

**Effects of Competence-Based Curriculum in Secondary Education:
Focusing on critical thinking and career development of Rwandan students**

中等教育におけるコンピテンス基盤型教育の効果
-ルワンダ学生の批判的思考力及びキャリア発達に着目して-

総合生存学館 総合生存学専攻 高橋朝晴

学位論文内容要旨

This paper examined the Competence-Based Curriculum (CBC) introduced in Rwanda and investigated its effects particularly focusing on critical thinking and career development of students in upper secondary education. The study looked into CBC in Rwanda while setting three main objectives: 1) What is Competence-Based Curriculum (CBC) in Rwanda and how has it been implemented? 2) Can CBC enhance students' critical thinking? 3) What is the relationship between critical thinking and career development?

Chapter 1 focused on the historical development of educational policies in Rwanda and considered the reasons behind the introduction of Competence-Based Curriculum (CBC). The study showed that the Harmonised Curriculum Framework set by the East African Community and expectation from labour markets are the main reasons behind the introduction of the new curriculum. In addition, it became clear that Rwanda is very future-orientated in its way of implementing policies. Chapter 1 clarified that although there is no clear prospect of changing into a knowledge-based society, Rwanda made a decision to introduce the curriculum with strong emphasis on economic development.

Chapter 2 examined the development of competence-based education in general and clarified characteristics of Competence-Based Curriculum (CBC) in Rwanda in comparison to major competence frameworks. It became clear that CBC shares similarities with the EU framework in terms of the focus of the framework and the way of its utilization. Contrary to OECD-DeSeCo framework which focuses on the interrelationship of competences, each competence is presented as a list of important elements rather than a model in both CBC and EU framework. As for the way of utilization, Rwanda and the EU consider the demands of labour markets. However, although the EU considers competence as context-dependent, Rwanda has a stance of considering competence as versatile, meaning it can be developed in all the subjects and be used for many different purposes regardless of the contexts. This difference was observed in the CBC in the way of a conceptualizing competence.

Chapter 3 organized previous studies on critical thinking and gave a description of critical thinking from the perspectives of its definition, structure, education pattern and evaluation. As for the structure of critical thinking, the study explained that critical thinking is supported by skills (a cognitive component) and an attitude (a non-cognitive component).

Chapter 4 analyzed the effects of CBC in Rwanda focusing on critical thinking of upper secondary students. As a result of tracing 186 students at the level of Senior 4 to Senior 6, it was found that CBC had positive effects on both attitude and skill aspects of critical thinking. Significant differences were also seen in comparison to former Senior 6 students who studied in the previous curriculum. The study observed the reasons of positive effects on students' critical thinking attitudes and skills from various aspects including changes in teaching methodology, lesson evaluation sheet and textbooks. The study drew attention to the way of critical thinking education and pointed out a kind of contradiction seen in the method of teaching. Due to its contradiction, the study made an indication that CBC's effects on the critical thinking of students might weaken as age decreases.

Chapter 5 gave a review on career self-efficacy studies which became the basis of the research design in Chapter 6. In addition, the importance of considering career development in Rwanda was observed as students' perception of their career paths is too determined and considered not desirable since most of their expectations are set unrealistically.

Chapter 6 examined the relationship between critical thinking and career development with a follow-up survey of students. The same 186 students observed in Chapter 4 participated in the study and the results showed that hypothetically a critical thinking attitude is supposed to have a positive effect on career decision-making self-efficacy; however, that effect was not observed. Results of the study showed that most of the students, in reality, maintained almost the same level of self-efficacy, while holding the same view on their future occupation. The study also considered possible factors which led to offset the effects of critical thinking over the career decision-making process from perspectives of cognitive process and career education in Rwanda. The study also observed the reasons contributing to the high level of self-efficacy in Rwanda referring to the study of Bandura (1997). The findings suggested that the parental and teacher approval of students' career views, work as verbal persuasion which is considered to enhance the level of self-efficacy. The relationship between academic achievement, critical thinking and career development was also examined at the end of the paper.

In the Epilogue, the paper organized the research findings and made the implication of CBC in Rwanda with consideration of its outlook and its impact on society. Despite the fact that Rwanda is very future-orientated, CBC has certainly positive effects on students in terms of the development of critical thinking attitudes and skills. However, the question is, does the acquisition of generic skills really guarantee job security. Rwanda considers competence as versatile; however, individuals seem to not yet be ready to apply acquired competences in the school to the creation of knowledge-based society. Career development is a good instance since the exercise of critical thinking over career decision-making was not observed. The study concluded that although the whereabouts of the curriculum should be observed in the long term, the government is expected to have a future-orientated mind with a more realistic view of the curriculum.