

Original Research Article

The Drive for the Development of the School Language Policy: Its Enforcement and Influence on the Use of Kiswahili Language in Secondary Schools

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Abstract: Kiswahili is both a national and official language in the republic of Kenya. However, there are concerns that the poor performance in Kiswahili in national examinations is partially attributed to the laxity in the enforcement of the school language policy. Recent research has shown that Kiswahili is faced with lack of full implementation of language policy at various levels yet scholars have argued that language policy performs a substantial role in the enhancement of performance as well as the comprehension of the languages. The study objective was to establish drive or motive for the development of the school language policy in secondary schools. The study was conducted in 30 out of 300 public secondary schools found in Bungoma County. The respondents were 360 from three students, 90 teachers of Kiswahili and 30 principals. Cluster, stratified, purposive and simple random sampling techniques were used to sample the target groups. The questionnaire, FGD guide and document analysis guide were used to collect data. The quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics which included the use of frequencies and percentages while the qualitative data was analyzed using the content analysis. The study established that the drive behind the development of the school language policy was almost uniform in all the sampled schools that participated in the study. It was further discovered that the way different schools enforced their school language policy impacted on the use of Kiswahili. In view of the above findings, it was recommended that the school administrators should ensure that their respective language policies should be fully enforced in order to meet its intended purpose and the school language policies should be well structured. It is hoped the finding of this study would help MOEST, principals of schools and teachers in formulating school language policy that aim at enhancing students' achievements in languages offered in the curriculum.

Keywords: Drive, Motive, Language, Policy, Schools, Enforcement.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Corson (1999) defines school language policy as a policy document that aims at addressing the particular language needs of a school. It breaks down the traditional subject boundaries and normally it involves the staff and the whole student community in the development and implementation. It is an action statement outlining the solution necessary for addressing the desired language needs of a school. In Britain and other countries in the British Commonwealth and North America, schools began to develop their own school language policies. Each school organized policy for language across the

curriculum, establishing every teacher's involvement in language.

International Baccalaureate (2008) indicated that each school existed in unique social context with language complex and learning related needs. Therefore, school language policy should be dynamic. It gave the guidelines for developing a school language policy. The first step is establishing a language policy steering committee. At this stage, the process must be collaborative, involving all the stakeholders of the school. It should comprise representatives from the school community such as coordinators, parents and students. The starting point should be the school philosophy that states beliefs about the languages and

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how they should be learned. The second step that the school philosophy must reflect the interests of the whole school community. Step three entails reviewing the current language situations and practices and compiling language profile. The comprehensive school profile should identify the following;

Motivation is a process whereby a certain amount of instigation forces arises, initiates action, and persists as long as there are no other forces weakening it until the planned goals are realized (Dorney 1998). Thus a force that makes a person to initiate action and to keep on until the goals are reached. Serin (2018) defines motivation as the intention of acquiring the knowledge or skills that activities are intended to develop. It is an internal drive to meet desires and needs. A person who is motivated is inspired to do something and the impetus he or she has enables him or her towards completing a task. On the other hand, Gadner (1985) defines L2 motivation as the extent to which an individual works or strives to learn language because of the desire to do so and satisfaction obtained from the creativity, such definition focuses on learners' inner desire and attitude towards language acquisition. Brown (2007) says that motivation is something that can, like self-esteem, be global, situational or task oriented. He looks at motivation from different perspectives. From the behavioral point of view, he opines that motivation is the anticipation of a reward. Then from the cognitive perspective, he says that motivation emphasizes more on an individual's decision. This entails the need for exploration, manipulation, activity for movement and exploration and ego enhancement. Finally, from the constructivism approach he shows that each person is motivated differently and consequently acts on his or her environment in unique ways. However, the unique acts are carried out in a cultural and social environment that cannot be completely separated from the context. Based on the degree of self-determination theory by Deci and Ryan (2000), motivation is classified as intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation.

1.1 Objective of the study

Establish the motive for the development of the school language policy in place in each school and how its enforcement influences the use of Kiswahili in secondary schools.

1.2 Significance of the Study

It is expected that the findings of this study would be useful to Ministry of education science and technology (MOEST), principals of schools and teachers of Kiswahili and other languages in formulation of language policies aimed at enhancing student's achievement in languages. It may be useful in contributing to the advancement of knowledge about language education. Through this work, other areas of further.

2.0 RESEARCH DESIGN

Research design is the plan that is employed by a researcher that specifies the sources and types of information relevant to the research problem (Briggs, Coleman & Morrison, 2012). It is a strategy that specifies the approach to be used for gathering and analyzing data. In that regard it indicates the procedures and techniques to be used for gathering information and methods used in data analysis (Creswell, 2014). In line with Kothari (2006) a research layout is an association of situations for collection and analysis of records in a manner that aims to combine relevance to the studies reason with financial system in system.

There are 3 major frameworks for designing any investigation; quantitative, qualitative and blended methods. The three studies techniques structure tactics and techniques in a different way (Creswell, 2014) and their philosophical underpinning have an extensive-ranging studies techniques and methods that may be implemented in particularly different ways. A framework is desirable while it mixes the elements of philosophical ideas, techniques and methods using the three strategies to analyze. Given the three processes, the choice of 1 technique over any other for the design of the study is defined by the studies hassle, the involvement of the researcher and the target audience for whom the document might be written (Creswell, 2003).

Therefore, mixed method turned into followed for this examine. It comprised the planned collection of each quantitative and qualitative statistics and the combination of the strengths of each to answer studies questions. In mixed strategies studies, researchers purposely combine quantitative and qualitative information in preference to preserving them separate if you want to maximize the strengths and decrease the weak point of each form of information (Creswell & Plano, 2011). The collection and evaluation of records can both be accomplished concurrently or sequentially, or involve integration of the information at one or greater levels within the system of research (Onwuegbuzie & Collins, 2007). this look at adopted a concurrent triangulation approach in which each quantitative and qualitative information changed into collected on the equal time and using the identical respondents. it mixed each quantitative and qualitative research devices for purposes of triangulation.

Creswell, Plano, Guttman and Hanson (2003) and Johnson (2014) cited that during concurrently accumulating each sorts of facts on the same time, the researcher receives to evaluation each styles of information to look for well-matched outcomes. One compares the issues pinpointed within the qualitative facts with the statistical outcomes inside the quantitative analysis.

Hence, the study used the descriptive mixed design because it was the most ideal for the kind of data that was collected. Koul (2009) explains that, at times descriptive survey is the only means through which views, opinions, attitudes and suggestions for improvement of educational practice, instructions and other data can be collected. The researcher found it appropriate because it is a fact finding and exploratory with the capacity of establishing the truth.

Table 1.1: Sample Frame

Category of respondents	Target population	Sample size	
		F	%
Principals	300	30	10%
Teachers	600	90	15%
Students	16,588	360	2.17%

The study sample consisted of 360 students, who were selected using simple random sampling technique. Then students sample was determined using a formula (Israel, 2013).

2.1 Research Instruments

Three research instruments were used to obtain data for the study. These were the questionnaire, focused group interview schedule and document analysis guide. The methodological triangulation is adopted because it increases the credibility and validity of the results (Cohen and Manion, 2000). It also gives a detailed and balanced picture of the situation thereby making one to be more confident with the results of different methods that lead to the same results.

3.0 FINDINGS OF THE RESULTS

3.1 Responses from the teachers of Kiswahili

The teachers' responses are indicated in the following sub sections:

Findings in Table 1.2 indicated that majority of the teachers 64 (71.1%) showed that the motivation for the development of school language policy was to enhance students' participation in class. A few 23 (24.4%) had a contrary opinion. This implies that schools which had a language policy are likely to have students who participate in class. Further information indicated that majority of the teachers 65 (72.2%) indicated that schools were motivated to have a school language policy because it improves reading skills in Kiswahili and other subjects. Further information showed that majority of the teachers 71(78.9%) felt that the school language policy was formulated because it would enhance cognitive learning. A few teachers 14 (15.5%) indicated that that cognitive learning was not part of the motivation in the establishment of the school language policy. This implies that learners may be able to grow and develop intellectually. This is important for student academic performance in language subjects and other subjects too.

Table 1.2 further showed that majority of the teachers 61 (78.9%) felt that, the motivation behind establishing a school language policy was to enhance academic achievement. A few teachers 25 (21.1%) felt the other way. It is important to note that, academic achievement is a product of many factors. Importantly though school language policy may play a key role in academic achievement.

Table 1.2 indicated that majority of the schools as indicated by 64 (71.1%) teachers established a language policy because they felt that it will develop positive attitude towards languages among learners. On the other hand, a few schools as indicated by 36 (28.9%) teachers felt that development of positive attitude was not behind the development of the school language policy. Matters related to language are critical in the language learning process. It is therefore important that schools develop a language policy that can go a long way in improving the students' attitude.

Almost related to attitude is the need to have a positive self-esteem. Table 1.2 indicated that majority of the teachers 58 (64.4%) felt that, school language policy could improve students' self-esteem. That may have explained the reason behind formulation of that policy.

Table 1.2 further indicated that majority of the teachers 57 (63.4%) felt that school language policy was developed in order to compliment on student discipline. A few teachers 47 (36.6%) did not perceive likewise. Given that these policies are integrated in the schools' rules and regulations then it is imperative that they will go a long way in enhancing students' discipline.

Further finding indicated that majority of the teachers 72 (80%) felt that the motivation for the development of the school language policy was to improve communication skills among students in school. On the other hand, a few teachers as indicated by 16 (17.8%) felt otherwise.

Further findings in Table 1.2 indicated that 73 (81.1%) of the teachers were of the view that the motivation behind development of the school language policy was to nurture students' talents in journalism and leadership. A few teachers (12 (13.3%) were of a different opinion. This implies that schools with students who are multitalented may benefit in terms of sharpening their skills. Students who are good writers, orators and actors may benefit.

Lastly, finding in Table 1.2 indicated that schools were motivated to develop the language policy because it would help in developing the school culture. This was indicated by majority of the teachers 64 (71.1%) who agreed. a few teachers 22 (24.4%) indicated that the motivation was not school culture.

Many schools are founded and built in different cultural values and background one of which may be the alignment of the school in a culture where different languages are spoken in the school as per the laid down policy.

Findings in Table 1.2 have clearly revealed the motivation behind development of the school language policy. Several factors led to the establishment of the language policy namely instilling students’ discipline, improving academic performance, nurturing students’ talents, among others.

Table 1.2: Motivation for Development of the School Language Policy

	SD		D		N		A		SA	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
To enhance students participation in class	12	13.3	10	11.1	4	4.4	35	38.9	29	32.2
To improve reading skills in Kiswahili and other subjects	5	5.6	15	16.7	5	5.6	40	44.4	25	27.8
To enhance student cognitive learning	10	11.1	4	4.4	5	5.6	44	48.9	27	30.0
To enhance academic achievement	15	16.7	10	11.1	4	4.4	26	28.9	35	38.9
To enhance students’ self-esteem which is important in learning	9	10.0	5	5.6	5	5.6	28	31.1	30	33.3
Compliment student discipline	12	13.3	8	8.9	8	8.9	25	27.8	32	35.6
Improve communication skills	7	7.8	9	10.0	2	2.2	45	50.0	27	30.0
To nurture students talents in journalism and leadership	8	8.9	4	4.4	5	5.6	40	44.4	33	36.7
To develop school culture	12	13.3	10	11.1	4	4.4	35	38.9	29	32.2

3.2 Responses from the principals

The principals cited improving the school academic standards, nurturing the talents of learners and developing the school culture, a way of instilling discipline in the students, as the main drive for the development of the school language policy in place.

a) Improving Academic Standards

Several Principals cited improvement of the school academic standards as the reason for the development of the school language policy. The principals’ responses are indicated in the following excerpts: - Principal 4 said thus: -

Language is key in the overall achievement of the school academic standards. There is a saying in our school that languages mean is the school mean. This means that if Kiswahili or English has a mean of 5.4 then the overall school mean will be 5.4. This therefore explains my point that, it is imperative to develop a school language policy in order to improve performance of the school academically. In the same vein language is a medium through which many activities in the school such as instruction are attained thereby having a language policy will ensure that such is achieved.

This finding indicates that language is critical in the improvement and effectiveness of the school quality standards that involves academic achievement of students.

b) Nurturing of Talents

The aspect of talent development was mentioned by one of several Principals as the drive behind development of the school language policy. Principal 7 mentioned the following regarding talent development: -

Schools are not only established or managed for purposes of academic excellence alone. Other benefits such as talent development are the reason why schools are managed. To achieve this language development is critical. We have therefore developed a language policy in order to nurture students’ talents in areas such as journalism, debating and writing that are important. This has enabled our students to establish the debating club. Through this club student are able to sharpen their skills in communication, research and leadership. These are core values in the development of talents and even careers. My school participates in great debaters’ competition which is aired by the Citizen television.

c) Development of School Culture

School culture is important in the management of schools. The culture of a school also helps in instilling discipline among students. Principal 16 pointed out that:

Through the language policy the school has been able to enhance its culture. When you enter the school you will be greeted by a big banner written “tujivunie Kiswahili” (let’s cherish Kiswahili). The other one next to the administration block reads “speak good English”. This enhances the cultural values of the school. New students easily get inducted in the school system without much effort from the school management. A school is known by its culture

3.3 DISCUSSION FROM THE FINDINGS

Dhilon and Wanjiru (2013) carried out a study on the challenges and strategies for teachers and

learners of English as a second language in a case study of an urban school in Kenya. They found out that teachers used whole school initiatives and policies as demanding that pupils use only English at school. Their study further revealed other strategies used by the school to promote good use of English which included the establishment of school clubs such as debating club, composition writing competitions and encouraging all subject users to use proper English when teaching other subjects. Kiswahili which is a compulsory subject was not mentioned. The current study has established from findings that almost similar suggestions were made by all the respondents as the way forward. The principals and teachers of Kiswahili suggested that English and Kiswahili clubs to be active and those who do well especially during debates to be rewarded. The teachers of Kiswahili on their part indicated that those who win during composition competition also to be rewarded. The same information was echoed by the students during the FGD. All the respondents were in agreement that practice makes perfect. There was also a suggestion of having drama clubs that are active and those who emerged as good actors to be rewarded.

The research revealed that motivation, both intrinsic and extrinsic had positive effects on the use of Kiswahili. This is in agreement with Khasturi (2022) argues that students who lack intrinsic motivation should be given extrinsic motivation. This is because intrinsic motivation gets built in someone who already has it. Those who already have intrinsic motivation should be given extrinsic motivation in order for the existing intrinsic motivation to continue remaining in him or her.

However, the researcher should not ignore the 18(20%) of the teachers 5(16.666%) of the principals who insisted that there should be more intrinsic motivation than extrinsic motivation. They argued that the effects of extrinsic motivation are short lived.

3.4 Summary of the findings

From the findings, it was revealed that the drive behind the development of the respective school language policies included the following: Nurturing students' talents in journalism, establishment of debating clubs, to sharpen their communication skills, to enhance academic achievement, to improve the reading skills in languages, to enhance the school cultural values.

3.5 RECOMMENDATION

The school administration should ensure that the school language policy is fully enforced to meet its intended purpose.

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