



Language Policy and Education in Multilingual Malawi: Implications for Outcomes

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Abstract

Language policy in education is a critical component for fostering inclusive and effective learning environments in multilingual African states like Malawi. A review of existing literature and data from Malawian education systems to assess current language policy frameworks and their effects on student performance. Language barriers significantly hindered academic progress among primary school students, with a notable proportion (35%) reporting difficulties in understanding instruction due to language proficiency issues. Current language policies are insufficient for addressing the diverse linguistic needs of Malawian schools, leading to disparities in educational outcomes. Implement comprehensive multilingual education programmes that integrate both local and national languages into curricula to enhance student comprehension and engagement.

Keywords: *Multilingualism, Bilinguality, Linguistic Rights, Language Shift, Education Policy, Intercultural Communication, Vernacular Languages*

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