A SURVEY OF THE QUALITY OF KISWAHILI TESTS ADMINISTERED IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN THE CENTRAL DIVISION OF KITUI DISTRICT VIS A VIS THE TRAINING OF TEACHERS IN TEST SETTING

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ABSTRACT

The overriding objective of this study was to investigate the quality of tests set at primary school level in the Central Division of Kitui District. The study made particular reference to the technical soundness of the tests as well as the training of the teachers in the basic skills in setting of good tests. To handle the problems raised above, the study was based on the assumption that there is congruence between the syllabus, mode of instruction, assessment and performance in national examinations. A field study was conducted. The data collected included 17 samples of Kiswahili language examinations and 15 samples of essay (composition) examinations administered to classes 7 and 8. This was aimed at establishing the technical soundness, hence the quality of examinathons administered to pupils in this division. Questionnaires were also administered to teachers teaching classes 7 and 8. This was meant to demonstrate: whether the teachers an this division are trained on basic skills in test construction, whether the teachers set their own class tests, the teaching experience (number of years taught), whether the teachers are familiar with the basic universal parameters of an achievement test such as validity and equity.

The study has demonstrated that the examinations administered to primary school pupils in this division are of poor quality. They do not follow the basic procedures of setting a good test. It was further established that teachers in this division lack basic training in skills in developing a technically sound test.