



Language Policy and Education Outcomes in Multilingual African States: A Nigerian Perspective

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Abstract

Language policies in multilingual African states often aim to promote national unity while accommodating linguistic diversity. Nigeria is a notable example where over 500 indigenous languages coexist with English and Yoruba, Hausa, Igbo, and other major languages. The research employs a mixed-methods approach combining quantitative surveys with qualitative interviews to gather data from various stakeholders including policymakers, educators, and parents. Data is analysed using statistical software for comparative insights across different regions of Nigeria. Findings indicate that while English remains the dominant language in formal education systems, there are significant disparities in educational attainment among students from non-English speaking backgrounds. For instance, in some areas, up to 40% of primary school children face challenges due to language barriers. The study concludes that effective implementation of multilingual education policies is crucial for reducing linguistic inequalities and improving overall educational outcomes in Nigeria. Recommendations include the development of bilingual curricula, teacher training programmes focused on second-language acquisition, and increased funding for mother-tongue language support initiatives. Language Policy, Multilingual Education, Nigerian Schools, Educational Outcomes

Keywords: *Multilingualism, Bilingualism, Linguistic Diversity, Education Policy, Ethnography, Sociolinguistics, Multiculturalism*

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