

Research proposal assignment

[Education](#)



The study mainly will use qualitative approach in data collection, analysis and presentation. Quantitative approach will be used to present statistical data. Data will be obtained through the use of interviews, observation and documentary review. The study will adopt a multiple-case study and content analysis will be applied for data analysis. The findings will indicate that students in urban secondary school performed better than students at the rural school. The mock examination performance results for History and English verified this; however the difference between the schools is marginal.

The findings will also show that the use of similar coping strategies and lack of student participation in class discussions were observed in both schools. The scarcity of learning materials, regular use of teacher-centered methods were observed in both schools except in a few lessons in the urban school. Findings also may show that overcrowded classrooms and lack of physical facilities such as a library hamper effective learning and developing language skills. Moreover, the findings will reveal other influences that affect students performance.

School administrative issues such as giving students punishments and outdoor activities during class hours and the absence of lunch meals in school are issues that affect both urban and rural students' academic performance. The finding will show that for students to perform well in examinations they need to be motivated by teachers and be willing to study conscientiously. Parental support and tuition/remedial classes were also highly recommended to enable students to perform much better. The absence of favorable living surroundings and lack of time to study at home were other factors that could contribute to poor academic achievement.

Roy-Campbell and Sorrow (1997) identify two problems that result from using English as a language of instruction in secondary schools; first, little knowledge is gained from the subject-matter since learners do not understand English well, second, even their Swahili language skills tend to be lagging behind because they are not using the language as a medium of instruction. Furthermore, learners are restricted from adequately acquiring the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes intended in their academic studies because of using a foreign language as a medium of instruction.

The language problem can be traced back since the time when Tanzania decided to adopt African socialism (Jam) and as a result of this there was a move of Fractionation where everything that had to do with the colonial heritage was seen as a means to corrupt the socialist system. English language also was inherited from the British therefore was seen as a negative influence especially when Swahili officially came the medium of instruction in primary schools in 1967.

English still remained as the medium of instruction in secondary and tertiary education but was not given high prominence as Swahili. However, in 1969 the Ministry of National Education sent out a circular to all heads of secondary schools which explained the possibility of introducing Swahili as the language of instruction in some subjects starting with Political education in 1969/70, then Domestication in 1970, followed by History, Geography, Biology, Agriculture and Mathematics in 1971 (Bias, 1976 in Roy-Campbell, 1990).

The interest of doing a research in this issue has to do with personal experience of teaching in both urban and rural secondary schools during field work. In my experience I saw that the ability of students in using the language of instruction in class was very minimal and so was their performance based on class tests. Also as a teacher at teachers training college experience showed that even students who have been using the language of instruction from form one up to six (ordinary and advance level education) are still facing the same problems despite having used the language for six years.

Linguist specialists claim that a language which is not used in daily interactions tends to suffers regression. Therefore, this is the case with English it has become an classroom languages because it is only used meagerly in the classroom. Rural and urban schools differ in terms of the extent in which the language of instruction influences their academic performance because first the teachers that are normally in rural schools are not as competent as those who are in urban secondary schools.

Secondly, is the students perceptions of the language of instruction, students from urban schools have a more positive outlook towards English and see the benefits that come with the language (see chapter 2) unlike their rural counterparts who have little or no motivation to diligently learn the language. Socio-economic status also plays a role in this urban-rural divide in terms of the family individual students come from and their future prospects of further studies.

1. Problem statement The medium of instruction in Tanzania secondary schools is English a language which does not facilitate effective teaching and learning in classrooms. Both teachers and students

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are not competent in the language which has been the medium of instruction for the past 40 years. The teaching and learning process has been gradually deteriorating because of the English language barrier. Students are experiencing difficulty in understanding what they are taught in class and performing to their full capability. The students substandard performance in test and examinations shows how serious this problem is in secondary schools.

The aim of this study is to examine two schools- an urban and a rural secondary school and see whether the language of instruction plays a crucial role in inhibiting learners from reforming to their full potential. Is there a possibility that both the language of instruction and other factors consequently lead to low performances in students] academic studies? What are the contrasts and comparisons that can be drawn from the two schools in terms of the language of instruction and its impact on their performance? I shall be looking into two subjects namely History and English. 1. Significance of the study This study aims to provide information to the present literature on current situation students are facing using English the language of instruction and Its impact on their performance in both urban and rural secondary schools in Tanzania. This study draws attention to the current situation on the language of instruction and its influence on students] performance in secondary schools in Tanzania. In this case the language policy still states English as the language of instruction in secondary schools, therefore, what could be done to make a difference?

The study will look into matters concerning opportunities students get to use the language of instruction in class, teaching strategies used, students] <https://assignbuster.com/research-proposal-assignment/>

general performance and issues of motivation. 2 1. Purpose of the study The purpose of this study is to examine the impact of the language of instruction on urban and rural students academic performance in the subjects of History and English language. A number of studies show that one Of the reasons for the unsatisfactory performance in examinations is because teaching and learning is conducted in an unfamiliar language.

The aim of this study is to examine to what extent the language of instruction impedes these final year students to perform well in examinations even with four years experience of using the language in urban and rural secondary schools. Also want to see if there are other factors that are contributing towards the low performance of students. I further want to find out what are the contrasting features between the urban and rural school in terms of using the language of instruction and the outcome of their performance in the two subjects. . 3. 1 Specific objectives i. To what extent does the language of instruction contribute towards students success or failure. ii. To find out the main differences and similarities in students performance in urban and rural secondary schools. iii. To examine other contributing factors that influence students reference. CHAPTER MO:

LITERATURE REVIEW 2. 2 The current language policy and issues surrounding this policy In 1 997 the Ministry of Education and Culture issued a policy document called Sera yea Tantamount (Cultural policy).

This document addressed the question of the language of instruction particularly the position of the Tanzania government regarding the two languages used within the formal education system (Brock- tune, 2009). The policy stated: n A special programmer that shall enable the use of Swahili at <https://assignbuster.com/research-proposal-assignment/>

all levels of education and training shall be prepared and implemented (RUT, 1997: 19 translated). C English shall be a compulsory subject in pre-primary, primary and secondary education and shall be encouraged in higher education and its teaching shall be enhanced (RUT, 1997: 18 translated).

As far as all levels of education are concerned only primary schools have experienced the implementation of these policies since the language of instruction is already Swahili and English is a compulsory subject. However, in post-primary education that is secondary and tertiary level there has been no change yet, the language of instruction is still English. 3 In 2000 the National Council for Swahili BAKING conducted a two day inference whereby the language issue was one among the topics discussed particularly whether English or Swahili should be used as the LOL (Sorrow, 2009).

Sorrow explains that the Minister of Education was an invited honorary guest, pointed out two main things: the governments intention of improving on the quality of education in the country and to accomplish this the resources available shall be directed towards fulfilling this goal saying that the government had no money to wastes on the LOL Sorrow (2009) notes that the Minister's remarks may suggest that the LOL and delivering quality education seem to have no correlation to each other.

Such remarks show dilemma on the governments side whether they understand the extent of the language problem at the grass root level. The government should consider that to achieve quality education the language policy needs to be revised and expenses have to be incurred as Brock-Tune (2006) clarifies: A language policy that strengthens the African languages

may be costly but when the costs are calculated, it should also be calculated what it costs to continue with a language policy where LOL becomes a barrier to knowledge or millions of African children. 3 Multilateral and Bilateral donor agency. 3 of instruction in post-secondary education Brock-Tune (2009: 12) asserts that donors have the power “ to exert control over and influence the choice of language policy of a country’ . A development agency such as UNESCO has played an essential role in advocating African languages as mediums of instruction.

UNESCO set forth 2 propositions that supported the use of indigenous languages: (a) the vernaculars] are superior to the foreign languages in enhancing cognitive skills in a child’s early education, and (b) as Edie of instruction, vernaculars may promote linguistic skills that facilitate, rather than inhibit, the acquisition of the imperial language at a later stage in the educational process (UNESCO, 1953 in Mazurka, 1997: 36).

The 1988 World Bank document “ Education in Sub- Sahara Africa: policies for adjustment, revitalization and expansion” also agrees with UNESCO propositions concerning the language of instruction (World Bank, 1988; Mazurka, 1997). It claims that in the early years of education children learn easier if instructions are in a familiar medium and this enables them to master their native engage and develop cognitive skills necessary for learning a foreign language (World Bank, 1988 in Mazurka, 1997). The World Bank establishes the detrimental effects of using a foreign language.

The main concern of using a native language as a medium of instruction is the shortage of instructional materials (UNESCO, 1953). UNESCO addresses

the financial problem that most African countries face in a document the use of Vernacular Language in Education: 4 One of the important and difficult problems connected with the use of vernacular languages in education is that of providing reading materials. It often happens that even a language which is quite capable of being used as a medium of instruction will be almost entirely without books or other materials. The difficulty is... Above all to find money (UNESCO, 1953: 50 in Mazurka, 1997). This statement is true to a certain extent because Tanzania lacks the financial resources to publish sufficient teaching and learning material in all academic subjects in Swahili language. Further propounds that any free society transmits knowledge in the home language because it allows creativity and innovation among learners but more importantly it is the engage in which they develop their thoughts. If the LOL is not the mother tongue this maybe the result of patterns of dominance or colonialism based on the country's history (Para, 2003).

There is a lot of evidence to show the current dominance of English in international trade, finance, world governance and in tertiary education, science and technology, the publishing industry and other domains (Alexander, 2005). In Tanzania case, English language was inherited as the LOL from the British colonizers immediately after independence. Dominance is currently portrayed by international donor agencies exerting their power in the publishing industry, educational policies and even the policy on the LOL by placing conditions to be fulfilled for Tanzania to receive aid.

The next section looks into the implications of using English as LOL in the teaching and learning process in urban and rural context. 2. 4 The language <https://assignbuster.com/research-proposal-assignment/>

problem in urban and rural schools English language teaching and learning in Tanzania primary schools has declined over the years, a problem affecting both teachers and learners. According to Batik (1990) the location of schools whether urban or rural has major influence on English language learning and usage.

Batik describes that urban primary schools are far better off than rural schools since they have good facilities and surroundings also learners are well motivated by the school and home environment for personal and academic reasons for instance to be able to understand what is said in newspapers, radio, films and for further academic pursuit. On the other hand, most rural primary schools lack basic school facilities although not all depending on when the school was built and learners are less motivated or interested in learning English kto hem English is as remote as the name England is in their minds (Batik, 1990: 55).

Batik note other reasons that lead to the decline in English teaching and learning such as lack of textbooks, reference books and subsidiary reading materials; incompetent teachers; inappropriate teaching strategies; lack of motivation; and lack of proper language impact. Batik (1990) claims that rural schools have a negative attitude towards English due to inadequate teaching methods and teaching aids while urban schools are more interested and motivated due to the availability of teaching aids and appropriate teaching methods used. Batik (1990) mentions the last reason as lack of proper language impact whereby the impact of English language is weak in primary school mainly because: Swahili is the medium of instruction in all the subjects except English; the number of English lessons per week have <https://assignbuster.com/research-proposal-assignment/>

dropped from 12 to only 5 or 6; the practical usage of the language outside the classroom is very rare or non-existent; and the class sizes are too large to allow effective teaching and learning to take place.

These are some of the problems that face English language teaching and learning in primary schools. Such problems also exist in rural secondary schools in Tanzania including lack of well trained English teachers, shortage of teaching and learning resources and use of poor teaching strategies while in urban secondary schools there are slightly better opportunities available unlike rural although there are common grounds which both rural and urban schools share such as overcrowded classrooms, shortage of learning materials, overall, the language impact is poor nowadays.

In Tanzania some similarities can be drawn from Sir Lankan case particularly the shortage of teaching and learning materials and poor performance standards in rural government secondary schools, however to what extent they differ from urban government secondary schools is one of the objectives that this study intends to examine. 2. 5 Learning environment One of the reasons why students in secondary schools face so much difficulty using English is their reluctance in the language (Roy-Campbell & Sorrow, 1997).

They note that students are unwilling to actively participate in class discussions because teachers would criticize them or other students laugh at them because of their lack of ability to express themselves in English.

However, students who have had early exposure to English from the beginning of primary school are able to cope using English as a medium of instruction

in secondary school and their performance tends to be better off in comprehension tests conducted unlike those who started learning English from class three and thus have less exposure in the language (Roy-Campbell & Sorrow, 1997).

The socio-economic background of a student matters a lot. For instance parents who support their children by paying for extra tuition class after school and buying supplementary reading books help their children to improve their English language knowledge and skills (Roy- Campbell & Sorrow, 1997). Such opportunities help them to cope with their academic studies in secondary school using English as the language Of instruction unlike children who are unable to get additional support from their families. Etc]s important for the learning environment to be conducive for the learners to allow effective teaching and learning to occur. However, this isn't the case in most government secondary schools apart from the factors mentioned above there are other issues that exist including: overcrowded classrooms, few teaching and learning material such as textbooks and supplementary books, shortage of well-qualified teachers and he situation differs across urban and rural secondary schools. These are some of the issues that this study intends to discuss later on which may also contribute to the substandard performance and language problem in secondary schools. 2. 7 Language of instruction and Academic performance Aloud (2009) says that under-achievement is not experience by learners because they have inherent cognitive problems but due to the fact that most learners do not fully master the LOL used.

Language may not be the only reason that accounts for students low academic performance but it surely is a significant determinant that contributes. According to the National Examination Council Tanzania (NECTAR) the language problem inhibits students to express what they have learnt clearly in writing which is a result of poor performance in form four National examinations (NECTAR, 1993 in Monkeyshine, 2003). Moving (1981) in Egghead (2003) conducted an empirical study to see whether there was any correlation between LOL and performance.

Her study came to the conclusion that English language was a major hindrance towards effective learning and thus affected school performance in both science and arts subjects. Monkeyshine (2003) shared ere experience as a National examination marker said that students who attempted to answer in Swahili usually the answers were correct, unfortunately the marking regulations disqualifies such answers from being marked. NECTAR (1993) in Monkeyshine (2003) conducted an analysis on candidates answers using examination results of 1990 CASE (Certificate of Secondary Education Examination).

The analysis showed that the answers Of students were unintelligibly expressed because of poor command of English language. Although some of the answers were correct but the overall manner of expression displayed that students were unable to express their knowledge, they lacked clarity and markers were unable to draw any meaningful message out of them. At university level Pupas (2003) explains the typical situation that exists in university when students are required to write tests, take-home assignments and examinations.

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According to Pupas students use academic survival strategies such as hmade/exudes[l the former are lecture notes used from previous years and the latter is the act of copying from previously used material. She further explains that students cram this material and reproduce exactly what they have memorized to write a test, cake-home assignments and examinations in order to pass them. The impression one may have is that students prefer to reproduce instead of understanding what is taught.