher relates content to students contextual experience	Contextual experience
	D	Teacher breaks down content of the lesson into simple parts	Lessons into simple parts
	E	Teacher breaks down the content simple to complex and from known to unknown	Simple to complex
	F	Teacher present the content of the history lesson with a song	Lesson with a song
	G	Teacher presents the content of history lesson by dramatizing it.	Lesson by dramatization
	H	Teacher presents the content of the history lesson with previous knowledge	Lesson with previous knowledge
	I	Teacher present the content of history lesson by asking the students questions	By asking the students questions
	J	Teacher present the content of history lesson by assessing previous Knowledge	Assessing previous knowledge
	K	Teacher presents the content of history lesson by breaking down the content from simple to complex	Break down the content from simple to complex
	L	My teacher presents the content of history lesson with a song	Lesson with a song
	M	My teacher presents history content in a systematic and chronological manner	Systematic and chronological manner
	N	Teacher presents the content of history lesson by reviewing previous Knowledge	Lesson by reviewing previous knowledge

Table 9 shows teacher’s pedagogical content knowledge on students’ academic performance. Themes from the responses of the participants (students) are interpreted and discussed here. The themes include: systematic and chronological manner, explain content clearly and promote students understanding, relate content to students’ contextual experience, break down lesson into simple parts, break down lesson from simple to complex, present with a song, present lesson by dramatization, present lesson with previous knowledge and by asking questions to the students. During the discussion with students, “Students A” and “M” are of the opinion that the teacher presented the history content in a systematic and chronological manner for the students to understand undoubtedly. Meanwhile, “Student B” affirmed that the teacher explained the content clearly to promote students’ understanding of the history lesson. Also “Student C”, attested that teacher relates content to students’ contextual experience. However, “Student D” stated that the history teacher breaks down the content of the lesson into simple parts. “Students E” and “K” confirmed that the teacher breaks down the content from simple to complex

and from the known to unknown for easy understanding of the history lessons.

Relating to “Students F” and “L,” they affirmed that the teacher presented the content of the history lesson with a song, especially when teaching about European explorers that explored the coast of Cameroon. That notwithstanding, “Student G” also stated that the teacher presented the content of the history lesson by dramatizing it for easy understanding. Furthermore, “Students “H”, “J” and “N” acknowledged that the history teachers presented the content of the history lesson by reviewing previous knowledge, that is, what had already been taught to the students. Lastly, “Student I” attested that teacher presented the content of history by asking questions to students to ensure proper understanding of the lessons.

Summarily, the findings revealed as observed by the researcher that, teachers’ pedagogical content knowledge observed was 49.8% (263) and 50.2% (265) was not observed. Furthermore, based on teachers’ interview and students’ focus group discussion, the findings revealed that teachers are not very versed with the history pedagogical

content knowledge to a lesser extent based on their interview responses, the focus group discussion with the students also corroborate the teachers' assertion and what the researcher observed. Generally, both the researcher's observation, teachers' interview and students' focus group findings revealed that teachers' pedagogical content knowledge has a negative effect on students' competence development. Thus, has a negative impact on students' academic performance in history in secondary schools.

This is because when the content is appropriately presented, the right pedagogy used, appropriate instructional materials also used in the teaching learning/process, it makes the lesson active as the teacher display the mastery of the subject matter. This is because a classroom is made up of different types of learners. In case a lesson is not supported with different types of instructional materials, teaching approach based on the content, the lesson becomes boring and abstract. The teacher will teach using only the conventional teacher centered approach in the teaching of history. Majority of the teachers said that teachers used instructional materials adequately in teaching history in secondary schools. They outlined that mostly textbooks are used, few teachers use newspapers, articles, pictures, diagrams, maps, and most of the teachers use chalkboards in teaching history. This hinders skills acquisition and to some extent the students' academic performance.

Based on the teachers' interview and student's focus group discussion, the teachers affirm that most teachers do not use appropriate teaching materials in the teaching of history in secondary schools. The students' also corroborated this aspect of history teachers' nonuse of instructional materials in teaching history in secondary schools. The students mentioned in their discussion that history teachers were mostly using only charts and textbooks during history lesson in secondary schools. One of the students said "teacher use of chalkboard in teaching the history lesson is so boring to him because the teacher writes disorderly on the chalkboard and speak to herself". Another student said "this demotivated her not to have interest in the lesson". Another student reiterated,

"History teachers did not use projectors which could project films and show some interesting videos to students. Besides, history teachers do not use technological advanced instructional materials such as whiteboard, audio-visual materials, motion pictures, films, videos, audio-tapes and audio-cassettes".

They all were of the opinion that history teachers hardly used instructional materials in the teaching of history in secondary schools. As such this has negative impact on students' academic performance in history in secondary schools.

The finding of this question is in line with the study findings of Tety (2016) ^[5] in some selected community secondary school in Rombo District. They found out that proper use of quality and adequate instructional materials in classrooms are the key to teachers and students' performance. Secondly, most community secondary schools in Rombo district suffer shortage of essential teaching and learning materials. Thirdly, the study revealed that teachers' use of different teaching strategies minimizes the challenges of attaining and using quality instructional materials in teaching.

Furthermore, the findings of this question are corroborated with the study findings of Bukoye (2018) ^[1] entitled utilization of instructional materials as tool for effective

academic performance of students. The findings revealed that there is inadequate use of instructional materials in most secondary schools and majority of the teachers did not take cognizance of the importance derived from the use of instructional materials while teaching.

The findings of this study is informed by Lee Shulman's theory of pedagogical content knowledge (1987) who advocated that pedagogical content knowledge is very important to be mastered by the teacher. It is the core content of the teachers' knowledge. Therefore, lack of teachers' pedagogical content knowledge about a topic should not be taken lightly. Shulman further stated that pedagogical content knowledge is interwoven pedagogy and subject matter knowledge necessary for good disciplinary teaching. He also stated that pedagogical content knowledge is a form of subject matter knowledge which is based on teaching-learning process. This pedagogical content knowledge comprised of actions that teachers should undergo during the teaching process which include comprehension of subject knowledge, transformation of subject knowledge into teachable representations, instruction, evaluation on students' learning and teachers' performance, reflection and new comprehensions.

5. Conclusion

The finding of this study reveals that teachers' attitude towards the implementation of the competency-based history syllabus has negative impact on students' academic performance in secondary schools. The findings also revealed that teachers' inappropriate use of pedagogical content knowledge has a negative impact on students' academic performance in history in secondary schools.

6. Recommendations

It is recommended that more in-service training, workshops and seminars should be given to history teachers to enhance their pedagogical content knowledge, develop positive attitude, skills and interest in implementing competency-based approach of history syllabus. This should be done regularly to raise teachers' awareness and build their confidence in implementing competency-based history syllabus and classroom management skills in the teaching-learning process.

Secondly, the Ministry of Secondary Education in Cameroon should make it as an important task to endow schools with the necessary facilities to enable the implementation of competency-based history syllabus to enhance students' academic performance.

Thirdly, the government and curricularists should continually organize conferences about the implementation of the competency-based approach in secondary schools. This is because many history teachers have not yet understood the techniques and the importance of competency-based history syllabus to the students in secondary schools, which is the foundation of many history professions.

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