

**CAUSES OF POOR PERFORMANCE OF PUPILS IN KISWAHILI SUBJECT IN KENYAN  
PRIMARY SCHOOLS: A CASE STUDY OF MALINDI DIVISION,  
MALINDI DISTRICT, KENYA**


**BY  
AHMAD AHMAD ABDU  
BED/20026/ 81/DF**

**A RESEARCH REPORT SUBMITTED TO THE COLLEGE OF OPEN AND  
DISTANCE LEARNING IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE  
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF DEGREE OF  
BACHELOR OF EDUCATION IN PRIMARY OF  
KAMPALAININTERNATIONAL  
UNIVERSITY**

**AUGUST, 2011**

## DECLARATION

I, **Ahmad Ahmad Abdu** , declare that this research project is my original work. It has never been submitted for any academic award where the works of others have been cited acknowledgement has been made.

Signature   
Ahmad Ahmad Abdu

Date 20/8/2011

## APPROVAL

I declare that this research project has been under my supervision as the University supervisor. His work is ready for submission to be evaluated for award of a Bachelor of Education in Primary Education at Kampala International University.

Signature ..... 

Mr. Ssekajugo Derrick

Date ..... 

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this research work to my wife Fat-hiya Hemed and my son Akram Ahmad who gave me support in prayer, encouragement and financially throughout my studies in Kampala International University.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

I wish to register my sincere appreciation to my supervisor Mr. Ssekajugo Derrick of Kampala International University, who took me through the work.

I also acknowledge my fellow teaching staff in Tahdhib Muslim Academy and all those other people who helped me in my research Project.

My Almighty Allah Bless all.

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study was intended to investigate the causes of poor performance of pupils in Kiswahili within selected primary schools in Malindi district Kenya.

All primary sources that is; the articles and all other important citation by other researchers were consulted which helped to give a clear picture of what the whole study was meant to entail. A descriptive design was adopted since much of what was to be presented was to be theoretical. Questionnaires and interview guides acted as the main tools of data collection. The findings revealed that pupils are not given assignments for Kiswahili subject, lesson plans are not carried out by the teachers and teachers also claim that they are not satisfied with the salary they get. The research study also pointed out that most of the teachers did not have Kiswahili as their first choice as a career, and they do not use Kiswahili to communicate with the pupils. It was recommended that learners should be assessed more as Kiswahili subject is taught daily.



# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.0 Background of the Study**

The poor performance in Kiswahili - one of the core subjects especially in the primary school curriculum has largely contributed to the overall poor performance in the other subjects and subsequently.

In the Kenyan system of education there is great emphasis on the teaching of Kiswahili Subject. This has been necessitated by the fact that globally, Kiswahili is also one of the Subjects taught in Kenya. Martha L. King (1984) argues that just as success in learning is linked to skill or the Subject, failure in Subject whatever the reason - is bound up in the way children share and create meaning through Subject.

The researcher being one of the Subject teachers in the location, has observed that in Malindi district, many primary school leavers are missing places at the Secondary even when they have performed well in other subjects due to their poor performance in Kiswahili. The cause of this all is attributed to the poor background at primary level where Kiswahili has not been so effective. This drove the researcher to come up with a study that specifically aimed at establishing the causes of poor performance of pupils in Kiswahili Subject in primary schools.

### **1.1 Statement of the Problem**

This particular study was to establish the reasons as to why pupils are performing poorly in Kiswahili as a subject.

### **1.2 Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study was to investigate the causes of poor performance of pupils in Kiswahili Subject within primary schools.

### **1.3 Scope of the Study.**

The study was conducted in Malindi division within Malindi district in Kenya.

### **1.4 Objectives of the Study.**

The objectives of the study were to:

1. Determine the attitudes of pupils towards learning of Kiswahili Subject.
2. Determine the effectiveness of the teachers in the teaching of Kiswahili Subject.
3. Establish whether teaching materials are available or not and the way forward.

### **1.5 Research Questions**

1. What is the attitude of pupils towards learning of Kiswahili Subject?
2. How is the effectiveness of the teachers in the teaching of Kiswahili Subject?
3. Do pupils get adequate and relevant reading materials?

### **1.6 Significance of the Study**

The study was thought to be of benefit in the following ways:

Provide more insight to the causes of poor performance in Kiswahili and recommend the necessary solutions.

Enable the curriculum developers to improve the findings of the study to identify areas of strength and weakness, of pupils doing Kiswahili subject with a view of making it more effective and compatible with the needs of the society.

Enable the learners to compete favorably and meet all their learning needs.

Provide a kick start on which other researchers can develop their own studies or do conduct more studies on the same problem.

## **CHAPTER TWO:**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.0 Introduction**

This chapter was all about a revisitation of other scholars' work and or writings on the same study.

#### **2.1 Attitude of pupils towards Kiswahili Subject learning**

Chiuri (1995) argued that, poor performance is attributed to primary school factors .He articulated the problems such as drilling pupils to pass the Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (K.C.P.E) and the use of vernaculars as medium of communication (instruction )in primary schools as major causes of poor performance in Kiswahili+-.

Gichuhi (1996) argues that attitudes and subjects are not learned separately but simultaneously through complex interaction .The student with a positive attitude in class is likely to perform much better than those with a negative attitude. On clearing their courses, such students are also expected to be proud of the subject and use it more often in their daily activities. It has been observed that many students who have a negative attitude towards Kiswahili will avoid using it when not obliged to, subsequently, they will not perform well.

Eshiwani (1993) argues that students' traits in primary education and social characteristics cause poor performance in general.

## **2.2 Teachers' Effectiveness in Teaching Kiswahili**

Owour (1995) observes that; poor performance is as a result of teachers not being dedicated to their duties. Some of them are traders while others are drunkards. When they devote most of their time in their businesses or drinking they have little time for their students. They result to giving students homework or assignments that they never mark and hence discourage the students. The researcher intends to find out whether the above applies in his area of study.

## **2.3 The Ideal Kiswahili Teacher**

The ideal Kiswahili teacher is one whose liberal education has freed him to lead a harmonious, well- behaved life .He has been liberated from those accidental restrictions – the circumstances of birth and environment –that narrow personal vision .The liberally educated teacher of Kiswahili is one whose feelings imaginations and intellect have been fused into that stable poise which enables him to grapple with essential and ultimate questions of experience. He sees clearly than most ,how ends and means are related ,how outer symbols shadow forth the inner truths of existence and how choices reflect the values ,conscious or unconscious ,an individual concept. Such a teacher clarifies in his own mind and the minds of his students the values to be gained from studying Subject and literature .This requires a complex equilibrium of many qualities and skills ,but for characteristics outlooks may be identified.(Passer and Smith,2001 ).

## **2.4 Kiswahili learning materials Availability.**

Facilities are crucial in learning of Subjects .Facilities like libraries are important components in learning Kiswahili. They provide the base for reading and this is

where the reading material is kept .A school without a library lacks a vital organ

.The library case has been argued :-

indeed if a school aims at really educating the pupils entrusted to it and not merely “teaching” them ,the library is a facility which can make an essential contribution to such a purpose .There is no substitute for it. It is a priority without which a school must inevitably be poorer ,no matter how many other facilities it provides (Ayot et al 1984)

Gechaga (1986) argues that there is a correlation with good performance and facilities.

A school with good facilities seems to produce better results than the one with inadequate facilities

## **CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY**

### **3.0 Research Design**

The researcher used qualitative a design. This was viewed as being necessary because the whole research was geared towards describing a situation.

### **3.1 Research Environment**

The study was carried in Malindi division within Malindi district in Kenya.

### **3.2 Selection of Respondents**

The researcher used random sampling from a population of teachers and pupils.

### **3.3 Research Instruments**

The instruments used for this particular study included questionnaires and interview guides.

### **3.4 Data Analysis.**

The collected data was analyzed and presented in percentages and frequency distribution tables.

### **3.5 Qualitative Analysis**

The researcher further described, explained and interpreted the data around each of the major questions so as to achieve the objectives.

### **3.6 Ethical Considerations**

The study primarily engaged those respondents in the area who had been viewed necessary for data collection. Accordingly, extreme confidentiality had to be promised and this was to be effected only, by promising secrecy to the selected respondent's information provided.



## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

#### **4.0 Introduction.**

Kiswahili Subject in primary schools within Malindi district. It is in this chapter that the researcher tried to present, analyze, and interpret data obtained from the two selected groups of individuals namely:- The teachers, and the pupils who in this case had been used as the respondents for this particular study..

#### **4.0.1 Research question one: Determine the attitudes of students towards learning of Kiswahili**

The study of Kiswahili in the selected schools has undergone a tremendous neglect by the pupils in the school and to show this, a table was produced to give a detailed picture of what was on ground.

**Table 4.1: Attitude of the pupils towards the learning of Kiswahili**

VARIABLE (S)	FREQUENCES			
	SA	A	SD	D
I enjoy school	65	15	12	36
I do best in Kiswahili	5	15	68	40
My performance declined	15	5	30	78
I'm becoming lazy	15	5	20	88
I don't interact with the teacher.	70	25	18	15
I don't ask questions in Kiswahili Because	100	10	8	10
I don't know how to frame them.				
I performed well in Kiswahili in Primary School because teachers use explanation	25	8	60	35
I don't work hard in Kiswahili because others say it is hard.	18	25	75	10
I'm always in class	80	20	10	18
No matter how I try, I cannot do well in Kiswahili.	45	45	25	13
The teacher of Kiswahili interacts freely with students.	10	28	75	15

**Source: Primary Data 2011**

From the table 4.1 above, in the view of the performance of the pupils, it is realized that most of the pupils do like being in school as per the responses got after asking them about their school it was found that so many pupils do like the school and would really love to be in school. But then further on, from the analysis we also found that the performance in Kiswahili was not very good and this was due to the following:-

From the analysis of the sampled pupils only 10 agreed with the suggestion that teachers do interact with the students and it is due to this that the attitude of the students is towards learning the Subject.

Due to the fact that these pupils try as hard as they can to work hard, they do not pass the Subject, well this also has led to having a poor attitude towards Kiswahili Subject, on analysis, most of them claimed that no matter how hard they try, they do not pass the subject.

However, a greater deal of the respondents strongly agreed that they do not ask questions in Kiswahili because they cannot frame these questions and thus the attitude towards the Subject is demoralized.

#### 4.0.2 Research question two: How is the effectiveness of the teachers in the teaching of Kiswahili?

The research was further focused on the effectiveness of the teachers towards teaching the subject and the table below shows the results that were obtained.

**Table 2 : The Effectiveness of the Teachers of Kiswahili.**

VARIABLES	RESPONSES				
	SA	A	SD	D	
Are Kiswahili assignments given to the learners	5	3	2	6	
Are Lesson plans carried out before going to class	2	0	8	6	
Are you satisfied with the salary that you receive	5	3	2	6	
Pupils are often taught with 95% attendance	6	2	3	5	
Is the Kiswahili syllabus completed	6	0	5	5	
Was Kiswahili your first choice as a career	10	0	2	4	
Are the pupils you teach teachable	10	2	3	1	
The time table is favorable for teaching Kiswahili	10	5	0	1	

**Source: Primary Data 2011**

From table 2 above, it was realized that the teachers do not give Kiswahili assignments to the students. It was also realized that lesson plans in Kiswahili are not prepared by the teachers thus; so many teachers reach the classes unprepared.

On asking whether the teachers are satisfied with the salaries they get, most of them claimed that they get very little compared to what they do.

From the table the biggest number of respondents claimed that during communication Kiswahili Subject is not used so much as most of the time the local Subjects are used for easier communication with the pupils and that the pupils that are admitted in these schools are some times found to be very unruly and not easily teachable by the teachers.

#### **4.0.3 Research questions three: Analysis on the availability of teaching materials.**

The availability of teaching materials was also realized to be another problem that is affecting the performance of learners in Kiswahili and the researcher made a detailed analysis on the poor performance and the researcher came up with the following results in table 4.3.

**Table 4.3: Analysis on the availability of teaching materials**

VARIABLES		RESPONSES			
	Statement	SA	A	SD	D
1	Are News papers often provided to the learners	0	3	10	3
2	Learners often use the library	2	3	6	5
3	Story books are provided to the students	3	3	0	10
4	The text books and novels are costly	10	4	2	0
5	Reading materials are not easily accessible	10	4	0	2
6	The school provides adequate teaching books	3	2	6	5
7	Most of the books available are not relevant to syllabus	10	4	2	0
8	The teaching materials do not reach the school in time	8	7	1	0
9	Many materials are provided by the teachers privately	10	4	0	2
10	Are there several books in the library	6	5	2	3

Source: Primary data 2011

From the table above, it is realized that news papers are rarely provided to the learners and also the access to these news papers is very poor and this also applies to the reading novels since the students rarely visit the library to refer to the books in the library.

Text books are also very costly as per the respondents from the table many of them strongly agree that the text books are very expensive and this makes it hard for the school to buy them.

In conclusion, the teaching materials are not made available to the learners and this alone makes the performance in Kiswahili very poor according to the remarks in the above table.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

In this chapter, attempt was made to present a detailed discussion that eventually progressed towards a comprehensive conclusion. It is forming a platform for the recommendations.

#### **5.0 Discussion**

In this section, vigilant evaluation and scrutiny of the findings were represented by the results. The section was organized according to the three research questions, which were formulated to guide the survey.

Owing to the reality all the arithmetic was presented and interpreted in chapter for emphasis here was placed on what such arithmetic implies in relation to the objective of the study and the already existing literature.

##### **5.0.1 Research question one: Analysis of the attitude of the students towards learning of Kiswahili Subject in the selected schools.**

This question was approached and the information got was analyzed and tabulated, it was aimed at finding out the attitudes that the pupils have towards learning of Kiswahili Subject.

The study pointed out that pupils have a poor attitude towards learning the Subject and it points out different grounds as to why the attitude is very negative.



It is also elaborated in this study that the learners like the school, but then they do not do well in Kiswahili, so many pupils simply do not communicate freely in Kiswahili and they also claim that they do work hard in Kiswahili but continue to fail the Subject, Most of the times the Kiswahili syllabus is not completed.

In addition to that, the study also revealed that the pupils do not ask questions in Kiswahili simply because they fear the teachers and also they do not know how to phrase these questions properly in Kiswahili.

#### **5.0.2 Research Question two: Analysis on the effectiveness and capabilities of the teachers in Kiswahili.**

The research findings revealed that pupils are not given assignments for Kiswahili subject, lesson plans are not carried out by the teachers and very important to mention teachers also claim that they are not satisfied with the salary they get.

The research study also pointed out that most of the teachers did not have Kiswahili as their first choice as a career, and they do not use Kiswahili to communicate with the pupils, also so many of the pupils are non teachable and are very unruly which makes it hard for the teachers to teach them.

In addition the speaking of Kiswahili Subject is not so much emphasized on the school compound as most of the pupils use local language for easier communication with one another.

### **5.0.3 Research question three: Analysis on the availability of teaching materials.**

The study revealed that there are few teaching materials in the school as most of the text books are very expensive and also the pupils do rarely visit the libraries. The learners also do not read news papers and novels.

### **5.1 Conclusions**

The research study has indicated that from the summary above, the researcher arrived at the conclusion that first the use of mother tongue and sheng (in general not communicating in Kiswahili Subject all the time) has really affected the teaching and performance of Kiswahili Subject negatively. Secondly, Lack of equipped libraries and the tendency of learners not reading novels and story books have also affected the teaching of Kiswahili Subject and performance negatively.

### **5.2 Recommendations.**

The researcher recommended that learners should be assessed more as Kiswahili subject is taught daily. If this is done, the learners will learn their mistakes and areas of weakness and thus improve. The researcher found out that most teachers assessed their students weekly and then others assessed monthly while students also indicated that some teachers don't even mark the students work, they only append their signatures.

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## **APPENDICES**

### **APPENDIX A**

#### **THE TIME FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY**

<b>E VENT / ACTIVITY</b>	<b>TIME</b>
Proposal writing	April 2011
Data collection	May 2011
Dissertation writing	June-July 2011
Submission	August 2011

## APPENDIX B

### BUDGET FOR THE STUDY

ACTIVITY	COST (USH)
Typing and printing	50,000
Literature collection	70,000
Data collection	130,000
Transport	50,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>300,000</b>

## APPENDIX C

### HEADTEACHER'S QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Background information

Sex        male (        )                      Female (        )

2. i) How many teachers of Kiswahili Subject do you have in your school?

(1-2) (2-3) (3-4) (4-5) (5-6) (6-7) (7-8)

ii) Is the number of teachers of Kiswahili Subject in your school adequate?

Yes (        )                      No (        )

iii) If no, how do you supplement the teaching force in your school?

3. State whether you have the following facilities by ticking where applicable

a) Library    yes (        )                      No (        )

b) Is the library equipped with relevant Kiswahili Subject course books?

Yes (        )                      No (        )

c) If no, how do you cope with the shortages?

4. i) What is the average number of students per class in your school?

(20-30) (30-40) (40-50) (50-60)

ii) What is the size of your classroom?

Spacious enough (        )        Small (        )                      Medium (        )

5. i) Do your teachers of Kiswahili Subject submit their preparations (schemes of work, records of work, lesson notes/plans) on time?

Yes (        )                      No (        )

ii) How can you describe the relationship between your teacher of Kiswahili Subject and students?

Cordial (        )        Bad (        )        Fair (        )

6. i) Have your Kiswahili teachers attended an in-service course in Kiswahili during the past four years?

Yes (        )                      No (        )

ii) If yes, do you think the courses have any impact on the teacher delivery of the content?

iii) Do your teachers complete the syllabus for their respective classes every year?

Yes (    )                      No (    )

iv) If no, Why?

ii) Do you think the Subject policy is strictly adhered to by both teachers and students?

Yes (    )                      No (    )

iii) If not, why do you think that is the case?

iv) Basing your response on (iii) above do you think this affects the performance of Kiswahili Subject in national exams?

8. What do you think are the causes of poor performance in Kiswahili Subject?

9. According to you, what measures could be taken to improve the performance of Kiswahili in national examinations? Explain

## APPENDIX D

### QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS

1. Background Information

School

Numbers

Sex        Male (        )        Female (        )

Date

iii) Basing your response in the three above, how do you think this has affected the performance of Kiswahili in National Exams?

2. i) For how long have you taught Kiswahili Subject in your teaching career?

Less than two years                      (        )

Between two to five years                (        )

Between five to ten years (        )

Over ten years                              (        )

iii) How many lessons do you teach per week?

3. What teaching approach do you employ in teaching Kiswahili Subject.

Lecture method                              (        )

Group discussion                            (        )

Question/answer                            (        )

Dramatizing and role playing            (        )

Demonstrations                            (        )

Others-specify                              (        )

ii) How often do you administer tests and assignments?

Daily    (        )

Weekly                                        (        )

Monthly                                       (        )



Termly ( )

iii) How has your response in 3 (ii) above affect the performance of Kiswahili Subject in National exams?

4. i) Do you have enough of the recommended course books for use in class?

Yes ( ) No ( )

ii) If No, which other texts do you use, please specify.

iii) Basing your response in (ii) above, how has this affected the performance of students in Kiswahili Subject in National Examinations?

5. i) What is the number of pupils in your class?

(20-30) (30-40) (40-50) (50-60)

ii) Does the above number affect the delivery of content in any way?

Yes ( ) No ( )

iii) If yes, how?

6. i) How the integration of Kiswahili and mother tongue affected your teaching in Kiswahili?

7. What could be the contribution of other subjects towards improvement of Kiswahili Subject performance in National Examinations?

8. How do you find the teaching of Kiswahili Subject as a teacher?

Boring ( )

Intensely ( )

Fairly enjoyable ( )

9. How has the integration of English affected the performance of Kiswahili Subject?

10. According to you, what can be done to improve the performance of Kiswahili in National Examination?

## APPENDIX E

### INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR LEARNERS

1. Background information

i) School

ii) Number

iii) Sex Male( ) Female ( )

2. What are the levels of your parent's education?

	Father	Mother
Primary	( )	( )
Secondary	( )	( )
College	( )	( )
University	( )	( )
None of the above	( )	( )

3. Did you attend nursery school?

Yes ( ) No ( )

4. i) When your Kiswahili Subject teacher is teaching, do you understand the lesson

Yes ( ) No ( )

ii) State the reason for the option you have taken in (i)

5. How often does your Kiswahili Subject teacher mark your work?

Daily ( )

Weekly ( )

Monthly ( )

Termly ( )

6. Does your Kiswahili teacher attend classes always & promptly?

Yes ( ) No ( )

7. Does your teacher of Kiswahili Subject give you homework assignments? If so, how often?

8. i) Which of the following is commonly used within your school environment?

Kiswahili ( )

Arabic ( )

English ( )

Mother Tongue ( )

ii) Which of the following Subjects do you use for communication with your parents at home?

English ( )

Arabic ( )

Kiswahili ( )

Mother tongue ( )

9. How often do you attend to the following activities per week?

Many times

Few times

Not at all

Read newspapers ( ) ( ) ( )

Visit the library ( ) ( ) ( )

Read story books ( ) ( ) ( )

10. How has the integration of Kiswahili affected your Performance in class?

11. According to you, what do you think are the contributing factors to the poor performance of Kiswahili in Kenya Certificate of primary Education?

12. What do you think can be done to improve the performance of Kiswahili Subject in your school.

**Thanks**