

The influence of the first language in the process of teaching and learning Kiswahili in public secondary schools in Kikuyu Sub-county, Kiambu County, Kenya

By

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Abstract

The main aim of this study was to interrogate the influence of the first language in the process of teaching and learning Kiswahili in public secondary schools in Kikuyu Sub-county, Kiambu County, Kenya. The contention of the study is that beyond the confines of the African continent, the Kiswahili language has flourished. Our assumption is that the language policy both before and after independence can be used to trace the historical roots of Kenya's challenges with the use of Kiswahili as a language. Despite having a vital function to play on a global, regional, and national scale, Kiswahili continues to do poorly in national exams. Students' performance in the Kiswahili language in Kikuyu Sub-County has been dismal. The aim of the study was to determine the influence of the first language in the process of teaching and learning Kiswahili in Kikuyu Sub County, Kiambu County, Kenya. The study employed a descriptive survey research design on a sample of 75 teachers drawn using Slovin's formula. Data was collected using questionnaires. There were 45.33 percent men and 54.67% women among the study's participants. The researchers' findings showed that most of the Kiswahili instructors were female. Ages 30-34 made up the majority of the teachers. Over 75% of the responders were over the age of 30. Speaking in the first language affected these procedures, according to the study's conclusion on the impact of the first language on the teaching and learning of Kiswahili in public secondary schools in the study area. The researchers recommend that schools create Kiswahili-enhancing language policies designed to lessen the negative impact of the first language on the teaching and learning of Kiswahili based on the data and conclusions drawn from this study.

Key words: Kenya, first language, teaching and learning, Kiswahili, public secondary schools, Kikuyu Sub-county, Kiambu County

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1.0 Introduction

In their study, Nurse and Spear (2017) found that the Kiswahili language is spoken in many locations around the world due to the dispersion of East Africans, who make up the majority of its speakers. Additionally, it has been accepted by the majority of higher education institutions worldwide, including universities in the Middle East, Europe, Japan, China, and the United States, to name a few. Second, some of the biggest media organisations in the world, like the British Broadcasting Corporation (B.B.C.), transmit in Kiswahili. To facilitate communication among the many member states, the UN has designated Kiswahili as one of the forty-two official languages. Kiswahili has also been incorporated into computer software to make it accessible to a wider audience. Kiswahili prompts are now displayed on modern I.C.T. websites like Wikipedia and Google, which amplifies the language's growing acceptance as a global language. Kiswahili is the official language of Tanzania and Kenya, making it the second most widely spoken language in the continent.

Beyond the confines of the African continent, the Kiswahili language has flourished. It is a language that unifies a huge, multilingual society like Kenya, according to Murunga (2013). The nation's judiciary, parliament, and executive branch all speak Kiswahili. Additionally, it occupies a substantial place in the curriculum as a subject that is taught in Kenyan primary and secondary schools and is assessed. Malilo (2014) claims that many international media organisations, including Radio Beijing, Voice of America, the British Broadcasting Corporation, Cologne, and Pretoria, employ Kiswahili extensively. Kiswahili is recognised as an official language in Kenya under the 2010 constitution, in addition to being the country's official language (Syomwene, Nyandusi, & Yungungu, 2017). Kiswahili is proclaimed to be the official language of the Republic of Kenya in Chapter 2(7) of the new constitution. Kiswahili and English are listed as the official languages of the Republic of Kenya in Section 7(2) (Republic of Kenya, 2010).

Kiswahili has proven to be essential in many fields on the African continent. The expansion and use of the Kiswahili language from the 18th century to its status as a tongue with international recognition show its development. According to Kamau (2013), Kiswahili has been employed in colonial control, religion, post-independence government policies, communication, trade, education, and writing. The Kiswahili language is clearly one of the most well-known indigenous languages in Africa and abroad in the modern world.

According to Chebet-Choge (2012), Kiswahili is widely spoken throughout the countries that make up the East Africa Community, the Central African region, and Southern Africa. Kiswahili is utilized among the countries of Eastern Africa to promote trade, regional collaboration, and sociopolitical stability. Kiswahili was chosen by the African colonizers of East Africa as the continent's common tongue, whereas English remained the colonizers' dialect,

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according to Ombui (2012). Furthermore, Kiswahili is one of the African indigenous languages of communication, according to Ombui (2012). In light of this, the Kiswahili language is now used instead of other African languages like Portuguese, Spanish, and French, providing competition to the aforementioned languages.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Kiswahili is the national language of Kenya and is widely spoken by Kenyans. However, there has been a decline in the performance of students in Kiswahili in recent years. This is a matter of concern, as Kiswahili is an important language for communication, education, and employment in Kenya. There are a number of factors that may be contributing to the poor performance of students in Kiswahili. These include lack of exposure to Kiswahili at home and in the community. Many students come from homes and communities where English is the primary language of communication. This means that they have less exposure to Kiswahili and fewer opportunities to practice speaking and writing the language. Another factor is inadequate teaching and learning resources which is brought about by lack of adequate textbooks and other teaching and learning resources for Kiswahili in many schools. This makes it difficult for teachers to teach the subject effectively.

Additionally poor teacher training also contributes to poor performance in the subject. Some Kiswahili teachers may not have received adequate training in the teaching of the language. This can lead to ineffective teaching and poor student learning outcomes. Further, negative attitudes towards Kiswahili has also been found to lead to poor performance in the national language. Some students may have negative attitudes towards Kiswahili, seeing it as a less important language than English. This can lead to them not putting in the necessary effort to learn the language. The poor performance of students in Kiswahili has a number of negative consequences. It can limit their educational and employment opportunities, and it can also undermine their sense of national identity, Ngecha, (2020).

While there has been some research on the reasons for poor performance in Kiswahili in Kenya, there are gaps in the literature. For example, there is a need for more research on the the role of language policy in influencing student performance in Kiswahili, the impact of different teaching and learning approaches on student performance in Kiswahili, the role of teacher motivation and professional development in improving student performance in Kiswahili and also the influence of student motivation and attitudes on their performance in Kiswahili. In these studies, the factors influencing Performance in Kiswahili in public secondary schools were not discussed. Therefore, the researcher found it necessary to investigate the factors influencing students' performance in Kiswahili at KCSE in public secondary schools in Kikuyu Sub County, Kiambu County, Kenya.

1.2 Objective of the Study

To determine the influence of the first language in the process of teaching and learning Kiswahili

1.3 Research question

What is the influence of the first language in the process of teaching and learning Kiswahili?

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2.1 Empirical Literature

2.1.1 Influence of the First Language in the Teaching and Learning Kiswahili

A significant part of how knowledge is created and how new behaviours that set humans apart from other organisms are produced is through language. According to Barasa (2015), individuals must possess linguistic information and the ability to apply it to patterns, which they can either learn or acquire. There have been linguistic issues with learning Kiswahili as a second language (SL) since the colonial era. Kenya has a large number of indigenous (mother tongues) and foreign languages, making it a linguistically varied and heterogeneous nation. Kenya has at least 42 indigenous languages, while English is one of the foreign languages, according to Mwakira & Mwangi (2021). While some of the indigenous languages include Kalenjin, Dholuo, Kikuyu, Luhya, and Kisii among others, other alien languages include Arabic, French, German, Hindu, and Chinese. English has a long history of use in Kenya, and after the country gained independence in 1963, English was designated as the official language (Republic of Kenya, 1964). It was to be applied to all significant areas of government, including education. This policy reinforced what colonial language policy had already established. The Ministry of Education at this time took action in accordance with language policy.

The Kenya Education Commission conducted a poll in 1964 to determine the preferences of the populace on language use. According to the research, the majority of individuals preferred a trilingual educational method (Ministry of Education, 2012). During this time, English and Kiswahili were chosen for schooling from lower primary to the university, but mother tongue was favoured for verbal communication, particularly in rural areas. In order to promote regional and national unity, Kiswahili was particularly preferred in the educational system. Mother tongue languages, in contrast to English, were not integrated into the curriculum (Ministry of Education, 2012). The pupils' first language is their mother tongue. Were (2016) asserts that a learner's first language interferes with their second language acquisition, which negatively impacts their performance. Mother Tongue could have both beneficial and detrimental effects (Carless, 2018). According to this source, learning a second language may be hampered by the mother tongue.

In Zanzibar, poetry is written in mother-tongue variants, according to Hinnebusch (2012), who found that this area has been ignored in most study programmes in schools because students and teachers believe it to be stylistically complex and unfamiliar. The fact that this study was carried out in Zanzibar, a region that can have distinct educational norms and attitudes from the region under examination, is a drawback of this evaluation because different countries have varied educational policies.

Today, a lot of parents in Tanzania take their children to private, English-medium schools. Once more, the country is seeing a rapid increase in the number of private English-medium schools. The goal of this study is to discover the factors that influence parents' decisions to enroll their kids in private, English-medium schools. used in this research. In this study's qualitative research design, ten parents were chosen at random to be interviewed. For the study, ten parents of Njombe-area students in private English-medium schools were chosen. According to the results, the majority of parents favored private English-medium schools for a variety of reasons, including the English language's foundation, ties to the outside world, the language of instruction, international language, and competition for employment. T Today, a lot of parents in Tanzania send their children to private, English-medium schools. Kiswahili will continue to be a

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necessary subject from kindergarten through the university level, but the study recommends that the government explore making English the standard language of instruction in all schools (Mwalongo, 2022).

Language choice has gained popularity around the world as a result of how it is viewed as a kind of personal freedom and allows parents to make decisions regarding their children's language education based on information. It gives parents more power over their children's education (Fung & Lam 2011). Tanzania's educational system is made up of both state and private schools. Public schools in Tanzania are free to attend and are run by the state. Private schools, on the other hand, are owned and managed by individuals, parent organizations, or religious groups like Christian and Muslim organizations. They could be distinguished based on the medium of instruction, curriculum approaches, religious orientation, origin (local or worldwide), political affiliation, and branded or non-branded schools, according to Bin Dahari and Sabri Bin Ya (2011). In Tanzania, parents are free to select one of the aforementioned school kinds for their children's pre-primary education. Since the 2000s, the number of private pre-primary schools in Tanzania has increased dramatically, and most parents opt to enroll their children there (Mwalongo, 2016).

Therefore, Tanzania's basic and mandated education includes pre-primary, elementary, and secondary school (ordinary level) (MoEVT, 2014). This study focused on the pre-primary school education level because it is the starting point for all subsequent formal education school levels and a level of instruction before primary school. Both private and public schools can offer language instruction in English, Kiswahili, French, and Arabic; however, most public pre-primary schools use Kiswahili (MoEVT, 2014). Tanzanian study examined the elements influencing parents' preferences for languages in private pre-primary schools. The language of education may be either the official or national language of the country, an international language like English, the mother tongue of the student (the language spoken at home and in their community), or a combination of these languages. The subject of instructional language is on educators' minds in a lot of different countries. Which mother tongue should be taught in which grade, when to introduce national and international languages, and which international language should be taught are all topics of discussion and decision about the instruction language. However, the work put into creating resources and supporting educational materials is also taken into account in Tanzanian Kiswahili.

2.2 Theoretical Literature

The study will be driven by Eric A. Hanushek's 1979 input-output theory, also known as the production function theory of education. The production function theory of education is an economic theory that relates inputs (such as labor, capital, and resources) to outputs (such as knowledge, skills, and human capital) in the context of education. This theory suggests that education can be viewed as a process of production, where investments in education lead to the production of knowledge and skills in individuals, which in turn contribute to their productivity and earning potential. While the concept of the production function theory of education is not associated with a single proponent, it draws upon the broader field of economics and education. Economists like Gary Becker and Jacob Mincer have made significant contributions to this field by developing human capital theory, which is closely related to the production function theory of

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education. Becker, in particular, is known for his work on human capital theory and its application to education and labor economics.

The idea that education can be viewed as an investment in human capital and that inputs (such as resources, teaching quality, and student effort) can lead to outputs (knowledge, skills, and human capital) is an important concept in the economics of education. This concept is often discussed in the context of human capital theory. Examples of how these ideas can be applied in a school situation include the following.

Schools can apply the concept of the production function by allocating resources effectively. This includes investments in well-qualified teachers, up-to-date instructional materials, and classroom technology. By optimizing these inputs, schools aim to maximize the educational outcomes for students. Research has examined the impact of class size and teacher quality on student outcomes. Smaller class sizes are often associated with better student-teacher interactions and improved learning. Investing in hiring high-quality teachers is also an important aspect of improving educational outcomes. Schools can use the production function concept to design and adapt curricula to enhance student learning. This involves identifying the most effective teaching methods and materials to produce the desired educational outcomes.

The integration of technology in the classroom is another way to apply the concept. By providing students with access to educational software, online resources, and interactive learning tools, schools aim to increase the productivity and effectiveness of the education process. In the production function framework, the effort that students put into their education is an important input. Schools can create an environment that motivates students to engage actively in their learning, which can ultimately lead to better educational outcomes.

Many educational systems use standardized tests to assess student learning and teacher effectiveness. These tests are often seen as a way to measure the "output" of the education process and inform policy decisions. Policymakers and education researchers can apply the production function concept to evaluate the effectiveness of education policies and interventions. They can analyze whether specific policy changes lead to improved educational outcomes, such as increased graduation rates or better test scores. While not a specific theory, these principles and practices are rooted in the broader field of education economics and human capital theory. They demonstrate how schools and policymakers can use economic and educational principles to improve the education process and outcomes for students.

3.0 Methodology

3.1. Research Design

The study used a descriptive survey research design to examine the difficulties students faced when attempting to perform well in Kiswahili on the national exam. The current phenomena in terms of conditions, practises, beliefs, processes, linkages, or trends are what survey design is concerned with. According to Wamokhela (2012), survey design is helpful in figuring out the connections between occurrences. This layout worked well for trend and relationship analysis, interpretation, comparison, and identification. Given the size and diversity of the population in the current study, the design seemed appropriate. The strategy allowed the researcher to thoroughly collect and examine data by polling a representative sample of the community. Therefore, it would be beneficial for the researcher to highlight the connection between the

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difficulties students face in their Kiswahili performance in the KCSE examination and the teaching and learning materials for Kiswahili. The survey method produced descriptive data on respondents' perceptions of the difficulties students face in performing well in the Kiswahili curriculum.

3.2 Area of Study

Kikuyu Sub-County in Kiambu County served as the study's location. Because the Sub-county had a wide range of schools with various attributes, it was picked. Additionally, it had day or boarding secondary schools that were either public or private, each with their own unique attributes and difficulties. The sub-county, also, had nationally top-performing schools such as Alliance Girls and Boys.'

3.3 Target Population

The Kikuyu sub-county, where the study was conducted, has 21 secondary schools and 92 Kiswahili teachers. The study population consists of 92 teachers of Kiswahili. The researcher only used public secondary schools in this research study since they were being funded by the government and the public hence they reflected similar characteristics. The teachers of Kiswahili were included because they were directly involved in teaching Kiswahili, they understood the factors that influenced students' performance as well as strategies for coping with the challenges.

3.4 Sample and Sampling Techniques

The study population was 92 Kiswahili teachers. A sample of 75 teachers was drawn from the target population. To determine the sample size, the researcher used Slovin's formula at a 95% confidence interval as shown below:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N * e^2} \dots\dots\dots 3.3.1$$

Where:

n = Samples size,

N = Total population

e = Error tolerance (level).

In this case, the sample size was $92 / (1 + 92 * 0.05^2) = 75$.

3.5 Research Instruments

Questionnaires served as the study's primary tool. Given the size and literacy of the target population and the constrained time available for data collection, this was an appropriate way to conduct the study (Legal Notes, 2018). When more information was needed or to confirm the data gathered, questionnaires were used.

3.6 Validity and Reliability of Research Instruments

This section sought to show how the validity and reliability of the study were obtained.

3.6.1 Validity

Before the researcher travelled to the field to gather data, the validity of the research tools was confirmed. Supervisors reviewed them and used the suggestions made to increase the validity of

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the instruments by experts in analysing the validity of research instruments. To evaluate the validity of the content, a pilot study was conducted. Before the actual study began, the experts' advice and suggestions, as well as the input from the pilot study, were included into the final instruments. As a result, the data collecting tools were more effective (Curtis & Curtis, 2019).

3.6.2 Reliability

To yield the same anticipated findings, research tools must be trustworthy (Curtis & Curtis, 2019). During the pilot study in the neighbouring Kikuyu sub-county, the researcher employed the test-retest procedure to guarantee the dependability of research instruments. Four schools outside of Kikuyu Sub-county received research instruments. The tests were given again and the results were compared after a two-week interval. By doing this, it was ensured that the terminology used and the statements made were clear. The test-retest approach was used to assess reliability.

3.6.3 Pilot Study

The study tools were tested outside of Kikuyu Sub-County in two public secondary schools. The aim of the piloting was to confirm the validity and dependability of the instruments. The actual study was not conducted in the pilot study's schools. A chosen pilot sample with traits close to the real sample was used to repeat the study questions. This aided in identifying the shortcomings of the research tools.

3.7 Data Collection Procedure

To conduct the research in the chosen public secondary schools in the Kikuyu Sub-county, the researcher secured letters of introduction from NACOSTI and the School of Graduate Studies at Lukenya University. During the course of the research, the researcher also informed the Sub-County Director of Education of his or her intention to conduct research in Kikuyu Sub-county's secondary schools. Before beginning the investigation, the researcher obtained approval from the respective school's principal and teachers. To prevent interfering with teaching, plans were then prepared for the study's time and date. Teachers who participated in the study were given questionnaires by the researcher and her research assistant in person.

3.8 Data Analysis Procedures.

Data analysis is the process of interpreting the data that has been gathered using logical and analytical reasoning to identify patterns, correlations, and trends. It served as an overview of the information gathered (University of Pretoria, 2018). Using SPSS version 29, the researcher conducted content analysis and descriptive statistical analyses of the data. The collected data was coded, organized, and examined. Frequency distribution tables, bar graphs, and other visual presentations were created using the tabulated data. The findings were then discussed, and judgements were made.

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4.0 Findings and Discussions

4.1 Response Rate

There was a 100% response in the study. All the respondents filled in all the questions in all the

	Cronbach's Alpha
Influence of First Language	.733
Learners' Attitude	.729
Teacher Motivation	.834
Availability of Resource Materials	0.704

questionnaires.

Source: Field Data 2023

4.2 Reliability

The Cronbach's alpha values for the independent variables were $\alpha = 0.733$ for the influence of first language, $\alpha = 0.729$ for learners' attitude, $\alpha = 0.834$ for teacher motivation, and $\alpha = 0.704$ for the availability of resource materials.

4.3 Population Bio Data

The population demographics of the target populations were characterized by gender constitution, age distribution, school gender, and the respondents' roles besides teaching and mean score in Kiswahili performance in KCSE. The results of the analysis were presented as demonstrated in the following subheadings.

4.3.1 Gender Constitution

The gender distribution of the target population is illustrated in Figure 1. The statistics showed that 54.67% of study participants were female and 45.33% male. The findings exhibited that most of the Kiswahili teachers in the study were females. Therefore, there exists a huge difference in the number of male and female teachers that teach Kiswahili in the schools that were involved in the study. There needs a closer investigation to study the factors that have contributed to the uneven or imbalance in gender constitution in the study area. The study deduced that there were more female than male Kiswahili teachers in the schools.

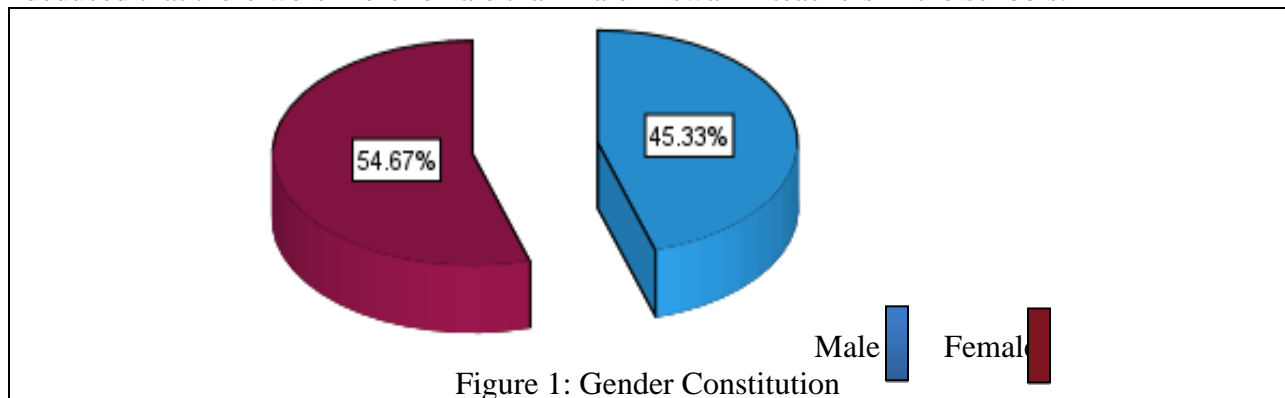
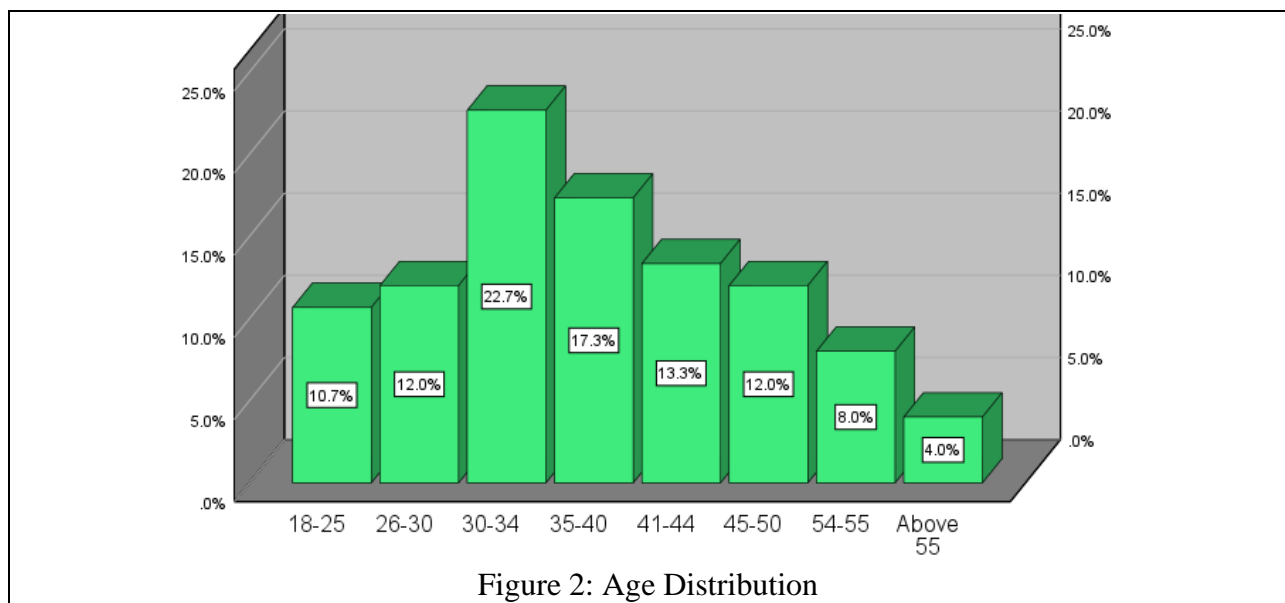


Figure 1: Gender Constitution

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4.3.2 Age Distribution

The participants in the study were required to indicate their age by choosing from a list of age brackets that were provided by the researcher in the questionnaire. The classes were 18-25, 26-30, 31-34, 35-40, 41-50, 51-55, and above 55. The statistics obtained were illustrated using the bar graph in Figure 4.4 below. The percentages were 10.7%, 12.0%, 22.7%, 17.3%, 13.3%, 12.0%, 8.0%, and 4.0% for classes 26-30, 31-34, 35-40, 41-50, 51-55, and above 55 respectively. The class 30-34 had the highest frequency. This implies that most of the teachers were of age 30-34. The majority (more than 75%) of the respondents were above age 30. The minority of the participants were above 55 years old. The statistics imply that the targeted population had enough experience in teaching Kiswahili and were well-versed in the issues affecting students' performance in the subject. Besides, they have had more interactions with different categories of students and, therefore, the participants were able to provide credible data for the study. Most of them were experienced teachers and parents and they understood the behaviour of their students from a teacher's and a parent's perspective.



Source: Field Data 2023

4.3.3 School Gender

The constitution of the school in terms of gender was examined and the results were presented using the pie chart in Figure 2. The largest proportion (50.67%) of the schools included in the study were boys' schools. 29.33% of the schools were Girls while 20% were mixed schools. The statistics demonstrate a well-represented population from which reliable and valid conclusions could be drawn. The target population had all categories of schools concerning gender represented well and that eliminated gender-based biases in the findings of the study. The researcher was able to collect data on the factors influencing students' KCSE performance in Kiswahili in public boys', girls', and mixed secondary schools. It, therefore, provided the researcher the opportunity to investigate the factors that were unique in one category of the

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schools that were not exceptional to the other categories. In this way, the researcher was able to generalize conclusions that cut across all the school categories. Given the blend of the schools, the research would be profitable to all educational stakeholders because the study provided an understanding of the underwriting factors that influence the performance of both boys and girls in any of the school categories.

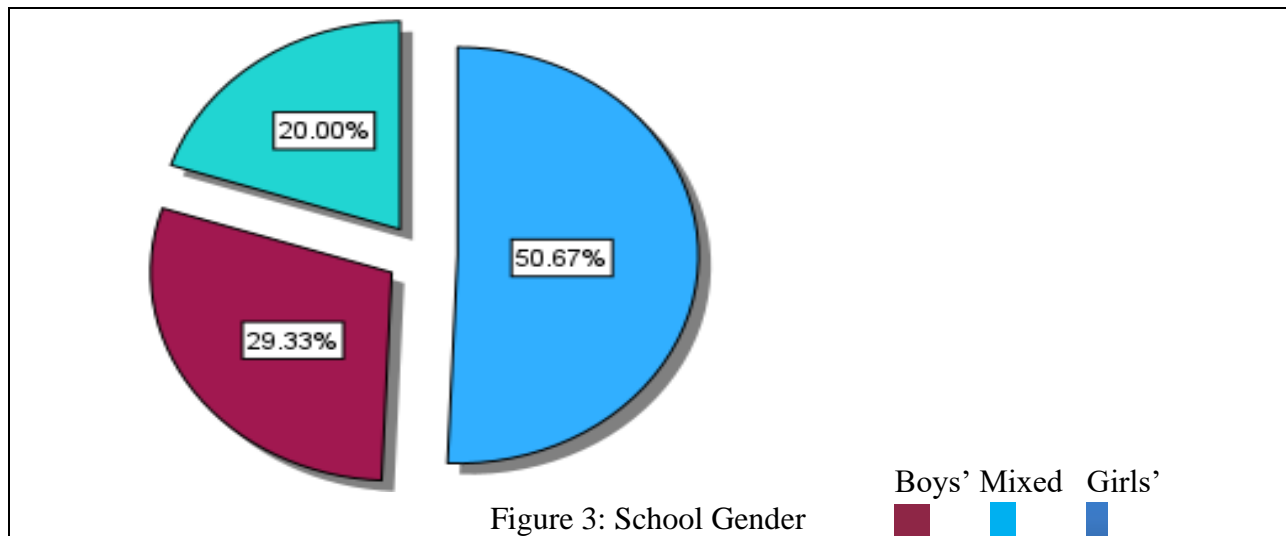


Figure 3: School Gender

Source: Field Data 2023

4.3.4 Role Besides Teaching

The researcher was interested to know additional responsibilities that were held by the respondents besides teaching Kiswahili in their schools. The statistics obtained after analysis showed that 13.3% of the Kiswahili teachers were members of the guidance and counseling department. This lot of teachers were appropriate to provide information concerning issues that concerned guidance and counseling. Factors that related to academic factors were well articulated by the 28.0% of the population that represented heads of academic departments. The academics-related data was supported by 18.7% of Deans of Academics and curriculum implementation that were part of the study's sample (see Figure 3).

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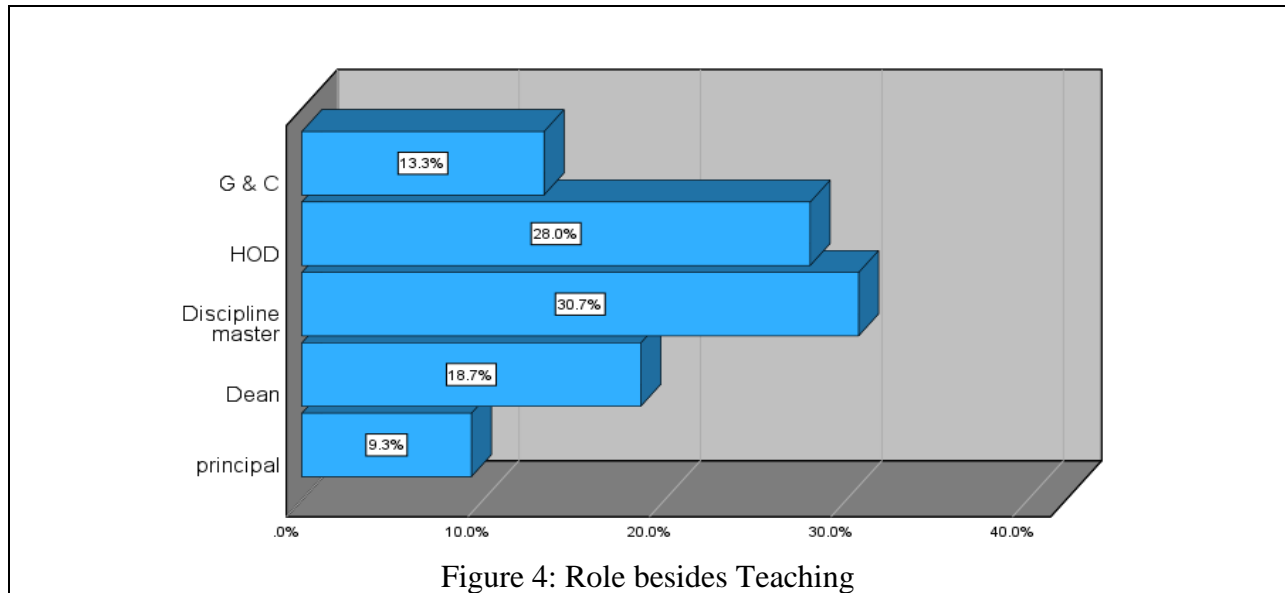


Figure 4: Role besides Teaching

Source: Field Data 2023

Issues with student conduct and demeanor were well-addressed by incorporating 30.7% of discipline masters. Information concerning administrative and school management factors was appropriately collected from a 9.3% proportion of the sample that was formed by school principals who taught Kiswahili in their schools.

4.3.5 School KCSE Mean in Kiswahili

The study analyzed the school KCSE mean in Kiswahili as an indicator of the academic performance of the schools. From the results, most schools (58.7%) performed average and had a school mean ranging between 5-7. 18.7% of the schools were below average in performance by attaining a Kiswahili mean score that ranged between 0-4 in KCSE. About 23% of the schools performed above average by achieving a school mean of between 8 and 10 in KCSE. No school was found to have attained a good performance mean score that was rated as 11-12 in the current study. Consequently, the study concluded the schools in the sub-county were poorly performing with the majority of the schools attaining a mean of less than 7 in KCSE, and in the subject, Kiswahili (Table 4).

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Table 4.1: School KCSE Mean in Kiswahili

Choose your school's KCSE Kiswahili to mean

	N	%
0-4	14	18.7%
5-7	44	58.7%
8-10	17	22.7%

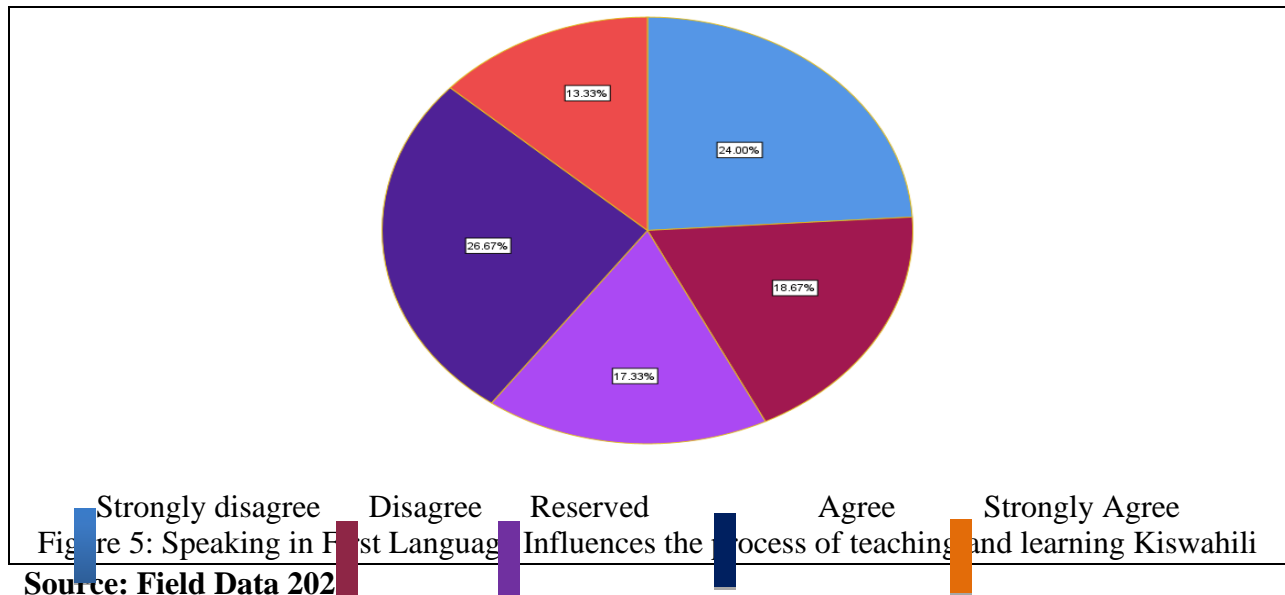
Source: Field Data 2023

4.4 Influence of the First Language in the Process Of Teaching and Learning Kiswahili

4.4.1 Speaking in First Language Influences

The researcher sought to establish the effect of first language (FL) on Kiswahili teaching and learning in the target public schools. The researcher wanted first to establish whether the first language affects teaching and learning Kiswahili. The respondents showed on a five-point Likert question the extent to which they agreed with the statement that speaking in their first language influenced Kiswahili's teaching and learning processes. Percentages were computed from the data and the statistics were illustrated by the pie chart in Figure 4.7. The results showed that 24% of the respondents strongly disagreed that speaking in their first language affected the process of teaching and learning Kiswahili. 18.67% of the respondents disagreed that speaking the first language influences the process of teaching and learning. 17.73% of the target population admitted that teaching and learning processes were influenced by speaking their first language. 26.67% and 13.3% of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed that the processes of teaching and learning Kiswahili were influenced by speaking the first language. The study established that speaking in the first language had influenced the process of teaching and learning Kiswahili in public secondary schools in the study area.

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4.4.2 Students' Languages Preference

Besides speaking the first language and teaching and learning Kiswahili, the study further examined the degree of students' consideration of other languages than Kiswahili in the population of the schools studied. The outcome of this evaluation is indicated in Figure 5 below. The results were obtained after the analysis of 5-point Likert questions that required the respondents to show the extent to which they agreed with the statement that their students considered other languages than Kiswahili. Interestingly, the outcome demonstrated that students in public secondary schools in the area of study preferred other languages to Kiswahili. 22.7% of the respondents strongly agreed that students in their schools preferred other languages to Kiswahili. A proportion of 28.0% of the respondents stated that they agreed that their students considered other languages than they did Kiswahili. 18.7% stated that most of their students choose other languages and do not consider Kiswahili. 30.6% disagreed with the statement. From the statistics, it was established that public secondary students in the study area have a higher preference for other languages than they have for Kiswahili. The majority of the (more than 65%) respondents argued that their students preferred foreign languages such as French, Spanish, and German to Kiswahili. The study thus concluded that there exist major underscoring factors that contribute to the foreign-languages-inclined preference.

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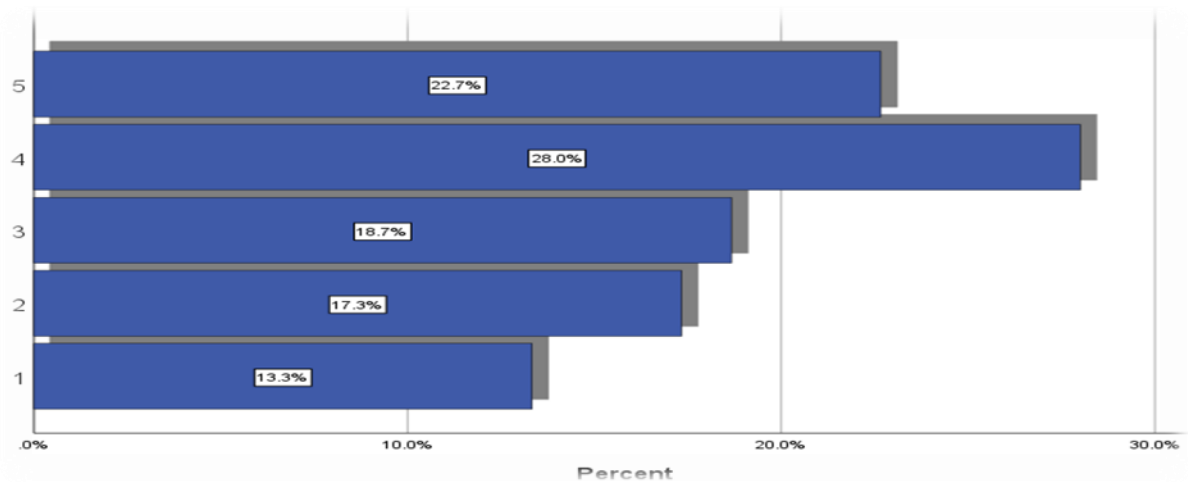


Figure 6: Students' Languages Preference

Source: Field Data 2023

4.4.3 KCSE Kiswahili Performance of Students Who Prefer First Language to Kiswahili

On a scale of 1 to 5, the participants were asked to rate the performance of students who prefer first language to Kiswahili. The results are illustrated in Table 6.

Table 4.2: KCSE Kiswahili Performance of Students Who Prefer First Language to Kiswahili

	N	%
1	10	13.3%
2	17	22.7%
3	20	26.7%
4	18	24.0%
5	10	13.3%

Source: Field Data 2023

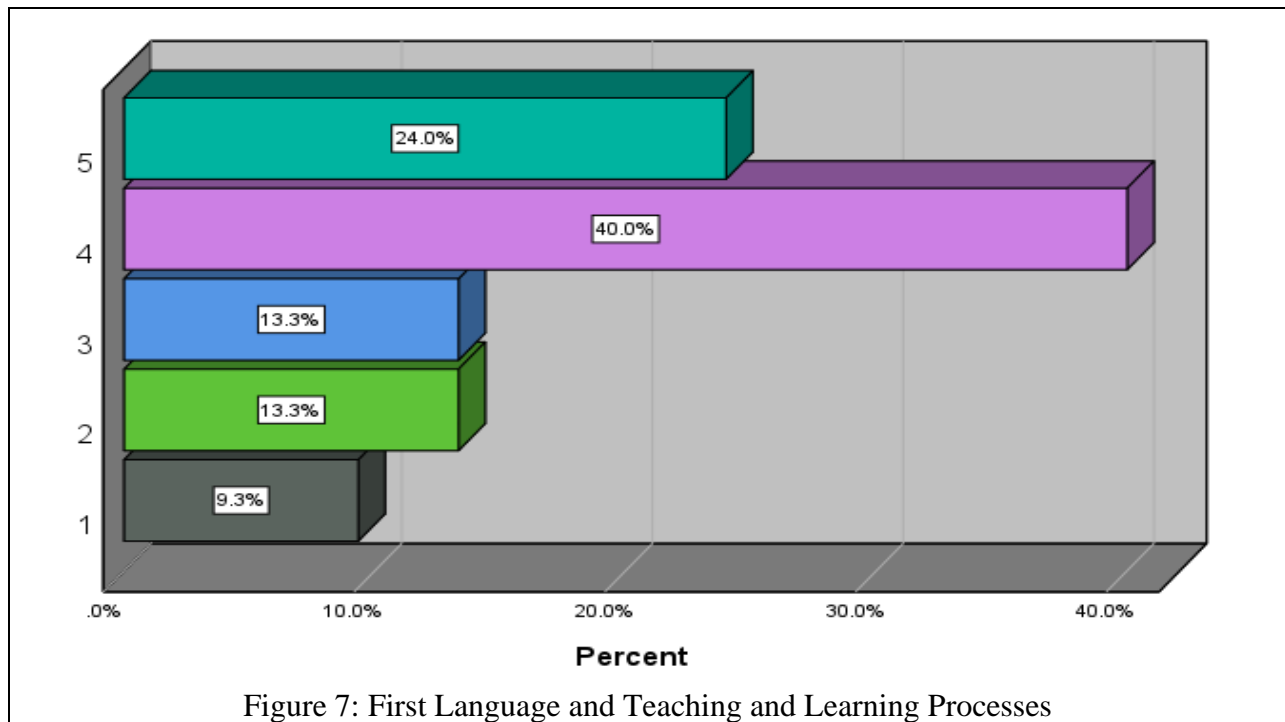
The results in Table 4.6 above showed that 13.3% of students who prefer their first language to Kiswahili perform very poorly in Kiswahili. 22.7% of such students perform poorly. 26.7% stated that the performance of this cohort of students is low. 24.0% and 23.3% indicated that the performance of such students in their schools was average and good respectively. The study

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determined that the majority (more than 55%) of students who prefer their first language to Kiswahili perform lowly in Kiswahili in their KCSE examinations. Therefore, the study described the first language as detrimental to KCSE Kiswahili performance for students who prefer their first language to Kiswahili.

4.4.4 First Language and Teaching and Learning Processes

The study evaluated the effect of the first language on the process of teaching and learning Kiswahili. Figure 7 below illustrates the results of the analysis of the data collected.



Source: Field Data 2023

The researcher established that the processes of teaching and learning Kiswahili were immensely affected by the first language. 24.0% strongly agreed that teaching and learning processes were severely affected by the influence of the first language. 40.0% of the respondents stated that the influence that speaking first language had on the teaching and learning processes was severe. 13.3% of the participants said that the effect was moderately severe. The remaining percentage (less than 24%) said that first language did not severely affect teaching and learning Kiswahili in their schools. The study thus concluded that the effect of speaking a first language was severely detrimental to the processes of teaching and learning Kiswahili in public secondary schools.

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5.0 Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 Summary

The majority of schools (58.7%) had average performance and a school mean that fell between 5-7. With a mean Kiswahili score in the 0–4 range on the KCSE, 18.7% of the schools performed below average. A school mean between 8 and 10 in the KCSE was achieved by about 23% of the schools, which is above-average performance. In the current investigation, no school was discovered to have achieved a good performance mean score that was graded between 11 and 12. According to the findings, 24% of respondents strongly disagreed that speaking in one's native tongue interfered with learning and teaching Kiswahili. 18.67% of the respondents disagreed that teaching and learning take place more effectively when first languages are spoken. Speaking one's first language influenced teaching and learning, 17.73% of the target population admitted. Speaking one's native language has an impact on the teaching and learning of Kiswahili, according to 26.67% and 13.3% of respondents, respectively.

According to 22.7% of the respondents, Kiswahili was not the language of choice for students in their schools. 28.0% of those surveyed said they concurred that their students gave other languages more thought than Kiswahili. According to 18.7% of teachers, the majority of their students choose other languages rather than Kiswahili. 30.6% of respondents disputed the assertion. Statistics showed that students in the study area's public secondary schools prefer other languages over Kiswahili by a significant margin. The vast majority of respondents (more than 65%) claimed that their kids preferred French, Spanish, and German to Kiswahili.

The responses showed that 13.3% of students who prefer their native tongue to Kiswahili perform poorly on the language test. Such pupils perform poorly in 22.7% of cases. 26.7% of respondents believed that this student cohort's performance was subpar. According to 24.0% and 23.3% of respondents, these students performed average and well in their schools, respectively. The majority of kids (more than 55%) who prefer their native tongue to Kiswahili underperform in Kiswahili on their KCSE exams, according to the study. 24.0% firmly believed that the impact of the first language on teaching and learning processes was significant. 40.0% of respondents said that speaking one's first language has a significant impact on the teaching and learning processes. Among the individuals, moderate severity was reported by 13.3%. Less than 24 percent of the remaining group claimed that learning Kiswahili in their schools was not significantly impacted by their first language.

5.2 Conclusion

The study's conclusion about the impact of the first language on the teaching and learning of Kiswahili in public secondary schools in the study area was that speaking in the first language had an impact on these processes. The study concluded that there are significant factors that underscore the inclination to learn other languages. For pupils who prefer their first language to Kiswahili, the study concluded that first language is detrimental to KCSE Kiswahili performance. The study concluded that speaking one's native tongue had a negative impact on how Kiswahili was taught and learned in public secondary schools.

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5.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusion made in this study, the researcher recommended that schools develop Kiswahili-enhancing language policies that are tailored to reduce the detrimental effect of the first language on the teaching and learning of Kiswahili. Secondly, teachers should devise ways to instill a positive attitude towards Kiswahili as a subject among their students. This could be done by increasing and diversifying teacher motivation. All stakeholders in education must guarantee that schools are well equipped with necessary and sufficient resource materials to enhance the teaching and learning of Kiswahili.

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