

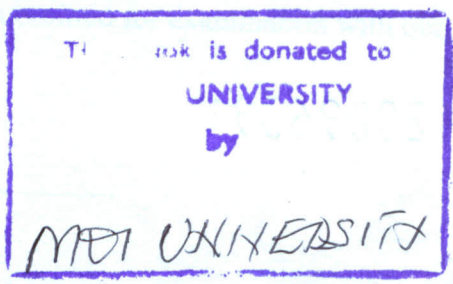
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**A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF BOYS' AND GIRLS' SPELLING ERRORS IN
KISWAHILI FUNCTIONAL WRITING IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN KENYA**

BY



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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to compare spelling errors committed by boys and girls in Kiswahili functional writing. It was done in March 2009. The study adopted a triangulation approach in its theoretical framework. As a result, three theories were used: Error Analysis (Corder, 1967), Interlanguage (Selinker, 1972) and Gender Social Role (Eagly, 1987). The study was carried out in Nyamira County, Kenya. The sample comprised 326 Form Four subjects of equal gender distribution drawn from eight secondary schools. Simple random sampling technique (lottery method) was used to select the study respondents. They wrote a Kiswahili functional essay whereby spelling errors were identified and typified for comparison. Descriptive statistics was used to analyze data. This involved use of measures of central tendency (mean) and distribution (percentage and frequencies). The study revealed that there are no gender specific spelling errors; major gender specific spelling errors, gender specific types of spelling errors that cause boys to be outscored by girls in spelling and specific causes of gender spelling disparities. In the light of the aforesaid findings, the researcher recommends that curriculum developers should give Kiswahili spelling prominence to be taught rationally and systematically; teachers should give the reading skill prominence and nurture the learners' reading culture in order to boost their spelling facility; KNEC should include a compulsory spelling question in Kiswahili national examinations to make both boys and girls competent spellers; spelling bees should be introduced in secondary schools to bridge the gender spelling gap, teachers should motivate both boys and girls 'equally' to be hard-working and conscientious during teaching and learning processes to make them acquire in-depth knowledge about Kiswahili spelling and finally the teaching of spelling should zero in on phonology, word boundaries, and punctuation spelling errors.