**SRI VENKATESWARA INTERNSHIP PROGRAM
FOR RESEARCH IN ACADEMICS
(SRI-VIPRA)**

SRI-VIPRA

Project Report of 2023: SVP-2362

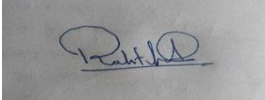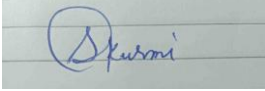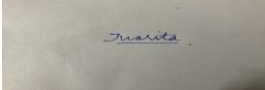## "Higher Education and the Language Question in India"

**IQAC
Sri Venkateswara College
University of Delhi
Benito Juarez Road, Dhaula Kuan, New Delhi
New Delhi -110021**
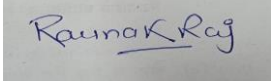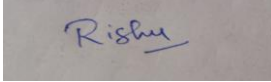
SRIVIPRA PROJECT 2023

Title: Higher Education and the Language Question in India
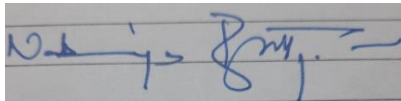
Name of Mentor(s): Nabanipa Bhattacharjee & Judhajit Mukherjee **Names of Department(s):** Department of Sociology, SVC/DU & CSSS/SSS/JNU **Designation(s):** Professor & Doctoral Researcher (CSSS/SSS, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi) respectively	**Photo(s):**

List of students under the SRIVIPRA Project

S. No	Photo	Name of the student	Roll number	Course	Signature
1.		Rohitkrishna A.	821029	B.A. (Hons) Sociology	
2.		Sachin Kurmi	1721090	B.Sc. (Hons) Mathematics	
3.		Tvarita Meena	0121050	B.A. (Prog.) (Eco & Pol Sc)	
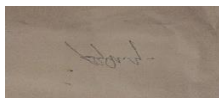
			0121225	B.A. (Prog.) (Eco & Maths)	Raunak Raj
4.		Raunak Raj			
5.		Rishabh Ray	0121229	B.A. (Prog.) (Eco & Maths)	Rishu

Signature(s) of Mentor(s):

Nabanipa Bhattacharjee

Judhajit Mukherjee

18.09.2023, New Delhi
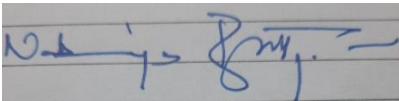
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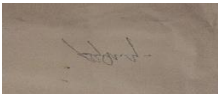
This is to certify that the aforementioned students from Sri Venkateswara College have participated in the summer project SVP-2362 titled **"Higher Education and the Language Question in India"**. The participants have carried out the research project work under our guidance and supervision from 15th June, 2023 to 15th September, 2023. The work carried out is original and it was carried out in an online/offline/hybrid mode.

Signature of Mentor(s):

18.09.2023, New Delhi

Nabanipa Bhattacharjee

Judhajit Mukherjee

Acknowledgements

We would like to express our special thanks and gratitude to our teachers/mentors Prof. Nabanipa Bhattacharjee and Mr. Judhajit Mukherjee for guiding us and ensuring the completion of the research project. We would also like to thank our Principal and the SRIVIPRA team for offering us the golden opportunity to carry out this interesting and important project on the topic **"Higher Education and the Language Question in India"**. The project not only introduced us to the method/theory of doing social science research but also opened up and helped us (re)think and (re)interrogate two of the most significant domains of human life, education and language, and their deep interconnection. We are thankful to our families and friends for being there whenever we needed.

Rohit, Raunak, Tvarita, Rishabh and Sachin   18.09.2023, New Delhi

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Abstract

India is a nation which is rich in its linguistic diversity. However, it faces a significant challenge in the higher education sector regarding the language question. The selection of a language as a medium of instruction in higher education institutions has far-reaching implications on access, equity, quality, and national integration. This project looks into the complexities and debates surrounding the language question in Indian higher education, examining the impact of language policies, regional disparities, the role of English, and efforts to promote multilingualism.

Language plays a significant role in education. India is a linguistically diverse country that faces unique challenges in providing high quality education while accommodating multiple languages. This project delves into the historical background, policies, challenges, and potential solutions related to higher education and language question in India. This project offers different insights and recommendations for fostering a more inclusive and effective higher education system.

In other words, India's linguistic diversity is surrounded by debates and challenges regarding language as a medium of instruction and its impact on higher education. This abstract provides an overview of the language question in Indian higher education and highlights key issues and trends.

Chapter I

<u>Introduction</u>

India is a linguistically diverse nation with 1,600 languages. The Constitution of India recognizes 22 languages as scheduled languages and gives them official status. A legacy from the colonial era, English plays an important role as a language of communication and medium of instruction in higher education. However, the dominance of English has prompted debates about the alienation of regional languages and the exclusion of students from non-English medium backgrounds.

A major challenge is the lack of uniformity in language policy across Indian states. While some states favour the use of regional languages as the language of instruction in higher education, others rely heavily on English. This gap often creates barriers for students to migrate from one state to another, where language proficiency becomes an important factor in accessing education.

Another aspect of the language question in higher education is the demand for English-medium education. Many students and parents perceive English as a key to better job prospects and global opportunities. Consequently, the popularity of English-medium institutions has significantly increased, leading to a growing divide between English and non-English medium institutions, further exaggerating social and economic disparities.

Efforts have been made to address these challenges. The National Education Policy 2020, introduced by the Government of India, emphasizes the promotion of multilingualism and the integration of regional languages into higher education. It encourages universities to offer programs in regional languages and aims to provide increased flexibility and choices for students regarding the medium of instruction.

However, implementing these policies and their impact on the ground remains a complex and evolving issue. It should be noted that balancing the preservation of regional languages, promoting access to education, and preparing students for a globally competitive world poses significant challenges for policymakers and institutions.

Language policies in Indian higher education vary from state to state, leading to disparities and challenges for students migrating across regions. Some states prioritize the use of regional languages, such as Hindi, Bengali, Tamil, or Telugu, as the medium of instruction, while others rely heavily on English. This gap creates hurdles for students from non-English medium backgrounds, as they often struggle to adapt to English-medium institutions or face barriers in accessing education in states with a different regional language. The lack of uniformity in language policies limits the mobility and choices available to students, which affects their educational opportunities.

English is widely seen as a pathway to better job prospects, global opportunities, and social mobility in India. Many students and parents prioritize English-medium education, perceiving it as essential for success in a competitive job market. This demand has fuelled the growth of English-medium institutions, further widening the gap between English and regional language institutions. The pursuit of English-medium education has also led to the erosion of regional language proficiency among younger generations, raising concerns about the preservation of cultural and linguistic heritage.

The language proficiency, especially in English and other languages, can provide various advantages in terms of job opportunities, communication skills, global reach, and access to a wider audience. Proficiency in languages is considered crucial for effective communication in a globalized world and can lead to higher earning potential. English as a medium of instruction can promote cross-cultural understanding and facilitate intercultural communication. When students from diverse linguistic backgrounds come together in an English-medium classroom, they can learn from each other's perspectives and experiences. This exposure to different cultures and ideas can foster tolerance, respect, and global citizenship among students. However, it is important to acknowledge that the adoption of English as a medium of instruction may present challenges.

English, inherited from the colonial era, holds a significant position in Indian higher education as a language of communication and instruction. However, its dominance has been criticized for marginalizing regional languages and excluding students from non-English medium backgrounds. English-medium institutions are often perceived as more prestigious, leading to a growing divide between English and non-English medium institutions. This divide

perpetuates social and economic disparities, as access to quality education becomes skewed in favour of English-speaking students, while those proficient in regional languages face limited opportunities.

Recognizing the need to address the language question, the Government of India introduced the National Education Policy (NEP) in 2020. The NEP emphasizes the promotion of multilingualism and the integration of regional languages into higher education. It encourages universities to offer programs in regional languages and provides flexibility for students to choose the medium of instruction. The policy aims to promote inclusive education, preserve linguistic diversity, and empower students to excel in their chosen language. However, the successful implementation of the NEP requires concerted efforts, collaboration between stakeholders, and capacity building to ensure the availability of quality resources and faculty proficient in regional languages.

Chapter II

<u>History of (Higher) Education in India</u>

The evolution of modern education is associated with the development of the modern state and a modern economic structure in the West. When it comes to sources of ancient education, it is generally found in reports by colonial officials.

The reports of Francis Buchanan and William Adams are particularly important. His 19th-century treatise on the level of education in Bihar and Bengal. According to Qazi Shahidullah, the village pathshala was an institution for all the children of the village. Hindus and Muslims could also participate.

Depending on the situation in the village, classes may also be held at the teacher's home, at a temple, student's parent's home, or outdoors only under highly exceptional circumstances. Also under certain circumstances, funds are usually raised to build another school building from the whole village.

The first systematic attempt to force the East India Company government to provide education was the Charter Act of 1813. According to Orientalists, administrative would have to be based on the following concepts:

Government and administration have always been active in India. Aside from that, this knowledge was contained in classical texts, especially the Shastras. This orientalist lobby was a powerful voice participating in debates about education policy created since 1813. The British believed that education should be based on a curriculum using Western knowledge.

Also, the language of instruction must be English. From their perspective, the challenge of education was not just to produce educated people, but to transform them entirely. Curriculum and education should be designed so that those who have learned it can put it into practice. It is steeped in modern western thought and culture. The missionaries were also a group that believed that the role of education was to transform Indian society. However, the changes they sought to bring about were religious in nature. After the Charter Act of 1813, missionary

activity in India increased. Evangelists' concerns about the questions of most effective methods to promote Christian values and teachings. Their task was to transform Indian personality. However, the transformation that they wished to create was religious in nature.

The Hindu University of Calcutta was founded in his 1816 year. The university establishment movement led by Raja Rammohan Roy and David Hare gathered support and students who desired English as well as colloquial languages to be the medium of instruction. The Hindu University emerged as centres of rebellious rational thought in the 1830s and 1840s. Many of its students rejected the religious orthodoxy in which they had been raised.

The General Assembly institution was founded in Calcutta in 1830 by Alexander Duff, a missionary of the Church of Scotland. He opposed the idea that education should be conducted in the mother tongue language. The popularity of Duff's school, which teaches in English, drew a lot of attention. This theme of coming together of other cultures continued in the nature of the curriculum and other activities in Delhi College. Significant effort was also directed towards translating works of Western science into Indian languages. Thus, there seemed to be a harmonious interplay between western and eastern knowledge systems. During the 1830s, the conflict between the Orientalists and Anglicists was decisively resolved favouring English-language education. Orientalists advocated for integrating contemporary knowledge into the classical framework they endorsed. English as the main language of instruction was supported by both Evangelists and other Anglicists.

The Education Despatch of 1854 (also known as Wood's Despatch) was a major step towards creating a system of education that would be administered by the colonial state. Wood's Despatch proclaimed the determination of the colonial state to directly ensure the spread of education. One key shift that was necessary for a move towards widening access to education was a reassessment of the Filtration theory Wood's Despatch proposed to commit government funds to support higher education in English and primary education in the vernacular. At both of these levels, there were also efforts now made to centralize authority at the level of higher education, a university system was established after the Universities Act of 1857. Colleges were now to be affiliated to various universities which were established in the Presidency towns.

The Hunter Commission, set up in 1882, consolidated the direction of colonial policy established by Wood's Despatch. For primary education, it supported the idea of instruction in the vernaculars. An educational network spanning from village communities to regional districts was implemented. District authorities were granted the authority to determine the curriculum. The Hunter Commission also implemented centralized examinations for primary schools. Nevertheless, the Hunter Commission asserted that the nationwide coverage of the government school system was unattainable. Indeed, it strengthened the importance given to private schools. Expenditure on education was kept low. The notion that the state alone couldn't shoulder the responsibility for disseminating education persisted during the colonial era. It has long been acknowledged that privately operated institutions, functioning on market principles, would need to play a pivotal role in expanding the reach of education.

Education in post-colonial India

Education in post-colonial India has undergone significant transformations from the period of British rule to the present day. The legacy of British rule left India with an education system primarily designed to produce clerks and administrators to serve colonial interests, characterized by an emphasis on English language education and limited access for the masses. However, after gaining independence in 1947, India initiated educational reforms aimed at addressing disparities in access to education. This era saw the establishment of institutions like the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) and Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs) to promote higher education and technical skills.

The National Policy on Education (NPE) of 1968 in India was a seminal document that delineated the nation's vision and aspirations for its education system. Crafted during the tenure of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, the policy aimed to confront the prevalent challenges in the education sector while furnishing a comprehensive framework for development. Some noteworthy highlights of the National Policy on Education 1968 encompassed:

Firstly, it underscored the significance of extending free and compulsory education to all children up to the age of 14. The policy placed a premium on granting access to education for youngsters from all societal strata, with a particular focus on marginalized and disadvantaged communities.

Secondly, the policy acknowledged the pivotal role of regional languages as the medium of instruction at the primary level. It articulated the imperative of employing the mother tongue or local dialect as the instructional medium to facilitate effective learning and comprehension.

Furthermore, the policy underscored the imperative of enhancing the quality of education across all tiers. It advocated for the recruitment and training of highly qualified educators, the revamping of curricula, and the incorporation of innovative pedagogical techniques to elevate the learning experience.

In addition, NPE 1968 recognized the criticality of technical and vocational education in fulfilling the country's industrial and economic requisites. It aspired to seamlessly integrate vocational education into the mainstream educational framework, offering avenues for skill cultivation and entrepreneurship.

Moreover, it accentuated the importance of teacher education and professional growth. The policy laid emphasis on establishing teacher training institutes and implementing comprehensive teacher education programs to augment the competencies and effectiveness of educators.

Concerning higher education, the policy acknowledged the necessity for the expansion and enhancement of higher education institutions. It called for the fostering of research and the establishment of fresh universities, colleges, and specialized institutions to cater to the burgeoning demand for advanced education.

Furthermore, NPE 1968 accorded due recognition to the role of science and technology in national progress. It stressed the promotion of a scientific temperament, the establishment of science laboratories, and the infusion of scientific education into the curriculum at all educational echelons.

Lastly, the policy illuminated the importance of adult education as a vehicle for eradicating illiteracy and fostering social and economic advancement. It aimed to provide platforms for continuous learning and skills augmentation for adults.

The National Policy on Education 1968 laid the cornerstone for substantial reforms and initiatives within the Indian education system. Successive policies and endeavours built upon its principles and objectives. While subsequent revisions and updates have occurred, NPE 1968 remains an indelible milestone in moulding India's educational landscape and confronting the challenges of delivering quality education to all.

After gaining independence in 1947, India embarked on a journey to reform and revitalize its higher education system. This endeavour included the establishment of various education commissions, each tasked with addressing critical issues, including the language question. This essay explores the recommendations of three significant commissions: the Radhakrishnan Committee (1948-1949), the Kothari Commission (1964-1966), and the Knowledge Commission (2005-2009).

One of the earliest education commissions of post-independence India was the Radhakrishnan Committee chaired by Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, a renowned philosopher and statesman. Formed in 1948, this committee aimed to assess the state of higher education in India. Regarding the language question, the committee recognized the importance of promoting regional languages alongside English. They emphasized that universities should offer courses in regional languages, preserving and promoting India's linguistic diversity. The Radhakrishnan Committee's recommendations laid the foundation for a bilingual approach in higher education.

The Kothari Commission, led by Dr. D. S. Kothari, was established in the mid-1960s to comprehensively review and reform the education system. The commission acknowledged the multilingual nature of India and proposed a three-language formula for schools. This formula encouraged the study of the mother tongue, a regional language, and Hindi or English. However, for higher education, the commission recommended a more flexible language policy, allowing universities to use either Hindi or English as the medium of instruction, depending on their location and needs. This recommendation aimed to balance linguistic diversity with accessibility and employability.

In 2007, the Government of India set up the Knowledge Commission with Sam Pitroda as its chairman. This commission had a broader mandate, focusing on the knowledge sector, including education. While not directly addressing the language question, the Knowledge

Commission stressed the importance of improving the quality of education and enhancing research capabilities in Indian higher education institutions. This emphasis indirectly encouraged universities to offer courses in multiple languages, ensuring that language diversity did not compromise educational excellence.

The journey of education commissions in independent India reflects the nation's commitment to addressing the language question while striving for educational excellence. From the Radhakrishnan Committee's emphasis on regional languages to the Kothari Commission's flexible language policy and the Knowledge Commission's focus on knowledge enhancement, each commission played a vital role in shaping India's higher education landscape. These recommendations, while evolving over time, have contributed to a dynamic and inclusive higher education system in India, where linguistic diversity is celebrated without compromising educational standards.

In 2009, the Right to Education Act (RTE) was enacted to provide free and compulsory education to all children aged 6 to 14 years, emphasizing equity and access.

Despite these reforms, several challenges persisted. Inadequate infrastructure, a shortage of qualified teachers, and disparities in educational access remained issues. The education system's emphasis on rote learning and a rigid examination system drew criticism for stifling creativity and critical thinking. Gender and socio-economic disparities in education were particularly concerning, especially in rural areas.

In the 1990s, India's economic liberalization led to increased private sector participation in education and the emergence of international schools and universities. The Information Technology (IT) boom also drove a greater focus on science and technology education. Additionally, the digital age brought about a significant shift in education, with online learning platforms and resources becoming more accessible, particularly after the COVID-19 pandemic.

NEP 2020 and the Language Question

The National Education Policy 2020 recognizes the importance of multilingualism and the need to integrate regional languages into higher education. It addresses the issue of language in the country's higher education systems. It aims to promote inclusive and equitable education while

preserving linguistic diversity. The policy emphasizes a lot of key aspects regarding the language question.

The NEP recognizes the significance of a child's mother tongue or regional language as the medium of instruction in early education. It states that children will be taught in their mother tongue or the local/regional language until at least Grade 5. This provision aims to ensure a strong foundation in the child's first language, enabling better understanding and cognitive development. It promotes multilingualism by encouraging schools and institutions to offer multiple languages at various levels of education. It suggests the introduction of language modules that enable students to learn multiple languages, including classical languages, modern Indian languages, and foreign languages. The policy recognizes the cognitive and academic advantages of multilingualism and aims to foster linguistic diversity and cultural understanding.

The NEP emphasizes providing students with flexibility and choices regarding the medium of instruction. It suggests that higher education institutions, including universities, should offer programs in regional languages. This provision aims to enable students from diverse linguistic backgrounds to access higher education in their preferred language and encourages the use of regional languages as mediums of instruction, research, and expression. It recognizes the need for comprehensive efforts to promote Indian languages, including classical languages, in higher education. It suggests the establishment of language laboratories, translation and interpretation centres, and promotion of Indian language departments. These initiatives aim to facilitate the study, research, and preservation of Indian languages and their rich cultural heritage.

The NEP emphasizes the importance of faculty development and capacity building to ensure proficiency in regional languages. It suggests providing opportunities for teachers and faculty members to enhance their language skills through training programs, workshops, and exchange programs. This provision aims to create a pool of competent educators who can effectively teach in regional languages and support multilingual education.

By addressing the language question through these provisions, the NEP 2020 endeavours to create an inclusive and multilingual education system in India. However, successful implementation of these measures requires collaboration among policymakers, institutions,

teachers, and communities to overcome challenges such as resource allocation, availability of quality learning materials, and capacity building in regional languages.

Higher education plays a central role in shaping a nation's future. In India, the demand for quality higher education is increasing due to a growing population, economic development, and aspirations for a highly skilled workforce. Education plays a central role in the development and progress of any country. Realizing the need for a comprehensive and transformative approach to education, the Government of India has launched the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. NEP 2020 aims to revolutionize the education system of the country, responding to the changing needs of learners and adapting it to global standards. Here are the key features and benefits of NEP 2020, and highlight its potential to shape the future of education in India.

The NEP 2020 adopts a holistic approach to education, focusing on the overall development of students. It emphasizes early childhood care and education, aiming to provide a strong foundation for lifelong learning. Foundational literacy and numeracy are prioritized, ensuring that every child achieves basic competency in these crucial areas. This approach empowers students with essential skills and knowledge, equipping them for future challenges.

The NEP 2020 promotes multidisciplinary education, allowing students to choose subjects from various fields. It encourages the integration of vocational education from an early stage, enabling students to develop practical skills along with academic knowledge. The flexibility in choosing subjects and the removal of rigid subject streams facilitate a more inclusive and personalized learning experience, nurturing students' individual interests and talents.

Understanding the transformative potential of technology, the NEP 2020 envisions the integration of technology in education. It encourages the use of digital platforms and resources for effective teaching-learning process. The policy aims to bridge the digital divide by providing universal access to digital infrastructure and ensuring digital literacy for students and teachers. Technology-driven initiatives like online courses, virtual labs, and digital libraries enhance the quality and reach of education across the country.

The NEP 2020 emphasizes the continuous professional development of teachers, enabling them to stay abreast of evolving pedagogical practices and technologies. The policy promotes the recruitment of qualified teachers and introduces robust teacher training programs to enhance

their teaching skills and subject expertise. This focus on teacher empowerment ensures quality education delivery and nurtures a culture of excellence.

NEP 2020 emphasizes the development of analytical, problem-solving and creative thinking skills. This policy encourages project-based and experiential learning, allowing students to apply their theoretical knowledge to real-life situations. By promoting research-oriented thinking, NEP 2020 aims to nurture a generation of thinkers and innovators who can contribute to India's progress and competitiveness globally. bridge.

The NEP 2020 focuses on the transformation of higher education institutions to meet international standards. It encourages autonomy and academic freedom, promoting institutional collaborations and partnerships. The policy emphasizes the holistic development of students, focusing on their employability and entrepreneurship skills. It also promotes interdisciplinarity and encourages the establishment of research and innovation ecosystems. These initiatives aim to create a vibrant higher education system that nurtures talent and fosters innovation. While the National Education Policy 2020 has the potential to bring about transformative changes in India's education system, it requires careful planning, effective implementation, and continuous monitoring. Addressing the challenges related to implementation, teacher training, inclusivity, assessment reforms, funding, and monitoring mechanisms will be key to realizing the policy's objectives. Critical analysis and ongoing evaluation of the policy's impact are essential to ensure that it effectively meets the evolving needs of learners and contributes to the holistic development of India's education landscape.

Chapter III

<u>Language Policy in India</u>

The language policy of India is a "complex and dynamic field that reflects the linguistic diversity and historical context of the nation". This project aims to provide an analysis of the language policy of India, exploring its objectives, implementation, challenges, and impact on society. It discusses the constitutional provisions related to language, the official language policies, and the recognition of regional languages. The project also examines the implications of language policies on education, administration, and cultural identity. Furthermore, it highlights the role of language movements and activism in shaping language policies in India. It concludes by emphasizing the need for a balanced and inclusive language policy that respects linguistic diversity and promotes social cohesion.

"Dialect, Language, Nation" is a seminal work by Einar Haugen, a renowned linguist and professor at Harvard University. Published in 1966, the book explores the complex relationship between dialects, languages, and national identities. Haugen's central argument revolves around the idea that language is not only a tool of communication but also a marker of cultural and national identity. It challenges the traditional view that dialects are inferior or corrupted forms of standard language, emphasizing instead their intrinsic value and meaning. One of the main concepts introduced by Haugen is "linguistic continuity", which refers to the gradual linguistic variations that occur within a geographical area. He argues that drawing strict boundaries between languages and dialects is arbitrary because they are interconnected and exist on a spectrum. Haugen emphasized that linguistic varieties should be considered part of a dynamic linguistic continuum rather than separate entities. Haugen also explores the role of language in shaping national identity. It argues that language is an essential part of a nation's cultural heritage and can be used as a symbol of solidarity and pride. Furthermore, it explains how language standardization, often driven by political or social factors, plays a role in defining and strengthening national identities. Throughout the book, Haugen provides many examples from a variety of linguistic situations around the world, including Scandinavia, Switzerland, and the Balkans, to illustrate his arguments. It examines language policies, language planning and language conflicts, highlighting the complex links between languages, dialects and nations. "Dialects, language, Nation" has had a profound impact on the fields of sociolinguistics and

language planning. Haugen's ideas and perspectives have influenced subsequent research and discussions on linguistic diversity, language policy and language rights. His work has contributed to a deeper understanding of the relationship between languages, dialects and national identities, challenging simple categorizations and promoting an appreciation of linguistic diversity.

The language policy of India plays a crucial role in defining the linguistic landscape and cultural identity of the country. This project aims to provide an analysis of India's language policy, exploring its historical context, objectives, implementation, and challenges. The project discusses the constitutional provisions related to language in India, including the Eighth Schedule that recognizes 22 officially recognized languages. It explores the constitutional guarantees of linguistic diversity and the rights of linguistic minorities.

India's official language policies have evolved over time. The project examines the status of Hindi as the official language and the role of English as an associate official language. It also discusses the tensions and debates surrounding the promotion and use of Hindi in various domains. India's linguistic diversity extends beyond the official languages. The project explores the recognition and status of regional languages, highlighting their importance in preserving cultural heritage and promoting inclusivity.

Language policies in India have significant implications for the education system. The project discusses the challenges and debates surrounding the choice of medium of instruction, the role of English in education, and the efforts to promote mother tongue-based multilingual education. Language policies also impact the administrative domain in India. The project examines the use of languages in government offices, judiciary, and public services, and the challenges faced in ensuring accessibility and inclusivity.

Language movements and activism have played a significant role in shaping language policies in India. The project explores the role of language-based movements in demanding recognition and promotion of regional languages and the impact of such activism on policy decisions. While the constitutional provisions and official language policies provide a framework, challenges exist in implementation and balancing the interests of different language communities. The project concludes by emphasizing the need for a balanced and inclusive

language policy that respects linguistic diversity, promotes multilingualism, and fosters social cohesion in India.
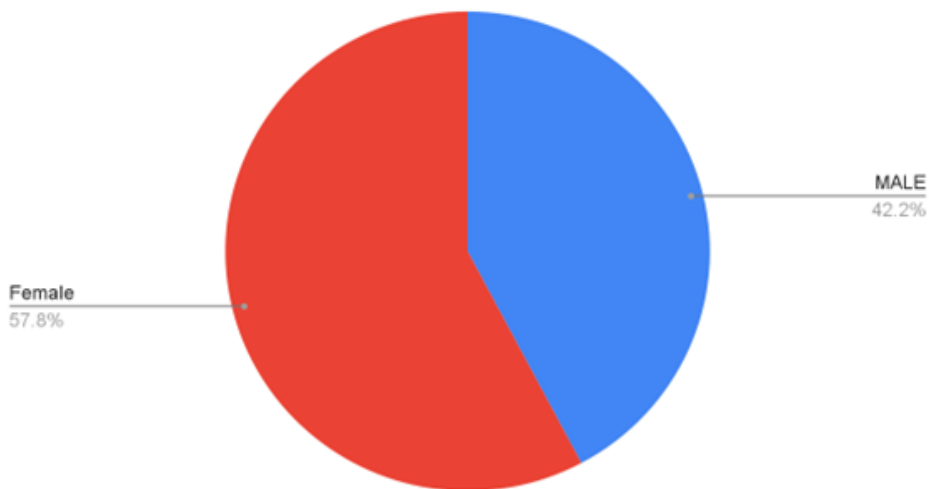
Chapter IV

Presentation of Data

The data for this project was collected by circulating an online questionnaire among a statistical sample of close to 55 male and female UG students of age group 18-24 enrolled in different colleges of the University of Delhi.
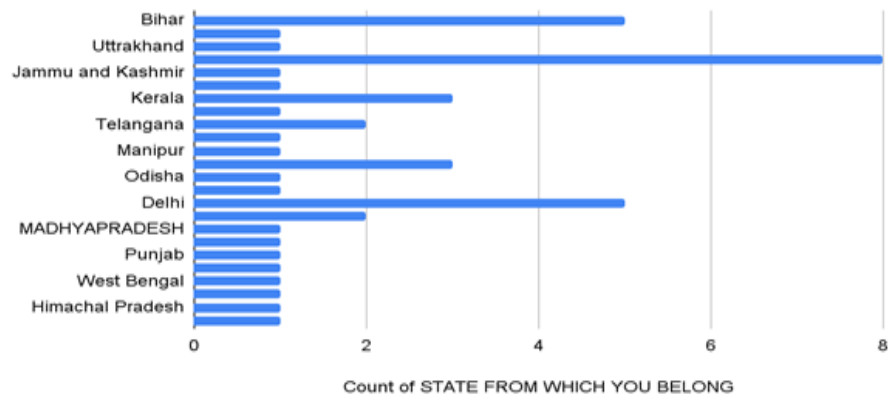
Characteristics of respondents

1. **Gender:**

Count of GENDER

MALE
42.2%

Female
57.8%

2. **States to which respondents belong:**

Count of STATE FROM WHICH YOU BELONG

Count of STATE FROM WHICH YOU BELONG

3. Field of study:

Science

Social sciences/Humanities

Higher education

1. Factors which influence higher education:

By looking at the graph we see that affordability is the most important element that influences students when choosing a college for higher education, followed by the reputation of the university, the availability of desired courses, and the quality of education.
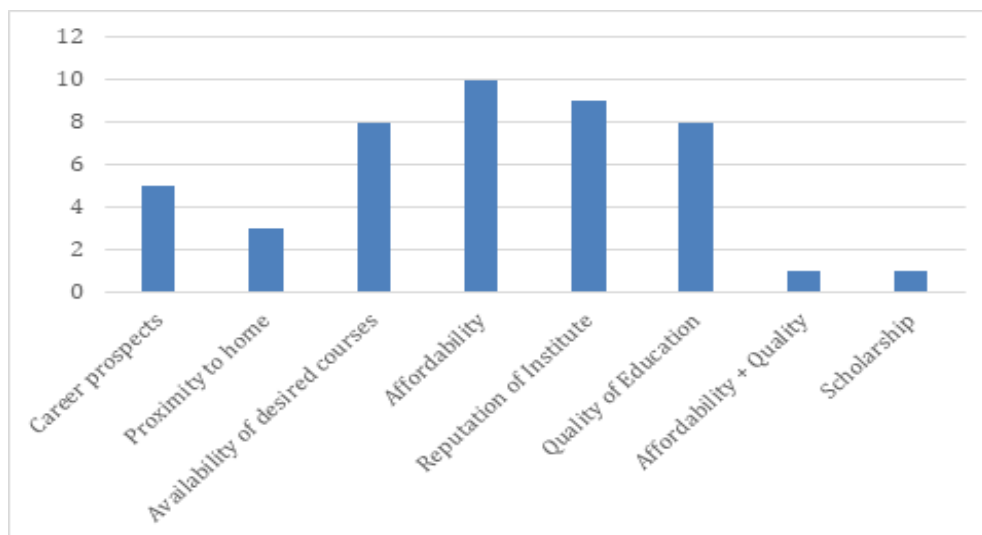

2. Satisfaction level of respondents on the basis of quality of education:

After examining the data, we understand that quality of education is different according to different set of people. We see that about 19% students have the view that quality of education is dissatisfactory and a bigger chunk of the people (81%) have thoughts between neutral to satisfied. 80% of the students' gauge satisfaction on the basis of factors like grades, job opportunities and general experience of the college life together. More than 50% of the students would like to see improvement in all the sectors like improved teaching, technical tools like digital white boards, diverse friends and relatable curriculum.

Count of How satisfied are you with the quality of higher education in India?
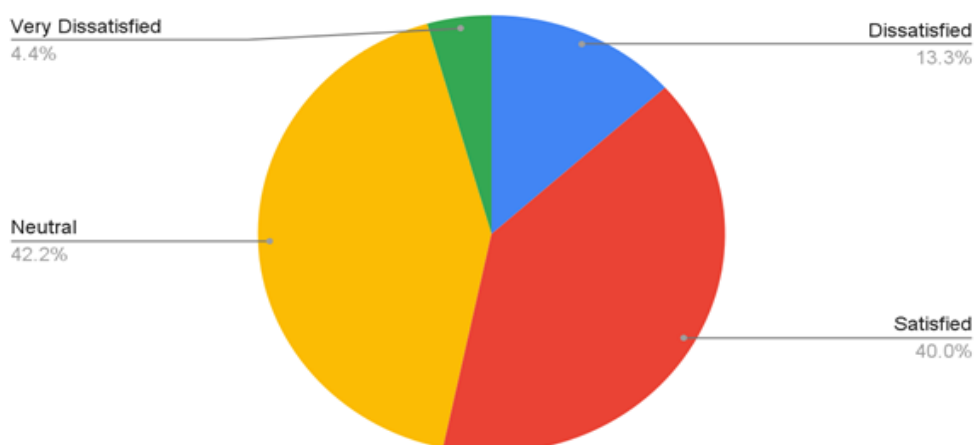
Language (medium of instruction)

1. **Mother tongue:**

62% of the respondents have chosen Hindi as their mother tongue and the rest have the regional languages as their mother tongues like Garwali, Dogri,Telugu, Maithli etc.

2. **Language used among peers:**

Around 50% of the students use Hindi with their peer group and the rest use English and other regional languages. But we observed that the language they are speak with their peer group depends on the kind and character of peer group they are with.

3. **Views on the language which should be used as medium of instruction:**

Around 70% of respondents think English should be the medium of instruction and the rest think we should use the language with which the students of a region feel more comfortable and confident with.

Count of What is the level of emphasis on English as a medium of instruction in higher education in India especially in classroom

Insufficent
20.0%

Excessive
15.6%
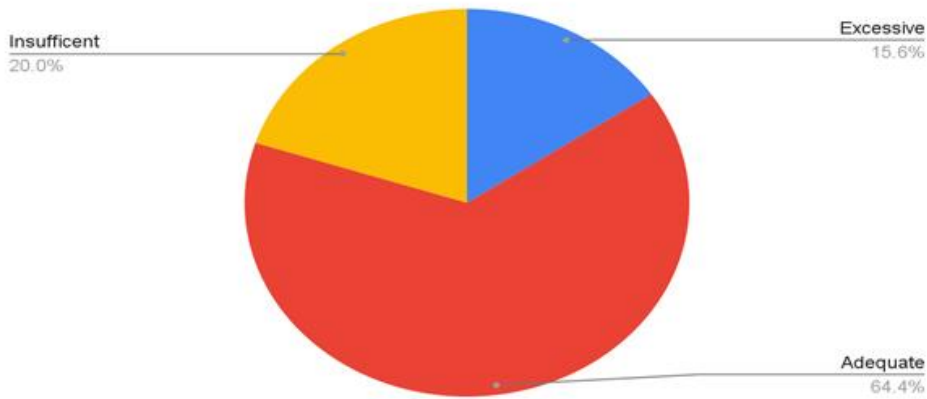
Adequate
64.4%

By examining the diagram, we understand that most of the students think that the use of English language as a medium of instruction is in adequate amount.

While the graph below shows that most of the students think that the government should make more efforts to promote regional language in higher education.

Count of Should more efforts be made to promote regional languages in higher education in India?

Count of Should more efforts be made to promote regional languages in higher education in India?
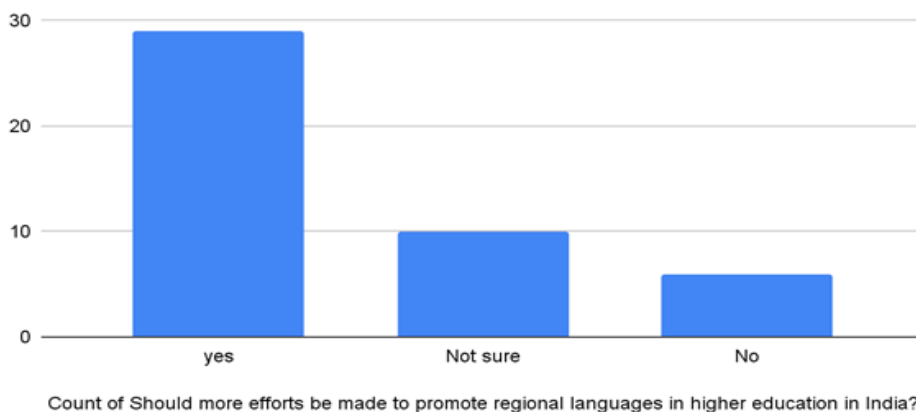
Dependency on language proficiency for economic potential

88% of the respondents think that there is a direct relation between language proficiency and economic potential while the rest are unsure.

Dependency on language proficiency for political potential

85% of the students think that there is a direct link between language proficiency and political potential.

What challenges, if any, do you foresee in implementing Hindi as the sole medium of instruction in centrally aided higher education institutions?

After analysing the answers of all the respondents, it is observed that most of them think it is a very challenging and not very useful step because:

- As most top institutes and colleges in our country are centrally aided and if Hindi will be the sole medium of instruction, then it will create a havoc for the students who do not know the language very well and a major chunk of Indian population does not understand Hindi well.

- In most parts of the country people consider language as a source of pride and identity. We have seen organization of Indian states based on language and many movements (and violent riots) have happened in the name of language. So implementation of Hindi as the sole medium of instruction may probably yet again unsettle the country.

- English is a very important global language of, among others, politics and trade and commerce. So, implementation of Hindi will neither serve the purpose of national development nor international political and economic negotiations.

What challenges, if any, do you foresee in implementing regional languages as the media of instruction in state aided higher education institutions?

The common challenges which the respondents noted are as follows:

- This step of regional languages implementation will kill the diversity of state aided institutions because many students of different states change their institutions

for better study facilities. Indeed, in higher education, if this step is taken, diversity of the state aided institutions will be nullified.

- It will create an issue regarding getting employment/placement in future because most hirings require English as the medium of speech. So, it will lead to many more students dropping out from higher studies.

- Lack of faculty who can teach in regional languages again which will lead to decrease in the quality of education.

Issues related to language policy, preservation of language and culture, NEP, language and employment
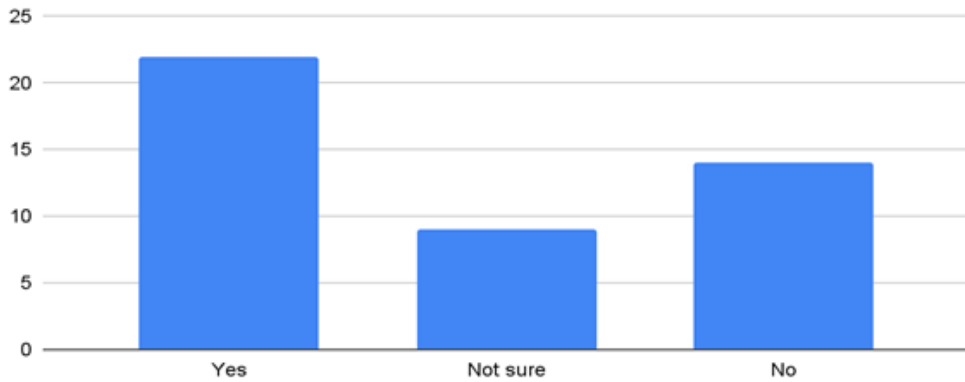
Count of Are you aware of India's language policy?

No
20.0%

Not sure
13.3%

Yes
66.7%
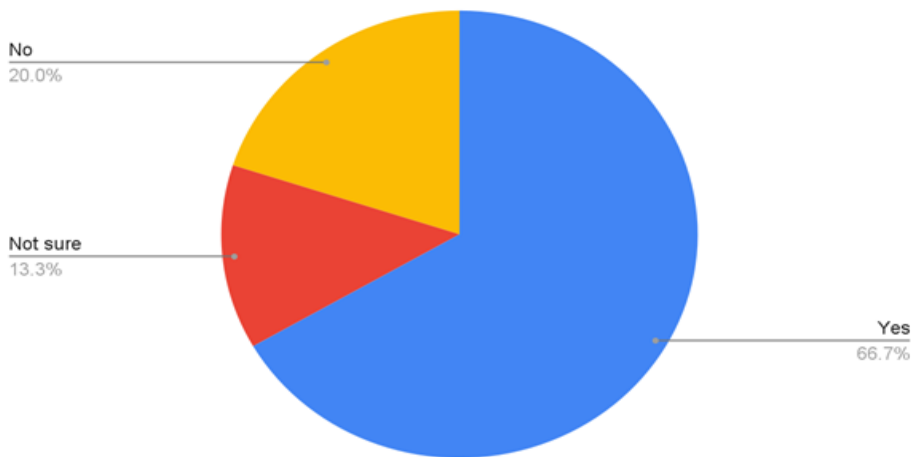
Count of Do you believe the language policy outlined in NEP 2020 is necessary for promoting linguistic
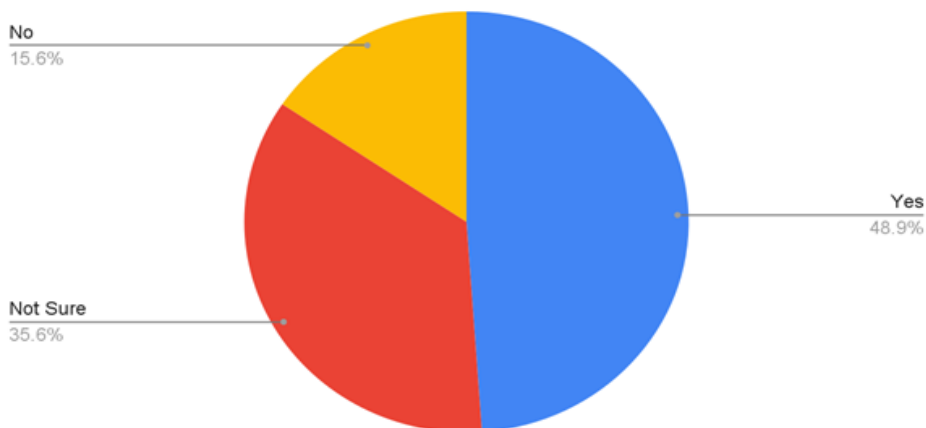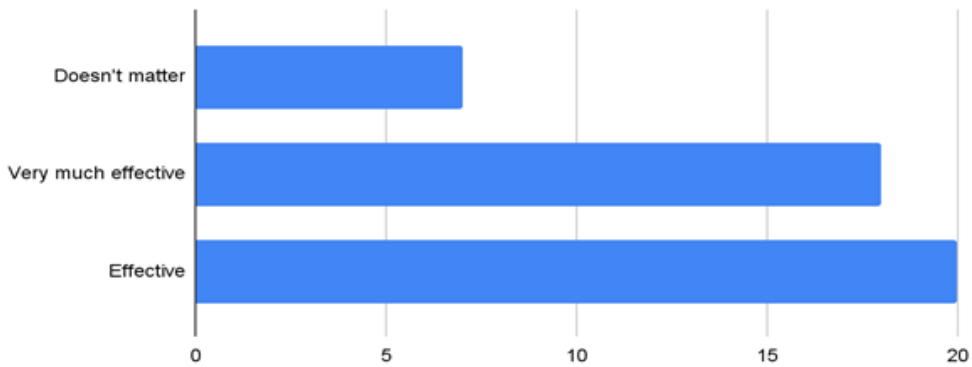
No
15.6%

Yes
48.9%

Not Sure
35.6%

Count of Are you in favour of promoting Hindi/Sanskrit as a language of national and cultural significance under NEP?


Count of Are you in favour of promoting Hindi/Sanskrit as a language of national and cultural

Count of To what extent do you think language (English/mother tongue) can facilitate critical thinking about society?
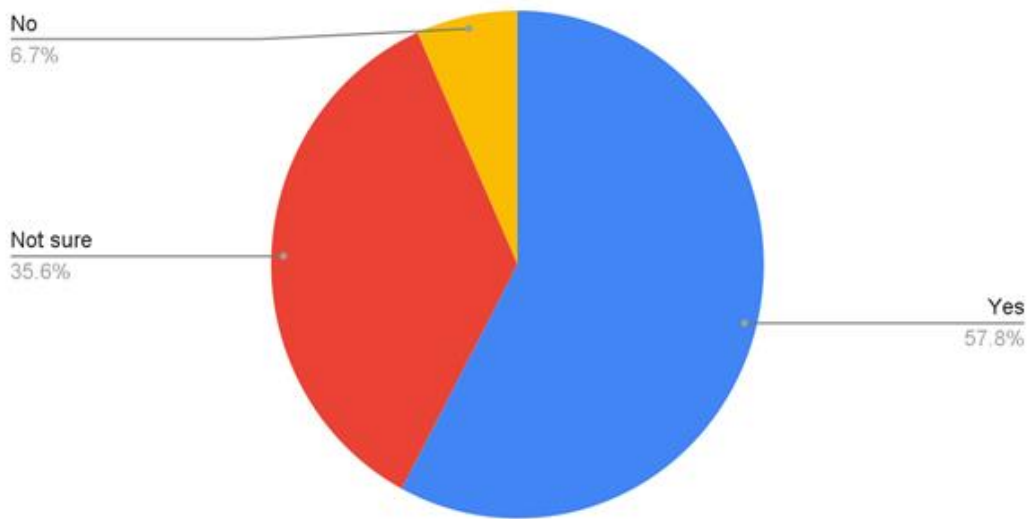

Count of To what extent do you think language (English/mother tongue) can
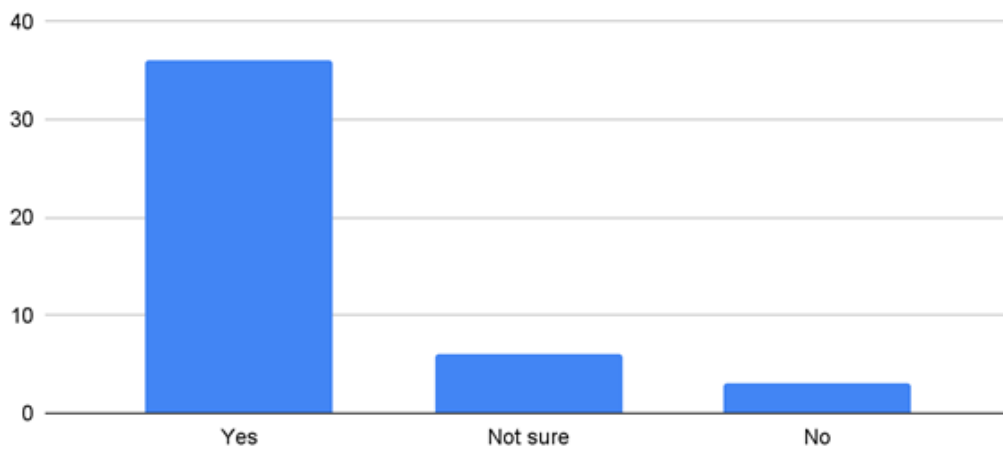
Count of What language(s) do jobs and employment opportunities value?

English, and Regional(if
2.3%
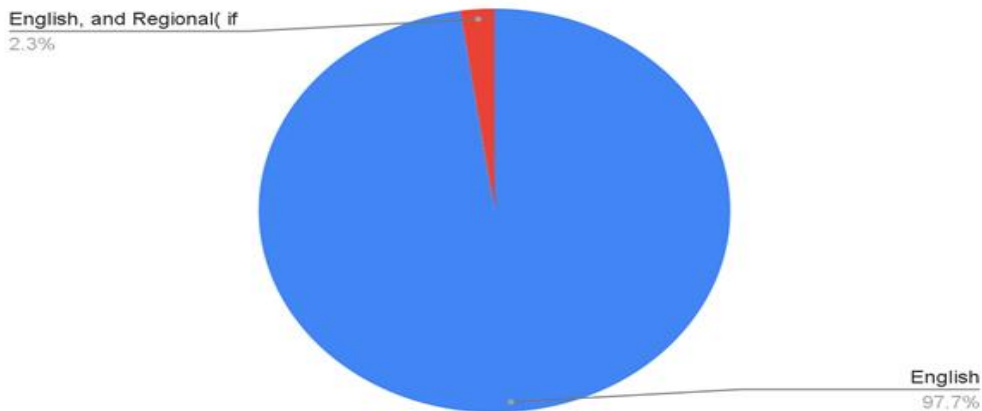
English
97.7%

Count of Do you think more official languages should be added to the Eight Schedule of the Constitution of India?

No
6.7%

Not sure
35.6%

Yes
57.8%

Count of Do you approve of the three language formula (Hindi/English/mother tongue) which has been the core of India's

Count of Do you approve of the three language formula (Hindi/English/mother tongue) which has

Suggestions : NOT ANY

Chapter V

<u>Conclusion</u>

Higher education and language are interconnected aspects of India's educational landscape, and they have been a topic of discussion and debate, especially in the context of the National Education Policy (NEP) introduced in 2020. The NEP aims to bring significant reforms to the higher education system in India.

One of the key features of the NEP is its emphasis on promoting multilingualism and the preservation of regional languages. It recognizes the importance of mother tongue or regional language as the medium of instruction in early education. This approach is seen as a way to ensure that students have a strong foundation in their native languages while also learning in other languages like English.

In the realm of higher education, English has traditionally been the dominant medium of instruction, which has often posed challenges for students from non-English speaking backgrounds. The NEP seeks to address this by allowing universities to offer programs in multiple languages, making higher education more accessible to a wider linguistic diversity.

However, the balance between regional languages and English in higher education remains a topic of discussion. While English is essential for global competitiveness and access to international knowledge, the NEP aims to ensure that the promotion of regional languages does not compromise students' proficiency in English.

Thus, the National Education Policy in India recognizes the importance of both regional languages and English in higher education. It aims to strike a balance by promoting multilingualism and providing flexibility in the choice of language for instruction. This approach seeks to empower students with linguistic diversity while ensuring they are prepared for a globalized world. The successful implementation of these policies will play a pivotal role in shaping the future of higher education and language in India.

The NEP 2020's three language policy represents a significant shift in India's language policy framework. While it aims to promote multilingualism and national integration, it also poses challenges in terms of implementation and balancing the role of regional languages. The project concludes by emphasizing the need for a balanced and flexible language policy that respects linguistic diversity, empowers teachers, and promotes holistic language learning for all students.

Education in mother tongue is the key step towards social justice. NEP highlights the significance of promoting education in the native language of learners to ensure equitable access and opportunity. The NEP in India highlights the significance of mother tongue-based education and multilingualism. It emphasizes that children should be taught in their mother tongue or regional language until at least Grade 5.

This approach has several advantages. First, it enhances comprehension and cognitive development as students grasp concepts more effectively in a familiar language. Second, it helps in preserving cultural and linguistic diversity. Thirdly, it bridges the educational gap for marginalized and rural communities, ultimately contributing to social justice.

However, there are challenges in implementing this policy. One concern is the availability of quality teaching materials and trained educators in various languages. Additionally, as students' progress to higher grades, the need for standardized testing and education in a global language like English arises, which can pose a dilemma.

In conclusion, while mother tongue-based education aligns with the goals of social justice and inclusivity, its successful implementation depends on addressing logistical challenges and finding a balance between preserving cultural identities and meeting broader educational requirements.

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