



Language Policy Impacts on Educational Outcomes in Multilingual Rwanda

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Abstract

Rwanda, a multilingual nation, has faced challenges in educational outcomes despite its commitment to language diversity through policies aimed at promoting national unity and development. The study employs a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative analysis of standardised test scores with qualitative interviews to explore perceptions and practices related to language use in education. Analysis reveals significant disparities in academic performance among students who predominantly speak the national language versus those from minority linguistic backgrounds, suggesting that language policy implementation varies inconsistently across regions. Language policies have a discernible impact on educational outcomes, with potential for improvement through more equitable and inclusive approaches to bilingual education. To enhance educational equity, Rwanda should strengthen its language policy by providing targeted support to schools in minority linguistic areas, ensuring that all students can access quality education regardless of their mother tongue.

Keywords: *Rwanda, Multilingualism, Bilingual Education, Language Policies, Linguistic Pluralism, Sociolinguistics, Heritage Languages*

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