



EXAMINING EDUCATIONAL POLICIES AND THE ROLE OF TEACHERS PROMOTING MULTILINGUAL EDUCATION AT PERIPHERAL REGIONS IN KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA

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Abstract

Multilingualism is an essential but insufficiently addressed aspect of Pakistan's educational framework, especially in the linguistically varied province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP). Previous research investigated the cognitive and cultural advantages which is associated with mother tongue education and multilingual instruction. However, limited research has assessed the educational policies facilitating these practices in the peripheral regions of KP. Moreover, there is an absence of studies that investigate the practical obstacles encountered by educators when implementing these policies in linguistically diverse classrooms. Thereby, using Braun and Clarke's Thematic Analysis Model, the current study aims to qualitatively examine the educational policies that promote multilingualism and identify the challenges that the teachers face while applying these policies in the peripheral areas of KP. This research revealed a significant disparity between policy and practice, characterised by ambiguous guidelines, insufficient training for teachers, a lack of resources in local languages, and institutional neglect. This ultimately places students whose home languages differ from the medium of instruction at a disadvantage.

Keywords: *Braun and Clark Thematic Analysis Model, Educational Policies, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), Language Policy, Linguistic Diversity, Medium of Instruction, Mother Tongue Education, Multilingual Education, Peripheral Regions.*

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1. Introduction

Multilingualism, the use of multiple languages within a community or individual, is an inherent feature of many societies, particularly in linguistically diverse regions such as Pakistan. As a multilingual nation, Pakistan hosts more than 70 languages, with Pashto, Punjabi, Sindhi, Balochi, Saraiki, and Urdu as the major ones (Rahman, 2021; Ethnologue, 2022). In this context, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) represents a linguistically rich province where a variety of regional languages, including Pashto, Khowar, Torwali, and Gojri are spoken across different districts, particularly in the peripheral and mountainous regions (Hussain, 2020). Despite this linguistic diversity, Pakistan's educational system continues to promote Urdu and English as the dominant mediums of instruction (Rahman, 2014; Shamim & Rashid, 2019), often marginalizing local languages.

Educational policies in Pakistan have not adequately accommodated multilingualism, prioritizing national cohesion through Urdu and global competitiveness through English (Coleman, 2010). This trend has led to the exclusion of regional and indigenous languages from formal education, contributing to language-based inequalities, particularly in rural and peripheral areas (Mahboob, 2015). Although the National Education Policy 2009 and the Single National Curriculum (2020) refer to the inclusion of regional languages, their practical implementation remains limited (Ministry of Education, 2009; Government of Pakistan, 2020). As a result, schools in peripheral regions of KP continue to rely on Urdu and English, leaving local languages largely unrepresented in educational materials and pedagogy (Zia, 2022).

In recent years, researchers have emphasised the need to recognize and incorporate multilingual education to improve learning outcomes and preserve linguistic diversity (Skutnabb-Kangas & Heugh, 2012; Benson, 2013). Studies show that children learn best in their mother tongue, particularly in early education, as it enhances cognitive development, participation, and retention (UNESCO, 2003; Ball, 2011). Despite this, very few studies have critically examined the effectiveness of educational policies in promoting multilingualism as a medium of instruction in KP, especially in its peripheral districts, which often face systemic neglect in resource allocation and teacher training (Shinwari, 2017; Ahmad & Ali, 2021).

Teachers play a pivotal role in the successful implementation of multilingual education. However, existing literature indicates that teachers in KP often lack the professional preparation and pedagogical tools necessary to manage multilingual classrooms (Aslam, 2020). Most instructional materials are available only in Urdu or English, leaving both students and teachers at a disadvantage in regions where neither is the dominant spoken language (Rahman, 2019; Khattak & Saeed, 2021). Moreover, teacher training programs do not typically offer modules on multilingual pedagogy or curriculum adaptation, further exacerbating the problem (Nazar & Chaudhary, 2019).

Thus, while the multilingual reality of KP is widely acknowledged, there is a significant research gap in assessing how educational policies are operationalized in peripheral areas and what challenges educators face on the ground. This study aims to fill that gap by examining the effectiveness of educational policies in promoting multilingual instruction and identifying the key challenges faced by teachers in the peripheral regions of KP. By focusing on both policy frameworks and the lived experiences of teachers, this research seeks to contribute to the growing discourse on equitable and inclusive language education in Pakistan.

1.1. Problem Statement

Despite Pakistan's linguistic diversity and global emphasis on multilingual education, the education system of Pakistan continues to prefer Urdu and English as the dominant mediums of instruction. This centralisation of language policy overlooks the multilingual realities of provinces such as Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), specifically in its peripheral regions where indigenous languages like Khwar, Torwali, Gojri and Pashto are widely spoken. While educational policies at the national and provincial levels have made vague commitments in the recognition at regional languages, the implementation of multilingual instruction in practice remains weak and inconsistent. Existing studies have explored aspects of multilingualism in KP, however, very few have critically analysed how educational policies support or hinder the use of multiple languages in peripheral classrooms. Therefore, there is an urgent need to examine educational policies in KP addressing multilingualism and the teachers in peripheral districts experiencing and navigating policies in real classroom settings. Addressing this gap is essential for fostering inclusive, culturally relevant, and effective education for all learners in the province.

1.2. Research Objectives

1. To examine the effectiveness of educational policies in promoting multilingual instruction in KP.
2. To identify the key challenges faced by teachers in implementing multilingual education in the peripheral regions of KP.

1.3. Research Questions

1. How do educational policies in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) promote multilingualism as a medium of instruction?
2. What challenges do teachers face in implementing multilingual education in the peripheral regions of KP?

2. Literature Review

The existing literature on multilingual education, emphasizing its advantages for both learning and cultural identity. It evaluates various global and regional studies, demonstrating that outcomes improve when instruction is conducted in the mother tongue. Nevertheless, obstacles remain, including insufficient teacher training, inadequate

resources, and a lack of policy support. The chapter also highlights a noticeable gap in research concerning how educational policies tackle multilingualism in the peripheral regions of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Multilingualism denotes the capacity of an individual or a community to utilise more than two languages for communication, expression of thoughts, and sharing of ideas. The prefix 'multi' signifies many, while 'lingua' translates to language; thus, it encompasses the employment of various languages in contexts such as communication, education, or everyday interactions. This phenomenon manifests in individuals who possess fluency in several languages and in communities or regions where numerous languages are spoken and actively employed in day-to-day life. According to Grosjean (2010), “Multilingualism refers to the use of two or more languages by an individual or the coexistence of multiple languages in society”. The review of articles is for multilingualism and education as follows:

UNESCO recognises that acquiring a language involves learning the culture that is expressed through the language. Ball, J. (2011) expresses that using a home language preserves cultural identity while acquiring additional languages promotes intercultural communication and understanding. In situations where a community is struggling to maintain or revive a threatened minority or indigenous language, meaningful and effective education in this language can have very positive linguistic and psychological effects.

One study conducted by Vogelzang et al. (2024) examines the effects of mother tongue education and multilingualism on reading comprehension and literacy development among primary school children in India. The research employed a mixed-methods strategy, integrating quantitative literacy evaluations with qualitative observations. A sample of 1,272 children from three distinct linguistic regions, Delhi, Hyderabad, and Patna, was assessed utilising the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) literacy tool to evaluate decoding and comprehension abilities in both their regional language (Hindi or Telugu) and English. The results indicate that speakers of minority languages from monolingual households exhibited lower literacy levels compared to their majority language counterparts, highlighting a disadvantage for children lacking access to mother tongue-based education (Vogelzang et al., 2024).

Singh (2025) examines the socio-cultural and policy-related obstacles to the implementation of multilingual education in Nepal, a country where more than 123 languages are spoken. This research adopts a case study methodology, concentrating on five schools located in the Ramechhap District. Two schools implement mother tongue-based multilingual education (MTB-MLE), while three adhere to a monolingual Nepali curriculum. Data collection involved qualitative interviews with teachers, students, and parents, alongside quantitative performance metrics from the schools (Singh, 2025). The findings indicate that students enrolled in MTB-MLE programmes exhibited higher levels

of engagement, enhanced literacy skills in their native languages, and improved academic achievements. Nonetheless, significant challenges persist, including a shortage of trained educators, insufficient educational resources, and community scepticism, which impeded the comprehensive implementation of this educational approach.

Further, Bosch et al. (2024) examine educators' perspectives on multilingual education across three European nations: Greece, Italy, and the Netherlands. These countries exhibit varied language policies and differing degrees of multilingualism within their educational settings. The research utilises a survey-based approach, gathering data from 150 primary school educators through structured questionnaires and interviews. The results reveal that educators in the Netherlands possess the most favourable attitudes towards multilingual education, which they attribute to the nation's advanced language policies and robust teacher training initiatives (Bosch et al., 2024). Conversely, teachers in Greece and Italy demonstrate lower levels of support, highlighting insufficient institutional backing and apprehensions regarding the challenges associated with instructing in multilingual environments. Moreover, while a significant number of teachers acknowledge the cognitive advantages linked to multilingualism, there exists a prevalent concern that it may adversely affect students' proficiency in the national language (Blair et al., 2018).

In addition, Mehboob, T. (2025) investigates the intricate function of language policy in influencing educational outcomes in Pakistan, with a particular focus on the enduring impact of colonial legacies and socio-political frameworks that perpetuate the prevalence of Urdu and English within educational settings (Mehboob, 2025). This study aims to evaluate the effects of current language policies on equitable educational access, especially for underrepresented ethnic and linguistic groups. Employing a critical policy analysis methodology, the author scrutinises constitutional documents, educational reforms, and classroom language practices to elucidate their implications for learning. The findings indicate that, despite official recognition of multilingualism, the educational system suffers from a shortage of trained bilingual or multilingual educators and provides limited teaching resources in regional languages, notably in provinces such as Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. These deficiencies lead to feelings of alienation and reduced academic involvement among children who communicate in minority languages.

Moreover, Singh (2025) examines the application of multilingual education within public schools in Nepal, providing insights that are pertinent to multilingual areas in Pakistan, such as Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP). The primary objective of the study is to assess the impact of multilingual policies on educational equity and student performance in regions characterised by linguistic diversity. The research employs a mixed-method case study approach in the Ramechhap District, incorporating teacher interviews, classroom observations, and analysis of student performance data. The findings indicate that schools

which adopt mother tongue-based multilingual education (MTB-MLE) experience enhanced student engagement and improved learning outcomes. Nevertheless, the execution of these programmes faces challenges due to a lack of trained multilingual educators and insufficient instructional resources in local languages (Singh, 2025).

Other studies, including an edited volume, comprehensively analyse multilingual education practices across South Asia, featuring a specific chapter focused on Pakistan. The primary objective is to investigate the intersection of policy and practice within multilingual classrooms while revealing the systemic inequalities associated with language utilisation in education. The volume incorporates ethnographic and qualitative research from nations such as India, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. In the chapter dedicated to Pakistan, the authors illustrate how language policy frequently overlooks the complexities of linguistic diversity, particularly in rural areas like Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) (Adinolfi, Bhattacharya, & Phyak, 2022). Educators typically receive training that emphasises monolingual approaches and often lack the necessary resources or pedagogical strategies to manage multilingual classrooms effectively. This analysis highlights a significant disconnect between top-down language policies and the actual teaching conditions faced at the grassroots level, resulting in suboptimal educational experiences for students who do not communicate in Urdu or English.

Another study, which is conducted in Thailand, examines educators' views on bilingual instruction through mobile language learning applications, providing comparative insights applicable to technologically underserved regions. The objective is to investigate the design and efficacy of dual-language learning applications for primary school pupils and to comprehend the requirements of educators within bilingual educational settings. Through a qualitative research approach, semi-structured interviews were carried out with 30 in-service teachers from six different regions. The results indicated significant endorsement for bilingual mobile applications, while also highlighting the insufficiency of training for educators to effectively incorporate this technology into their teaching methodologies (Wiboolyasarin & Jinowat, 2024). Educators expressed a clear necessity for continuous professional development and accessible content that is customised to local languages. Although the context is Thailand, the findings are pertinent to KP, where digital resources could facilitate multilingual education but remain underutilised due to similar challenges in teacher training and resource development.

Moreover, Saikham (2025) investigates the challenges and prospects associated with the implementation of multilingual education in Thailand, with a particular emphasis on the influence of language policy on classroom practices within varied educational environments. The study seeks to evaluate the balance among Standard Thai, English, and regional languages within the curriculum, and the resultant impact on learners from

different ethnic backgrounds. This research utilises an analysis of policy documents and case studies from public schools in Thailand. A significant finding reveals that educators frequently face expectations to deliver multilingual curricula without adequate training, while the institutional framework provides minimal support or teaching materials in minority languages. The author concludes that although policy reforms may advocate for linguistic diversity, the absence of well-trained educators and locally relevant resources hinders the achievement of equitable educational outcomes (Saikham, 2025).

2.1. Research gap

The review emphasises the benefits of multilingualism while highlighting concerns regarding the difficulties encountered during language transition in multilingualism as a medium of instruction in education. The analysis holds significant relevance for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), where educational reforms advocating for Urdu, English, and Pashto operate simultaneously. Researchers have explored multilingualism in KP however, few studies have recognised Educational Policies, catering for multilingualism as a medium of instruction in the peripheries of KP. Nevertheless, teachers frequently lack sufficient preparation to teach multiple languages, and instructional resources are accessible only in the predominant languages, such as Urdu or English.

3. Research Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative research design to explore the role of educational policies in supporting multilingual instruction and to identify the challenges faced by teachers in peripheral areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP). The qualitative approach is appropriate as it allows for an in-depth understanding of policy impacts and lived teacher experiences within complex multilingual educational settings.

3.1. Epistemology

The epistemology used in his research is interpretivism. From the perspective of teachers and SDEOs, Interpretivism is used as an epistemology which focuses on the subjective experiences of a person, since teachers' and education officers' interviews are taken to know their stance and experiences on the subject matter. Interpretivism explores the subjective experiences and base it for social reality as according to Cresswell (2014), Interpretivism is an epistemological method which stresses on the significance of subjective meanings and lived experiences while focusing on the perspective to comprehend their subjective experiences as Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2018) states that rather than considering universal laws, Interpretivism urges that the research needs to focus on understanding of the meaning and context of the human experiences.

3.2. Research Design

The study will use a case study approach focusing on selected peripheral districts in KP, such as Lower Dir, Swat, Shangla, Chitral, Gilgit, Bannu and Karak. This design

enables the exploration of contextual factors influencing the implementation of multilingual policies.

This study uses semi-structured interviews conducted with teachers to explore their experiences, perceptions, and challenges related to multilingual instruction. Moreover, interviews with SDEOs will provide insights into the design and implementation of educational policies.

4. Data Analysis

4.1. Overview

This chapter presents a detailed thematic analysis of the qualitative data collected through semi-structured interviews with teachers and Sub-Divisional Education Officers (SDEOs) in peripheral regions of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP). The purpose of the analysis is to explore the effectiveness of educational policies in promoting multilingual instruction and identify the key challenges faced in its implementation. Thematic analysis was conducted using Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase model, which enabled a structured and systematic examination of recurring patterns and themes emerging from participant responses.

4.2. Thematic Analysis of Teachers' Interviews Using Braun and Clarke's Model

Teachers' interviews were analysed under Braun and Clark's (2006) model. This analysis covered the following themes:

4.2.1. Policy Practice Gap

One of the most prominent themes that emerged from all three interviews was the policy-practice gap. Although national and provincial educational policies occasionally reference the use of local languages in education, the participants unanimously expressed that these policies are vague and largely symbolic. For example, Participant 1 observed that "they say local languages can be used, but we don't have any formal system for it," highlighting the disconnect between policy documentation and actual classroom realities. Participant 2 reinforced this concern, stating that "policies look good on paper, but there's nothing for us in the classrooms." Similarly, Participant 3 referred to the policy as "silent," indicating a lack of any practical mechanisms or guidance for integrating mother tongues into instruction.

4.2.2. Lack of Teacher Training

Closely related to the policy-practice gap is the lack of teacher training, another major theme that surfaced across the interviews. All three participants reported having received no professional development specific to multilingual education. Participant 2 explicitly stated, "No. Never. Not even a workshop," in response to whether he had been trained to teach in multiple languages. Participant 1 echoed this concern, noting that most of her training was in Urdu or English and focused on general topics like classroom management, with nothing addressing multilingual pedagogy. Participant 3 also confirmed

that while some workshops were conducted, they never focused on how to manage multilingual classrooms, leaving teachers to navigate linguistic diversity on their own, often through trial and error. This lack of structured training severely limits teachers' ability to cater to linguistically diverse student populations, making them feel unsupported and underprepared.

4.2.3. Instructional Language Mismatch

A third theme, instructional language mismatch, emerged as a direct consequence of policy neglect and absence of training. All participants emphasised the linguistic disconnect between their students' home languages and the official medium of instruction. Participant 1 described how most of her students spoke Pashto or Kohistani, but instruction was expected to be in Urdu and sometimes English, particularly for science and mathematics. She often found herself "repeating things in Pashto" despite being unsure whether it was permitted. Participant 2 highlighted that "some students don't speak a word of Urdu when they join school," which severely impacts comprehension and slows down the pace of instruction. In Participant 3's classroom, students who spoke Pashto or Torwali were often shy and hesitant to participate, likely due to this linguistic barrier, which she noted negatively affected their confidence and sense of belonging.

4.2.4. Absence of Multilingual Resources

The absence of multilingual resources was another recurring theme that compounded the challenges created by policy gaps and language mismatches. All three participants expressed frustration over the lack of storybooks, textbooks, or teaching guides in regional languages. Participant 1 specifically stated, "There are no storybooks or resources in their language," while Participant 2 stressed the need for "teaching aids in Khowar" and suggested that "a bilingual textbook or picture dictionaries" would make a substantial difference. Participant 3 also advocated for teacher guides in Pashto and Torwali, which would help teachers bridge the gap between students' home languages and the official curriculum. The absence of such materials forces teachers to rely on translation or simplification, which not only slows down the learning process but also restricts the depth and quality of instruction.

4.2.5. Impact on Student Learning and Confidence

Finally, the interviews collectively pointed to the impact of these issues on student learning and confidence. Participant 3 noted that students were "shy and hesitant to speak" and that many felt their home languages were "wrong," leading to reduced participation and lower self-esteem. Participant 2 described how learning was delayed because "we lose so much time just translating," and Participant 1 observed that students, particularly in lower grades, struggled to understand lessons delivered in Urdu or English. These accounts underscore the emotional and academic toll of a monolingual education system imposed on multilingual communities. The cumulative effect of policy silence, untrained teachers,

inappropriate language mediums, and resource scarcity creates a classroom environment where linguistic minority students are systematically disadvantaged.

4.3. Thematic Analysis of SDEOs Interviews Using Braun and Clarke's Model

Interviews with education officers were analysed under Braun and Clark's (2006) model. This analysis covered the following themes:

4.3.1. Policy Ambiguity and Lack of Implementation

Both participants highlighted the vague and unenforced nature of current education policies regarding multilingualism. Participant A noted that policies only offer broad statements without concrete implementation plans. Participant B reinforced this by stating that there is "no accountability for ignoring multilingual needs," pointing to the lack of oversight and monitoring mechanisms. This shows that while the idea of mother tongue instruction is embedded in national discourse, it has not translated into actionable directives at the divisional level.

4.3.2. Absence of Institutional Measures

The second theme relates to the lack of institutional support at the sub-divisional and district levels. Participant A admitted there were "no formal programs" or resources for local language instruction, and that school heads were left to make their adjustments. **Participant B** echoed this, observing that "no structure or support" exists from the SDEO's office to enable multilingual teaching, due to a complete absence of directives. This demonstrates a systemic gap between policy vision and grassroots administrative action.

4.3.3. Shortage of Resources and Materials

A significant challenge reported by both participants was the non-availability of teaching resources in local languages. Participant A mentioned that "no books or guides are available in languages like Khowar," and Participant B added that students from Torwali- and Gujri-speaking backgrounds are being taught in Urdu without supportive materials. This lack of curriculum integration undermines the potential of using home languages for improved learning outcomes.

4.3.4. Inadequate Teacher Preparation

Another central theme was the insufficient teacher preparation for multilingual classrooms. According to Participant A, teachers are "not prepared at all," especially since their training is in Urdu or English and does not cover multilingual strategies. Participant B stated that while teachers are making informal efforts, they "have had no exposure to multilingual pedagogy." This reinforces the earlier theme from the teacher interviews, indicating that teacher training programs are structurally monolingual and do not reflect the linguistic realities of the regions.

4.4. Need for Localised Policy and Training Reform

Finally, both participants made strong recommendations for systemic change. Participant A suggested “localised teacher training programs” and “recognition of local languages in the curriculum,” while Participant B emphasised the creation of district-specific language-in-education plans, updated training modules, and school-level policies that encourage mother tongue use. These recommendations point to a shared understanding that multilingual education cannot be implemented effectively without policy localisation, targeted resource development, and capacity building at the ground level.

5. Discussion

This chapter presents a critical discussion of the study’s findings in light of the research questions, about the relevant literature and the theoretical framework. It synthesises insights from interviews with teachers and Sub-Divisional Education Officers (SDEOs) in peripheral districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), aiming to understand how educational policies promote multilingual instruction and the practical challenges faced in their implementation. The findings are interpreted through the lens of Braun and Clarke’s (2006) Thematic Analysis Model, which provides a nuanced understanding of the intersection between policy, pedagogy, and linguistic diversity in marginalised educational contexts.

6. Findings

The analysis of the first research question reveals that teachers and SDEOs noted that the educational policies lack practical guidelines, implementation strategies, and monitoring mechanisms. Participants consistently highlighted a policy practice gap, where ideals of inclusive, multilingual education exist in discourse but are not reflected in classroom realities. As Participant A (SDEO) put it, “It’s more of a statement than a practical directive,” pointing to the disconnection between central policy intentions and local execution.

The second research question addressed the interviews with teachers exposed and thereby exposed several barriers including a severe lack of professional training in multilingual pedagogy. Teachers reported having received no workshops, courses, or in-service training related to multilingual teaching strategies, which left them unprepared to manage linguistically diverse classrooms. Moreover, a significant instructional language mismatch was observed between students’ home languages (such as Khowar, Torwali, Pashto, Kohistani, and Gujri) and the medium of instruction (Urdu and English). This mismatch led to reduced comprehension, slower learning, and lower student participation. Teachers frequently resorted to translating content into local languages informally, but expressed uncertainty about whether such practices were officially supported. Compounding these challenges was the absence of multilingual educational resources, such as textbooks, storybooks, or teaching guides in local languages. Teachers were forced

to improvise or simplify content, which undermined both learning depth and curriculum coverage.

From the perspective of administration, SDEOs confirmed that no structured institutional support exists for multilingual instruction at the sub-divisional or district levels. There are no resource allocations, curriculum adaptations, or policy circulars that empower schools to adopt mother tongue-based instruction. The lack of localised planning was particularly troubling, given the clear linguistic diversity within their regions. Both SDEOs strongly advocated for district-specific policies, localised training modules, and the formal inclusion of regional languages in the curriculum. These findings resonate with Bourdieu's (1991) argument that language operates as symbolic power, where dominant languages (Urdu and English) continue to marginalise others, reinforcing linguistic inequalities in education.

Perhaps most concerning was the impact of these systemic shortcomings on student learning and confidence. Teachers observed that students often became shy, hesitant, or disengaged when they could not understand the instructional language, especially in early grades. Some students even internalised feelings of linguistic inferiority, believing their home languages were "wrong" or not valuable. This alienation reinforces educational inequality and contradicts research showing that children learn best in their mother tongue during foundational years (UNESCO, 2003; Ball, 2011). The cumulative findings make it evident that multilingual education in peripheral KP remains underdeveloped, unsupported, and inconsistently practised, despite existing policy rhetoric.

7. Recommendations

In light of the findings, several actionable recommendations are proposed. First, the Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and curriculum authorities should develop clear, localised language-in-education policies that specify how and when regional languages can be used in instruction. These policies must be supported by official guidelines, training programs, and accountability structures to ensure effective implementation. Second, teacher education programs and in-service training modules should include comprehensive components on multilingual pedagogy, equipping teachers with both theoretical knowledge and practical strategies to navigate linguistically diverse classrooms. Third, there is a pressing need for the development of multilingual teaching resources, including textbooks, visual aids, and reading materials in local languages, starting from early grades. Fourth, district and sub-divisional education offices must be empowered and resourced to support multilingual initiatives, including by hiring local language specialists, organising workshops, and fostering collaboration with local communities. Finally, public awareness campaigns should be launched to counter the stigma attached to regional languages, reinforcing their value in education, identity, and social cohesion.

8. Conclusion

This study set out to explore the effectiveness of educational policies in promoting multilingual instruction in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and to understand the challenges faced by teachers in peripheral regions. The findings reveal a profound disconnect between policy rhetoric and classroom realities, shaped by vague directives, lack of training, resource scarcity, and institutional neglect. Teachers and education officers alike are operating in an environment that does not support the linguistic needs of learners, leading to reduced educational access, performance, and equity. While the study was limited in scope, it highlights an urgent need for policy reform, grassroots support, and pedagogical innovation to ensure that multilingual education becomes a practical, inclusive reality for all learners in KP. Future research should extend these findings by incorporating larger samples, observational data, and comparative analyses across multiple provinces to further inform language policy and planning in Pakistan.

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Appendix A

1. What languages do your students speak at home, and what language(s) are you expected to use for instruction?
2. How well do you think current educational policies support multilingual teaching in your school?
3. Have you received any training or professional development on teaching in multiple languages? If yes, please describe.
4. What challenges do you face while teaching students who speak different local languages?
5. What kinds of support (e.g., resources, training, policy changes) would help you better implement multilingual education in your classroom?

Appendix B

1. How do current educational policies address multilingual education in your division?
2. What measures have been taken at the district/sub-divisional level to support teaching in multiple languages?
3. What challenges do you observe in implementing multilingual education in peripheral schools?
4. How well are teachers prepared to handle multilingual classrooms, in your opinion?
5. What recommendations would you suggest to improve the implementation of multilingual instruction in your region?