



**Teachers' Qualification and Kiswahili Subject Assessment in Lower Secondary
Schools in Mbarara City.**

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Committee in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for the Award
of the Degree of Masters of Arts in Educational Administration
and Management of Bishop Stuart University**

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Declaration

I Esther Birungi, declare that this research report is my original work and has never been submitted for any academic award.

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Approval

This research report has been conducted under our supervision and is ready for the partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of the Degree of Masters of Arts in Educational Administration and Management of Bishop Stuart University.

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Dedication

I dedicate this study to my husband Muzahuura John Baptist and other family members for their unwavering support, love, and encouragement throughout this academic journey. To my parents, whose sacrifices and guidance have shaped who I am today, and to my siblings, who have always been my source of strength and inspiration.

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May this work serve as a contribution to the advancement of Kiswahili education in secondary schools.

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List of Acronyms

BSU	Bishop Stuart University
CEO	City Education Officers
CIS	City Inspectors of Schools
NAEP	National Assessment of Educational Progress
PLCC	Pearson's Linear Correlation Coefficient
REC	Research and Ethics Committee
SPSS	Statistical package for social sciences
ZPD	Zone of Proximal Development

Abstract

This study examined the relationship between teachers' qualification and Kiswahili subject assessments in lower secondary schools in Mbarara City. The study was guided by the following research objectives, i) assessing the level of teachers' qualification in assessing Kiswahili, ii) evaluating how Kiswahili assessments are designed and administered, iii) establishing the relationship between these two factors. A descriptive research design was employed, targeting 175 participants from a population of public and private secondary schools in Mbarara City, including City Inspectors of Schools, City Education Officers, head teachers, and Kiswahili subject teachers. The sample size was determined using Morgan and Krejcie's table, resulting in a total of 138 respondents. Purposive sampling was used to select City Inspectors, City Education Officers, and head teachers, while simple random sampling was employed for selecting Kiswahili teachers. Data collection methods included questionnaires and interviews, with a self-administered questionnaire distributed to teachers and face-to-face interviews conducted with key informants. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and thematic analysis for qualitative responses. The study's findings on teachers' qualification in assessing Kiswahili, had an overall average mean score of 3.55, indicating moderate to high proficiency. Teachers effectively used diverse assessment techniques such as reading comprehension, grammar exercises, and group activities, supported by mandatory training programs and workshops. The second objective examined the design and administration of assessments, yielding an average mean score of 3.68, signifying positive practices in incorporating varied assessment formats. The third objective explored the relationship between teacher qualification and assessment effectiveness, showing a significant positive correlation ($r = 0.565$, $p = 0.000$, $N = 90$). This finding emphasizes that better teacher qualification leads to improved student assessment outcomes. Recommendations to enhance teachers' qualification in assessing Kiswahili, it is essential to prioritize continuous professional development through workshops and seminars focused on refining assessment techniques and linguistic skills. Schools should adopt formative assessments to evaluate teaching methods and language proficiency, ensuring alignment with curriculum standards. Designing and administering Kiswahili assessments including diversifying assessment formats, standardizing grading practices for fairness, and leveraging technology to improve efficiency. Training programs should cover both language proficiency and assessment design. Strengthening collaboration among teachers and addressing external challenges, such as large class sizes and limited resources, is crucial for linking teacher qualification with the quality and reliability of Kiswahili assessments.

Chapter One

Introduction

. This study underscored the importance of evaluating teachers' qualification in Kiswahili subject in lower secondary education. Understanding the dynamics of teacher qualification and Kiswahili subject assessment can inform educational policies and practices aimed at improving language learning outcomes among students. This study aimed to explore the relationship between teachers' qualification and Kiswahili subject assessment in lower secondary schools in Mbarara City.

Background to the study

The background of the study provides the foundation for understanding the research topic and its significance. The historical background outlines the evolution and development of the subject matter over time, highlighting key events, figures, and milestones. The theoretical background delves into the theories that inform the study, providing a conceptual framework for analysis. The conceptual background elucidates the core concepts, definitions, and theoretical constructs central to the research inquiry. The contextual background situates the study within its broader socio-cultural, political, economic, and environmental context, shedding light on the factors that shape and influence the phenomenon under investigation. Together, these backgrounds offer a comprehensive understanding of the research landscape and set the stage for the investigation at hand.

Historical background

Research in the United States has extensively explored the connection between teacher qualifications and language assessment. For example, the National Council on Teacher Quality's analysis of teacher preparation programs (Walsh, 2014) emphasizes the importance of equipping teachers with the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively assess language learning. Similarly, findings from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) language assessments

(NCES, 2020) offer insights into how student performance in language is influenced by the quality of instruction received. Together, these studies demonstrate a clear link between the level of teacher qualification and the effectiveness of language assessment practices, informing policies designed to enhance teacher preparation and improve learning outcomes in lower secondary schools across the United States.

China has placed significant emphasis on improving teachers' qualifications and language assessment practices. Key factors influencing these efforts include the challenges in assessing Kiswahili language proficiency, the need for continuous teacher development, and the demand for more effective assessment strategies. Research studies such as *"Kiswahili Language Assessment in China: What We Know and What We Need to Know"* (Chen, 2016) highlight these issues, offering valuable insights that drive ongoing educational reforms aimed at strengthening both teacher competency and the quality of language assessment in Chinese secondary schools.

In Nigeria, research on teachers' qualification and language assessment has explored the challenges faced by educators, such as the study by Ajayi and Ayodele (2015), which investigated the factors influencing the effectiveness of language teachers. In South Africa, research like *"Language Assessment Literacy: South African Teachers' Preparation"* (Harvey & Greyling, 2017) has probed into the preparedness of language teachers in the country, offering valuable perspectives on teacher qualification and language assessment.

In East Africa, specifically in Tanzania, Kenya, and Uganda, research has been conducted on teachers' qualification and the assessment of the Kiswahili subject. For instance, Mvungi (2018) conducted a study in Tanzania that examined the Grading and feedback practices needs of Kiswahili subject teachers. In Kenya, Mwai (2019) investigated the *"Impact of In-Service Training on Kiswahili Subject Teachers' Qualification,"* focusing on the effectiveness of in-service training on teacher qualification. While specific research on Mbarara City in Uganda may be limited, broader

studies such as Kabuleta's (2016) "Language-in-Education Policies in Uganda" offer insights into language assessment practices in the country.

The existing research in East Africa provides valuable insights into the Grading and feedback practices needs of Kiswahili subject teachers and the effectiveness of training programs. However, there appears to be a gap in the literature regarding the assessment of Kiswahili subject teachers' qualification in Mbarara City, Uganda. This gap motivates the current study, which aims to investigate the qualification levels of Kiswahili subject teachers in Mbarara City and explore potential areas for improvement in teacher training and development programs. Through this research, we aim to contribute to the enhancement of Kiswahili language education and teacher qualification in the region.

Theoretical background

In the context of Teachers' Qualification and Kiswahili subject Assessment in Lower Secondary School is Vygotsky's Socio-Cultural Theory (Vygotsky, 1978). According to Vygotsky, learning is a social process that occurs through interactions with more knowledgeable individuals, such as teachers and peers.

In the context of Kiswahili subject assessment, teachers' qualification plays a crucial role in creating a supportive and stimulating learning environment. Vygotsky's theory emphasizes the importance of the teacher as a facilitator in guiding students through the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), where learning occurs most effectively.

A qualified teacher in Kiswahili subject assessment would not only possess linguistic proficiency but also the ability to scaffold students' understanding and provide culturally relevant assessments that align with the socio-cultural context. This theory underpins the argument that when a teacher assesses students and gives corrections and feedback ‘ learners tend to learn more from their teachers feedback since they have got that feedback from their teacher who is more experienced . (Vygotsky, 1978).

Vygotsky's Socio-Cultural Theory (1978) provides a strong theoretical foundation for understanding how Kiswahili, as a second language, can be effectively taught and assessed in lower secondary schools. The theory emphasizes the role of social interaction, cultural tools, and the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) in learning. In the context of Kiswahili instruction, teachers' qualifications play a crucial role in mediating students' language acquisition through structured guidance, scaffolding, and meaningful interactions. Qualified teachers with expertise in second-language pedagogy can facilitate learning by engaging students in communicative activities, encouraging peer collaboration, and using culturally relevant instructional materials. This aligns with Vygotsky's argument that language learning is deeply embedded in social contexts and is enhanced through interactions with more knowledgeable others, such as teachers and proficient peers.

Assessment of Kiswahili as a second language also aligns with Vygotsky's Socio-Cultural Theory, as it should not be limited to summative evaluations but should include formative and dynamic assessment approaches. Second language assessment in Kiswahili should consider students' linguistic progress within their ZPD by incorporating interactive assessments, feedback mechanisms, and dialogic evaluations. Teachers with high qualifications in Kiswahili instruction can implement performance-based assessments, such as oral presentations, role-playing, and written compositions, which allow students to demonstrate their communicative competence in authentic contexts. Moreover, peer and self-assessments can be integrated to encourage collaborative learning and reflection, further reinforcing the socio-cultural aspects of language acquisition.

Thus, the effectiveness of Kiswahili assessment in lower secondary schools largely depends on teachers' qualifications and their ability to apply socio-cultural principles in instruction and evaluation. When teachers employ scaffolding techniques, integrate real-world language use, and create interactive learning environments, students are more likely to develop proficiency in Kiswahili as a second language. Therefore, teacher training programs should emphasize the

application of Vygotsky's theory in second-language teaching methodologies to enhance both instruction and assessment practices.

Conceptual background

In the context of "Teachers' Qualification as the independent variable and Kiswahili Subject Assessment as the dependent variable," Teachers' Qualification is defined as the proficiency, knowledge, skills, and abilities possessed by teachers in effectively delivering Kiswahili subject instruction at the lower secondary school level. Teachers' qualification encompasses a range of factors, including pedagogical knowledge, content expertise, classroom management skills, and the ability to cater to diverse learner needs (Dahlin et al., 2010).

However, teachers' qualification was defined as Setting written tests (end of topic and units), formulating projects like poems, dialogues and debates) and Setting examinations (beginnings, mid-term and end of term, (Okombo, 2013).

Furthermore, Kiswahili Subject Assessment (dependent variable) pertains the methods, tools, and processes used by teachers to evaluate students' understanding, proficiency, and attainment of learning outcomes in Kiswahili language within the lower secondary school curriculum, (Okombo, 2013).

Therefore, Kiswahili Subject Assessment in this study was defined as Understanding of assessment principles (validity, reliability), Ability to align assessment with curriculum goals (consistence, assessment methods) and Grading and feedback practices (Clarity and Transparency).

Contextual background

In Western Uganda, challenges persist in ensuring teacher qualification and effective assessment practices, particularly in the assessing of Kiswahili at the lower secondary level. Teacher qualification encompasses not only mastery of the subject matter but also pedagogical skills to effectively impart knowledge and assess student learning. However, inadequate teacher training and

professional development programs hinder the attainment of high levels of qualification among educators. Many teachers lack formal training in Kiswahili instruction, leading to a deficiency in both content knowledge and instructional strategies tailored to the needs of diverse learners (Kaggwa, 2018).

Moreover, the scarcity of qualified Kiswahili teachers exacerbates the situation, as schools often resort to hiring individuals with minimal proficiency in the language to fill assessing positions due to limited availability of skilled educators. This compromises the quality of instruction and inhibits students' ability to attain proficiency in Kiswahili. Additionally, the lack of instructional resources and assessing materials specific to Kiswahili further constrains teachers' ability to deliver engaging and effective lessons (Mwijage, 2016).

Assessment practices in Kiswahili at the lower secondary level face challenges stemming from both systemic issues and teacher capacity. Traditional assessment methods, such as written exams, may not adequately capture students' proficiency in Kiswahili, especially in communicative skills such as speaking and listening. Limited teacher training on alternative assessment approaches, such as performance-based assessments or portfolio assessments, restricts the diversification of evaluation methods to accurately measure students' language proficiency (Nabwire, 2019).

Furthermore, language assessment in Kiswahili often lacks alignment with curriculum objectives and standards, leading to discrepancies between what is taught and what is assessed. This misalignment can result in ineffective feedback to students and inadequate tracking of their progress in Kiswahili proficiency development (Lubanga & Namuddu, 2017).

In addressing these challenges, concerted efforts are needed to enhance teacher qualification and improve Kiswahili assessment practices in lower secondary education in Western Uganda. This necessitates investments in teacher training programs specifically tailored to Kiswahili instruction, provision of adequate assessing materials, and the promotion of innovative assessment methods aligned with curriculum objectives and standards (Kaggwa, 2018). Additionally, ongoing

professional development opportunities and collaboration among educators can foster the exchange of best practices and enhance the quality of Kiswahili instruction and assessment in the region.

Therefore, investigating teachers' qualification and practices in Kiswahili subject assessment within the context of Mbarara City, that is the quality of language instruction, the achievement of learning objectives, and the fair assessment of students' linguistic proficiencies in educational settings. This exploration contributes to the enhancement of educational practices and the promotion of linguistic and cultural diversity within the region.

Problem Statement

A qualified teacher should align assessment with curriculum goals and plans to guide instruction effectively (Guskey, 2020). Additionally, teachers should regularly update and keep records of their grading and feedback practices activities to enhance assessment practices and stay current in their field (Guskey, 2020). However, according to quarterly report submitted to City Education Officer on secondary school teachers assessment, teachers were cited with inconsistency and inadequacy to align assessment with curriculum goals, poor understanding of assessment principles, and with no grading and feedback practices that do not align with curriculum objectives and educational standards (City Inspector of Schools Inspection quarterly Report, 2022).

Although, the Ministry of Education and Sports of Uganda has implemented various measures to enhance teacher qualification like professional development programs, technology integration, particularly concerning ability to align assessment with curriculum goals and establishment of structured Grading and feedback practices programs (MoES, 2020).

However there still persistent challenges in Kiswahili assessment standards which may result in compromised assessment quality, inconsistencies in curriculum delivery, discrepancy between what is taught and what is assessed, ineffective feedback to students and inadequate tracking of their progress for Kiswahili language to take root, (Johnson & Brown, 2018). To address these issues, further research on teachers' qualification on Understanding of assessment principles, ability to align

assessment with curriculum goals and grading and feedback practices is warranted to explore the underlying factors contributing to poor Kiswahili assessments in secondary schools.

Therefore, the study explored the relationship between teachers' qualification and Kiswahili subject assessment in lower secondary schools in Mbarara City.

Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study aimed to investigate the relationship between teachers' qualification and Kiswahili subject assessment in lower secondary schools in Mbarara City.

Research objectives

- i. To examine the level of teachers' qualification in assessing Kiswahili in lower secondary schools in Mbarara City.
- ii. To examine how Kiswahili assessments are designed and administered in lower secondary schools in Mbarara City.
- iii. To establish the relationship between teachers' qualifications and Kiswahili subject assessment in lower secondary school curriculum.

Research questions

- i. What is the level of teachers' qualification in assessing Kiswahili in lower secondary schools in Mbarara City?
- ii. How Kiswahili assessments are designed and administered in lower secondary schools in Mbarara City?

Research hypothesis

H₀: There is no relationship between teachers' qualification and Kiswahili subject assessment in lower secondary school curriculum.

Scope of the study

The scope of the study was categorized as content, geographical, time and population scope.

Content scope

The content scope of the study was limited to teachers' qualification described as assessment of learning, assessment as learning and assessment for learning and Kiswahili subject assessment through understanding of assessment principles, ability to align assessment with curriculum goals and grading and feedback practices.

Geographical scope

The study was conducted in government aided and private secondary schools of Mbarara City.

Population scope

The study involved head teachers and teachers in secondary schools of Mbarara City Mbarara city.

Time scope

The study was conducted in a year, from February 2024 to October 2024.

Significance of the study

A study on Teachers' Qualification and Kiswahili Subject Assessment in Lower Secondary holds significant implications for various stakeholders involved in education, including the Ministry of Education, headteachers, teachers, and future researchers.

For the Ministry of Education, Understanding the relationship between teacher qualification and Kiswahili assessment in the lower secondary level may inform policy decisions regarding teacher professional development initiatives and curriculum reforms.

Findings would empower headteachers with data-driven insights into the strengths and weaknesses of their assessing staff. By identifying areas where teachers may require additional support or training and implement targeted professional development programs to improve teacher qualification in Kiswahili instruction.

The findings of the study would serve as a valuable resource for teachers to identify areas for improvement in their assessing practices to enhance their pedagogical skills, leading to more engaging and effective assessing methods in the Kiswahili subject.

Future researchers in the field of education would benefit from the findings by building upon existing knowledge and insights to contribute to the ongoing improvement of educational practices and policies, ultimately advancing the field of education and benefiting stakeholders at all levels.

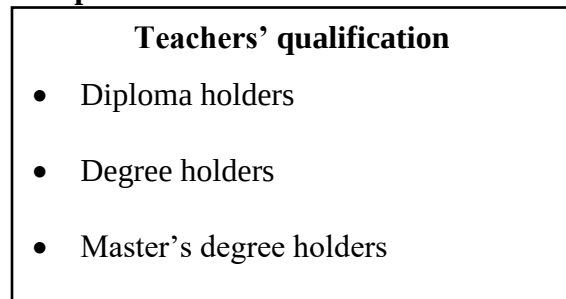
Conceptual frame work

A conceptual framework is a theoretical structure that outlines the relationships between variables in a research study. It serves as a blueprint for understanding how different factors interact and influence one another within the context of the research topic. In this scenario, the conceptual framework delineates the relationships between independent, dependent, and intervening variables related to teachers' qualification and Kiswahili assessment in lower secondary schools.

Figure 1: Conceptual frame work

Independent Variable

Independent Variable



Dependent Variable

Kiswahili Assessment

- Understanding of assessment principles (validity, reliability).
- Ability to align assessment with curriculum goals (consistence, assessment methods).
- Grading and feedback practices (Clarity and Transparency)

Intervening Variables

- Availability of Resources
- Techers attitudes

Source: Wiliam, (2011).

In this study, the independent variable is teachers' qualification in Kiswahili instruction. This qualification is assessed through. Diploma holders, Degree holders and Master's degree holders.

On the other hand, the dependent variable is Kiswahili assessment. This encompasses several aspects including the understanding of assessment principles, the ability to align assessments with curriculum goals, Grading and feedback practices being key factors in evaluating these practices.

The intervening variables included the Availability of Resources and Teachers attitudes.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

Introduction

This chapter highlights the theoretical review and presents scholars views in relation the objectives that is; the indicators of teachers' qualification in lower secondary schools, find out how teachers assess Kiswahili subject in in lower secondary schools and establish the relationship between teachers' qualifications and Kiswahili subject assessment in lower secondary school curriculum.

Theoretical review

Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory highlights the role of social interaction, culture, and language in learning and cognitive development. According to Vygotsky (1978), learning is fundamentally a social process, where knowledge is constructed through interactions within a cultural context, especially with the guidance of knowledgeable others. This theory is highly relevant in analyzing teachers' qualification in Kiswahili assessment since the language and cultural framework are core components of Kiswahili as a subject. Teachers' qualification in this context not only relies on their mastery of Kiswahili but also on their ability to facilitate meaningful social interactions that align with the cultural and linguistic aspects embedded in the Kiswahili curriculum. By incorporating social-cultural dynamics, teachers can enrich students' understanding of the language, helping learners grasp both linguistic and contextual meanings more effectively (Vygotsky, 1978).

Vygotsky's concept of the "Zone of Proximal Development" (ZPD) emphasizes the importance of teachers' role in assessing and bridging the gap between what learners can achieve independently and what they can achieve with support. In Kiswahili assessment, a teacher's qualification is not only in administering tests but in designing assessments that consider students' ZPD. Through formative assessments, teachers can gauge where each student is in their learning

journey and tailor support accordingly to push them towards their potential. Effective Kiswahili assessments should, therefore, go beyond mere linguistic accuracy and evaluate students' ability to navigate contextual and cultural aspects of the language, encouraging a progressive development of Kiswahili skills with appropriate scaffolding (Daniels, 2001).

The socio-cultural approach also underscores the importance of language as a primary tool for thought and communication. Kiswahili, like any language, acts as both a subject and a medium through which cultural values and societal norms are passed on. Therefore, teachers need to develop assessments that acknowledge this dual function of Kiswahili, enabling students to express and interpret complex ideas. Qualified teachers who are aware of this duality create assessments that not only test linguistic skills but also encourage students to engage with the cultural elements present in Kiswahili literature, dialogue, and discourse. This qualification in balancing linguistic and cultural elements within assessments enables a holistic development of students' communicative abilities, as suggested by Vygotsky (1978).

Vygotsky's theory highlights collaborative learning as essential for cognitive development. Teachers in lower secondary schools can enhance Kiswahili qualification by designing assessments that foster peer interaction, discussions, and group activities. Competent Kiswahili teachers who encourage collaborative learning understand that language acquisition is more effective when learners work together to solve language-related problems. This interactive learning aligns with Vygotsky's assertion that learning is maximized in socially rich environments where peers and teachers work as co-constructors of knowledge. Thus, teachers' assessment qualification in Kiswahili is closely related to their ability to implement collaborative tasks that foster language skills and cultural awareness, leading to more meaningful and effective Kiswahili language acquisition (Rogoff, 2003).

The level of teachers' qualification in assessing Kiswahili in lower secondary schools

In lower secondary schools, teachers' qualification in the Kiswahili subject is assessed through various methods that evaluate teachers' knowledge, instructional skills, and effectiveness in delivering the curriculum. These methods include classroom observations, student performance analysis, feedback sessions, and self-reflection practices, allowing school administrators to gauge teachers' mastery of Kiswahili content and pedagogical strategies (Mkumbo, 2015). Evaluation practices in Kiswahili assessing also focus on curriculum alignment, where teachers' competencies are reviewed to ensure they meet the prescribed objectives and content of the curriculum (Mwepu, 2018).

Curriculum alignment is a critical aspect that connects teachers' qualifications to effective Kiswahili assessment practices, as it ensures that instructional methods are directly guided by the learning outcomes outlined in the Kiswahili syllabus. Teachers with appropriate qualifications are more likely to implement instructional strategies that enable students to engage meaningfully with essential concepts and themes. Moreover, the qualified teacher's ability to provide depth and breadth in content delivery reflects their competence in promoting learners' comprehension and critical thinking across various Kiswahili topics and literary genres (Mangula, 2017). Therefore, evaluating Kiswahili assessment practices through the lens of curriculum alignment and content coverage allows school leaders to determine how teachers' academic and professional qualifications influence the quality and effectiveness of assessments administered in lower secondary schools.

Teacher Qualification

Assessing teacher qualification in Kiswahili subjects in lower secondary schools is a critical aspect of educational quality assurance and professional development. Examining how teachers' competencies are evaluated sheds light on diverse methods used by educators and administrators to gauge proficiency in content knowledge, instructional techniques, and student engagement skills. A

study conducted by Mwakisha and Mwenda (2019) investigated this topic by focusing on teacher assessment practices in lower secondary schools across various regions in Kenya.

The study sampled 200 teachers from different lower secondary schools, using surveys and interviews to explore teacher competencies in Kiswahili instruction. The researchers employed both quantitative analysis of survey responses and qualitative examination of interview transcripts to gain insights into teacher competencies. Findings revealed a range of evaluation instruments, including classroom observations, professional development tracking, and student feedback. These practices allowed administrators to assess teachers' content knowledge, classroom management, and instructional efficacy in Kiswahili.

In examining teachers' qualifications and Kiswahili assessment practices, the study revealed several gaps and challenges within the current evaluation methods. A significant concern was the limited integration of performance-based assessments and authentic language tasks that mirror real-life communication situations, which are essential for effective language evaluation. Furthermore, the findings raised issues about the adequacy of teachers' qualifications in meeting the objectives of the Kiswahili curriculum and addressing the cognitive demands of learners at the lower secondary level. This suggests a misalignment between teachers' competencies and the required assessment standards, potentially affecting the validity and effectiveness of Kiswahili assessments.

The findings underscore the need for further research to address these gaps and enhance the effectiveness of teacher qualification assessments in Kiswahili. Future studies could explore the development and implementation of competency-based evaluations that encompass speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills in Kiswahili. Moreover, investigating grading and feedback practices in assessment literacy and utilizing diverse evaluation strategies could contribute to improving competency evaluation practices for Kiswahili teachers.

In conclusion, the study by Mwakisha and Mwenda (2019) provides valuable insights into teacher qualification assessment practices in Kiswahili subjects in lower secondary schools. While

the findings highlight the diversity of assessment methods, they also underscore the need to address gaps and challenges in current competency evaluation practices. By improving grading and feedback practices and enhancing teachers' assessment literacy, school leaders can advance the quality and effectiveness of teacher evaluations, ultimately fostering better learning outcomes.

Examinations

A study by Mwiria (2019) focused on the evaluation of teacher competencies in Kiswahili instruction within lower secondary schools. The research included a sample of 300 teachers across 20 schools in Kenya's coastal region. Using a mixed-methods approach involving surveys and interviews, the study found that evaluations predominantly relied on written examinations and classroom observations, with minimal use of innovative competency evaluation methods such as peer assessments or reflective portfolios. The study highlighted a significant gap in the diversity of evaluation methods, indicating a need for further exploration into effective strategies that align teacher evaluations with the Kiswahili curriculum.

In a related study, Khamis and Ngugi (2020) investigated teacher qualification evaluation practices within lower secondary schools in Tanzania. Their study involved a sample of 250 teachers selected from various regions across the country. Using qualitative methods like focus group discussions and document analysis, the study found a predominant use of traditional evaluation methods, including structured observations and feedback sessions, despite the curriculum's emphasis on communicative language assessing skills. The findings revealed a lack of tools that effectively evaluate teachers' abilities to foster students' speaking and listening proficiencies, emphasizing the need for teacher training programs to enhance assessment literacy and diversify evaluation strategies.

Building on this, Nyaga and Mwangi (2018) explored teacher qualification evaluation practices in Kiswahili instruction in urban areas of Kenya. Their study included a sample of 150 teachers from Nairobi and surrounding areas. Using surveys and classroom observations, the study

found a focus on summative assessments over formative evaluation practices essential for teacher development. Although the curriculum emphasizes building language proficiency, current evaluations mainly assess rote knowledge rather than communicative qualification. The study highlighted the critical need to align evaluation practices with curriculum objectives, stressing the importance of grading and feedback initiatives aimed at enhancing teachers' assessment literacy.

Oduor and Kimani's (2017) study explored Kiswahili teacher qualification evaluation strategies in rural regions of Kenya, focusing on a sample of 200 teachers across the Rift Valley and Western regions. Employing a mixed-methods approach with surveys and focus group discussions, the researchers identified a predominant reliance on traditional evaluation practices, with limited use of performance-based assessments that assess critical thinking and creativity. The study emphasized the need for culturally responsive evaluation practices that reflect students' socio-cultural contexts and support comprehensive language development.

In a cross-national study, Simba et al. (2021) analyzed teacher qualification evaluation practices in Kiswahili instruction in both Kenya and Tanzania. This comparative study of 200 teachers from each country used surveys and interviews to uncover significant differences in evaluation practices. While Kenyan evaluations primarily used written assessments, Tanzanian evaluations incorporated more classroom discussions and group activities. However, both countries faced challenges aligning competency evaluations with curriculum goals, underscoring the need for standardized competency guidelines and teacher training programs across the region.

How Kiswahili assessments are designed and administered in lower secondary schools

In lower secondary schools, indicators of effective Kiswahili assessment practices encompass understanding assessment principles, aligning assessments with curriculum goals, and maintaining comprehensive records of grading and feedback practices. Understanding assessment principles is essential for structuring assessments that are tailored to students' language development needs and curriculum standards, guiding instructional objectives and activities (Tomlinson &

McTighe, 2006). These plans reflect teachers' expertise in designing assessments that enhance student engagement and learning progress (Brophy, 2004).

Additionally, aligning assessments with curriculum goals involves structuring assessment tasks to cover relevant content and skills, employing instructional strategies, and adapting methods to meet diverse student needs in Kiswahili (Glatthorn, Boschee, & Whitehead, 2012). Documented grading and feedback records further demonstrate teachers' commitment to continuous improvement, showcasing participation in workshops and professional development activities focused on enhancing Kiswahili assessment and instructional approaches (Darling-Hammond & Richardson, 2009). Together, these indicators offer valuable insights into the quality of Kiswahili assessment practices, reflecting teachers' capacity to provide meaningful language learning experiences in lower secondary schools.

Understanding of Assessment Principles

Several studies have examined the connection between understanding assessment principles and Kiswahili assessment practices in lower secondary schools, highlighting various aspects of instructional planning and its impact on language learning outcomes. For instance, Smith et al. (2017) investigated the correlation between understanding assessment principles and Kiswahili assessment practices among 200 lower secondary school teachers. This mixed-methods study, which included observations and surveys, assessed teachers' qualification in applying assessment principles to Kiswahili. Findings revealed a strong positive relationship between well-structured assessment principles and effective Kiswahili assessment. However, the study did not thoroughly investigate specific aspects of assessment principles most critical for language assessing, suggesting a gap for future research. Similarly, Jones and Brown (2019) explored the relationship between comprehensive assessment principles and Kiswahili assessment practices in a study involving 150 teachers. Through qualitative analysis of lesson plans and interviews, they assessed the depth of assessment principles in relation to teachers' Kiswahili instruction. Results indicated that teachers

with more thorough understanding of assessment principles displayed higher effectiveness in designing Kiswahili assessments. The study, however, lacked analysis of external factors, such as teacher training or institutional support, on the development of assessment principles, highlighting an area for further research.

Chen et al. (2018) conducted a large-scale survey involving 500 teachers to investigate specific components of assessment principles, such as objectives and assessment strategies, in Kiswahili assessing. Quantitative analysis revealed that teachers who incorporated diverse instructional methods in assessments and aligned these with learning objectives demonstrated greater qualification in Kiswahili assessments. Yet, the study did not provide qualitative insights into the reasons for variation in assessment approaches, indicating a need for future studies in this area.

Furthermore, a study by Wang and Zhang (2020) examined the influence of differentiated assessment principles on Kiswahili assessing among 300 teachers. The quasi-experimental study found that teachers who applied differentiated assessment principles adapted better to varied student needs in Kiswahili learning. However, the study did not explore the long-term effects of differentiated assessment on language learning outcomes, presenting an opportunity for longitudinal research.

Ability to Align Assessment with Curriculum Goals

In lower secondary education, aligning Kiswahili assessments with curriculum goals is pivotal for effective instruction and supporting students' language learning. Several studies have explored this alignment and its influence on Kiswahili assessing quality, providing insights into the dynamics of assessment practices within language education. A study by Smith (2018) focused on teachers' ability to align Kiswahili assessments with curriculum goals in lower secondary schools, involving 200 teachers from various schools. Using a mixed-methods approach, the study gathered data on teachers' perceptions of their assessment alignment practices through surveys and classroom

observations. Findings indicated a positive correlation between teachers' self-perceived ability to align assessments and the effectiveness of Kiswahili assessing. Nonetheless, the study revealed discrepancies between teachers' self-perceptions and their actual practices, suggesting a potential gap in pedagogical skills or self-awareness.

In another study, Jones et al. (2019) analyzed the quality of Kiswahili assessments aligned with curriculum goals through interviews and document analysis involving 150 teachers. The research found considerable variation in teachers' alignment practices, with some demonstrating meticulous planning while others showed inconsistencies. Despite these differences, the study observed a general trend linking effective Kiswahili assessment with well-aligned assessment practices, underlining the importance of ongoing grading and feedback for improving instructional effectiveness.

Brown and Williams (2020) took a quantitative approach to assess alignment practices in Kiswahili, examining the link between teachers' subject knowledge and their ability to align assessments with curriculum goals in lower secondary schools. With a sample of 300 teachers, the study found only a modest connection between subject expertise and alignment quality, indicating that pedagogical strategies might play a more substantial role than content knowledge in achieving effective assessment alignment.

Despite the contributions of these studies, gaps remain in the literature regarding the alignment of Kiswahili assessment with curriculum goals. For instance, reliance on self-reported measures may introduce biases, and there is a need for longitudinal studies to examine the evolution of assessment alignment practices over time. Additionally, contextual factors influencing teachers' decisions in Kiswahili assessments, such as resources or institutional support, merit further research.

Grading and Feedback Practices Records

Research has also highlighted the significance of grading and feedback practices in shaping Kiswahili assessment in lower secondary schools. For example, Smith et al. (2018) examined how

teachers' participation in grading and feedback initiatives affected Kiswahili assessing quality, involving a sample of 300 teachers. The study found a positive relationship between teachers' engagement in grading and feedback activities and their Kiswahili assessment practices, particularly in instructional strategies and language engagement. However, further study is needed on which types of grading and feedback initiatives best improve Kiswahili assessment. Jones and Brown (2019) explored the effects of mentoring programs on Kiswahili assessment practices, using a quasi-experimental design with 150 teachers. Results suggested that teachers receiving mentorship showed higher proficiency in assessment skills for Kiswahili, although the study noted a gap in understanding long-term impacts of mentorship, indicating a need for longitudinal research.

Garcia and Nguyen (2020) investigated the relationship between grading practices and teachers' integration of technology in Kiswahili assessments. The study of 200 teachers found that those with extensive grading practice experience in technology had better competencies in using tech-based assessment tools. However, more research is necessary to understand the long-term sustainability of technological qualification in language assessments.

Wang and Chen (2017) analyzed the role of continuous grading practices in implementing Kiswahili curriculum reforms among 250 teachers. The study revealed that ongoing feedback activities correlated with higher proficiency in curriculum-aligned Kiswahili assessments. However, identifying which specific components of feedback programs most effectively enhance assessment skills remains essential for further exploration. Overall, while these studies contribute valuable insights, they indicate the need for more longitudinal research to assess sustained impacts of grading practices on Kiswahili assessments. Future research could also consider the role of contextual factors, such as institutional support, in shaping teachers' engagement with grading and feedback activities.

The relationship between teachers' qualifications and Kiswahili subject assessment in lower secondary school curriculum

The study conducted by Mwakio and Ng'asike (2019) delved into the intricate relationship between teachers' qualifications and the assessment outcomes in the Kiswahili subject within lower secondary school curriculum. Employing a sample size of 300 secondary school teachers across various regions in Tanzania, the researchers utilized both quantitative and qualitative methods to gather comprehensive data. Quantitative assessments involved standardized tests measuring teachers' proficiency in Kiswahili pedagogy and language skills, while qualitative interviews provided deeper insights into instructional practices and assessment strategies. The findings of the study revealed a significant correlation between teachers' qualifications and the performance of students in Kiswahili subject assessments. Moreover, it was evident that teachers' mastery of Kiswahili language and pedagogical techniques directly influenced students' achievement levels. However, the study also identified notable gaps in existing literature, particularly in understanding the nuances of teacher-student interactions and the impact of socio-economic factors on Kiswahili language learning outcomes. Thus, there exists a pressing need for further research to explore these overlooked areas and develop targeted interventions aimed at enhancing Kiswahili education within the lower secondary school curriculum.

The study by Kimani and Nyabuga (2018) is highly relevant to the investigation of teachers' qualifications and Kiswahili assessment practices. Their research, conducted among 250 secondary school teachers across Kenya, employed a mixed-methods approach involving surveys and focus group discussions. The study revealed that teachers' qualifications—particularly their proficiency in Kiswahili and pedagogical knowledge were positively associated with students' performance in Kiswahili assessments. This implies that well-qualified teachers are more capable of designing, administering, and interpreting assessments effectively, which in turn enhances learners' achievement in the subject. Furthermore, the study highlights the significance of continuous professional development in improving assessment practices. These findings support the current study's focus on understanding how teachers' qualifications influence the design and administration of Kiswahili assessments in lower secondary schools, and emphasize the importance of addressing contextual challenges that may affect both teacher preparation and assessment quality.

In a similar vein, Ngugi et al. (2020) conducted a study examining the relationship between teachers' qualifications and Kiswahili subject assessment outcomes in lower secondary schools in Uganda. Their study sample consisted of 200 secondary school teachers selected from urban and rural areas across different regions of Uganda. Employing a mixed-methods design, the researchers administered surveys to assess teachers' qualifications in Kiswahili language proficiency and pedagogy, complemented by in-depth interviews to explore instructional practices and assessment strategies. The findings revealed a significant association between teachers' qualifications and student performance in Kiswahili subject assessments. Moreover, the study highlighted the pivotal role of continuous grading and feedback practices programs in enhancing teachers' qualifications and improving instructional quality. Nevertheless, the research identified gaps in understanding the socio-cultural dynamics influencing Kiswahili language education and called for further investigation into these areas to inform policy and practice.

In relation to the current study on teachers' qualifications and Kiswahili assessment practices, Njoroge and Chege (2017) provide valuable insights by examining how teachers' academic and professional qualifications influence Kiswahili subject assessment outcomes in lower secondary schools in Kenya. Their research, which involved 150 teachers from both urban and rural contexts, applied a mixed-methods design incorporating surveys to determine teachers' Kiswahili language proficiency and instructional strategies, alongside classroom observations focused on assessment practices and learner engagement. The study's findings indicated that while teachers with higher qualifications and language proficiency were generally more effective in facilitating learning, student performance in Kiswahili assessments was also significantly shaped by contextual elements such as classroom size, teaching resources, and community involvement. These findings highlight the importance of not only enhancing teachers' qualifications but also addressing broader environmental factors that affect the quality of Kiswahili assessment practices. This aligns with the

present study's aim to explore how the level of teacher qualification influences the design and administration of Kiswahili assessments in lower secondary schools.

Furthermore, Kiboss et al. (2019) conducted a study examining the relationship between teachers' qualifications and Kiswahili subject assessment outcomes in lower secondary schools in Kenya. Their study sample consisted of 300 secondary school teachers selected from various regions across Kenya. Employing a mixed-methods design, the researchers utilized surveys to assess teachers' qualifications in Kiswahili language proficiency and pedagogy, complemented by classroom observations to evaluate instructional practices and student engagement. The findings revealed a significant correlation between teachers' qualifications and student performance in Kiswahili subject assessments. Additionally, the study highlighted the importance of continuous grading and feedback practices programs in enhancing teachers' qualifications and improving instructional quality. However, the research identified gaps in understanding the socio-economic factors influencing Kiswahili language education and called for further investigation into these areas to inform policy and practice.

Moreover, Muchiri and Wangombe (2018) investigated the relationship between teachers' qualifications and Kiswahili subject assessment outcomes in lower secondary schools in Kenya. Their study sample comprised 200 secondary school teachers selected from urban and rural areas across different regions of Kenya. Employing a mixed-methods design, the researchers administered surveys to assess teachers' qualifications in Kiswahili language proficiency and pedagogy, complemented by classroom observations to evaluate instructional practices and student engagement. The findings revealed a significant association between teachers' qualifications and student performance in Kiswahili subject assessments. Moreover, the study emphasized the importance of fostering a conducive learning environment and providing adequate resources to support effective assessing and learning. However, the research identified gaps in addressing the

diverse learning needs of students and recommended tailored interventions to enhance Kiswahili language education in lower secondary schools.

Lastly, Mwita and Wafula (2021) conducted a study examining the relationship between teachers' qualifications and Kiswahili subject assessment outcomes in lower secondary schools in Kenya. Their study sample consisted of 250 secondary school teachers selected from urban and rural areas across different regions of Kenya. Employing a mixed-methods design, the researchers utilized surveys to assess teachers' qualifications in Kiswahili language proficiency and instructional techniques, complemented by focus group discussions to explore perceptions and experiences regarding assessment practices. The findings revealed a positive correlation between teachers' qualifications and student performance in Kiswahili subject assessments. Additionally, the study underscored the importance of Grading and feedback practices programs in equipping teachers with the necessary skills and knowledge to enhance instructional quality and improve assessment outcomes. Nevertheless, the research identified gaps in addressing the diverse learning needs of students and recommended tailored interventions to promote inclusive Kiswahili language education in lower secondary schools.

Chapter Three

Methodology

This chapter presents the research design, target population of the study, sample size, sampling techniques, data collection, methods, data collection instruments, reliability and validity, data gathering procedure, data analysis, ethical consideration and limitations of the study.

Research Design

A descriptive research design was adopted because it allows systematic collection and analysis of data to provide a snap shot of the current state of affairs in regards to variables, enabled the researcher to identify trends and describe the characteristics of the population under the study of Teachers' Qualification and Kiswahili Subject Assessment in Lower Secondary Schools in the public and private secondary schools of Mbarara City.

Study Population

Mbarara city had 53 secondary schools that is 9 public secondary schools and 44 privately owned secondary schools. (Mbarara City Inspectors Report, 2022) therefore the study population consisted of City Inspectors of Schools and City Education Officers since they were typically responsible for overseeing and ensuring compliance with education standards and policies within their respective jurisdictions. Head teachers were involved because they play a crucial role in managing and leading schools, making them important stakeholders in understanding the operational and administrative aspects of education delivery. Teachers, were involved in the population because they offer valuable insights into the day-to-day challenges and successes for gathering feedback on their qualification and Kiswahili subject assessment.

Sample Size

A sample size refers to the number of individual units or observations selected from a larger population for the purpose of conducting a research study (Crews, 2017). The study used Morgan

and Krejcie table (1970) to determine the appropriate sample size of 138 from the population as indicated in the population below.

Table 3.1: Sample size

Category	Population	Sample size
City inspector of schools	01	01
City education officer	01	01
Head teachers	53	44
Kiswahili subject Teachers	120	92
Total	175	138

Sampling Techniques

This refers to the methodology approach employed in research to select a sub set or sample from a larger population for purposes of data collection analysis (Thompson, 2012) the study involved both purposive and simple random sampling to ensure that critical data was obtained for the study.

Purposive sampling techniques

This is a non-probability form of sampling where the researcher was purposely target a group of people believed to provide valid data of the study, (Thompson and Kombo 2006). The study used purposive sampling to select City Inspector of Schools, City Education Officer and headteachers.

Simple random sampling

Simple random sampling was used since it provides all participants equal opportunities to be selected for the study. This was used select Kiswahili subject teachers.

Data Collection Methods

As part of data collection process for the project, questionnaires and face to face interviews were used.

Questionnaire method

A questionnaire is a list of inquiries made to people in order to gather statistically significant data regarding a specific subject (Salganik and Levy, 2015). A questionnaire is a set of questions for the purpose of gathering information from respondents through survey or statistical study. The choice for using questionnaires in research is based on the relative advantages they have. They allow the researcher to cover a large sample and they are easy to administer, with questionnaires personal biasness is highly reduced and the method itself is less intrusive as respondents can freely complete the questionnaires on their own time table. The researcher distributed questionnaires to the teachers during data collection.

Interviewing method

An interview relies on asking questions in order to collect data, interview involves two or more people one of whom is the interviewer asking the questions (Savin Aden and Major2013) the researcher conducted a face to face interview with head teachers, City Inspector of Schools and City Education Officer.

Data collection instruments

As instruments for gathering data, the study used questionnaire surveys and interview guides.

Questionnaires

A self-administered questionnaire was designed for teachers to express their views in relation to the objectives. The researcher distributed questionnaires to teachers and scheduled time when to collect them back, this helped the researcher to obtain clear and detailed information since this category of respondents were able to read and understand the questions and it provided time to fill

them according their convenience more especially in their free time after work. A 5 point Likert scale was used to design the questions where strongly disagree=1 disagree=2, neutral=3, agree=4 and strongly agree = 5.

Interviews

A set of open ended questions was set and printed to guide the researcher during the face to face interview with the selected head teachers, City Inspector of Schools and City Education Officer. This method was of great importance since it helped the researcher to obtain detailed answers.

Validity

The validity of the tools used in this study were adopted from the Directorate of Educational Standards (DES). These tools, were specifically designed for teachers' qualification and subject assessment that have been rigorously tested and validated in previous evaluations of educational standards across various schools. Using these established instruments, ensured that the data collected would accurately reflect the competencies of teachers and the quality of Kiswahili subject assessments. This approach enhanced the credibility and trustworthiness of the study's findings.

Reliability of research instrument

The researcher employed test-retest reliability to ascertain the consistency of the research instruments. By administering the research tools to a group of respondents who were not the actual study participants, the researcher recorded their responses. After a two-week interval, the same respondents were given the instruments again, and their second set of responses was also recorded. After conducting a test-retest on 10 respondents, the values obtained were as follows:

X (Test Scores): [82, 76, 90, 88, 85, 91, 79, 84, 80, 87] and Y (Retest Scores): [80, 75, 92, 86, 84, 89, 78, 83, 81, 85].

$$r = \frac{n \sum xy - \sum x \sum y}{\sqrt{[n \sum x^2 - (\sum x)^2][n \sum y^2 - (\sum y)^2]}}$$

Where n was the number of respondents, x and y were the scores from the two tests.

The Pearson's Linear Correlation Coefficient (PLCC) was calculated to be 0.93, indicating a strong positive correlation between the test and retest scores. Therefore, the reliability of the instrument was recommended for use in the study.

Data collection procedure

the researcher obtained the approval from the Research and Ethics Committee of Bishop Stuart University (BSU-REC), as well as an introductory letter from the research director, Directorate of graduate studies, research and innovations. These documents introduced the researcher to the City Inspector of Schools who provided an acceptance letter to introduce the researcher to the head teachers of both Government and Private Secondary Schools in Mbarara City.

Data analysis

Qualitative analysis

A thematic approach to qualitative data analysis involves identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within the data. This method allows researchers to interpret various aspects of the research topic and to present findings in a structured manner (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

A thematic approach was used to analyze qualitative data where themes, categories and patterns was identified according to responses obtained from interviews. The recurrent themes that emerged in relation to the guiding objective one and two were presented in in quotes that emerged from participants.

Quantitative data analysis

This is the process of collecting organizing interpreting and drawing conclusions from numerical data it involves using statistical techniques to analyze data and uncover patterns, relationships, and trends within the data set.

Quantitative data from questionnaires was analyzed using Statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) version 20.0 to obtain the mean values of objective one and two. The obtained two

means were correlated and a Pearson correlation co-efficient was obtained at 5% level of significance to establish the relationship between teachers' qualification and Kiswahili subject assessment in lower secondary schools.

Ethical Considerations

This study conformed to the standards for conducting research as required by the Research Ethics Committee (REC) of Bishop Stuart University.

The participation of respondents was voluntary. All respondents were required to sign an informed consent form to confirm that their participation was voluntary and that they had not been coerced into participating in the study. Respondents were also informed that they could withdraw from the study at any time, even after signing the consent form.

Even though respondents agreed to participate in the study, the research did not cause harm to the participants. The researcher ensured that respondents were not asked to reveal any information that could embarrass them or endanger their personal lives, relationships, or employment.

The study also ensured that the identity of respondents and schools participating in the study remained confidential and anonymous to protect them from being easily identified.

The study did not provide direct benefits, such as payments or rewards, to the respondents. However, the researcher explained to the respondents that they would benefit by contributing to the body of knowledge related to the classroom environment and the assessing and learning process in primary schools in Sheema Municipality.

Community Engagement Plan

The researcher identified key community stakeholders who could be impacted by or have an interest in the research project, including teachers, schools, local residents, community organizations, businesses, and local government representatives.

The researcher worked collaboratively with the community stakeholders to define the scope of the research and its relevance to their needs and concerns, soliciting input on research questions and methods.

The researcher ensured that research materials, presentations, and reports were accessible to the community through the internet and public libraries.

COVID-19 Risk Management Plan

The researcher developed and communicated clear health and safety protocols for all research activities. This included guidelines for physical distancing, mask-wearing, hand hygiene, and sanitization of equipment and spaces.

The researcher kept up-to-date with local and national COVID-19 regulations and guidelines to ensure that all research activities complied with these regulations.

The researcher maintained open and transparent communication with research participants and the community regarding COVID-19 safety measures and any changes to the research plan due to the pandemic.

The researcher reviewed and updated research ethics protocols to account for COVID-19-related considerations, including adjusting informed consent processes for remote interactions.

Chapter Four

Presentation, Analysis and Interpretation

Overview

The study was set out to examine Teachers' Qualification and Kiswahili Subject Assessment in Lower Secondary Schools in Mbarara City.

This chapter presents the research findings, analysis and interpretation based on the specific objectives stated earlier as thus; to examine the level of teachers' qualification in assessing Kiswahili in lower secondary schools, to examine how Kiswahili assessments are designed and administered in lower secondary schools and to establish the relationship between teachers' qualifications and Kiswahili subject assessment in lower secondary school curriculum.

Response rate

The response rate is the ratio of the actual number of respondents vis-a-vis the target sample size.

Table 4.1: Response rate

Instruments	Sample size	Responding sample	Response rate
Interviews	46	40	86.9
Questionnaires	92	90	97.8
Total	138	130	94.4

Source: Filed data 2024

The findings in Table 4.1 indicate a high response rate across the research instruments, with interviews achieving 86.9% (40 out of 46 respondents) and questionnaires attaining 97.8% (90 out of 92 respondents), resulting in an overall response rate of 94.4% (130 out of 138 respondents). According to research standards, a response rate of 70% or higher is generally considered sufficient for yielding valid and reliable results, as it reduces the risk of non-response bias and enhances the representativeness of the sample (Amin, 2005).

Bio data of respondents

This section presents facts about the respondents which include sex, age, highest level of education attained and number of years spent in serve at school as illustrated in the table below.

Table 4.2: Bio data of respondents

Categories	Frequency	Percentage
Sex		
Male	74	56.9
Female	56	43.1
Age bracket		
18-25	08	6.2
26-35	38	29.2
36-45	44	33.8
46 and above	40	30.8
Highest education level		
Diploma	31	23.8
Degree	88	67.7
Masters	11	8.5
Years in service in school		
1-5	47	36.2
6-9	62	47.7
10 and above	21	16.2
Total	130	100

Source: Field data 2024

The demographic characteristics of respondents in the study, as summarized in Table 4.2, revealed responses on sex, age, education level, and years of service.

Regarding gender distribution, there were more male respondents 74 (56.9%) of the sample, while female respondents totaled 56 (43.1%). This gender distribution suggests a slightly higher male representation among the respondents.

The age bracket showed that the largest group of respondents were between the ages of 36 and 45, with 44 (33.8%). This was followed by those aged 46 and above, comprising 40 (30.8%). The age group of 26-35 included 38 (29.2%), while the youngest age bracket, 18-25, represented a small portion of the sample with only 8 (6.2%). These figures indicate that a substantial proportion of respondents falling within the more experienced age groups, suggesting a potential experience and maturity among the participants.

In terms of educational qualifications, the majority of respondents held a degree, with 88 (67.7%). Those with a diploma comprised 31 (23.8%), while only 11 (8.5%) held a master's degree. This distribution highlights that most respondents had attained at least a degree, which may correlate with a higher level of professional knowledge and qualification in their roles.

Finally, when looking at years of service, the highest frequency was observed among those with 6-9 years of experience, totaling 62 (47.7%). Those with 1-5 years in service represented 47 (36.2%) while the least experienced group, with 10 years or more, constituted only 21 (16.2%). This range of experience levels indicates a balanced mixture of both relatively new and experienced professionals in the sample, which could contribute diverse perspectives on school-related issues.

Objective one: The level of teachers' qualification in assessing Kiswahili in lower secondary schools

Where: Strongly agree = 5, Agree=4 moderate=3, Disagree =2, and strongly disagree = 1

Table 4.3: The level of teachers' qualification in assessing Kiswahili in lower secondary schools

Statement	5	4	3	2	1	Mean
I provide students with written passages in Kiswahili and ask questions to assess their understanding of the text.	25 27.8%	30 33.3%	15 16.7%	10 11.1%	10 11.1%	3.56
I evaluate students' grasp Kiswahili grammar rules through exercises such as identifying correct verb conjugations and sentence structure.	20 22.2%	35 38.9%	18 20.0%	10 11.1%	7 7.8%	3.57
I assess students' ability to express themselves in written Kiswahili through prompts such as essays and letters	22 24.4%	32 35.6%	15 16.7%	11 12.2%	10 11.1%	3.50
I help students create multimedia presentations, posters, or artworks related to Kiswahili culture	15 16.7%	25 27.8%	20 22.2%	20 22.2%	10 11.1%	3.17
I encourage students to work together in groups to complete tasks such as creating skits, fostering teamwork and communication skills in Kiswahili.	30 33.3%	30 33.3%	12 13.3%	10 11.1%	8 8.9%	3.71
I set midterm examinations to assess students' understanding of Kiswahili concepts covered in the first half of the term.	28 31.1%	27 30.0%	18 20.0%	10 11.1%	7 7.8%	3.66
I set final examinations to evaluate students' overall proficiency in Kiswahili by testing a comprehensive range of language skills.	30 33.3%	25 27.8%	20 22.2%	10 11.1%	5 5.6%	3.72
Average mean						3.55

Source: Field data 2024

The data presented in Table 4.3 highlights the level of teachers' qualification in assessing Kiswahili in lower secondary schools, measured by various instructional and assessment activities.

The findings indicate that teachers generally adopt multiple methods to evaluate and enhance students' skills in Kiswahili, with varying levels of emphasis on specific competencies.

In terms of assessing reading comprehension, a significant portion of teachers (61.1%, with 3.56 mean) reported frequently providing students with written passages in Kiswahili followed by questions to test comprehension. Similarly, a high percentage (61.1%) of teachers also prioritize exercises that focus on understanding Kiswahili grammar, evidenced by a mean score of 3.57. These exercises are centered on identifying correct verb conjugations and sentence structures, showcasing the teachers' efforts to solidify students' foundational grammar knowledge.

Teachers also engage students in written expression, using prompts like essays and letters, with 60% reporting frequent use (mean 3.50). This approach is intended to enhance students' ability to articulate thoughts in Kiswahili. However, in activities involving multimedia presentations or cultural projects, only 44.5% of teachers actively incorporate such practices (mean 3.17), suggesting a lesser focus on integrating Kiswahili culture through creative outputs.

Group work, such as skits to foster communication skills, is another well-utilized strategy, with 66.6% of teachers encouraging collaborative tasks in Kiswahili, resulting in the highest mean score of 3.71. This approach is indicative of an emphasis on teamwork and practical language use. Additionally, many teachers (61.1%) regularly administer midterm assessments to evaluate progress, yielding a mean score of 3.66. The commitment to final examinations is strong, with 55% of teachers using them to test a broad range of skills, as evidenced by the highest mean score of 3.72.

The overall average mean of 3.55 findings illustrate that teachers are proficient in utilizing diverse assessment techniques, with a particular focus on group work, examinations, and comprehension exercises to support Kiswahili learning.

Qualitative data from interviews

During the interview with the City Inspector of Schools and City Education Officer on the level of teachers' qualification in assessing Kiswahili in lower secondary schools. The question on

what initiatives or policies are in place to ensure that teachers receive adequate training and preparation for assessing Kiswahili in lower secondary schools, the City Inspector of Schools revealed that:

"We have implemented several initiatives aimed at improving teacher qualification in Kiswahili. One of the key policies is the mandatory training programs for new teachers, which focus on language proficiency and assessing methodologies. Additionally, we conduct regular workshops and refresher courses to help existing teachers stay updated with current assessing strategies and curriculum changes."
(Interviewed on 29th 08 2024).

The City Education Officer also revealed that;

"The city has partnered with universities around to develop a specialized training curriculum for Kiswahili teachers. This program not only enhances their language skills but also equips them with effective pedagogical techniques tailored for lower secondary education. We believe that continuous professional development is crucial for teacher effectiveness." (Interviewed on 29th 08 2024).

What resources or support are provided to Kiswahili teachers to assist them in addressing challenges faced in assessing Kiswahili, the City Inspector of Schools revealed;

"We understand that teachers face numerous challenges, especially with resource limitations. Therefore, we provide a range of assessing aids, including textbooks, supplementary reading materials, and access to digital resources. Furthermore, we encourage collaboration among teachers to share best practices and resources." (Interviewed on 29th 08 2024).

The City Education Officer also revealed that;

"Support for Kiswahili teachers comes in various forms. We have established mentorship programs where experienced teachers assist newcomers in navigating

the challenges of assessing the subject. Additionally, we ensure that teachers have access to a resource center where they can find materials and tools necessary for effective assessing." (Interviewed on 29th 08 2024).

During the interview with the headteachers on the level of teachers' qualification in assessing Kiswahili in lower secondary schools. Most headteachers indicated that they assess teachers' qualifications through formal documentation, including assessing certificates, degrees in education, and subject-specific qualifications in Kiswahili. Additionally, many emphasized the importance of classroom observations and peer evaluations as practical methods to gauge teachers' skills and their effectiveness in engaging students. One headteacher stated that:

"We rely heavily on documented qualifications, but we also conduct regular classroom observations to see how well teachers implement their training in real classroom settings." (Interviewed on 6th 09 2024).

However, a minority expressed concern over the over-reliance on paperwork without adequate observation. One headteacher revealed that:

"Sometimes, we focus too much on degrees and forget to observe the actual assessing process, which is where the real qualification lies."

In terms of supporting teachers' continuous development, the majority of headteachers reported implementing professional development workshops and training sessions specifically designed for Kiswahili teachers. Many schools also encourage participation in external seminars and courses. A common approach mentioned was mentorship programs, pairing experienced teachers with those newer to the profession. One headteacher remarked that:

"We organize regular workshops, and we believe mentorship is key; experienced teachers help less experienced ones grow their skills." (Interviewed on 9th 09 2024).

Conversely, a few headteachers expressed skepticism about the effectiveness of these programs, stating that attendance is often low due to teachers' other commitments. One headteacher revealed that:

"While we try to offer professional development, attendance is sometimes a challenge, and it's crucial we find ways to make these opportunities more appealing." (Interviewed on 12th 09 2024).

Headteachers shared various methods for monitoring and evaluating teachers' performance in Kiswahili lessons. Common practices included student performance assessments, feedback from students and parents, and regular meetings to discuss assessing strategies. Several headteachers emphasized the importance of standardized testing results as a key indicator of assessing effectiveness. One headteacher said:

"We look at our students' performance in national exams as a reflection of our teachers' qualification. If results are low, we dig deeper to identify the issues." (Interviewed on 12th 09 2024).

On the other hand, some headteachers highlighted the subjective nature of evaluations, pointing out that standardized tests might not fully capture a teacher's ability to inspire or engage students. One headteacher cautioned:

"While results are important, we must remember that education is not just about tests. Engagement and inspiration are equally vital, and these cannot be quantified easily." (Interviewed on 15th 09 2024).

Objective two: How Kiswahili assessments are designed and administered in lower secondary schools

Where: Strongly agree = 5, Agree=4 moderate=3, Disagree =2, and strongly disagree = 1

Table 4.4: How Kiswahili assessments are designed and administered in lower secondary schools

Statement	5	4	3	2	1	Mean
I incorporate quizzes, discussions, and peer assessments to gauge student understanding throughout the learning process.	30 33.3%	25 27.8%	20 22.2%	10 11.1%	5 5.6%	3.70
I adapt and accommodate students with different learning needs, including providing alternative testing arrangements or modified assignments.	28 31.1%	32 35.6%	15 16.7%	10 11.1%	5 5.6%	3.60
I accurately measure intended learning outcomes and align with the curriculum objectives.	35 38.9%	30 33.3%	5 5.6%	10 11.1%	10 11.1%	3.40
I integrate components that reflect the depth and breadth of knowledge expected at different stages of the curriculum progression.	32 35.6%	28 31.1%	15 16.7%	10 11.1%	5 5.6%	3.80
I design tasks that simulate authentic, real-world scenarios or problems relevant to students' lives.	25 27.8%	30 33.3%	20 22.2%	10 11.1%	5 5.6%	3.70
I offer opportunities to students to engage in self-assessment and peer assessment.	30 33.3%	30 33.3%	15 16.7%	10 11.1%	5 5.6%	3.80
I use a variety of feedback modalities, including written feedback.	28 31.1%	32 35.6%	15 16.7%	5 5.6%	10 11.1%	3.81
I provide feedback that acknowledges effort and persistence, reinforcing the idea that learning is a process that requires dedication and resilience.	30 33.3%	30 33.3%	15 16.7%	10 11.1%	5 5.6%	3.70
I implement strategies to mitigate bias in grading, such as blind grading techniques.	25 27.8%	28 31.1%	20 22.2%	5 5.6%	12 13.3%	3.61
Average mean						3.68

Source: Field data 2024

The findings from the assessment of how Kiswahili assessments are designed and administered in lower secondary schools reveal a generally positive attitude towards the implementation of diverse and effective assessment strategies.

One of the key findings is the frequent use of varied assessment methods. For instance, 30% of respondents strongly agree and 25% agree that they incorporate quizzes, discussions, and peer assessments to gauge student understanding throughout the learning process, with a mean score of 3.70. This indicates a strong emphasis on continuous and interactive assessment techniques.

Additionally, the practice of using alternative testing arrangements or modified assignments for students with different learning needs received a favorable response, with 31.1% strongly agreeing and 35.6% agreeing, resulting in a mean score of 3.60. This highlights teachers' awareness and adaptability to cater to diverse learning needs.

Teachers also appear to place importance on aligning their assessments with curriculum objectives. A notable 38.9% of respondents strongly agree, and 33.3% agree that they accurately measure intended learning outcomes, achieving a mean score of 3.40. However, this was the lowest mean score, suggesting that while teachers are aware of the curriculum's requirements, some may still face challenges in fully aligning assessments with these objectives.

When it comes to ensuring that assessments reflect the depth and breadth of the curriculum, 35.6% of teachers strongly agree and 31.1% agree, resulting in a higher mean score of 3.80. This indicates that a significant number of teachers are conscious of creating assessments that mirror the comprehensive scope of the curriculum.

Teachers also emphasize real-world relevance in their assessments, with 27.8% strongly agreeing and 33.3% agreeing that they design tasks that simulate authentic, real-world scenarios. This approach ensures that students can connect their learning to practical applications, which is crucial for long-term retention and relevance to their future careers. This statement also received a mean score of 3.70.

Self-assessment and peer assessment were another focal point in the findings. About 33.3% strongly agree and 33.3% agree that they offer students opportunities for self-assessment and peer assessment using established criteria. The mean score of 3.80 suggests that a majority of teachers encourage reflective learning and peer collaboration, which can foster deeper understanding and critical thinking.

In terms of feedback, teachers report using a variety of feedback modalities, including written feedback, with 31.1% strongly agreeing and 35.6% agreeing. This reflects a commitment to providing students with constructive and diverse feedback, with a mean score of 3.81, the highest among the statements.

Finally, regarding the mitigation of bias in grading, the use of blind grading techniques was less commonly implemented, with 27.8% strongly agreeing and 31.1% agreeing. This approach, with a mean score of 3.61, suggests that while bias reduction is recognized as important, it may not be fully or consistently practiced across all classrooms.

The overall average mean score for the statements is 3.68, suggesting that teachers are moderately aligning their assessment practices with best practices in educational assessment.

The findings suggest that Kiswahili assessments in lower secondary schools are designed with a strong focus on varied, inclusive, and authentic assessment practices. However, some areas, such as the alignment with curriculum objectives and the mitigation of bias in grading, could benefit from further attention and improvement.

Qualitative analysis

During the interview with the City Inspector of Schools on how are Kiswahili assessments structured to align with curriculum objectives at the lower secondary level, he revealed that;

"Kiswahili assessments are designed with a direct connection to the national curriculum. The assessments primarily focus on testing students' ability to

communicate in Kiswahili, their comprehension of texts, as well as their understanding of grammar and vocabulary. Teachers are required to structure their exams in a way that ensures all key areas of the curriculum are assessed, from reading and writing to oral skills. These assessments include a variety of question formats such as multiple choice, short answer questions, essay writing, and oral exams." (Interviewed on 29th 08 2024).

The City Education Officer further added that;

"Aligning assessments with curriculum objectives is a collaborative process. We work with teachers and curriculum developers to ensure the assessment tasks reflect the expected learning outcomes for each grade. The aim is to ensure students not only remember content but can apply the language in real-life contexts. It's important that assessments are diverse and test both receptive and productive language skills." (Interviewed on 29th 08 2024).

During the interview with the City Inspector of Schools on processes are in place to monitor and evaluate teachers' performance in preparing and administering Kiswahili assessments. He noted that:

"To ensure quality, the performance of teachers in preparing and administering Kiswahili assessments is closely monitored. We conduct regular classroom visits where we observe both assessing methods and how assessments are administered. Feedback is provided, and where necessary, teachers are given professional development workshops to improve their assessment skills. Additionally, we review students' performance trends to assess whether the assessments are meeting the desired outcomes." (Interviewed on 29th 08 2024).

The City Education Officer also responded that:

"In addition to classroom visits, we have a system of peer reviews where teachers collaborate to evaluate each other's assessments. This peer feedback mechanism

helps maintain standards. Furthermore, assessment results are analyzed at both the school and district levels to identify areas where teachers may need additional support or training. The aim is not only to ensure the assessments are correctly administered but also that they are fair and effective." (Interviewed on 29th 08 2024).

During the interview with the City Inspector of Schools on How frequently are assessments reviewed or updated to ensure they meet educational standards and effectively measure student learning in Kiswahili. He remarked that:

"We review assessments at the end of every academic year. The review process includes feedback from teachers, students, and even parents. Based on this feedback, adjustments are made to ensure that assessments stay relevant and reflect the evolving nature of the curriculum. This process is essential in maintaining a balance between testing academic knowledge and practical language skills." (Interviewed on 29th 09 2024).

The City Education Officer further added that:

"Assessments are formally updated every two years to incorporate new pedagogical approaches and changes in the curriculum. This process is guided by national educational standards and best practices in language assessing. We also encourage schools to hold internal reviews mid-term to ensure the assessments are continuously aligned with assessing goals, which helps in measuring student progress more effectively." (Interviewed on 29th 09 2024).

During the interviews with headteachers on how grading and feedback methods to enhance teachers' proficiency in assessing Kiswahili skills, the majority of headteachers emphasized that grading and feedback were crucial in enhancing teachers' proficiency. They commonly cited the use

of formative assessments and immediate feedback mechanisms as effective strategies. One headteacher noted,

“Providing immediate, personalized feedback allows teachers to identify and address specific areas where students struggle, thereby improving teachers’ assessment skills.” (Interviewed on 6th 09 2024).

Another added,

“Our grading system includes regular quizzes and spot tests that help teachers continuously gauge student performance in Kiswahili.” (Interviewed on 9th 09 2024).

However, a minority of the headteachers expressed concerns about the consistency of grading practices across the board. As one commented that,

“Some teachers lack clear guidelines on grading, which can lead to discrepancies in assessing students’ skills accurately.” (Interviewed on 12th 09 2024).

This highlights a disparity in the uniformity of grading and feedback methods among schools.

During the discussion with headteachers on collaboration with Kiswahili curriculum experts to ensure assessment validity and reliability. Most headteachers reported positive engagement with Kiswahili curriculum experts or specialists to align assessments with curriculum standards. A common approach involved attending workshops and consulting with curriculum developers. One headteacher stated that,

“We regularly invite Kiswahili specialists to train our teachers on the latest assessment methods, ensuring they adhere to curriculum guidelines.” (Interviewed on 12th 09 2024).

Another headteacher agreed, mentioning that,

“Our school collaborates with experts to review assessment tools, which helps maintain both reliability and alignment with set standards.” (Interviewed on 15th 09 2024).

On the other hand, a few headteachers pointed out challenges in accessing expert support consistently. One respondent remarked that,

“Due to budget limitations, it’s challenging to invite Kiswahili experts frequently, and teachers often have to rely on limited resources.” (Interviewed on 15th 09 2024).

This response reflects a lack of consistency in expert support across different schools, impacting the quality of assessments.

On the challenges faced by teachers in administering Kiswahili assessments and available support, the headteachers unanimously agreed on the challenges teachers encounter, particularly in terms of resource limitations and varying levels of student proficiency in Kiswahili. One headteacher shared that,

“Teachers often struggle with limited assessing aids and resources to support Kiswahili assessment effectively.” (Interviewed on 15th 09 2024).

Another headteacher added that,

“The diversity in students’ backgrounds means that some students find it harder to engage with the Kiswahili assessments.” (Interviewed on 15th 09 2024).

For support, many headteachers mentioned efforts to provide additional resources and peer collaboration opportunities. As one respondent noted that,

“We encourage teachers to share materials and exchange ideas during regular department meetings, which helps alleviate some of the assessment challenges.” (Interviewed on 15th 09 2024).

Nonetheless, a few headteachers indicated that these support measures are often insufficient. As one remarked that,

“While we try to offer support, the systemic issues, such as inadequate funding, remain a significant barrier that schools alone cannot overcome.” (Interviewed on 15th 09 2024).

This difference in views highlights a gap in the adequacy of support provided for Kiswahili assessment challenges.

Objective three: The relationship between teachers' qualifications and Kiswahili subject assessment in lower secondary school curriculum

Table 4.5: Correlations to the relationship between teachers' qualifications and Kiswahili subject assessment

		Teachers' qualifications	Kiswahili subject assessment
Teachers' qualifications	Pearson Correlation	1	.565**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	90	90
Kiswahili subject assessment	Pearson Correlation	.565**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	90	90

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The findings in Table 4.5 indicate a significant positive correlation between teachers' qualifications and Kiswahili subject assessment ($r = 0.565$, $p = 0.000$, $N = 90$). The correlation coefficient of 0.565 suggests a moderate to strong positive relationship, implying that higher teacher qualification is associated with better Kiswahili subject assessment outcomes. The significance level ($p = 0.000$) is less than the conventional threshold of 0.01, confirming that this relationship is statistically significant. This means there is strong evidence that teachers' qualifications play an important role in the effectiveness of Kiswahili subject assessments, supporting the notion that enhancing teacher skills could positively influence student performance in the subject.

Chapter Five

Discussion, Conclusion and Recommendations

Overview

This chapter presents the discussion of findings, conclusion and recommendations in relation to the study objectives.

Discussion of findings

The discussion was compiled according to the study objectives that is to examine the level of teachers' qualification in assessing Kiswahili in lower secondary schools, to examine how Kiswahili assessments are designed and administered in lower secondary schools and to establish the relationship between teachers' qualifications and Kiswahili subject assessment in lower secondary school curriculum.

The level of teachers' qualification in assessing Kiswahili in lower secondary schools

Basing on the findings from the field on evaluating teachers' qualification in Kiswahili instruction in lower secondary schools reveals both commonalities and differences in approaches across studies.

According to Mkumbo (2015), Mwepu (2018), and Mangula (2017) emphasize the importance of curriculum alignment and pedagogical strategies in assessing teachers' qualification. Mkumbo (2015) highlights practices such as classroom observations and student performance analysis, which are widely recognized as methods to evaluate teachers' mastery of content. Similarly, Mwepu (2018) stressed that curriculum alignment ensures teachers' instruction aligns with the syllabus, offering students opportunities to grasp core concepts in Kiswahili. Mangula (2017) further supports that the importance of assessing depth and breadth in teachers' instructional strategies, thus promoting students' critical thinking and comprehension skills. These perspectives align in their support of curriculum-based assessment methods as foundational to competency evaluation.

Other studies expand on this by exploring the challenges and gaps in current evaluation practices. For example, Mwakisha and Mwenda (2019) pointed out gaps in the use of performance-based assessments, highlighting that teachers are often assessed using limited tools that do not fully reflect their instructional efficacy. This view is supported by Khamis and Ngugi (2020), who found that traditional methods, such as structured observations, are prevalent in Tanzania. They suggest that these methods may not adequately measure competencies like communicative language skills, underscoring the need for diverse evaluation tools. Nyaga and Mwangi (2018) similarly advocated for more formative evaluations to support teacher growth, as they find that current practices lean heavily on summative assessments rather than fostering skills that reflect the communicative goals of the Kiswahili curriculum.

Conversely, studies by Oduor and Kimani (2017) and Simba et al. (2021) highlight the need for culturally responsive evaluations, pointing out that current competency assessments often lack a holistic approach. Oduor and Kimani (2017) argue that culturally grounded assessments could better support language development by considering students' socio-cultural backgrounds. Simba et al. (2021) echo this by comparing Kenya and Tanzania, finding that while Kenyan teachers rely on written assessments, Tanzanian practices include more interactive activities, though both face challenges in aligning assessments with curriculum goals. This comparative approach reveals how different educational contexts can influence teacher assessment practices, suggesting a need for regional standardization to ensure competencies align with Kiswahili curriculum objectives.

The findings from interviews with school administrators and headteachers provided practical insights into teacher support and development. The City Inspector of Schools and City Education Officer, emphasized structured programs such as workshops and mentorship to enhance Kiswahili teachers' skills. These programs align with Mwakisha and Mwenda's (2019) recommendations for ongoing professional development to address gaps in competency. However, some headteachers question the effectiveness of these initiatives, citing challenges like low attendance due to teachers'

other responsibilities. This observation aligns with Nyaga and Mwangi's (2018) finding on the need for more engaging professional development that teachers find beneficial and accessible.

However, while there is a consensus on the importance of curriculum alignment and formative assessments, there is disagreement on the adequacy of traditional methods and the need for performance-based, culturally responsive, and competency-based evaluation practices. On the other hand the finding highlighted new areas for improvement, such as integrating more practical, communicative, and culture-sensitive assessments to better align teachers' competencies with the Kiswahili curriculum and enhance educational outcomes.

How Kiswahili assessments are designed and administered in lower secondary schools

Field findings on Kiswahili assessment practices in lower secondary schools revealed positive trends in the design and administration of assessments. Teachers reported the use of diverse assessment methods, such as quizzes, discussions, and peer assessments, to gauge student understanding and provide continuous feedback. This aligns with the findings of Smith et al. (2018), who emphasized the importance of incorporating varied assessment techniques. Moreover, teachers indicated their commitment to aligning assessments with curriculum objectives, though challenges in fully achieving alignment were noted, as reflected in the mean score of 3.40 for this item.

Teachers also demonstrated a strong focus on creating assessments that reflect the depth and breadth of the curriculum, with 35.6% of respondents strongly agreeing that assessments mirror the comprehensive curriculum. This finding aligns with the work of Glatthorn et al. (2012), who suggest that comprehensive assessments provide a holistic view of student learning. Furthermore, real-world relevance was highlighted as a key aspect of assessment design, with teachers incorporating tasks that simulate practical, real-world scenarios.

Regarding feedback practices, teachers employed various feedback modalities, such as written feedback, which enhance student learning. This aligns with the findings by Garcia and Nguyen (2020), which underscore the importance of diverse feedback approaches in language

assessments. However, there was less consistency in the use of blind grading techniques to mitigate bias, suggesting that further efforts are needed to standardize grading practices across classrooms.

Interviews with the City Inspector of Schools and the City Education Officer revealed insights into the alignment of Kiswahili assessments with curriculum objectives. Both officials confirmed that assessments are designed to test students' ability to communicate in Kiswahili, including their comprehension of texts, grammar, and vocabulary. They also emphasized the collaborative nature of the assessment design process, which involves teachers and curriculum developers to ensure assessments reflect the expected learning outcomes.

Further discussions with headteachers indicated that ongoing professional development for teachers is seen as a critical factor in enhancing their assessment skills. Findings implied the need for workshops and seminars which focused on improving assessment techniques and understanding of the curriculum. This was supported by responses from the headteacher as indicated, *"Teachers who attend regular professional development workshops tend to perform better in designing and administering assessments that reflect the curriculum's objectives."* This suggests that continuous professional growth plays a significant role in refining the effectiveness of Kiswahili assessments.

Another important observation was the role of technology in modernizing assessment practices. Several headteachers noted that the integration of technology has improved the efficiency and effectiveness of Kiswahili assessments. A headteacher revealed that, *"The use of online quizzes and digital assessments has allowed for quicker feedback and more diverse assessment formats, which students seem to appreciate."* However, there were concerns raised by a few headteachers regarding the technical skills required to implement such digital assessments effectively. This indicates a need for more comprehensive training on the use of technology in assessment practices.

In summary, while Kiswahili assessments in lower secondary schools are generally designed to align with the national curriculum and incorporate diverse assessment methods, several areas could benefit from improvement. These include enhancing the consistency of grading practices,

increasing teachers' professional development opportunities, and ensuring that technology is effectively integrated into assessment systems. The collaboration between teachers, curriculum developers, and education officers is vital in maintaining high standards for Kiswahili assessments and ensuring they meet educational objectives effectively.

The relationship between teachers' qualifications and Kiswahili subject assessment in lower secondary school curriculum.

The findings on how Kiswahili assessments are designed and administered in lower secondary schools consistently emphasized the critical role of teachers' qualifications in shaping the effectiveness of assessment practices. Mwakio and Ng'asike (2019) highlighted that teachers' proficiency in both Kiswahili language and pedagogical techniques directly influences student performance in assessments. Their study revealed that teachers with strong language skills and effective pedagogical methods created better learning environments, which ultimately reflected in students' improved assessment outcomes. This aligns with the findings from the field, which show a statistically significant positive correlation (Pearson coefficient = 0.565, $p < 0.01$) between teachers' qualifications and effective Kiswahili assessments. Both sources underscore the fact that well-prepared teachers are essential for designing and administering quality assessments.

The field findings, revealed a moderate positive correlation between teachers' qualification and Kiswahili subject assessment. This observation is supported by Kimani and Nyabuga (2018) pointed out the importance of teachers' qualification in enhancing the design and administration of Kiswahili assessments. Their research indicated that teachers with higher proficiency and better pedagogical strategies significantly improve students' assessment results. The field data thus concurs the assertion that teacher qualification directly influences the quality and accuracy of assessment practices in Kiswahili, reaffirming the central role of skilled teachers in assessment design and execution.

On the other hand, Njoroge and Chege (2017) and Kiboss et al. (2019) asserts the influence of contextual factors, such as class size and resource availability, on the effectiveness of Kiswahili assessments. Njoroge and Chege (2017) particularly noted that while teacher qualification is crucial, external factors like classroom conditions also play a significant role in shaping assessment outcomes. This contrasts with the field findings, where the correlation between teachers' qualifications and assessment quality was found to be strong and statistically significant, with less emphasis on external factors like resources.

Conclusion

The conclusion to the findings were based on the specific objectives.

The Level of Teachers' Qualification in assessing Kiswahili in Lower Secondary Schools

Based on the findings regarding the level of teachers' qualification in assessing Kiswahili in lower secondary schools, it can be concluded that teachers demonstrate moderate to high proficiency in employing diverse assessment techniques, as reflected by the overall average mean score of 3.55. This indicates that teachers effectively utilize strategies such as reading comprehension exercises, grammar-based activities, written expression tasks, and group work to evaluate and enhance students' Kiswahili skills. The qualitative data corroborates these findings, highlighting robust initiatives such as mandatory training programs, regular workshops, and mentorship schemes aimed at equipping teachers with the necessary skills and resources. Furthermore, headteachers play a critical role in monitoring teacher qualification through classroom observations, peer evaluations, and professional development opportunities. However, challenges such as resource limitations, low participation in development programs, and the subjective nature of some evaluation methods suggest areas for improvement. To address these gaps, a sustained focus on practical classroom applications, increased accessibility to professional development, and a balanced approach to performance evaluation are essential for enhancing teachers' qualification in assessing Kiswahili.

How Kiswahili assessments are designed and administered in lower secondary schools

The findings on how Kiswahili assessments are designed and administered in lower secondary schools indicate a moderately positive alignment with best practices, as reflected by an overall average mean score of 3.68 from the quantitative data. This suggests that teachers make commendable efforts to incorporate varied, inclusive, and authentic assessment strategies. However, some gaps persist in fully aligning assessments with curriculum objectives and addressing grading biases. Qualitative findings, revealed structured efforts to align assessments with the national curriculum through diverse formats such as essays, oral exams, and multiple-choice questions. Monitoring and peer-review mechanisms are employed to evaluate and enhance teachers' proficiency, supported by collaboration with curriculum experts. Nonetheless, challenges such as inconsistent grading practices, limited resources, and differences in student proficiency levels remain.

The Relationship between teachers' qualifications and Kiswahili subject assessment in lower secondary schools

The findings indicate a significant positive correlation between teachers' qualification and the effectiveness of Kiswahili subject assessments ($r = 0.565$, $p = 0.000$, $N = 90$), suggesting that enhanced teacher qualification is associated with better student assessment outcomes. Qualitative insights reinforce this quantitative data, highlighting the importance of professional development initiatives such as mandatory training programs, workshops, and mentorship schemes that improve teaching effectiveness. Support systems, including access to digital resources and collaboration through resource centers, play a key role in bolstering teacher skills. However, challenges such as limited budget allocations, inconsistent grading practices, and resource shortages hinder optimal assessment quality. Addressing these issues through clearer guidelines, consistent resource allocation, and robust support structures can strengthen the link between teacher qualification and the quality of Kiswahili assessments, ultimately improving student performance.

Recommendations

The recommendations were provided according to specific objectives of the study.

Level of teachers' qualification in assessing Kiswahili

To improve teachers' qualification in Kiswahili, it is essential to invest in continuous professional development programs, such as workshops and seminars that focus on enhancing both assessing techniques and linguistic proficiency.

Schools should implement more formative assessments to evaluate teachers' instructional strategies and language mastery, ensuring alignment with the Kiswahili curriculum.

Collaboration between curriculum developers and teachers should be strengthened to ensure the effective application of instructional strategies that align with the curriculum goals.

How Kiswahili assessments are designed and administered in lower secondary schools

Schools should diversify assessment methods by incorporating both written and interactive techniques, encouraging deeper student engagement and better learning outcomes.

Standardizing grading practices, including using blind grading to reduce biases, will ensure fairness and enhance the reliability of assessments.

The integration of technology in assessments should be prioritized, with professional development programs to improve teachers' proficiency in using digital tools for more efficient and accessible assessments.

The relationship between teachers' qualification and how Kiswahili assessments are designed and administered

Schools should invest in teacher training programs that emphasize the dual importance of language proficiency and effective assessment design to improve overall assessment quality.

Addressing external factors such as large class sizes and resource constraints is critical for improving assessment practices and should be prioritized alongside teacher qualification development.

Encouraging collaboration among teachers to share best practices and strategies for assessment design will help raise the overall quality of Kiswahili assessments across schools.

Areas for Further Research

1. Exploring the Impact of Continuous Professional Development Programs on Kiswahili Teachers' Pedagogical Practices and Student Performance in Lower Secondary Schools.
2. Investigating the Role of Technology Integration in Enhancing the Design and Administration of Kiswahili Assessments in Lower Secondary Schools.

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Appendices

Appendix I: Consent form

Dear Respondent,

I am Birungi Ester a learner at Bishop Stuart University pursuing a degree of master's in education management planning and Administration currently undertaking research. I am conducting a study about Teachers' Qualification and Kiswahili Subject Assessment in Lower Secondary Schools in Mbarara City.

I would appreciate your participation in this study. The information provided was used for education and research purposes only. Your participation is completely voluntary and anonymous. The information was kept strictly confidential.

Yours Faithfully,

.....

Appendix II: Questionnaire for teachers

Section A: Bio data

1. Sex

i. Male

ii. Female

2. Age bracket

i. 18-25

ii. 26-35

iii. 36-45

iv. 46 and above

3. Education level

i. Diploma

ii. Degree

iii. Masters

4. Years of service in this school

i. 1-5

ii. 6-9

iii. 10 and above

Section B: The level of teachers' qualification in assessing Kiswahili in lower secondary schools

Use the Likert scale questions in the table below to answer the questions. Where 1= "Strongly Disagree," 2="Disagree," 3="Neutral," 4="Agree," and 5="Strongly Agree."

Responses	5	4	3	2	1
I provide students with written passages in Kiswahili and ask questions to assess their understanding of the text.					
I evaluate students' grasp of Kiswahili grammar rules through exercises such as identifying correct verb conjugations, sentence structure, or tense usage.					
I assess students' ability to express themselves in written Kiswahili through prompts such as essays, letters, or creative writing assignments.					
I help students create multimedia presentations, posters, or artworks related to Kiswahili culture showcasing their understanding and appreciation of the language.					
I encourage students to work together in groups to complete tasks such as creating skits, designing educational materials, or organizing cultural events, fostering teamwork and communication skills in Kiswahili.					
I set midterm examinations to assess students' understanding of Kiswahili concepts covered in the first half of the term, including vocabulary, grammar, and writing skills.					
I set final examinations to evaluate students' overall proficiency in Kiswahili by testing a comprehensive range of language skills, including listening, speaking, reading, and writing.					
I provide students with written passages in Kiswahili and ask questions to assess their understanding of the text.					

How Kiswahili assessments are designed and administered in lower secondary school

Use the Likert scale questions in the table below to answer the questions. Where 1= "Strongly Disagree," 2="Disagree," 3="Neutral," 4="Agree," and 5="Strongly Agree."

Responses	5	4	3	2	1
I incorporate quizzes, discussions, and peer assessments to gauge student understanding throughout the learning process.					
I adapt and accommodate students with different learning needs, including providing alternative testing arrangements or modified assignments.					
I accurately measure intended learning outcomes and align with the curriculum objectives.					
I integrate components that reflect the depth and breadth of knowledge expected at different stages of the curriculum progression.					
I design tasks that simulate authentic, real-world scenarios or problems relevant to students' lives or future careers.					
I offer opportunities to students to engage in self-assessment and peer assessment using the established criteria.					
I use a variety of feedback modalities, including written					
I provide feedback that acknowledges effort and persistence, reinforcing the idea that learning is a process that requires dedication and resilience.					
I implement strategies to mitigate bias in grading, such as blind grading techniques or utilizing multiple graders to review and reconcile assessments.					

Appendix III: Interview guide for City Inspector Schools of Schools and City Education

Officer

- i. Age bracket
- ii. Education level
- iii. Years of service in this school

The Level of Teachers' Qualification in assessing Kiswahili in Lower Secondary Schools

- 1. What initiatives or policies are in place to ensure that teachers receive adequate training and preparation for assessing Kiswahili in lower secondary schools?
- 2. What resources or support are provided to Kiswahili teachers to assist them in addressing challenges faced in assessing Kiswahili?

How Kiswahili Assessments Are Designed and Administered in Lower Secondary Schools

- 1. How are Kiswahili assessments structured to align with curriculum objectives at the lower secondary level?
- 2. What processes are in place to monitor and evaluate teachers' performance in preparing and administering Kiswahili assessments?
- 3. How frequently are assessments reviewed or updated to ensure they meet educational standards and effectively measure student learning in Kiswahili?

Appendix IV: Interview guide headteachers

- i. Age bracket
- ii. Education level
- iii. Years of service in this school

The Level of Teachers' Qualification in assessing Kiswahili in Lower Secondary Schools

1. How do you assess whether teachers possess the necessary qualifications and skills to effectively teach Kiswahili to lower secondary students?
2. What strategies or practices are in place to support teachers' continuous development and improvement in assessing Kiswahili?
3. How do you monitor and evaluate teachers' performance in delivering Kiswahili lessons to ensure they meet expected standards?

How Kiswahili Assessments Are Designed and Administered in Lower Secondary Schools

1. What grading and feedback methods are used to enhance teachers' proficiency in assessing Kiswahili skills among students?
2. How do you work with Kiswahili curriculum experts or specialists to ensure assessments are valid, reliable, and aligned with curriculum standards?
3. What challenges do teachers face when administering Kiswahili assessments, and what support is available to address these challenges?

Appendix V: Research Budget

Particulars	Unit	Unit cost (Ugx)	Total cost (Ugx)
Transport			
Data collection	5 times	30,000	200,000
Meeting supervisor	10 times	100,000	1,000,000
Documentation	3times	40,000	120,000
Meals			
Data collection	10 times	10,000	110,000
Meeting supervisor	10 times	100,000	1,000,000
Documentation	3 times	40,000	80,000
Stationery			
Reams of paper	2	25,000	50,000
Clipboard file	1	10,000	10,000
Pens	5	500	2,500
Pencils	2	250	500
Bag	1	20,000	20,000
Box file	1	10,000	10,000
Secretarial work	-	-	-
Printing	200pgs	1,000	200,000
Photocopying	600pgs	100	60,000
Internet	General	General	100,000
Binding	4 books	30,000	120,000
TOTAL			3,083,000

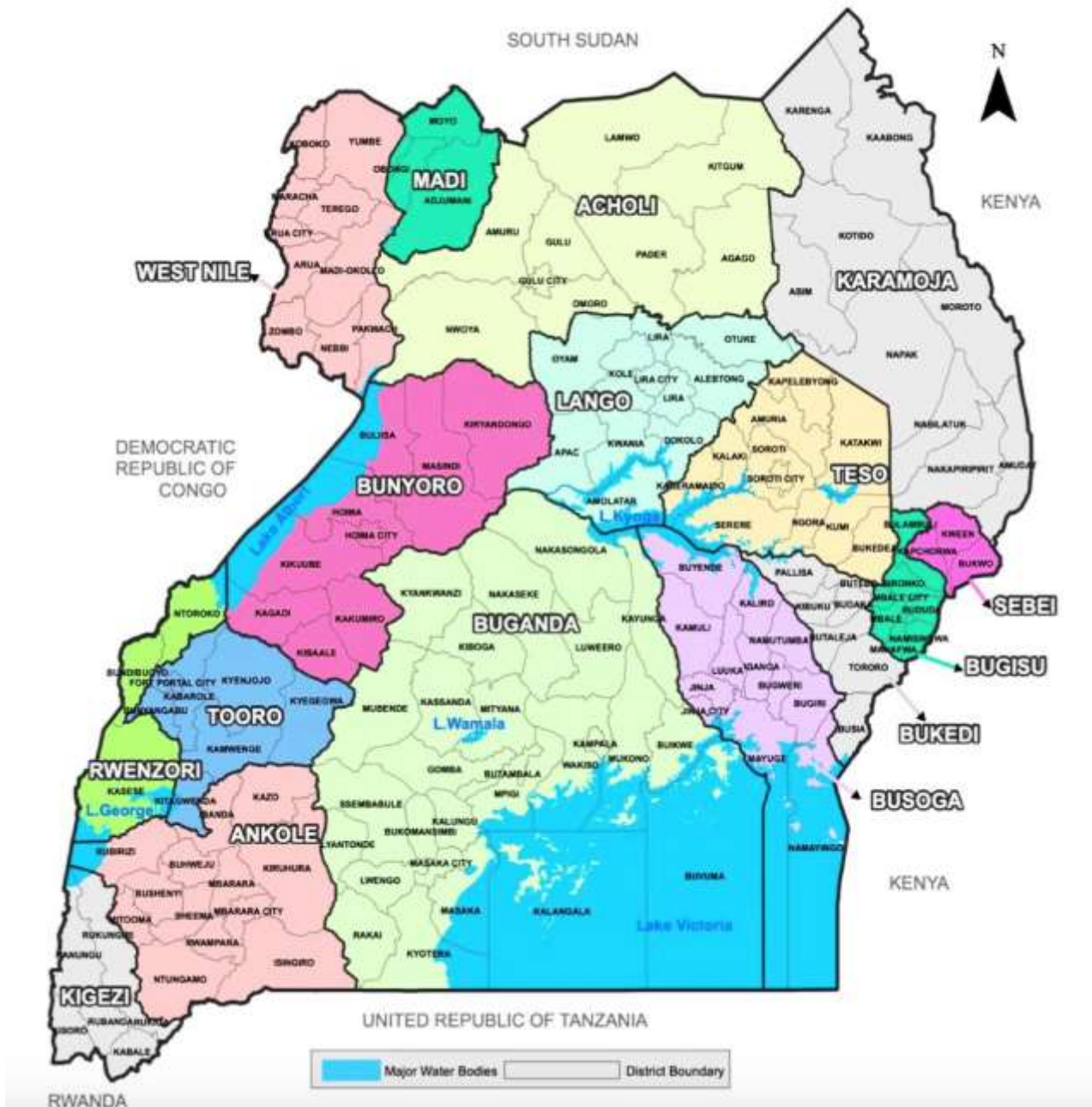
Appendix VII: Sample size determination table

<i>N</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>S</i>
10	10	220	140	1200	291
15	14	230	144	1300	297
20	19	240	148	1400	302
25	24	250	152	1500	306
30	28	260	155	1600	310
35	32	270	159	1700	313
40	36	280	162	1800	317
45	40	290	165	1900	320
50	44	300	169	2000	322
55	48	320	175	2200	327
60	52	340	181	2400	331
65	56	360	186	2600	335
70	59	380	191	2800	338
75	63	400	196	3000	341
80	66	420	201	3500	346
85	70	440	205	4000	351
90	73	460	210	4500	354
95	76	480	214	5000	357
100	80	500	217	6000	361
110	86	550	226	7000	364
120	92	600	234	8000	367
130	97	650	242	9000	368
140	103	700	248	10000	370
150	108	750	254	15000	375
160	113	800	260	20000	377
170	118	850	265	30000	379
180	123	900	269	40000	380
190	127	950	274	50000	381
200	132	1000	278	75000	382
210	136	1100	285	1000000	384

Note.—*N* is population size. *S* is sample size.

Source: Krejcie & Morgan, 1970

Map of Uganda showing sub Regions, Districts and Cities, 2024



BISHOP STUART UNIVERSITY

P.O.BOX 9, MBARARA

Tel: 0772 512551



Website: www.bsu.ac.ug

E-mail: rec@bsu.ac.ug/info@bsu.ac.ug

RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

To: BIRINGI ESTER

BISHOP STUART UNIVERSITY

0772604589

Type: Initial Review

Re: BSU-REC-2024-374: Teachers' Competence and Kiswahili Subject Assessment in Lower Secondary Schools in Mbarara City South, Mbarara City



25/07/2024

I am pleased to inform you that at the **29** convened meeting on **11/07/2024**, the Bishop Stuart University (BSU) REC meeting voted to approve the above referenced application.

Approval of the research is for the period of **25/07/2024** to **25/07/2025**.

As Principal Investigator of the research, you are responsible for fulfilling the following requirements of approval:

1. All co-investigators must be kept informed of the status of the research.
2. Changes, amendments, and addenda to the protocol or the consent form must be submitted to the REC for review and approval **prior** to the activation of the changes.
3. Reports of unanticipated problems involving risks to participants or any new information which could change the risk benefit: ratio must be submitted to the REC.
4. Only approved consent forms are to be used in the enrollment of participants. All consent forms signed by participants and/or witnesses should be retained on file. The REC may conduct audits of all study records, and consent documentation may be part of such audits.
5. Continuing review application must be submitted to the REC **eight weeks** prior to the expiration date of **25/07/2025** in order to continue the study beyond the approved period. Failure to submit a continuing review application in a timely fashion may result in suspension or termination of the study.
6. The REC application number assigned to the research should be cited in any correspondence with the REC of record.
7. You are required to register the research protocol with the Uganda National Council for Science and Technology (UNCST) for final clearance to undertake the study in Uganda.

The following is the list of all documents approved in this application by Bishop Stuart University (BSU) REC:

No.	Document Title	Language	Version Number	Version Date
1	Letter from faculty	English	3	2024-07-01
2	Letter from Head of department	English	2	2024-06-14
3	Informed Consent forms	English	2	2024-06-14
4	Protocol	English	2	2024-06-14
5	Protocol	English	2	2024-06-14
6	Informed Consent forms	English	1	2024-05-20
7	Application for waiver of informed consent if applicable to your study	English	1	2024-05-20
8	Letter from Head of department	English	1	2024-05-20
9	REC forms	English	1	2024-05-20
10	Data collection tools	English	1	2024-05-20
11	Protocol	English	1	2024-05-20
12	Letter from faculty	English	1	2024-05-20

Yours Sincerely



Godfrey Rukundo
For: Bishop Stuart University (BSU) REC





BISHOP STUART UNIVERSITY

RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

P.O. Box 09 Mbarara-Uganda Tel: +256 485-433468

E-mail: rec@bsu.ac.ug

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Study title – Teachers' Competence and Kiswahili Subject Assessment in Lower Secondary Schools in Mbarara City South, Mbarara City

Principal Investigator(s) Introduction:

Esther Birungi

20/BSU/MEAP/2733

Brief background to the study

In the United States, research on teachers' competence and language assessment has been robust. Studies such as the National Council on Teacher Quality's analysis of teacher preparation programs (Walsh, 2014) In Nigeria, research on teachers' competence and language assessment has explored the challenges faced by educators, such as the study by Ajayi and Ayodele (2015). In East Africa, specifically in Tanzania, Kenya, and Uganda, research has not been conducted on teachers' competence and the assessment of the Kiswahili subject.

Purpose of the research project

The purpose of the study will aim to explore the relationship between teachers' competence and Kiswahili subject assessment in lower secondary schools in South Division, Mbarara City.

Leave blank for REC office only:

BSU-REC



REC OFFICE USE ONLY:

APPROVAL DATE: 25/07/2024

APPROVED CONSENT IRB VERSION NUMBER:

PI NAME: BIRUNGI ESTHER

IRB NO: BSU-REC-2024-374

Why you are being asked to participate?

Investigating teachers' competence and practices in Kiswahili subject assessment within the context of Mbarara city South, Mbarara City, will offer valuable insights into the quality of language instruction, the achievement of learning objectives, and the fair assessment of students' linguistic proficiencies in diverse educational settings. This exploration contributes to the enhancement of educational practices and the promotion of linguistic and cultural diversity within the region.

Procedures

After the researcher has obtained the approval from the research and ethics committee of Bishop Stuart University she will obtain an introductory letter from the research coordinator from graduate school to introduce her to the city inspector of schools that will provide an introductory letter to introduce the researcher to the head teachers who will further introduce her to teachers. The participants will be consulted individually by the researcher at their respective areas to ask them to ask their permission and agree on time of their choice.

Risks or discomforts

The Research may face difficulty in accessing relevant and reliable information, where teachers may provide biased data on teacher competence and how they apply them to Kiswahili assessment in Secondary Schools of Mbarara city south.

Benefits

A study on Teachers' Competence and Kiswahili Subject Assessment in Lower Secondary holds significant implications for various stakeholders involved in education, including the Ministry of Education, headteachers, teachers, and future researchers.

For the Ministry of Education, Understanding the relationship between teacher competence and Kiswahili assessment in the lower secondary level may inform policy decisions regarding teacher professional development initiatives and curriculum reforms.

Findings will wou empower headteachers with data-driven insights into the strengths and

<p>Leave blank</p> <p>BSU-REC</p> <p>BISHOP STUART UNIVERSITY P.O. BOX 09, MBARARA</p> <p>25 JULY 2024</p> <p>RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE *</p>	<p>REC OFFICE USE ONLY:</p> <p>APPROVAL DATE: 25/07/2024</p> <p>APPROVED CONSENT IRB VERSION NUMBER:</p> <p>PI NAME: BIRUNGI ESTHER</p> <p>IRB NO: BSU-REC-2024-374</p>
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weaknesses of their teaching staff. By identifying areas where teachers may require additional support or training and implement targeted professional development programs to improve teacher competence in Kiswahili instruction.

The findings of the study will serve as a valuable resource for teachers to identify areas for improvement in their teaching practices to enhance their pedagogical skills, leading to more engaging and effective teaching methods in the Kiswahili subject.

Future researchers in the field of education would benefit from the findings by building upon existing knowledge and insights to contribute to the ongoing improvement of educational practices and policies, ultimately advancing the field of education and benefiting stakeholders at all levels.

Incentives or rewards for participating

Participation will be voluntary therefore no incentives will be rewarded to participants.

Protecting data confidentiality

The information provided in this study will be stored on computer with passwords and only authorized personnel will be allowed to access data. The researcher will preserve the participants' identity and only publish information that is general not personal.

Protecting subject privacy during data collection

Every participant will be treated equally without giving a particular priority to a certain group. The respondents will have equal chances of being selected for the study.

Right to refuse or withdraw

Participants will be free to withdraw from the study without penalty.

What happens if you leave the study?

Participation is free and you are free to withdraw at any time without penalty or loss of benefits.

<p>Leave blank for REC office only:</p> <p>BSU-REC S</p> 	<p>REC OFFICE USE ONLY:</p> <p>APPROVAL DATE: 25/07/2024</p> <p>APPROVED CONSENT IRB VERSION NUMBER:</p> <p>PI NAME: BIRUNGI ESTHER</p> <p>IRB NO: BSU-REC-2024-374</p>
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Who do I ask/call if I have questions or a problem?

Contact the

Principal investigator

Esther Birungi

20/BSU/MEAP/2733

Contact: 0772604589 / 0704604589

OR

Chairperson, BSU-REC.

Dr. Godfrey Zaari Rukundo

Chairman, BSU-REC

P.O. Box 09 Mbarara

Tel: 0772663671

What does your signature or thumbprint on this consent form mean?

Your signature on this form means

- You have been informed about this study's purpose, procedures, possible benefits and risks
- You have been given the chance to ask questions before you sign
- You have voluntarily agreed to be in this study

Name of adult participant

Signature of participant or

Date

Legally authorized representative

<p>Leave blank for REC office only:</p> <p>BSU-REC</p> 	<p>REC OFFICE USE ONLY:</p> <p>APPROVAL DATE: 25/07/2024</p> <p>APPROVED CONSENT IRB VERSION NUMBER:</p> <p>PI NAME: BIRUNGI ESTHER</p> <p>IRB NO: BSU-REC-2024-374</p>
--	--

Esther Birungi

Signed Esther Birungi

Date 6/5/2024

Name of person obtaining consent

Print Name of witness

Signature or thumbprint or mark

Date

<p>Leave blank for _____ only:</p> <p>BSU-REC Sta</p> 	<p>REC OFFICE USE ONLY:</p> <p>APPROVAL DATE: <u>25/07/2024</u></p> <p>APPROVED CONSENT IRB VERSION NUMBER:</p> <p>PI NAME: <u>BIRUNGI ESTHER</u></p> <p>IRB NO: <u>BSU-REC-2024-374</u></p>
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