

PalArch's Journal of Archaeology of Egypt / Egyptology

SOCIO-POLITICAL DIMENSIONS OF LANGUAGE POLICY AND PLANNING: A CASE STUDY OF PAKISTAN'S MULTILINGUAL LANDSCAPE (1947-2020)

Muhammad Asim Khan¹, Anwar Mahjabeen², Dr. Fayyaz Hussain³, Shehryar⁴

¹Lecturer English, Laboratory College (Pars) University of Agriculture Faisalabad.

²Lecturer English at University of Hail, Hail City, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

³Assistant Professor, In charge, Department of Punjabi, Government College University
Faisalabad.

⁴Bs (Hons) Public Policy, Department of Political science, Bahauddin Zakariya University,
Multan

Corresponding E.mail: drfayyazhussain@gcuf.edu.pk

Email: asim1412@gmail.com, maha.umt@gmail.com

Shehryangasial250@gmail.com

Muhammad Asim Khan, Anwar Mahjabeen, Dr. Fayyaz Hussain, Shehryar. Socio-Political Dimensions Of Language Policy And Planning: A Case Study Of Pakistan's Multilingual Landscape (1947-2020)-- Palarch's Journal Of Archaeology Of Egypt/Egyptology 17(12), 1906-1923. ISSN 1567-214x

Keywords: Pakistan, Language Policy, Multilingualism, English Language, Urdu, Linguistic Diversity, Bilingualism, Globalization, Unesco, Ethnic Identities, Education

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research is to examine the changing language policies throughout history and how they have affected the country's social dynamics, political structures, and linguistic variety. The data used for this study comprises of language policy documents. Utilized a qualitative research approach. Applied the social constructionist theoretical framework proposed by Luckmann and Berger (1966). The study's results showed that Pakistan has had a hard time coming up with a unified language policy since gaining independence. The controversial language policy had a symbolic significance in the Bengali nationalist struggle, eventually resulting in the division of East Pakistan and the establishment of Bangladesh. English's practical use in a multilingual setting has led to a pragmatic trend towards its formal acceptance. This study illuminated how historical legacies, social processes, and linguistic variety impact Pakistani language policy and highlighted Language

issues in Pakistan's culture, politics, and society. Due to its solid theoretical foundations and qualitative, historical methodology, this study has considerable potential to influence language policy and planning research, policymaking, and theoretical discoveries.

INTRODUCTION

Pakistan has 74 languages spoken, according to Dr. Tariq Rahman (1977), but Dr. Atish Durrani said there were 76 languages spoken. Furthermore, seven languages are officially recognized, seventeen are still being developed, eight are in danger of dying out, and only two are still being spoken. On a political, cultural, and religious level, the problem of linguistic variety is very hard to solve. In educational areas, it is also very hard to find a good way to teach in different languages. With over 74 or 76 languages and many dialects, Pakistan is a country rich in linguistic diversity. The diversity of the country's languages and cultures is a reflection of its complicated past. On the other hand, linguistic policy and planning face obstacles due to this variety. Language regulations in Pakistan have their roots in the colonial period, when English was designated the official language and the medium of instruction. The country's linguistic environment has been shaped by the heritage of English domination, which is seen in the ongoing use of English in government, education, and the media. The indigenous languages of Pakistan are still very much alive and well for millions of people, even though English is the most widely spoken language in the country. In domestic settings, among neighbors, and in the marketplace, these languages are the de facto standard. Because they represent the customs and identities of the many different ethnic groups in Pakistan, they are also very important socially and culturally. The term "Language Policy" was first used in Norway by Haugen (1983). School language policies are outlined in documents called "language policies" (Olson 2007). Languages and their functions in the nation's classrooms and daily lives are outlined below. Phillipson and Skutnabb-Kangs (1996) state that language policy is the end result of deciding rules for tasks, rights, functions, and access in terms of language.

Language planning is an ongoing activity that involves many different types of authorities, academies, and committees. The method is also nurtured and adjusted from committee to committee based on the aims of language planning. Some aspects of language planning are consistent across contexts; for instance, people of minority languages may be compelled to learn the language used by the majority. Support for multilingualism, pluralism, and multilingual recognition all exhibit similar patterns. It is also considered part of the language planning process to revitalize the language, reform it, maintain it, and standardize it. The goal of language planning, as stated by Cooper (1989), is to shape the way a speech community uses and acquires languages or linguistic variants. Corpus, Acquisition, Status, and Prestige planning are just a few of the many steps in this intricate process.

Since Pakistan gained its independence in 1947, a web of linguistic variety, political goals, and socio-cultural elements has developed within the framework of the country's language policy and planning. The groundwork for a language instruction strategy that is currently in use was set during an initial educational conference in Karachi (November- December, 1947). This policy's

main goals were to establish Urdu as "the lingua franca of Pakistan" and to mandate its teaching in schools (ABE 1947: Appendix VI). The linguistic environment has been shaped by the colonial history, which is why English continues to be the official and educational language. As a result of indigenous languages being neglected by Urdu's acceptance as the national language, there have been requests for minority languages to be recognized and supported. Non-Urdu speakers encounter barriers in educational and government contexts due to linguistic inequality caused by execution issues and discrepancies in language policy. Because of this exclusive strategy, the language environment is divided, and people's access to resources is influenced by their language affiliation. The 2017 National Education Policy highlights mother tongue education and the preservation of minority languages, indicating a recognition of the necessity for attention to linguistic variety and asks for a comprehensive plan promoting multilingualism.

Understanding the complexity and difficulties of managing linguistic variety is important as Pakistan continues to traverse its linguistic terrain. The historical context of language policy and planning provides useful background information. The development of a more accepting and linguistically varied Pakistan depends on people's willingness to embrace multilingualism, work towards linguistic fairness, and give equal weight to all languages in society.

Significance of the Study

The results of this study will help us learn more about Pakistan's complicated and changing language situation. The study will also help politicians and Policy makers involved in planning and developing languages in the country by giving them useful information. The study will also add to what is known about language laws and plans in countries with more than one tongue.

Research Questions

1. What challenges arise in the implementation of language policies in Pakistan and What role do social dynamics and power structures play in shaping and implementing language policies?
2. How does the historical legacy of British colonialism influence the current language policies in Pakistan, particularly regarding the status of English and regional languages?
3. How can a language policy be formulated to balance the promotion of local languages and English in Contemporary Pakistan?

LITERATURE REVIEW

We have had issues with language policy and planning from the very beginning of Pakistan; in fact, this is largely responsible for the partition of Bangladesh. Without considering regional differences, these policies are simply copied and pasted from other nations. The key to solving this problem is ensuring that students and instructors are communicating effectively (Homburger, 2003; Khubchandani, 2005; Mohanty, 2005; Skutnabb-Kangas et

al., 2009). According to Hassan and Dzakiria (2019) and Irvine and Gal (2000), "language orientation and ideology" refer to the perspectives held by Ruiz (1984), Schieffelin, Woolard, and Kroskrity (1998), and others on decisions pertaining to language and linguistics.

Different researchers and policy makers had done a lot of work. Almost all governments made new rules and laws without doing enough research or keeping an eye on the researchers who were doing the research. This means that planning for language becomes more important, along with other national problems. We have had trouble with language planning since the beginning of Pakistan. In fact, one of our parts, Bangladesh, was split up because of this problem. They make these rules by copying and pasting from other countries without looking at how those rules are different in each country.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Socio-Political Dimensions of Language Policy and Planning: A Case Study of Pakistan's Multilingual Landscape 1947-2020 will be based on social constructionism, a school of sociology developed by Berger and Luckmann (1966) in their book *The Social Construction of Reality* that questions reality assumptions and highlights the power of people and communities to shape their own reality. The theory argues that identities are built via regular social encounters; it has its roots in symbolic interactionism. Using this approach, we can see how language policies in Pakistan are socially constructed and question long-held assumptions, including the idea that Urdu is the only language that can unite the country.

Overview of Global Language Policies

Although UNESCO published "Education for a Multilingual World" in 2003, the lack of worldwide language regulations remains a discouraging reality. This powerful position is anticipated to seep into all levels of 190 member states' bureaucracy, education, law, and governance. Variegated cultural, political, and historical forces weave language policy throughout the world into a complex web. Some nations choose multilingualism to acknowledge and protect linguistic variety, while others adhere to bilingualism, which emphasizes a single official language, in an effort to promote national unity. Language policy disagreements are often microcosms of larger social dominance or inclusiveness dynamics. As a result of globalization, English has become more important as a major language for communicating across borders. This has sparked debates on linguistic equity and the possible erosion of ethnic identities. As a means of preparing its inhabitants for engagements on a global scale, certain countries forcefully advocate for bilingual or international education. There are a number of international accords that guarantee people the freedom to use their native language in public and at home. This is becoming more widely recognized as a matter of language rights. In spite of obstacles, well-designed language policies have the potential to impact people's everyday lives and the society in which they live by fostering cultural variety, inclusive economic development, and social justice.

Previous Studies

Shahzad et al. (2020) examined Pakistan's language policy from 1947 to 2009 and found its language planning challenges. The research emphasizes language planning's role in a nation's destiny. People argue early planning lacks ideology and ignores linguistic, social, economic, and ethnic factors. English's widespread use, particularly among the wealthy, indicates its practicality and efficiency, even though Urdu is the official language. Political instability prevents a progressive, long-term language policy plan, according to this study. The urge to replace English with Urdu and the disparity between planned and actual procedures show restricted political views. After commissions like the Sharif Commission (1959) and the National Language Authority (1979) showed the gap between words and deeds in language planning, Pakistan needs a more comprehensive and long-term strategy.

Pakistan's language planning history and challenges are examined in Khan et al.'s (2019) language strategy for education. Since Pakistan's language policies, practices, and strategies have not improved schooling, the report claims that Pakistan's language condition is confused. Developing students' Urdu and English creativity is essential to promoting bilingualism in language learning and instruction, according to the authors. The combination of translation and Translation Studies suggests a holistic approach. Practicality requires emphasizing English's status as an Instrumental International Language above its literary or linguistic qualities. Language promotes holistic-integrative development in schools, and the study supports learning approaches like The Pakistan Futuristic Foundation and Institute (PFI). Quality, experiential, and future-oriented parts of the research show the need for practical reforms to Pakistan's language policy for education, presenting a comprehensive and forward-thinking picture of viable answers.

Rafique et al. (2018) examined Punjabi rural public schools' English instruction. Their research illuminates Pakistan's language policy's merits and cons. The study describes Pakistan's multilingual society, where English is the official language and Urdu is the national language. With the first language policy in 1958 and many later efforts, the government has tried to make English the official language of education at all levels. In this descriptive research, 20 rural public school ESL teachers and their students are surveyed, interviewed, and observed in the classroom. The research found that the English medium policy caused students' English proficiency issues. Public school atmosphere, socio-cultural dynamics, poverty, poor pedagogies, and teacher shortages are all possible causes. We recommend lengthier, supervised English language policy in early education. Systemic changes are needed to address the concerns indicated in the critical study.

Ahmad and Khan (2017) critically explore Pakistan's federal framework's memory and present in language policy and provincial autonomy devolution. This paper examines devolution, which was implemented in the 18th amendments, and its pros and cons. Devolution advocates argue local decision-making may boost local languages and increase speakers' cultural, social, political, and economic opportunities. Devolution opponents believe it

threatens Pakistan's existence. Advocates say the 18th Amendment improved language policy in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, especially for minority languages. The study concurs. The paper states that the Higher Education Commission's authority is contested, particularly in language policy. The argument for devolution, which emphasizes minority language rights via legal, material, and institutional protections, supports using local languages to strengthen the federation. Pakistan's language policy, devolution, and federalism are examined to understand its complex cultural, political, and linguistic difficulties.

Siddiqui's (2011) language policy research in Pakistan delves into the country's complicated linguistic concerns. By understanding the complicated relationship between language, society, politics, culture, and the economy, the study shows that dominant languages sometimes overshadow indigenous ones, risking their survival in this era of globalization. Pakistani language issues are exacerbated by its multilingualism and English colonial legacy. The report correctly notes that language planning is neglected due to the absence of a comprehensive language policy document in the country. Putting everything in historical context highlights the difficulty of defining languages as colonial, national, or regional. Unless the 1959 National Education Commission report, education programs don't care about language. By closely comparing proclaimed policies to actual practices, Siddiqui illuminates the roots of Pakistan's language policy failure. This assessment is necessary to understand the country's language planning strategy's limitations.

Mansoor (2005) carefully surveyed Pakistani higher education language planning. The study's representativeness is questioned, yet the findings are enlightening. Two-stage cluster sampling polled students from selected educational institutions. The study comprised administrative and education stakeholder interviews. The study is substantially expanded by the 2,450 students from Pakistani institutions throughout the regions. The fact that students are motivated to learn English supports the concept that it will become a worldwide symbol of power and distinction. The idea that regional languages are undervalued in education shows systematic neglect. However, the surprising finding that Sindhi speakers utilize Urdu more in informal circumstances raises issues about the sample's representativeness and requires more study. However, Mansoor's research provides a strong foundation for understanding language preferences in Pakistan's educational system and emphasizes the necessity for comprehensive language policies that address linguistic diversity and classroom perception.

Mahboob's (2002) examination of Pakistan's language policy begins with English's adoption during British colonialism to replace Persian as the Mughal Empire's official language. This research supports Rubin's extra-linguistic agenda, which holds that the British introduced English to India to impose English ideals and culture. Kipling's "The White Man's Burden." inspired the colonial view of indigenous people as culturally inferior, according to Mahboob. The author emphasizes that the linguistic strategy was more than words, implying that English was promoted to dominate culture. The 1835 transfer from Persian to English, reflecting British domination over India and

changing its language and culture, illustrates a comparable power shift. Mahboob's analytical analysis uncovers Pakistan's language policy's deeper historical and social effects by stressing its role in cultural imposition and power assertion.

Rahman's (1998) study on Pakistani language-teaching methodologies illuminates how state policies affect language education. Language-teaching is an independent force that forms values and identities, and Rahman understands its capacity to empower or disempower. This study focuses on state-run vernacular schools, not private English-medium schools or madrassas. This study examines how these initiatives serve the state's goal of promoting Pakistani nationalism in response to ethnic diversity. Rahman criticizes the research's lack of detail on other state education systems. This critical analysis highlights the interdependence of language, power, and identity and the impact of language-teaching policies on Pakistan's social and political landscape to better understand the complex relationship between language and national identity.

Pakistan's linguistic resources are diverse, but few studies have examined their promotion and management. The literature on language policy focuses on history and characteristics rather than current and detailed reviews. Pakistan's linguistic policies and goals must be explored to address this knowledge gap. Such study on the country's linguistic status might guide future governmental decisions. Combining these studies calls for a more comprehensive, systematic, and long-term language policy for Pakistan. Considering historical legacies, social realities, and linguistic variety requires a smart and adaptable language planning technique. These studies provide insight on Pakistan's linguistic environment and create the framework for effective language policies that meet the needs and desires of its diverse population.

METHODOLOGY

This qualitative research uses discourse analysis to examine shifting language policy and planning discourses. The data of this study comprises of language policy documents. Historical literature will be analyzed using discourse analysis. It helps identify dominant discourses, including language policy and English-medium instruction. The goal is to understand the complex social practices and representations in language policy documents from 1947 to 2020.

Discourse analysis examines how physical processes, connections, and structures and mental concepts, emotions, and beliefs are depicted in social contexts. Discourse analysis analyzes how social systems are depicted. It helps critically assess language policy and its impacts on society (Fairclough, 2003:125). Discussion and influence of social activities and their effects on the environment are called discourse (Candlin&Maley, 1997:202).

Language Policy Analysis 1947-2019

Discourse analysis is dissecting language policy materials to reveal their discourses. This includes analyzing these literature' language, rhetoric, and

storylines. The main goal is to understand how language policies influence and are shaped by social practices, exposing their linguistic ideologies, power relations, and societal viewpoints. The study will respect language policy guidelines and protect sensitive data. Citations and credits must be correct to maintain academic integrity. The Pakistani political landscape is divided into many periods that correspond to major political upheavals and distinct English language usage subdivisions. Political upheavals affected language policy. After sociopolitical upheaval, language planning plans generally become secondary, according to Daoust (1997: 440).

Language Policy in 1950s

Despite the social benefits of English, the Municipal Corporation of Karachi chose Urdu as its official language in 1949 to balance linguistic proficiency and political concerns. Adan views language laws as social processes that affect power relations, supporting the assumption that schools transmit cultural norms. Ayub Khan promoted Urdu and Punjabi by using language as a political and cultural symbol. The 1966 Hamood-ur-Rehman Commission, which protected English medium schools, shows how political upheavals may affect language policy. The Bhutto strategy, which shares political goals, emphasizes the importance of linguistic strategies in gaining political support. This illustrates that Pakistani culture and politics are intertwined and that language policy changes reflect ongoing social and political debates. Discourse analysis within a framework may illuminate linguistic policy ideas, power systems, and social behaviors. This allows a complete study of their impact on Pakistani education and politics. Urdu committees, led by Abdul Haq, continue to promote Urdu despite resistance in East Bengal, demonstrating the complexity of language planning, which includes status and acquisition planning. Urdu should become the national language.

Ayub Khan's Language Policy

The 1952–53 East Bengal Report did not mention the Bengali language campaign, but it did notice the ban on English in primary schools up to fifth grade and the need of Urdu in middle school. Despite Bengali's 1956 declaration as a national language, reports stated that students had to study Urdu. While West Pakistan was under martial control in 1958, General Ayub Khan implemented a centrist language strategy that promoted Urdu as the official language by emphasizing the necessity for a strong central authority and its growth. Bengali nationalists criticized the prohibition on Bengali language courses as discriminatory. After Karachi defied directions not to change technical and scientific course mediums, tensions escalated. The study's authors recommended that institutions get top government clearance before changing course vocabulary. Like indigenous languages were repressed in education during colonial authority, this strategy disadvantaged Bengali and generated resentment, which culminated to the Bengali nationalist struggle and Bangladesh's founding in 1971. The governing elite's perseverance in moderate policies despite resistance and protests escalated ethno-nationalist and linguistic conflicts in West Pakistan.

Language Policy after Ayub

Air Marshal Nur Khan rhetorically attacked the English language, highlighting the apparent privilege gap between vernacular-speaking children and English-medium students. The 1970 New Education Policy did not address this issue. General Yahya Khan's Provincial Constitution Order established a 1972 commission to consider replacing English as an official language. No additional steps were taken. English survived Bhutto's socialism, Zia ulHaq's Islamic martial government, and subsequently democracy. The importance of education in sustaining Islamic norms for national cohesiveness and progress maintained, replicating Ayub Khan's policy of using religion to foster nationalism. The book suggests that Pakistani nationalism is always tied to Islam and supports military rule.

The PPP's Language Policy

Under Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, language policy remained unchanged, reflecting a continuation of previous measures. Despite his socialist and liberal views, Bhutto did not alienate the military or the establishment. Bhutto, like many before him, believed Islam and Urdu could create national unity in the face of ethnic differences. The 1972–1980 education plan upheld, advanced, and implemented Pakistani ideology as a guiding principle in individual and national life. According to the basic principle, education and social and cultural harmony were used to build national unity. Thus, even though Bhutto disagreed with the situation, his administration adopted similar educational and political methods as previous regimes. This demands a consistent language and education policy throughout Pakistan's political administrations.

Zia ulHaq's Language Policy

Pakistan's education changed in 1977 when General Zia ulHaq declared martial law, citing Islamic principles. Zia, unlike Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, won over Islamists, the middle class, and the lower classes by identifying herself with traditional Islamic ideals. Zia's educational reforms included Islamic teachings to promote Islam and Pakistan. English-medium schools have to teach in Urdu or a regional language from first to eighth grade due to policy change. Zia rejected and finally rejected this technique, although his language-teaching style was comparable to his predecessors', demonstrating a continuity of methods with varied focus. Zia's eleven years in leadership promoted Islamization, nationalism, and military integration into education in Pakistan, but it also increased right-wing rhetoric. Middle-class people were raised to believe in a theological synthesis that supported nationalism and militarism.

Post Zia ulHaq Era Language Policy

After Zia ulHaq, Benazir Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif maintained Zia's education program. Even though political leadership has changed, papers like Nawaz Sharif's 1998 education strategy resemble Zia's, making it hard to discern between Bhutto and Sharif. The 1995 Teacher Education preamble, written during Benazir Bhutto's second term, stressed Islamic values including

equality, tolerance, and global solidarity. Nawaz Sharif's education strategy emphasizes Islam and Urdu. Zia ulHaq's Arabic and Urdu lessons for grades VI–VIII and XI–XII are still required in professional schools. Despite some apparent rejection of prior restrictions, Pakistan's language policy remains unchanged and significantly influenced by its power structure. If the power structure changed drastically, this method would need to be reconsidered.

Language Policy 1988-1999

Political turmoil followed Zia-ul-Haq's reign, with Benazir Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif serving as prime ministers and being ousted for corruption and military coups. Even though policy changed throughout these transitions, language policy remained basically the same, illustrating how politically sensitive and difficult language problems are in the country. Language was not officially included in 1992 and 1998 education strategies or Nawaz Sharif's Pakistan 2010 Project. According to Mansoor's (1993) study on attitudes toward Urdu, Punjabi, and English, English medium school pupils had a significant advantage in employment, highlighting employer bias. The investigation also found a strong preference for English education, maybe due to its social status. Language disparities show how complicated and politically sensitive Pakistani language laws are.

General Pervez Musharraf's Language Policy 1999-2008

General Pervez Musharraf's administration has been tight-lipped on its educational policies since the coup that deposed the democratic government on October 12, 1999. General Musharraf is a native Urdu speaker, but he gave his first news conference in English, which might indicate that he is putting a focus on elevating the English language inside his administration. A major objective of Musharraf's administration was to strengthen the economy, because this was one of the reasons given for the coup. There has been a push to improve literacy rates due to the increased emphasis on IT and computer science growth. Given English's centrality to international trade, the government is likely to take steps to improve citizens' command of the language.

Language Policy 2009-2017

An inclusive and fair language policy in Pakistani schools has been impeded by the complicated relationship between religion and language politics. Pakistan still hasn't settled on a coherent plan for its educational system, despite nine reform efforts that culminated in the historic 18th Amendment in 2010. There is no comparison between Urdu and English in the official language policy, however Urdu is preferred over regional languages. The major significance of language in education presents a great challenge to those in charge. Since Pakistan's independence, the problem has remained, and many problems remain unsolved. Regarding linguistic issues in particular, the 2017 National Education Policy (NEP) was a radical change from earlier plans. Recognizing and appreciating linguistic variety for the first time, the NEP pushed for the use of Urdu or local languages as the medium of

instruction at the primary level. The NEP also took into account people's ethnic and social origins when it supported regional languages in addition to Urdu. The complex approach of the program was further shown by the order that Muslim students were religiously obligated to learn Arabic. This decision deviates from previous ones, which had made English or Urdu the official language of teaching from 1947 until 2009. Shah and Afsar's (2016) study on Pakistan's repositioning of the English language in the global context critically showed how elite patronage of English for efficiency and modernization paradoxically perpetuates economic inequality and allows the elite to suppress their own population, highlighting the exploitative and anti-poor nature of linguistic globalization.

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2017

By protecting the rights of language speakers and taking into account different ethnic and national viewpoints, the National Education Policy (NEP) of 2017 helped bring the country closer together politically and in terms of national pride. But it dealt with economic issues in a roundabout way and ignored the worldwide importance of English in this age of globalization. Adhering to UNESCO's guidelines, the policy acknowledged the educational advantages of starting classes in the native tongue. The NEP of 2017 reflected ideological changes in language planning by placing an emphasis on the need to assimilate Arabic and Urdu for certain communities. There was a great deal of linguistic variety shown by the simultaneous use of Urdu and local languages in the classroom. Nevertheless, a shift away from vernacularization and toward linguistic internationalism was apparent in the lack of an official name for regional languages. The NEP 2017 linguistic principles were defined by the intentional blending of multiculturalism, universal ideals, and assimilation.

National Education Policy (NEP) 2018 and Single National Curriculum (SNC) 2019

English language instruction was mandated under Pakistan's 2018 National Education Policy (NEP), which supported a bilingual approach. In an effort to provide uniform national standards for education, the policy was subject to a thorough evaluation and the curricular framework was revised. The government's strategy was further reviewed in 2019, and the Single National Curriculum (SNC) was established for all streams of education in 2019. The goal of the 2018 NEP was to strengthen social cohesiveness and peace-promoting themes and subthemes in the English curriculum. The curriculum emphasized principles such as variety of culture, language, and religion; sustainable development; gender equality; global citizenship; and SDG 4.71, one of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals. In addition to discussing ways to combat terrorism, the text also emphasized the need of promoting sports and adventure while avoiding societal ills such as aggressiveness, deceit, greed, and plagiarism.

Current Language Policy in Pakistan

Modern Pakistani language and culture reflect the terrible tendency of irresponsible English usage. Linguistic pollution, assisted by civil society and

the media, has created a composite Pakistani language. English has remained an official and academic language in Pakistan despite the decline in English education and learning throughout the generations. Due to population increase and a commercially oriented English school system for a limited elite, education quality has worsened. Because of self-financing privatization, universities increasingly house in leased commercial buildings and markets, commercializing education and destroying campus culture. Elite education, controlled by a wicked minority, marginalizes the masses by lowering mainstream education capacity and quality. Cultural outsiders squander resources and may leave for foreign interests. Tensions, trends, and difficulties needing resolution for national interests characterize the post-Quaid-e-Azam era. These challenges, notably education, must be addressed for Pakistan to prosper. To succeed, linguistic, cultural, and sociopolitical issues must be addressed since education is vital to the nation's future. Pakistan's educational potential and future of sovereign peace and brotherly independence depend on language, which allows interactive contact.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

There are many important sociopolitical factors that have influenced the development of language policy in Pakistan. A national language has been chosen for Pakistan with the hope that it would bring the country's varied people closer together and foster a feeling of common identity. There have been instances when dominant groups have used language policy to exert dominance and authority. In a heterogeneous and multilingual nation like Pakistan, the cultural rights of minority groups are profoundly affected by language policy. Various groups are significantly impacted by the educational possibilities provided by the language of instruction chosen by schools. Improving one's language abilities may be a game-changer when it comes to climbing the social ladder.

The obstacles encountered by Pakistan in creating a linguistic strategy subsequent to achieving independence. The presence of many languages inside the country, namely the rivalry between Urdu and Bengali for official recognition as national languages, presented considerable challenges. Urdu, selected as a representation of Muslim solidarity, came into conflict with Bengali, the indigenous language of East Pakistan (now Bangladesh), which formed a substantial part of Pakistan's population and income. Despite the significant demographic and economic significance of Bengali, prominent figures like as Muhammad Ali Jinnah and Liaquat Ali Khan advocated for Urdu to be the only national language. Jinnah's speech, which emphasized Urdu as the official language and denounced those supporting Bengali as the national language as subversive elements, incited demonstrations and exacerbated tensions between East and West Pakistan. The government's effort to implement a standardized script for all languages exacerbated dissatisfaction, since it was seen as an imposition on linguistic variety and cultural oppression. The controversial language policy had a symbolic significance in the Bengali nationalist struggle, eventually resulting in the division of East Pakistan and the establishment of Bangladesh.

A pragmatic stance on language policy advocates for prioritizing the establishment of functional linkages across languages rather than just focusing on individual languages. In countries with several languages, a policy that depends on the supremacy of just one language is considered ineffective. Alternatively, the approach acknowledges the need of using a shared language for effective communication. Over time, the passage observes a change towards English being officially recognized, and a decision was made to convert all official agreements into English within a certain period. In the 2016 curriculum, English was chosen as the language used to teach important topics such as Science, Mathematics, and Social Studies. The acknowledgment of the pragmatic usefulness of English for both communication and education. This aligns with the changing language policies that aim to promote productive interaction in a multilingual environment.

DISCUSSION

The complex geopolitics of Pakistan make language rules difficult to apply. The presence of several languages in various places makes it difficult to promote Urdu as the official language and address the linguistic demands of diverse ethnic groups. English's elitist association creates a linguistic hierarchy that mirrors socioeconomic inequities, deepening social disadvantages. Power conflicts and regional interests in politics cause language policy inconsistencies and oscillations, prioritizing short-term political gains above long-term linguistic inclusivity. Educational differences perpetuate linguistic and socioeconomic inequality, worsening this issue. Globalization and English's rise make protecting language and culture more crucial than ever. Since governments, companies, and the media shape language regulations, we must understand cultural sensitivities, be more tolerant, and eliminate socioeconomic differences that impact language dynamics.

Language policy is difficult to apply in Pakistan due to its diverse linguistic environment, tangled history, and geopolitics. The nation's linguistic policy is complicated by its 70 languages. Urdu and English's dominance in universities, media, and government restricts minority languages' cultural and economic expression. Formal educational materials are difficult to produce and sell without standardized forms for various minority languages. Underfunding of language planning and implementation hinders linguistic variety and language program viability. In minority language communities, the absence of skilled language instructors and linguists makes language policies difficult to execute.

Consistent linguistic policies based on Islam and Urdu were evident under Bhutto, Benazir Bhutto, and Nawaz Sharif, the three prime ministers who followed Zia, highlighting the difficulty of changing policies without rearranging power structures. Maintaining the status quo under General Pervez Musharraf's government exemplifies how language policies endure across political shifts, even if the regime placed an economic emphasis on English. By supporting local languages in addition to Urdu, the 2017 National Education Policy (NEP) acknowledged socioeconomic and ethnic roots, signaling a break from previous approaches. The intricacy of language planning ideologies is shown by the NEP's persistence of assimilation, pluralism, and

internationalism despite its focus on linguistic variation. Pakistan has not been able to establish a unified education policy, and the complex interplay between religion and language politics makes progress difficult.

Ultimately, the social dynamics and power structures in Pakistan are intricately related to the difficulties of enforcing language rules, which in turn reflect the ongoing negotiation of cultural, political, and linguistic elements. This timeline highlights the complex structure of Pakistan's language restrictions and shows how political actions have an ever-lasting impact on them.

Pakistani language policy reforms face criticism due to long-standing linguistic issues and the colonial legacy of English language dominance, which led to Urdu as the national language. Language policies influenced by powerful social and political organizations perpetuate linguistic inequality and marginalize minority languages. These policies are perceived as ways to dominate and control different linguistic groups, underlining the link between language and identity. Power dynamics and systems favor the political and social elite over minority language groups when making language rules. Language policy may promote or reduce power dynamics, demonstrating the intricate link between language and social power systems. Policies that encourage minority languages may revive a language community, but they may also be perceived as measures to perpetuate the majority language group's dominance.

Language policies in Pakistan unjustly favor Urdu and English, marginalizing minority languages and worsening linguistic inequality. This makes minority language groups' cultural expression and economic growth tougher. To address these issues, Pakistan's language policy must recognize and embrace its distinctive linguistic context. Cultural, social, and political factors that cause language disparity would be addressed. The repression of regional languages and promotion of English by British colonization had a lasting influence on language policy. A linguistic hierarchy formed by the colonial government's adoption of English disenfranchised regional language speakers and had far-reaching ramifications. English remained dominant in the executive branch, legislature, and other administrative responsibilities after independence, cementing its association with modernity and development. Language policy promotes multilingualism, minority languages, and equitable linguistic opportunity.

English's dominance in Pakistan has led to biases and underinvestment in regional languages. Due to governments, media, and schools' inability to promote regional languages, English's dominance is growing and competency levels are greatly disparate. The focus on English competence as a route to upward mobility has made it harder for non-English speakers to engage fully in society. A comprehensive strategy is needed to address British colonialism's consequences on language policy. Reevaluating English, embracing linguistic diversity, and promoting regional languages via education, media, and government are crucial. To overcome the long-term impacts of colonial

language policy in Pakistan, a more inviting linguistic environment that fosters bilingualism and appreciates regional languages alongside English is needed.

A comprehensive language plan for Pakistan must respect its linguistic diversity, historical context, and sociopolitical situation. An inclusive language environment promotes multilingualism, cultural diversity, and equal opportunity in education and employment. Recognition of native languages is crucial for regional prosperity, local identity, and historical preservation. Accepting multilingualism and encouraging early English and home language proficiency should be national pride. Successful language instruction requires adequate funds, experienced instructors, and high-quality course materials. Promoting English alongside local languages rather than replacing it may help prevent colonial linguistic gaps. Helping regional language authors and publishers, including them in media, and including local language groups in policymaking and enforcement are crucial. Language and socioeconomic disadvantages must be addressed to provide equal access to education, jobs, and services for everyone. To respond to changing social and linguistic settings, language policies must be examined and altered often. Pakistan needs a multifaceted language policy that emphasizes multilingualism, local language preservation, contextualized English usage, healing historical wrongs, empowering communities that speak these languages, and continuous evaluation. Lawmakers, educators, language specialists, and society must collaborate to represent Pakistan's diverse people and objectives in language. The background material in the results section supports this study's examination of Pakistan's language policy from 1947 until 2020. The research underscores Pakistan's challenging transition to an inclusive linguistic strategy due to Bengali and Urdu's disputed battle for national language status since independence. Despite Bengali's greater population and better economy, political authorities have pushed for Urdu, sparking conflicts and demonstrating language policy's complex geopolitics. Language was significant in the split of East Pakistan and the Bengali nationalist movement, and a uniform script for all languages exacerbated this conflict. This historical method helps explain how language policies have altered in response to sociopolitical dynamics by revealing the long-term impacts of initial decisions on the language environment.

The framework undermines long-held ideas such that Urdu is the only language that can unite the country and that English is worldwide. Discursive and social processes that influence language policy are studied using a social constructionist approach. This is supported by the results section's historical findings that strong individuals had a huge effect on language rules and linguistic reality. The framework encourages linguistic standard critique by emphasizing society's dynamic, historic, and human-made nature. Thus, the theoretical framework enhances historical research by illuminating Pakistan's language policy's sociopolitical dimensions.

Limitation of the Study

The research used qualitative data; it may not have been able to provide a thorough statistical analysis of the effects of language policy.

CONCLUSION

Finally, examining Pakistan's multilingual environment from 1947 to 2020 reveals a complex web of issues, disagreements, and evolving approaches to language regulation and planning. Language conflicts, like the Urdu-Bengali competition, demonstrate the complexity of language decision-making after independence. The study showed how early language policy shaped the Bengali nationalist movement that ultimately led to Bangladesh. The shift toward English, which is used in education and communication, is a sophisticated response to multilingualism. Modern Pakistani language policy is illuminated by social constructionism. The method challenges long-held ideas and assumes universal truths to stimulate critical review of language policies as social constructs. This is even more significant given political concerns, historical legacies, and power dynamics that have shaped language policy. As language policy develops, the emphasis on society's historical and dynamic nature emphasizes the necessity for continual critical review.

The sociopolitical ramifications of language policy and planning are immense, and the challenges are complicated and multidimensional. Anxieties about fostering national unity and accommodating linguistic variety have marked Pakistan's language policy's development throughout the years. All languages should be respected and everyone should have the chance to study and use their preferred language; nonetheless, there have been some encouraging trends in this area in recent years.

The research highlights persistent issues and valuable findings. Sociopolitics, power conflicts, regional interests, and historical legacies influence language policy. Language inequalities and educational gaps need a more comprehensive language approach. Recognizing and appreciating different languages, fostering multilingualism, and ensuring equitable education for all language groups are highlighted in the study.

A multifaceted language policy that addresses past injustices, empowers local language groups, and promotes continual review and adaptation is needed for the future. Policymakers, educators, language specialists, and society must collaborate to reflect Pakistanis' diverse interests and goals. This study advises stakeholders to tackle language issues with inclusivity, cultural sensitivity, and a deep understanding of history and geopolitics. It significantly enhances linguistic policy discussions.

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