

Examining the complications encountered by Grade 10-11 Oshikwanyama teachers and learners in conducting research projects (Paper 4) within the revised NSSCO Curriculum

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Abstract

This study critically examines the complexities encountered by Grade 10–11 Oshikwanyama teachers and learners in executing research projects (Paper 4) within the NSSCO Revised Curriculum. The impetus for this research stems from the continuous decline in learner performance in Paper 4, despite curriculum enhancements introduced five years ago. Employing robust constructivist and ethnographic research frameworks, this study investigates the multifaceted challenges faced by teachers and learners. A qualitative research methodology was adopted, with purposive sampling selecting participants actively involved in Oshikwanyama research in 2024. Data were meticulously gathered through semi-structured interviews and comprehensive document analysis. Content analysis was utilised to distil and interpret the data, identifying prominent themes and patterns. The findings elucidate several critical issues. Teachers grapple with inadequate training in research methodologies, insufficient parental involvement, and logistical constraints. Learners confront challenges such as limited access to reliable cultural information, prohibitive transportation costs, and a lack of intrinsic motivation. Furthermore, the abstract nature of research concepts and inadequate resources significantly impede the research process. To address these robust challenges, the study recommends strategic interventions, including enhanced awareness programs for parents, targeted professional development workshops for teachers, and practical support such as funding for research-related expenses. Additionally, it advocates for a re-evaluation of the Paper 4 component to boost engagement and mitigate academic dishonesty. By addressing these challenges, the study aims to inform educational stakeholders and develop strategies to improve the pedagogy and practice of Oshikwanyama research. This, in turn, will contribute to enhanced educational outcomes and support the preservation and archiving of Oshikwanyama culture, aligning with the aspirations of Vision 2030.

Keywords: 1st Language Oshikwanyama, Orature, Cultural topics, The revised Curriculum, NSSCO, National examinations, omapekaeko

Introduction

The Oshikwanyama dialect, one of the 12 variants of Oshiwambo in Namibia, is a cross-border language used in Namibia and Angola. Within the Namibian education system, it functions as a standardised language, utilised in educational settings, cultural activities, religious ceremonies, and media broadcasts. Oshikwanyama was standardised in 1990 and has been incorporated as a school subject up to Grade 12 (Shikesho, 2021). The introduction of the revised curriculum (NSSCO) in 2019 included a component called “Omapekaeko” or “Research/Orature” focusing on research within African or Oshiwambo culture. Despite its implementation in 2019, educators and learners continue to face significant challenges, underscoring the necessity of this study (Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture, 2019).

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The proficiency and effectiveness of the Namibian Senior Secondary Certificate Ordinary Level (NSSCO) are crucial for the educational advancement of learners in Namibia. Despite the revision of the NSSCO curriculum five years ago, national examination reports from 2020 to 2023 indicate a persistent decline in learner performance, particularly in Paper 4, which focuses on orature within the Oshikwanyama language as a subject. This consistent underperformance is a cause for concern, as it highlights significant challenges faced by both teachers and learners in executing the research components of Paper 4.

The Grade 10-11 Oshikwanyama's NSSCO curriculum includes five examinable papers: Reading and Directed Writing (Paper 1), Continuous Writing (Paper 2), Critical Response to Text (Paper 3), Orature (Paper 4), and Listening and Speaking on a Cultural Topic (Paper 5). Among these, Paper 4 stands out as particularly challenging due to its requirement for ethnographical research grounded in Oshikwanyama or Oshiwambo culture. This component demands a high level of critical engagement, methodological understanding, and cultural knowledge, which many learners find difficult to attain (Kandjii, 2020).

The challenges are multifaceted. Teachers often lack the necessary training and resources to teach the research methodologies required for Paper 4 effectively. Inadequate support and professional development opportunities exacerbate these issues, leaving teachers ill-prepared to guide their learners through the complexities of ethnographical research (Shikongo, 2019). Additionally, learners face obstacles such as limited access to academic resources, insufficient foundational knowledge, and the abstract nature of research concepts, all of which hinder their ability to perform well in this critical component (Amukugo, 2021).

The literature informing this study is limited, as no previous research has specifically addressed the ethnographical research challenges within the Oshikwanyama culture and Paper 4. However, insights from related studies on educational inequalities and the implementation of language curriculum provide a foundational understanding of the broader context (Higgins, 2016; Smith, 2018). The researcher, having served as a marker for Paper 4 at the Directorate of National Examinations and Assessment (DNEA), has firsthand experience of the difficulties faced by learners. This study aims to identify and analyse the challenges encountered by Oshikwanyama teachers and learners in executing Paper 4, offering potential solutions and implications for improving performance.

By addressing these challenges, this study seeks to inform educational stakeholders and generate new strategies that can enhance the teaching and learning of Paper 4. The goal is to bridge the gap between curriculum expectations and classroom realities, ultimately leading to improved educational outcomes for Oshikwanyama learners.

Despite the implementation of the revised NSSCO Curriculum in 2019, challenges persist in the effective supervision of learners, particularly in the First Language Oshikwanyama's Paper 4 (Grade 10-11). Teachers continue to face difficulties in providing robust oversight, which has led to ongoing issues with learner performance, particularly in the Paper 4 research component on one of the cultural topics, as provided by the Namibian Senior Secondary Certificate, Ordinary Level (Examiner's report, 2020; 2021; 2022; 2023). These challenges underscore the need for a deeper understanding of the obstacles encountered and the identification of effective strategies for improvement.

This study offers critical insights into effective pedagogical strategies and resources, essential for enhancing teachers' ability to deliver high-quality education in the context of the 4th Industrial Revolution. By identifying best practices and challenges in the research teaching process, the study supports professional development and instructional efficacy, thereby contributing to improved educational outcomes. For learners, the study's findings are

pivotal in addressing their needs and learning styles, resulting in a more engaging and effective educational experience. As a consequence, this fosters better academic achievement and skill acquisition. Furthermore, parents benefit from this research by gaining valuable information on how to support their children's education, particularly with regard to Oshikwanyama research projects. By understanding the educational landscape and its challenges, including those posed by technological advancements, parents can be more proactive and involved in their children's learning process.

Moreover, the study's results have significant implications for curriculum developers and educational institutions such as NIED and DNEA. Insights gained from the research can guide the development and refinement of curricula to ensure they are relevant and effective, aligning with the goals of Vision 2030, which aims to transform Namibia into a knowledge-based economy. The focus on Oshikwanyama language development highlights the unique challenges and opportunities in promoting this indigenous language, guiding efforts in language preservation and archiving for future generations. By exploring Oshiwambo cultural values and their impact on education, the study aids in preserving cultural traditions and fostering cultural awareness among both Oshiwambo speakers and the broader community. Additionally, the research provides evidence-based recommendations to NIED for enhancing educational policies and programs, while offering the DNEA critical feedback on assessment practices. This comprehensive approach not only addresses current educational needs but also prepares learners for the demands of a rapidly evolving technological landscape.

Research Questions

The present study aims to address the following research questions:

1. What challenges do Grades 10-11 Oshikwanyama teachers encounter in supervising learners?
2. What difficulties do Grade 10-11 Oshikwanyama learners face when conducting their Paper 4 ethnographical research?
3. What strategies can be implemented to enhance the effectiveness of Oshikwanyama research practices in Grades 10 and 11?

Theoretical Framework

This study employs a theoretical framework grounded in constructivist and ethnographic research theories to examine the challenges faced by Oshikwanyama teachers and learners in conducting research for Paper 4. Constructivism, primarily associated with theorists such as Piaget and Vygotsky, posits that learning is an active, constructive process where knowledge is built through interaction with one's environment (Piaget, 1972; Vygotsky, 1978). In the context of Oshikwanyama research, this theory emphasises the importance of understanding how learners construct knowledge through their research activities and the role of educators in facilitating this process.

Constructivist theory is particularly relevant as it highlights the role of prior knowledge and cognitive development in learning Oshikwanyama. For Oshikwanyama learners, the ability to conduct meaningful research is influenced by their existing knowledge of the language and culture. Teachers' pedagogical strategies, shaped by their understanding of constructivist principles, significantly impact how learners engage with and overcome research challenges (Fosnot, 2005). Thus, examining the challenges in conducting research from a constructivist perspective allows for an exploration of how educational practices can be adapted to support learners' cognitive and cultural development.

Ethnographic research theory, as described by Geertz (1973) and Denzin (2001), complements this framework by focusing on understanding cultural contexts through immersive, qualitative methods. Ethnography provides insights into how cultural factors

influence research practices and educational outcomes. In the Oshikwanyama context, ethnographic approaches help elucidate how cultural and linguistic barriers affect both teachers' and learners' experiences with research. This perspective is crucial for analysing how specific cultural practices and language use impact research performance and educational practices (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007).

The integration of constructivist and ethnographic theories provides a robust framework for analysing the challenges faced by the teachers and learners in conducting Grade 10-11 Oshikwanyama research. Constructivism offers insights into cognitive and pedagogical challenges, while ethnography reveals the cultural nuances affecting research. This combined theoretical approach facilitates a comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing research practices in Oshikwanyama as a First Language in Namibia's revised curriculum.

Literature Review

The literature on challenges in conducting educational research, particularly within the context of Oshikwanyama Paper 4 research (Grade 10-11), reveals significant barriers faced by both educators and researchers. Educational research literature highlights several recurring issues, including insufficient training, limited resources, and cultural barriers. According to Creswell and Poth (2018), teachers often encounter difficulties due to inadequate professional development in research methodologies, which impedes their ability to guide learners effectively through the research process. In the case of Oshikwanyama, this is compounded by the specific linguistic and cultural demands of the subject, which further complicate the teaching and learning of research skills.

Challenges in ethnographic research, as discussed by Hammersley and Atkinson (2007), include issues related to participant observation and the integration of cultural context into research findings. Ethnographic studies emphasise the importance of understanding the cultural dynamics that affect both the researcher and the participants. For Oshikwanyama research, these challenges are particularly pertinent as researchers must navigate the complexities of indigenous knowledge and cultural practices. These complexities can lead to misinterpretations or difficulties in collecting and analysing data effectively (Geertz, 1973).

Moreover, literature on the educational challenges specific to African contexts, such as that by Makgoba (2004) and Mlambo (2010), underscores the importance of contextualising research practices to fit local educational environments. In the Oshikwanyama context, this means addressing how cultural and linguistic factors impact research methodologies and student outcomes. These studies indicate that educators and researchers need targeted support and resources to overcome these barriers and effectively conduct research within their specific cultural contexts.

The literature reviewed highlights the need for tailored support for Oshikwanyama teachers and learners in conducting research. It provides a foundation for understanding the specific challenges faced and underscores the importance of addressing cultural and linguistic barriers to improve research practices and educational outcomes.

Methodology

This study utilised a qualitative research design to investigate the challenges encountered by Oshikwanyama teachers and learners in conducting research. The aim was to acquire an in-depth understanding of the pedagogical strategies and issues within this specific educational context (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Merriam & Tisdell, 2015).

The current study's population comprises teachers and learners who are involved in Oshikwanyama. A purposive sampling approach was employed to select participants actively engaged in Oshikwanyama research in 2024. The sample comprised four (4) teachers (presented in the findings as Teachers 1, 2, 3, and 4) and two (2) learners (presented in the findings as Learners 1 and 2) from various schools in Namibia. This sampling strategy ensured that participants had relevant experience and could provide valuable insights into the challenges associated with Oshikwanyama research, as suggested by Merriam and Tisdell (2015). The respondents have expressed no concerns about revealing their identities, which enhances the quality and reliability of this study. Their openness ensures that the information provided is both relevant and accurate, as it comes from individuals who are well-known within Oshikwanyama as a school subject.

Data were gathered through two primary methods, namely Interview and Document Reading. First, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the selected teachers and learners across the country. These interviews were guided by a set of core questions designed to explore their experiences, strategies, and difficulties encountered during Oshikwanyama research. The semi-structured format allowed for flexibility in responses while maintaining focus on key research questions (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The researcher interviewed the teachers telephonically and organised a weekend to meet the learners, given permission from their principals, as they were staying in the hostel. Second, a review of relevant literature and documents was conducted to complement the interview data. This included academic articles, curriculum documents, and National examiners' reports between 2020 and 2023 related to Oshikwanyama research and educational practices.

Data Analysis

The analysis of qualitative data was performed using content analysis, as outlined by Krippendorff (2018). The process included:

1. **Transcription:** Interviews were transcribed verbatim. The researcher arranged and analysed the answers from the interviews based on the three main questions, which stand as major themes.
2. **Content Analysis:** Content analysis was employed to analyse the data. This method involved categorising and interpreting the content of the interview transcripts and documents to identify key themes and trends. Content analysis is suitable for examining the presence of certain words, themes, or concepts within qualitative data, thus providing insights into the challenges faced by participants (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Krippendorff, 2018; Merriam & Tisdell, 2015).
3. **Synthesis and Interpretation:** The findings from the content analysis were synthesised to offer a comprehensive view of the challenges when dealing with grade 10-11 Oshikwanyama research (Paper 4). The results were interpreted in light of existing literature to provide context and draw meaningful conclusions about the current state of research in this field.

Findings from respondents (Teachers and Learners)

Challenges Encountered by Oshikwanyama Teachers in Supervising Grade 10–11 Learners in Their Oshikwanyama Research Projects

Teacher 1, an experienced educator at Engela Secondary School in Ohangwena Region, Teacher 2 from Shedile Combined School in Omusati Region, Teacher 3, an Oshikwanyama teacher at Oshikoto Secondary School in Oshikoto Region, and Teacher 4 from Kuisebmond Secondary School in Erongo Region have collectively highlighted several significant challenges faced by Oshikwanyama teachers in supervising Grade 10 – 11 learners' research projects.

One of the predominant issues identified by all three educators is the lack of communication between teachers and parents, which leads to insufficient parental involvement and support. This gap hampers the learners' ability to effectively engage in and complete their research projects. Moreover, Teachers 1, 3, and 4 pointed out that many teachers do not fully understand the concept of research in Oshikwanyama due to inadequate training. This lack of proper skills and understanding particularly affects their ability to guide learners in Oshikwanyama Paper 4 research.

Teacher 2 and Teacher 4 noted that teachers often start the research process late, resulting in a rushed approach that compromises the quality and thoroughness of the research. Additionally, Teacher 2 emphasised the issue of incorrect information on cultural topics provided by learners, which complicates the supervision process. Both Teacher 2 and Teacher 1 highlighted the problem of learners' absenteeism, which disrupts the continuity and effectiveness of research teaching.

Difficulties faced by Grade 10 – 11 Oshikwanyama learners when conducting research
All three respondents, including two additional respondents (a Grade 11 learner at Eembaxu Combined School in Eenhana Circuit, Ohangwena Region, and another one at Nuuyoma Secondary School in Oshikuku Circuit, Omusati Region), provided detailed insights into the difficulties faced by Grade 10-11 Oshikwanyama learners. A primary issue identified by Teacher 1, Teacher 4, Teacher 2 and one learner is the limited and often incorrect information provided by respondents, which restricts learners' ability to gather comprehensive and accurate cultural data. Additionally, according to one of the learners, learners face logistical challenges such as high transportation costs and the difficulty of travelling to regions with accurate cultural information. The learners further added that sometimes research prevents them from reading other subjects, which is why sometimes, if they focus only on Oshikwanyama research, they might end up losing knowledge in the other five subjects.

Teacher 1 and Teacher 4 noted that learners lack intrinsic motivation to conduct research, often engaging in it solely as an exam requirement. This leads to superficial engagement, with learners frequently copying information from the internet without proper verification. Furthermore, Teacher 4 highlighted the difficulty learners face in understanding fundamental research aspects despite repeated instruction from teachers.

Teacher 2 and Teacher 3 further observed that learners struggle with the lack of necessary resources such as funds for printing, transportation, voice recorders, cameras, and cell phones. Both Teacher 1 and Teacher 2, and the two learners, pointed out that geographical distances between learners and respondents further complicate data collection. Additionally, Teacher 1 and Teacher 2 expressed that sometimes learners often receive contradictory information from respondents, creating confusion and making it difficult for them to make informed judgments.

Strategies to enhance the effectiveness of Oshikwanyama research practices in Grades 10 and 11

To address these challenges, Teachers 1, 2, and 4 proposed several strategies aimed at enhancing the effectiveness of Oshikwanyama research practices in Grades 10 and 11. One key recommendation from all three respondents is the need for awareness programs targeted at parents, emphasising the importance of Oshikwanyama research and encouraging greater parental involvement and support.

Teacher 1, Teacher 3, and Teacher 4 stressed the necessity of workshops to train teachers in research methodologies, particularly those specific to Oshikwanyama Paper 4 research. This training would equip teachers with the necessary skills and knowledge to guide learners effectively through the research process. Additionally, Teacher 4 and Teacher 1 suggested that education officials conduct visits across different regions to disseminate research information. These visits can help standardize research practices and ensure that both teachers and learners have access to the necessary resources and support.

Teacher 2 recommended that research methodology instruction should begin in Grade 10 to build a strong foundation for Grade 11. She also suggested practical assistance from schools, such as funding for printing and transportation, and sharing examiners' reports with learners for better guidance. Teacher 1 and Teacher 3 proposed that curriculum developers re-evaluate the Paper 4 component to make it more engaging and prevent academic dishonesty. He also called for the collaboration of NIED and DNEA to develop a plagiarism detection device to ensure the integrity of research submissions.

By implementing these strategies, the effectiveness of Oshikwanyama research practices can be significantly enhanced, benefiting both teachers and learners and leading to more successful and meaningful research outcomes.

Findings from the Literature

1. Teachers often face several challenges in supervising learners' academic research. These include:

Lack of Time and Resources: Teachers frequently report having insufficient time to provide individualized support due to large class sizes and heavy workloads. This can limit their ability to offer meaningful feedback and guidance throughout the research process (Kumar & Sharma, 2021).

Limited Expertise in Research: Many teachers, especially those not specialized in research or advanced subjects, may lack the necessary expertise in research methodologies. This can hinder their ability to effectively guide learners in designing and conducting their studies (Gibson & Brown, 2020).

Student Motivation and Engagement: Teachers often struggle with keeping learners motivated and engaged, particularly when learners are disinterested in or find the research topic challenging. This can result in a lack of enthusiasm and commitment to the research process (Smith & Johnson, 2019).

Assessment and Evaluation Difficulties: Evaluating research can be challenging due to the subjective nature of qualitative research and the varying levels of student capability. Teachers need to balance providing constructive feedback with maintaining fairness and objectivity in grading (Harris & Johnson, 2022).

2. Learners encounter a variety of difficulties when conducting research, including:

Limited Research Skills: Many learners lack the fundamental skills required for conducting research, such as formulating research questions, conducting literature reviews, and applying appropriate methodologies (Miller & Anderson, 2020).

Access to Resources: learners often struggle with accessing necessary resources, such as academic journals, databases, and equipment, which can impede their research progress (Thompson & Green, 2021).

Time Management: Balancing research with other academic and extracurricular commitments can be challenging for learners, leading to poor time management and incomplete research projects (Baker, 2022).

Understanding Ethical Considerations: Learners frequently have difficulty understanding and adhering to ethical guidelines in research, such as issues related to plagiarism and consent (Morris & Lee, 2019).

To enhance research practices for Grades 10 and 11, the following strategies can be effective:

Professional Development for Teachers: Providing teachers with ongoing professional development opportunities focused on research methodologies and supervision can improve their ability to guide learners effectively (Smith, 2022).

Incorporation of Research Skills into Curriculum: Integrating research skills into the regular curriculum, rather than treating them as standalone topics, can help learners develop these skills more naturally over time (Jones & Adams, 2021).

Access to Research Resources: Schools can improve access to research resources by partnering with libraries and online databases, and by providing learners with training on how to use these resources effectively (Brown, 2022).

Mentorship Programs: Implementing mentorship programs where learners are paired with more experienced researchers or professionals can provide additional support and guidance (Taylor & Harris, 2020).

Encouraging Collaborative Research: Encouraging collaborative research projects can help learners develop teamwork skills and share the workload, making research more manageable and engaging (Lee, 2021).

The national examiners' reports of the NSSCO between 2020 and 2023 reveal significant shortcomings in teachers' research supervision as far as Oshikwanyama as a First Language is concerned. These weaknesses include a lack of preparation, engagement, and knowledge in dealing with learners' research. The reports suggest several recommendations for improvement. Teachers should guide candidates in formulating research topics, maintaining the progression of themes, and connecting major components. They should encourage learners to select diverse, researchable cultural topics and ensure they acknowledge their information sources to avoid plagiarism. Additionally, teachers must ensure candidates conduct original research and guide them through the entire process until the work meets the required standards. If an examiner suspects that a candidate has copied another's work, the candidate should be advised to select a new topic to avoid penalties during external moderation.

Candidates should gather information not only from books and the Internet but also from other sources, such as their communities. Examiners should ensure candidates differentiate between data collection and references. Examiners are encouraged to complete this exercise promptly, as many centres only undertake this activity towards the end of the due date, leading to numerous errors. Finally, examiners should monitor and guide candidates' work throughout the entire process to prevent incomplete and substandard work.

Discussion

The investigation into the complications encountered by Grade 10-11 Oshikwanyama teachers and learners in conducting Paper 4's research projects within the revised Namibian Senior Secondary Certificate Ordinary Level (NSSCO) curriculum has revealed significant findings. The study, grounded in constructivist and ethnographic research theories, offers insights into the multifaceted challenges faced by teachers and learners. These findings are critical for understanding and addressing the persistent decline in learner performance in Paper 4, as highlighted in national examination reports from 2020 to 2023.

Challenges Faced by Oshikwanyama Teachers

The study highlights several key challenges that Oshikwanyama teachers encounter in supervising research projects. A prominent issue is the lack of adequate training for teachers in research methodologies specific to Oshikwanyama culture. This gap in professional development impedes their ability to effectively guide learners, as noted by Shikongo (2019).

Teachers like Teachers 1, 2, and 4 emphasised the inadequacies in their training, which result in a superficial understanding of research processes and methodologies. This lack of preparation is compounded by limited academic resources and support, which further hinders their ability to provide comprehensive supervision.

Additionally, the study found that the communication gap between teachers and parents significantly affects the quality of learners' research. The insufficient parental involvement and support, as pointed out by the educators, limit the engagement and motivation of learners. This challenge is exacerbated by the logistical difficulties faced by teachers, such as the need to conduct research in geographically dispersed regions, which often leads to a rushed and incomplete approach to the research process.

Challenges faced by Oshikwanyama learners

The learners' perspective, as gathered from interviews with learners, revealed substantial obstacles in conducting research projects. One major issue is the limited access to accurate and comprehensive cultural information. This limitation is often due to the high transportation costs and the geographical distances between learners and potential information sources. Learners also face the challenge of balancing research activities with other academic responsibilities, which can lead to a lack of focus and thoroughness in their research efforts.

Furthermore, the study found that learners struggle with the abstract nature of research concepts and the lack of intrinsic motivation. Many learners engage in research merely as a requirement for examination, leading to superficial engagement and a tendency to copy information from the internet without proper verification. This issue is indicative of a deeper problem related to the foundational knowledge and skills required for conducting meaningful research.

Strategies for improvement

Based on the challenges identified, the study proposes several strategies to enhance the effectiveness of Oshikwanyama research practices.

One critical recommendation is the implementation of targeted professional development programs for teachers. These programs should focus on equipping educators with the necessary skills and knowledge to guide learners through the research process effectively. Workshops and training sessions on research methodologies specific to Oshikwanyama culture are essential for improving teachers' competencies and confidence in supervising research projects.

Additionally, the study suggests the need for increased parental involvement and support. Awareness programs aimed at educating parents about the importance of Oshikwanyama research can foster a more supportive environment for learners. Schools can also play a role by providing practical assistance, such as funding for printing and transportation, and sharing examiners' reports with learners for better guidance.

The study also recommends that educational officials conduct regional visits to disseminate research information and standardise research practices. This approach can ensure that both teachers and learners have access to the necessary resources and support, facilitating a more consistent and effective research process. This study, as cemented by the National examination reports between 2020 and 2023, recommends that teachers improve their research supervision by guiding candidates on formulating topics, maintaining theme progression, and connecting major components. Teachers should encourage diverse cultural topics, ensure proper source acknowledgement to avoid plagiarism and oversee original research from start to finish. Candidates should gather information from various sources,

including communities. Examiners need to differentiate between data collection and references, complete supervision tasks promptly, and consistently monitor and guide candidates to prevent incomplete and substandard work.

Conclusion

This study identified significant challenges faced by Grade 10 – 11 Oshikwanyama teachers and learners in conducting Paper 4 research projects within the revised NSSCO curriculum. Despite curricular updates, the persistent decline in learner performance highlights issues such as inadequate teacher training, limited resources, and the abstract nature of research concepts. Teachers encounter time constraints, insufficient expertise, and difficulties in assessing qualitative research, while learners struggle with limited research skills, poor access to resources, and challenges in time management and ethical considerations. To address these challenges, the study recommends targeted professional development for teachers, integration of research skills into the curriculum, and improved access to resources. Implementing mentorship and collaborative research programs can further support both teachers and learners. Additionally, awareness programs for parents to emphasise the importance of Oshikwanyama research and encourage greater parental involvement are crucial. By aligning curriculum expectations with classroom realities, educational stakeholders can improve the teaching and learning outcomes for Paper 4. Moreover, the study emphasises the importance of cultural preservation and awareness in education. By providing support for ethnographic research, schools can promote a deeper understanding and appreciation of Oshikwanyama culture among learners.

The findings from this study provide significant insights for curriculum developers and educational institutions such as NIED and DNEA. These insights can guide the development and refinement of curricula to ensure they are relevant and effective, aligning with the goals of Vision 2030, which aims to transform Namibia into a knowledge-based society. The focus on Oshikwanyama language development highlights the unique challenges and opportunities in promoting this indigenous language, guiding efforts in cultural preservation and archiving for future generations. By addressing these challenges through a multifaceted approach, educational institutions can significantly enhance the research capabilities of secondary school learners. These measures not only improve the quality of student research but also better prepare learners for future academic and professional pursuits in Oshikwanyama.

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