

## Language Policy Before and After Independence

In Pre-British days, Hindus and Muslims were educated through Pathshala and Madrasas respectively, but their advent created a new place of learning that is Missionaries, so that they can create a class of Indian, who would be “Indian in blood and colour but English in taste”, who would act as interpreters between the Government and the masses.

### Policies Before Independence :-

#### Charter Act (1813) :-

- Although before 1813, Missionaries and various religious groups had brought some basic education non-officially to the Indian masses but it was through the Charter Act that a state system of education was officially introduced in Indian history.
- Although it was the first act through which the education system was formally laid down in

India, yet it had created a controversy between the classicist and anglicist on the medium of instruction.

- Regarding the aims of education during that time, groups of people had different opinions. One group performed the propagation of Oriental literature, whereas the other group stressed the need to introduce western literature among the Indian people.
- Regarding the medium of instruction, there was also three opinions –
  1. The western sciences and knowledge should be promoted through the classical Language as a medium of instruction, Normally Sanskrit and Arabic.
  2. The second school of thought was favoured to the modern Indian language.
  3. Lastly the third School of thought held, that Education should be given through the medium of English.

## **Macaulay's Minute (1835) :-**

- As a president of General Committee of Public Instruction, Lord Macaulay wrote a minute on 2<sup>nd</sup> February 1835, where he made the conclusion regarding the controversy.
- He stressed the implementation of the English language as a medium of instruction through his minute.
- According to him, English was the best medium of instruction.
- He held that this would enable the emergence of a class of people in the Indian society, who would be well versed in English language, western ideology taste and opinion.
- This class would serve as a medium of contact with the great mass of Indian people who were culturally different from the English.
- Macaulay's opinion was that the public mind of India may expand under the English system and through the English language, it may educate

the people into a capacity for better government.

### **Bentinck's Educational Policy (1835, 7<sup>th</sup> March) :-**

- It also confirmed English as a medium of instruction.
- As a result of resolution ; there were established Zilla schools in the principal towns of the presidencies where literature and science were taught through the medium of English language.
- The policy of Lord William Bentinck in the field of higher education made obstacles to invest any expenditure on vernacular teaching, as a result of this this policy, in Govt. vernacular schools, the use of vernacular language as a medium of instruction was prohibited.

### **Wood's Despatch (1854) :-**

- The Wood's Despatch gave importance of teaching English, but at the same time, it also stressed on the teaching of Indian languages.

- The Despatch realised that any acquaintance of European knowledge could be communicated to the common people and that could be conveyed to them only through learning their own mother tongue.
- Therefore the Despatch clearly stated that Indian languages as well as English should be used as media of instruction.

### **Policies After Independence :-**

After Independence, the Govt. of India has set up various education committees to address the challenges of education, recommend comprehensive education policies and improve the education system in India.

### **Secondary Education Commission (1952) :-**

- After achieving the Independence in 1947, both the public and Govt. began to take keen interest in the development of secondary education.

- Although the number of secondary education schools and its enrolment began to significantly increase even before India's attaining independence, the quality of education imparted was unable to meet the changing socio economic needs of the country. As such the need for reform was strongly felt.
- The University Education Commission (Radhakrishnan Commission / 1948) also remarked that our Secondary education remained the weakest link in our educational machinery and it needed urgent reforms.
- Meanwhile with the attainment of independence, the political situation of the country also underwent a complete transformation.
- Education also needed a fresh look calling for a new outlook which was appropriately voiced by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the then Education Minister in his presidential address to the Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE) in 1948.

- The C.A.B.E. at its 14<sup>th</sup> meeting held in January 1948 recommended the appointment of a Commission to examine the prevailing system of Secondary Education in the country and to suggest measures for its re organization and improvements.
- In view of these considerations, the Govt. of India set up the Secondary Education Commission by Resolution dated 23<sup>rd</sup> September, 1952, under the chairmanship of Dr. A. Lakshmanaswami Mudaliar, the vice chancellor of the Madras University.
- Therefore the commission is also known as Mudaliar Commission.
- This commission was inaugurated on 6<sup>th</sup> October, 1952.
- It submitted its report on June 1959.
- This commission recommend that in 6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> standard the medium of instruction should be mother tongue or regional languages.
- Two other languages also to be learned namely English and Hindi.

- In Secondary and Higher Secondary stage, the mother tongue or regional languages should be made compulsory.
- Compulsory Languages :-
  - a) Regional languages or Mother Tongue.
  - b) One of the following Languages :-
    1. A classical Language
    2. Besides Hindi, one more Indian language
    3. Advanced English (for those students who had earlier studied English)
    4. Elementary English (for students studying it at the secondary stage)
    5. Besides English, another modern foreign language
    6. Hindi (for those students whose mother tongue is not hindi)

### **Kothari Commission / Indian Education Commission (1964) :-**

- Indian Education Commission, which is also popularly known as Kothari Commission, was



set up by the Govt. of India, on 14<sup>th</sup> July 1964, under the chairmanship of Daulat Singh Kothari, then chairman of the University Grant Commission.

- The commission aimed at examining all aspects of the educational sector across the country.
- Among other objectives behind setting up of this commission also included evolution of a general pattern of the.
- The commission, under the chairmanship of D.S.Kothari was the 6<sup>th</sup> Commission in India post independence and first commission with comprehensive terms of reference on education.
- The commission had submitted its report on 29<sup>th</sup> June 1968; its recommendations were accommodated in India's first National Policy on Education in 1968.
- The important recommendations in the area of language development are –

#### **a)Regional Languages :-**

- The regional languages are already in use as media of education at the primary and secondary stages.
- Urgent steps should now be taken to adopt them as media of education at the University stage.

### **b) Three Language Formula :-**

- At the secondary stage, the state Govt m should adopt and vigorously implement , the Three Language Formula which includes the study of a modern Indian language, preferably one of the southern Languages, apart from Hindi and English in the Hindi speaking states and of Hindi along with the regional language and English in the Non-Hindi speaking states.
- Suitable courses in Hindi and/or English should also be available in Universities and Colleges with a view to improving the proficiency of students in these Languages upto the prescribed university standards

### **c) Hindi :-**

- Every effort should be made to promote the development of Hindi.
- In developing Hindi as the link Language, care should be taken to ensure that it will serve as provided for in Article 351 of the constitution, as a medium of expression for all the elements of the composite culture of India.
- The establishment in Non-Hindi speaking states of colleges and other Institutions of higher education which use Hindi as the medium of education should be encouraged.

**d) Sanskrit :-**

- Considering the special importance of Sanskrit to the growth and development of Indian languages and it's unique contribution to the cultural unity of the country, facilities for its teaching at the school and university stages should be offered on a more liberal scale.

- Development of new methods of teaching the Language should be encouraged and the possibility explored of including the study of Sanskrit in those courses (such as modern Indian languages, ancient Indian History, Indology and Second Degree stages, where such knowledge is useful.)

#### e) International Languages :-

- Special emphasis needs to be laid on the study of English and other international Languages.
- World knowledge is growing at a tremendous pace, especially in science and technology.
- India must not only keep up this growth but should also make her own significant contribution to it.
- For this purpose , study of English deserves to be specially strengthened.

#### **National Policy on Education (1968) :-**

- Since the country's Independence in 1947, the Indian Govt. sponsored a variety of programs to address the problems of illiteracy in both rural and urban Indian.
- Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, India's first Minister of Education, envisaged strong central government control over education throughout the country, with a uniform educational system.
- The union govt. established the University Education Commission (1948-49), the Secondary Education Commission (1952-53), University Grant Commission and the Kothari Commission (1964-66) to develop proposals to modernise India's education system.
- Based on the report and recommendations of the Kothari Commission (1964-66), the Govt. of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi announced the first National Policy on Education in 1968, which called for a '**radical restructuring**' and equalise educational opportunities in order to achieve national integration and greater cultural and economic development.

- The policy called for focus on learning of regional languages, outlining the **Three Language Formula** to be implemented in Secondary Education.
- Although the decision to adopt Hindi as the National Language had proven controversial , the policy called for use and learning of Hindi to be encouraged unfortunately to promote a common language for all Indians.
- The policy also encouraged the teaching of the ancient Sanskrit Language, which was considered as an essential part of India's culture and heritage.

### **National Policy on Education (1986) :-**

- Having announced that a new policy was in development in January, 1985, the Govt. of Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi introduced a new National Policy on Education in May 1986.
- The new Policy called for “ special emphasis on the removal of disparities and to equalise

educational opportunity” especially for Indian women , SC and ST communities.

- Besides this, NPE called for a “child centered approach” in primary education and launched “Operation Blackboard” to improve primary schools nation wide.
- It expanded the Open University system with the IGNOU, which had been created in 1985.
- The policy also called for the creation of the ‘**Rural University**’ model, based on the philosophy of Indian leader Mahatma Gandhi to promote economic and social development at the grassroots level in rural India.
- This policy emphasized the adoption of regional languages as the media of instruction at the University stage.
- Vigorous effort in implementation of the three language – formula was made.
- These were , namely improvement in the linguistic competencies of students at different stages of education, provision of facilities for the study of English and other foreign languages

and development of Hindi as the link Language as provided for in Article 351 of the constitution.

- Teaching of Sanskrit at the University stage as part of certain courses like Indology, Indian History , Archaeology etc.
- Serious effort at translation of books from one language to the other and the preparation of biological and multi lingual dictionaries were also recommended.
- The emphasis in the policy is on the adoption of modern Indian languages as the media of instruction at the University stage.

### **National Curriculum Framework (NCF) (2005) :-**

- It is one of the four NCF, published in 1975 , 1988 , 2000 and 2005 by the National Council of Educational Research and Training ( NCERT ) in India.
- The framework provides the frame work for making syllabii, textbooks and teaching



practices within the school education programs in India.

- The NCF 2005 document draws its policy basis from earlier government reports on education as **Learning without Burden** and focus group discussion.
- NCF 2005 has been translated into 22 languages and has influenced the syllabi in 17 states.
- The NCERT gave a grant of Rs. 10 lakh to each state to promote NCF in the language of the state and to compare its current syllabus with the syllabus proposed, so that a plan for future reforms could be made
- Its recommendations about the languages are –
  - a) Three Language formula system to be followed.
  - b) Medium of communication should be the home language.
  - c) Proficiency in multiple languages including English should be encouraged in children.

d) Reading should be emphasized throughout the primary classes.

e) Culture and Language are intermingled.

However Language can relate all the subjects, as it is heart of education so it is the heart of children also centrality of Language and achieving it would be a great milestone. The three Language formula is an attempt to address the challenges and opportunities of the linguistic situation in India. The primary aim of the formula is to promote multilingualism and national harmony.

Course -  
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