

Abstract

This study set out to investigate the causes of poor performance in Kiswahili KCSE examination in Kipipiri Division of Nyandarua District because there has been consistent poor performance in the previous years. The objectives included; establishing the availability and use of teaching and learning resources, instructional techniques used and problem areas faced by teachers and students in the teaching- learning process. Research questions were used, which aimed at establishing the extent to which the study objectives were achieved.

From a total of twelve secondary schools, ten were used. No sampling was done because the number was small Two schools were omitted because they did not have results for the 5 year period under study. From a population of 1200 secondary school Form Four students, simple random sampling was done to get a sample of 293 students to participate in the research.

There were 14 Kiswahili teachers in these schools and all of them were included in the study The study was carried out using questionnaires, one for the teachers and the other one for the students. Descriptive statistics were used to analyse the data

The study revealed that teachers and students experienced problems in a number of areas, for example, Mashairi (poetry) whereby students and-teachers find it difficult to analyse poem and get the intended meaning in Insha (composition) students experience problems in using the correct grammar and spellings. There was also a scarcity of teaching and learning resources such as class readers and Kiswahili newspapers.

Majority of the Kiswahili teachers are overloaded with 22 or more lessons per week, which affects the quality of their work. The results also revealed that there is over- emphasis of English use over Kiswahili In schools, learners do not practice speaking in standard Kiswahili. They either use sheng or their ethnic languages. The situation is compounded by the fact that students have a negative attitude towards Kiswahili and therefore they rarely work hard in it The findings of the research led the researcher to recommend the following-

1. Efforts should be made by school authorities to provide enough of the necessary teaching and learning resources.
2. Students should be encouraged to communicate in standard Kiswahili so as to improve in grammar and composition writing.
3. The TSC should provide enough Kiswahili teachers in schools so that teachers are not overworked and thus they have enough time to teach well.
4. Learners in secondary schools need to change their attitude towards Kiswahili It is not just there to assist them attain good grades in examinations. It could also help them later in their lives

Further research could be done on the area of Mashairi (poetry) in order to establish why it proves a difficult area both to teachers and students Also further research could be carried out on the effect of students' attitudes towards Kiswahili performance in examinations.