



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

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Published: 23 April 2010 | **Received:** 21 January 2010 | **Accepted:** 05 April 2010

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DOI: [10.5281/zenodo.18904594](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.18904594)

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Abstract

Language policies in Nigeria reflect a multilingual context where over 500 languages are spoken by its diverse population. Education systems aim to accommodate these linguistic differences while promoting national unity and development. Qualitative data from interviews with educators, policymakers, and students were analysed to understand perceptions of language barriers and their impact on learning environments. Findings indicate that while some regions offer multilingual curricula, there is a significant disparity in the implementation of these policies across different states, affecting student performance and retention rates. Despite efforts to integrate languages into education, persistent language barriers hinder equitable educational access and achievement for students from minority linguistic backgrounds. Recommendations include developing standardised curricula that accommodate regional languages more effectively and training programmes for educators on inclusive teaching practices.

Keywords: *Multilingualism, Bilingual Education, Language Standardization, Linguistic Rights, Code-Switching, Heritage Languages, Ethnolinguistics*

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