

The Treatment of Kiswahili in Kenya's Education System

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English seems to remain prominent in the conduct of official communication in Kenya's public and private formal discourse. The paper examines language policy documents containing information on the place of Kiswahili in official communication within the Republic of Kenya. Some of these documents show the status of Kiswahili before and immediately (approximately 20 years) after independence while others are more recent documents. The paper then assesses the implementation of the policy documents as far as Kiswahili is concerned, noting that the treatment of Kiswahili has not been a fair one especially when contrasted with that of English. Possible reasons for the unfair treatment are suggested, noting that although the treatment (of Kiswahili) has not been very fair, Kiswahili has still developed, its use has increased and there are significant achievements that can be identified. Other ways of elevating Kiswahili are suggested and discussed. The paper concludes by observing that all Kenyans need to participate in the promotion of Kiswahili if it is to continue growing as it should as one of Kenya's two official languages, Kenya's only national language, and a mother tongue to many Kenyans.