

Original Paper

CONTRIBUTION OF USAID SOMA UMENYE TO THE
PERFORMANCE OF LEARNERS OF KINYARWANDA
LANGUAGE IN LOWER PRIMARY SCHOOLS.A CASE OF
PUBLIC AND GOVERNMENT AIDED SCHOOLS OF
MUSANZE DISTRICT, IN NORTHERN PROVINCE,
RWANDA (2016/20230)

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Abstract

This study aimed at determining the contribution of usaid soma umenye to the performance of learners of kinyarwanda language in lower primary schools. To assess the contribution of providing trainings to teachers and school leaders to the performance of learners in Kinyarwanda language, to assess the contribution of learning and teaching materials provided to the performance of learners in Kinyarwanda language. The study used correlation research design in which it used both quantitative and qualitative data collection to collect data from 100 participants as a sample out of 824 study population. The sample was drawn from three (3) primary schools located in Muhoza, Nkotsi and Kinigi Sectors of Musanze District. The data was gathered using questionnaire with a Likert scale with closed items and the interview guide was used to collect views from participant on how they think about materials provided, training and contribute to their learning outcomes in Kinyarwanda language in their respective schools. It is against this that the study described recommendations such as Integrate specific training modules on Kinyarwanda language instruction within the existing teacher training programs, implement regular formative and summative assessments to monitor students' progress in Kinyarwanda language proficiency and integrate specific training modules on Kinyarwanda language

instruction within the existing teacher training programs.

Keywords

Providing training, learning, and teaching materials, learners performance

Education is one of the fundamental pillars of social and economic development for any country. As Confucius stated, investing in education is an investment in the future, and this statement holds true for both developed and developing countries. Many developed countries invest heavily in education and human capital to ensure sustainable economic growth and development. On the other hand, developing countries are striving to provide quality education to their citizens to promote social and economic development. In Rwanda, the government has invested significantly in education since the genocide of 1994. The government has partnered with various stakeholders to develop basic education and provide free education from primary to secondary school. However, despite these efforts, many pupils in primary upper levels are still unable to read simple passages of p2 Kinyarwanda text, which is a significant concern for the government. To address this issue, the Rwanda Education Board (REB) initiated the Soma Umenye project in collaboration with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The project aims to improve reading outcomes in Kinyarwanda for at least 1 million children in public and government-aided schools in Rwanda by the end of P3. Specifically, the project aims to ensure that at least 70% of P1-P3 students can read grade-level text with fluency and comprehension.

To address this issue, the Rwanda Education Board initiated the Soma Umenye project in collaboration with USAID. The project aims to improve reading outcomes in Kinyarwanda for at least 1 million children in public and government-aided schools in Rwanda by the end of P3. The success of the project will be measured by evaluating the improvement.

1. Research Hypothesis

Training of teachers and school leaders has no positive contribution to the performance of learners in Kinyarwanda language in Musanze District, primary schools, and Learning and teaching materials provided have no positive contribution to the performance of learners in Kinyarwanda language in Musanze District, primary schools.

2. Theoretical Review

In recent times, educational projects have become popular in the education sector. These projects are designed to enhance the quality of learning and teaching in schools. The aim of this theoretical review was to examine the contribution of educational projects to the performance of learners in lower primary. This review focused on one theories, namely the Social Learning Theory.

2.1 Social Learning Theory

Social Learning Theory (SLT) proposes that learning occurs through observation and modeling of

others' behaviors, attitudes, and emotions. According to Bandura (1977), individuals learn by observing others and their environment. This theory suggests that learners can learn more effectively when they observe others performing tasks or activities. The concept of social learning has been applied in educational projects to enhance the learning experience of learners. Educational projects that use social learning theory as a basis for their design incorporate opportunities for learners to observe and learn from others. The learners are also provided with opportunities to collaborate with others in the learning process, which promotes social interaction and the exchange of ideas.

2.2 Empirical Review

2.2.1 The Contribution of Trainings to Teachers and School Leaders to the Performance of Learners in Lower Primary School

Education is a key driver of economic growth and development, and one of the most important components of education is the quality of teachers and school leaders. Research shows that well-trained teachers and school leaders are crucial to improving student learning outcomes, especially in lower primary school. In this literature review, we will examine the contribution of training to teachers and school leaders in improving the performance of learners in lower primary school.

Research has shown that training has a significant impact on the performance of teachers, and this, in turn, affects the performance of learners. In a study conducted by Ssewamala (2017) in Uganda, it was found that teacher training improved teacher knowledge and skills, resulting in better instructional practices and increased student performance. The study concluded that training was an effective way to improve the quality of education in lower primary school.

In a similar study conducted by Crouch and Pearce (2012) in South Africa, it was found that teacher training had a positive impact on learner performance in reading and mathematics. The study also found that the training had a long-term impact on the performance of learners, and the benefits were visible even after two years.

The contribution of training to teachers and school leaders cannot be overstated. Training has a positive impact on teacher knowledge, skills, instructional practices, school management, and teacher motivation. These factors, in turn, lead to improved student outcomes in lower primary school. Therefore, it is essential to invest in training teachers and school leaders to improve the quality of education in lower primary school. However, there is lack of research on contribution of provided trainings by USAID soma umenye to the performance of students in lower primary.

2.2.2 The Contribution Providing Teaching and Learning Materials to the Performance of Learners in Lower Primary School

Providing teaching and learning materials is considered an essential component of primary education. The use of these materials is believed to enhance the quality of teaching and learning, leading to improved academic performance among learners. This literature review aims to explore the contribution of providing teaching and learning materials to the performance of learners in lower primary school. The review will examine relevant studies that have investigated the relationship

between teaching and learning materials and academic performance.

Research has shown that the provision of teaching and learning materials positively affects academic performance among learners in lower primary school. According to a study by Kariuki (2018), the availability of teaching and learning materials in the classroom significantly contributes to learners' academic performance. The study found that learners who had access to teaching and learning materials performed better than those who did not have access to such materials.

Similarly, a study by Kilolo et al. (2020) found that the availability of teaching and learning materials had a significant positive effect on the academic performance of learners in lower primary school. The study found that learners who had access to teaching and learning materials had higher mean scores compared to those who did not have access to such materials.

Moreover, a study by Mugo and Muthee (2019) found that the use of teaching and learning materials in teaching contributed significantly to the academic performance of learners in lower primary school. The study found that learners who were taught using teaching and learning materials had higher mean scores compared to those who were not taught using such materials.

The reviewed studies consistently indicate that providing teaching and learning materials significantly contributes to the academic performance of learners in lower primary school. The studies suggest that the availability and use of teaching and learning materials positively influence learners' academic performance. However, there is no research have yet done on the contribution of providing teaching and learning material by USAID soma umenye to the performance of learners in lower primary.

3. Methodology

The researcher used correlation research design method. This comprises using questionnaire in collecting data from the respondents. In collecting data, questionnaires distributed to the concerned populations that carefully was chosen by the researcher. The researcher used a case study because it is an effective way of collecting data in a short period of time. As recommended by Kothari (1985), this method is effective since it is used to narrow down a very broad field of research into one easily researchable topic. The study was conducted in three (3) primary schools located in Muhoza, Nkotsi and Kinigi Sectors of Musanze District and the population of this study covered 824 people including school leaders, teachers, students. researcher utilized simple random and purposive sampling obtained by choosing elementary units in such a way that in each unit of the population has equal chance of being selected.

4. Findings

This section presents the findings of the study on two specific objectives addressed. Each objective, descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation). Descriptive statistics on trainings provided to teachers and school leaders

The researcher utilized descriptive statistics, specifically the mean and standard deviation, to gain insights into the level of agreement or disagreement among respondents regarding the training provided

to teachers and school leaders in primary schools located in the Musanze district. These statistics provided valuable information on the overall perception of the training items.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics on Trainings Provided to Teachers and School Leaders

Statements	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std.
Teachers are getting trainings	100	3.00	5.00	3.8800	.72864
Headteacher and Director of studies are getting trainings	100	3.00	5.00	3.7200	.75318
Soma umenye helps the school to teach students kinyarwanda	100	3.00	5.00	4.6000	.51247
Students know to read Kinyarwanda	100	3.00	5.00	4.2200	.71887
the provision of trainings to teachers and school leaders contribute to the performance of learners in Kinyarwanda language.	100	4.00	5.00	4.6600	.47610
the performance of learners in Kinyarwanda language improved after providing trainings to teachers and school leaders.	100	4.00	5.00	4.6200	.48783
Without Soma umenye students couldn't know to read Kinyarwanda as per now.	100	2.00	5.00	4.4300	.65528
Overall	100				

Note: Strongly disagree [1] = **Very low mean**, disagree [1-2] = **Low mean**, Neutral [2-3] = **Moderate mean**, agree [3-4] = **High mean**, strongly agree [4-5] = **Very high mean**.

Source: Research data.

The findings from the Table 1 on training provided to teachers and school leaders shows that Teachers are getting trainings with the mean rating is 3.8800, suggesting a relatively high level of agreement among the respondents and the standard deviation is 0.72864, indicating a moderate amount of variability in the responses.

Headteacher and Director of studies are getting trainings with the mean rating is 3.7200, implying a relatively high level of agreement and the standard deviation is 0.75318, suggesting a moderate amount of variability in the responses, Soma umenye helps the school to teach students Kinyarwanda with the mean rating is 4.6000, indicating a high level of agreement and the standard deviation is 0.51247, suggesting a relatively low amount of variability in the responses.

Students know to read Kinyarwanda with the mean rating is 4.2200, suggesting a high level of agreement and the standard deviation is 0.71887, indicating a moderate amount of variability in the responses, The provision of trainings to teachers and school leaders contribute to the performance of learners in Kinyarwanda language with the mean rating is 4.6600, indicating a very high level of agreement and the standard deviation is 0.47610, suggesting a relatively low amount of variability in the responses.

The performance of learners in Kinyarwanda language improved after providing trainings to teachers and school leaders with the mean rating is 4.6200, indicating a very high level of agreement and the standard

deviation is 0.48783, suggesting a relatively low amount of variability in the responses, Without Soma umenye, students couldn't know to read Kinyarwanda as of now with the mean rating is 4.4300, suggesting a high level of agreement and the standard deviation is 0.65528, indicating a moderate amount of variability in the responses.

Overall, the respondents generally expressed a high level of agreement regarding the effectiveness of trainings for teachers and school leaders, the impact of Soma umenye on teaching Kinyarwanda and improving student performance, as well as the importance of Soma umenye in enabling students to read Kinyarwanda. The standard deviations indicate some variability in the responses, but generally, the mean ratings indicate a positive consensus.

4.1 Descriptive Statistics on Providing Teaching and Learning Materials

The researcher utilized descriptive statistics, specifically the mean and standard deviation, to assess the level of agreement among respondents regarding the statements related to teaching and learning material. These statistics provided valuable insights into the extent to which the respondents agreed or disagreed with the provided statements.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics on Providing Teaching and Learning Materials

Statements	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std.
The school has library.	100	2.00	4.00	2.9100	.85393
The school has Kinyarwanda books for the students.	100	4.00	5.00	4.5900	.49431
The Kinyarwanda books are enough proportional to the number of students.	100	2.00	5.00	3.9600	.97359
Soma umenye project provides books to the school.	100	3.00	5.00	4.5700	.57305
learning and teaching materials provided contribute to the performance of learners in Kinyarwanda language.	100	3.00	5.00	4.7000	.48200
the performance of learners in Kinyarwanda language improved after the provision of learning and teaching materials.	100	3.00	5.00	4.5900	.53362
Without the assistance of Soma umenye by providing books and other materials, students could not know how to read Kinyarwanda.	100	3.00	5.00	4.5100	.61126
Overall	100				

Note. Strongly disagree [1] = Very low mean, disagree [1-2] =Low mean, Neutral [2-3] =Moderate mean, agree [3-4] =High mean, strongly agree [4-5] =Very high mean.

Source: Research data.

The Table 2 shows the findings on teaching and learning materials which indicates that for the first

statement “The school has a library,” received an average score of 2.9100, with a moderate standard deviation of 0.85393. This suggests that respondents had varying opinions regarding the presence of a library in the school. “The school has Kinyarwanda books for the students,” received a higher average score of 4.5900, with a relatively low standard deviation of 0.49431. This indicates that most respondents agreed that the school has an adequate supply of Kinyarwanda books. “The Kinyarwanda books are enough proportional to the number of students,” received an average score of 3.9600, with a higher standard deviation of 0.97359. This suggests that opinions were more diverse regarding whether the number of books is sufficient for the number of students. The fourth, fifth, and sixth statements all received high average scores above 4.5000, indicating positive perceptions about the impact of learning and teaching materials on Kinyarwanda language performance. However, the standard deviations vary, indicating varying levels of agreement among the respondents.

The final statement, “Without the assistance of Soma umenye by providing books and other materials, students could not know how to read Kinyarwanda,” received an average score of 4.5100, with a relatively high standard deviation of 0.61126. This implies that opinions were somewhat divided on the necessity of Soma umenye’s assistance in learning Kinyarwanda.

Overall, this table provides insights into the perceptions of respondents regarding the availability of books and learning materials in a school, as well as their impact on students’ performance in the Kinyarwanda language. The average scores and standard deviations help understand the level of agreement and variability in these perceptions.

4.2 Descriptive Statistics on Performance of Learners in Kinyarwanda Language

The use of descriptive statistics in assessing learners’ performance in Kinyarwanda involves measures like the mean and standard deviation. These statistical measures assist the researcher in understanding the level of agreement or disagreement among the respondents regarding the statements.

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics on Performance of Learners in Kinyarwanda Language

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
The students are highly interested in learning.	100	3.00	5.00	4.4900	.64346
The students feel that Kinyarwanda will be important for their future.	100	2.00	5.00	4.3800	.82609
In this school, the students’ performance is measured by the grades obtained in national exam.	100	2.00	5.00	4.4400	.72919

The students are interested in the Kinyarwanda subject that they are doing.	100	2.00	5.00	4.5100	.71767
The Soma umenye program helps students to perform better.	100	3.00	5.00	4.5100	.62757
Academic performance in Kinyarwanda language of this school is consistently improving.	100	2.00	5.00	4.3800	.86199
This school, students perform highly in district and national exam.	100	2.00	5.00	4.4000	.80403
Valid N (listwise)	100				

Note. Strongly disagree [1] = Very low mean, disagree [1-2] =Low mean, Neutral [2-3] =Moderate mean, agree [3-4] =High mean, strongly agree [4-5] =Very high mean.

Source. Research data.

The Table 3 provides descriptive statistics for various statements related to student interests, beliefs, and academic performance in the context of Kinyarwanda language learning. Let's analyze each statement and its corresponding statistics:

This indicates that, on average, the students have a high level of interest in learning. The scores range from 3.00 to 5.00, with a mean of 4.4900 and a relatively low standard deviation of 0.64346, suggesting that the students' interest levels are relatively consistent. It also indicates that, on average, the students perceive Kinyarwanda to be important for their future. The scores range from 2.00 to 5.00, with a mean of 4.3800 and a higher standard deviation of 0.82609, suggesting a wider range of opinions among the students regarding the future importance of Kinyarwanda.

The statistics indicate that the students' performance is assessed based on the grades they achieve in the national exam. The scores range from 2.00 to 5.00, with a mean of 4.4400 and a moderate standard deviation of 0.72919, suggesting a relatively consistent performance among the students. It specifies that, on average, the students have a high level of interest in the Kinyarwanda subjects they are studying. The scores range from 2.00 to 5.00, with a mean of 4.5100 and a relatively low standard deviation of 0.71767, indicating a consistent level of interest among the students.

The statistics suggest that the Soma umenye program is perceived to be helpful in improving students' performance. The scores range from 3.00 to 5.00, with a mean of 4.5100 and a relatively low standard deviation of 0.62757, indicating a consistent belief among the students regarding the program's effectiveness.

The statistics indicate that the students' academic performance in Kinyarwanda language is perceived to be consistently improving. The scores range from 2.00 to 5.00, with a mean of 4.3800 and a higher standard deviation of 0.86199, suggesting some variation in the perception of performance improvement among the students. The data shows that the students in this school achieve high performance levels in district and national exams. The scores range from 2.00 to 5.00, with a mean of 4.4000 and a moderate standard deviation of 0.80403, indicating a relatively consistent performance among the students.

In summary, the provided descriptive statistics highlight various aspects of student interests, beliefs, and academic performance in the context of Kinyarwanda language learning. The students generally exhibit high interest in learning, perceive Kinyarwanda to be important for their future, and have a consistent level of interest in the subjects they are studying. Additionally, the Soma umenye program is perceived as helpful in improving performance, and the students' academic performance in Kinyarwanda language is believed to be consistently improving. Furthermore, the students in this school perform well in district and national exams.

5. Discussion

Table 4. Regression Coefficient on Provided Training and Learners' Performance

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	2.369	.318		7.448	.000
1 LEARNERS' PERFORMANCE	.435	.071	.526	6.117	.000

a. Dependent Variable: PROVIDINGTRAINING

the findings suggest that there is a statistically significant positive relationship between learners' performance and the provision of training. As learners' performance increases, the likelihood of providing training also increases. However, it is important to consider the context and additional details of the study to draw more accurate conclusions. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected.

$$Y = 2.369 + 0.435PT + \epsilon$$

Where Y = Learners' performance, PT = Provided Training and ϵ = Error term

Table 5. Regression Coefficient of Providing Learning and Teaching Material and Learners' Performance

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients			t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	1.094	.428		2.554	.012
LEARNINGMATERIALS	.786	.100	.621	7.853	.000

a. Dependent Variable: LEARNERS' PERFORMANCE

the results from table 4.14 indicate that the provision of learning and teaching materials is a significant predictor of the learners' performance in the study, as evidenced by the significant coefficient, t-value, and low p-value of 0.000. therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected.

$$Y = 1.094 + 0.786LTM + \epsilon$$

Where Y = Learners' performance, LTM = learning and teaching materials,
 ϵ = Error term

6. Conclusion

Based on the aforementioned study findings, it can be deduced that in Musanze District, lower primary schools equipped with sufficient teaching and learning materials exhibit superior academic performance compared to those with insufficient resources. This suggests a significant influence of provided learning and teaching materials on learners' performance. Additionally, it can be concluded that schools where Soma Umenye conducts regular assessments and research tend to perform better. The results obtained indicate that in Musanze District, schools lacking trained teachers experience subpar academic performance, particularly in the context of Kinyarwanda language.

Recommendations

Ensure availability of up-to-date Kinyarwanda language textbooks, workbooks, and supplementary materials that align with the curriculum. Conduct regular professional development workshops and training sessions for Kinyarwanda language teachers to enhance their teaching methodologies, language proficiency, and understanding of the curriculum.

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