

In the year 2008, Rwanda adopted the policy of English as a medium of instruction. This was in an attempt to curb linguistic deficiencies inherited by trilingual educational system, which was in vogue from 1994 until 2008, and strengthen its ties to English-speaking neighbouring countries. This study sought to investigate the effectiveness of implementation of the policy. The study was governed by the following three objectives. To identify mechanisms put in place for implementation of the policy, to find out views of the implementers of English medium policy in Rwanda, to determine emerging issues and challenges encountered by head teachers, teachers and pupils and in the ongoing process of its implementation and evaluate strategies adopted to address those issues and challenges. The research was conducted by means of a descriptive survey design. The target population constituted 80 primary schools, one D.E.O, 80 Principals, 1349 teachers and 68843 pupils located in GASABO District.

The sampled population for primary school teachers involved 160 primary 5 and 6 teachers while it involved 800 primary 5 and 6 pupils. Data were collected from one (100%) D.E.O of the same district as well as eight (10%) primary school Principals, sixteen (10%) primary 5 and 6 teachers and eighty (10%) primary 5 and 6 pupils from 8 sample primary schools of Gasabo District. Schools were selected by means of stratified sampling, the D.E.O, the principals and the teachers were selected by means of purposive sampling technique while pupils were selected by means of simple random sampling technique. Questionnaires and interview schedules were used to collect data. Qualitative data were organized based on themes and summaries of major views by respondents. Quantitative data were analyzed and presented as percentages using tables.

The study found out that mechanisms adopted to implement English medium policy were not adequate to ensure smooth running of the policy implementation. Besides challenges related to preparation and training of trainers as well as preparation and provision of teaching/learning materials for implementation of English medium policy, the study identified other challenges namely parents' involvement, overcrowded classrooms, inadequate quality assurance mechanisms and local language as well as French (former medium of instruction) interference. The study also established that strategies adopted at different levels of education sector to curb those constraints are not adequate to enable effective policy implementation, Teachers and head teachers, as grass root implementers of the English medium policy, were not adequately prepared to meet the needs of English medium policy implementation what leads to a serious hindrance of education quality.

Therefore, the researcher recommended that mechanisms for implementation of English medium policy should be refurbished to meet the needs of pupils and policy implementers, that problems faced by pupils and policy implementers should be handled adequately and with immediate effect, and that strategies adopted to address issues and challenges facing the implementation of English medium policy should not contravene interests of both policy makers and policy implementers.