



Language Policy Impacts on Education Outcomes in Mali: A Multilingual Context Analysis

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Abstract

Language policies in Mali have evolved to accommodate the country's multilingual nature, with French as the official language and local languages such as Bambara and Soninké being widely used in education. The analysis will draw on existing literature, official government documents, and data from standardised test scores across various regions of Mali. A notable finding is the significant disparity in mathematics proficiency between students who primarily use Bambara at home versus those using French, highlighting challenges in language integration within educational systems. The current language policies are effective in ensuring access to education but fall short in fully addressing linguistic disparities that hinder equitable learning outcomes. To improve educational equity, the government should implement targeted support for non-French speaking students and integrate more local languages into the curriculum.

Keywords: *Multilingualism, Sub-Saharan Africa, Bilingual Education, Language Planning, Cultural Identity, Sociolinguistics, Ethnography*

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