THE RIGHT TO MOTHER TONGUE-BASED EDUCATION IN TRIBAL INDIA: A COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

India's linguistic diversity ranks fourth in the world. Over 19,569 languages or dialects are spoken as mother tongues (MTs); of these, 121 were spoken by over 10,000 people in 2011 (and hence reported upon in the Census) and only 22 are recognized and promoted as "Schedule Languages". Of the latter, only three are tribal languages. In 2015-16, 28 languages were used as the medium of instruction in schools and 69 were used as subjects. Thus, only 0.14% of India's mother tongues are used as a medium of instruction and 0.35% were taught in India's schools. This negatively affects the education of India's 104 million tribal population whose children experience a loss of confidence, high repetition and drop-out rates contributing to the loss of languages, cultures, and knowledge systems. It is estimated that nearly 25% of children in India face moderate to severe learning disadvantage due to the use of an unfamiliar language for instruction. India's Constitution, particularly Article 350(A) makes governments responsible for providing adequate facilities for instruction in the mother tongue at the primary stage of education to children belonging to linguistic minority groups. However, this has not been implemented in the full spirit except for some state-specific interventions that address a fraction of languages. The paper examines the existing interventions on mother tongue-based multi-lingual education for tribal learners adopted by various states, examines the challenges of tribal MTB-MLE across the country and makes recommendations to address the same. The introduction of the NEP offers the possibility of a greater push for the introduction of language in education policies by India's states to address the linguistic rights of India's tribal communities. The paper calls for the introduction of dedicated mother-tongue-based multi-lingual education policies by states having tribal populations, addressing the implementation gap of the existing dedicated State programmes and schemes for multilingual education, and working with communities, particularly the organizations of the concerned tribal groups, for the revival of the tribal languages and creating demand for the adoption of the concerned language in educational settings.

THE MOTHER TONGUES IN INDIA

India's 2011 Census describes mother tongue as "the language spoken in childhood by the person's mother to the person. If the mother died in infancy, the language mainly spoken in the person's home in childhood will be the mother tongue." Over 19,569 languages or dialects are spoken in India as mother tongues (MTs); of these, 121 languages were spoken by over 10,000 people[1]. In contrast, in 2015-16, only 28 languages were used as the medium of instruction in schools[2]. 69 languages were used as subjects. Thus, only 0.14% of India's mother tongues are used as a medium of instruction (MoI) and 0.35% are taught in India's schools.

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[1] https://www.firstpost.com/explainers/explained-what-is-the-mother-tongue-survey-of-india-and-why-is-it-significant-11604981.html
[2] https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10993-015-9397-4

India's linguistic diversity ranks fourth in the world.[3] States in the northeast of India, especially Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh, have the highest linguistic diversity; Kerala, UP, Punjab and Rajasthan are the least diverse[4]. Overall, nearly 35% of India's population is bilingual (almost 45% in urban areas) and 10% is trilingual (20% in urban India)[5]. Bilingualism is growing; only 9.7% of India's population was classified as bilingual in the 1961 census[6]. At the same time, India also heads the list of countries in the Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger.[7]

Educational systems worldwide play a critical role in either maintaining or creating a break in intergenerational language transmission. A clear language in education policy is critical to address the linguistic rights of India's tribal communities. Accordingly, the present document provides an overview of the current landscape of the provision of multilingual education in the country and makes recommendations for advocacy. These are made in the context of renewed policy interest in strengthening literacy since the introduction of the new National Education Policy. It is also critical to examine as the world entered the International Decade of Indigenous Languages in 2022[8].

EDUCATION IN THE MOTHER TONGUE FOR INDIA'S ADIVASI STUDENTS: A QUESTION OF EQUITY AND QUALITY

India had a tribal population of 104 million amounting to 8.6% of the population.[9] 700 Scheduled Tribes have been notified under Article 342 of the Constitution of India[10]. This includes 75 Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs).[11] Many tribal children, particularly in remote and scarcely populated areas where tribal populations live, still lack access to schools. While 65% of rural habitations have primary schools within a distance of half a kilometre, this share declines to 56% for tribal populations.[12] It is estimated that nearly 22% of tribal habitations have less than 100 persons; 40% have populations of 100 to 300 and most of the rest have populations of 300–500.[13] Accordingly, any measures to improve the use of tribal languages in educational settings need to be accompanied by steps to improve the overall status of tribal education.

The majority that can get enrolled, often do not speak the official language of instruction, and find that their indigenous knowledge, experience, and language—rather than serving as a foundation for learning—are treated as a disadvantage.[14] Their language skills find no place in the classroom and textbooks and teaching is in languages they neither speak nor understand. This results in a loss of confidence, high repetition and drop-out rates contributing to the loss of languages, cultures, and knowledge systems. It is estimated that nearly 25% of children in India face moderate to severe learning disadvantage due to the use of an unfamiliar language for instruction; tribal

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[3] Skutnabb-Kangas, T. (2000). Linguistic Genocide in Education or Worldwide Diversity and Human Rights? Mahwah, NJ & London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates

[4] https://osf.io/sjxc6/download/?format=pdf

[5] https://iie.chitkara.edu.in/index.php/iie/article/view/39

[6] http://www.tezu.ernet.in/wmcfel/pdf/field/01.pdf

[7] http://www.unesco.org/languages-atlas/

[8] https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/indigenous-languages.html

[9] https://tribal.nic.in/ST/Statistics8518.pdf

[10] https://tribal.nic.in/ST/LatestListofScheduledtribes.pdf

[11] https://tribal.nic.in/ST/StatewisePvTGsList.pdf

[12] (2006) India 2006. New Delhi: Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India.

[13] Khullar, K.K. (2006) 'Community Participation and Rural Development', Kurukshetra, A Journal of Rural Development, 55(6) (November):11–16.

[14] https://www.sil.org/sites/default/files/files/mtbmle_implications_for_policy.pdf

children perform significantly better in mother-tongue medium classrooms.[15] Thus, there are clear advantages to the use of multilingual education (MLE) and particularly, Mother-tongue-based MLE (MTB-MLE).

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MOTHER TONGUE-BASED MULTILINGUAL EDUCATION IN THE PACIFIC

It is often pointed out that responding to India's linguistic diversity is difficult. However, it is not unique in facing this challenge.[16] Many countries in the Pacific have high levels of linguistic diversity but have evolved processes to deliver MTB-MLE for their tribal populations. Thus, Papua New Guinea with a population of 8.8 million, roughly the population of Uttarakhand, has the greatest linguistic diversity, accounting for 12% of the world's spoken languages. Its people speak over 800 distinct languages[17]. An MTB-MLE programme was established in 1995 and over 200 languages were used in the formal education system by the 2000s.[18] Some 400 languages were estimated to be in use by 2017.[19]

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LANGUAGE POLICIES- INDIA AND THE WORLD

While India's constitution pledges equality before the law for everyone, it does not explicitly do so concerning languages. Thus, article 15(1) prohibits discrimination on the grounds of "religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth", but not language[20]. However, the rights of minority languages are protected under Articles 20, 30, 345, 347, 350, 350-A and B. The Special Directive, Article 350(A), states that "It shall be the endeavour of every State and of every local authority within the State to provide adequate facilities for instruction in the mother-tongue at the primary stage of education to children belonging to linguistic minority groups." Other rights of linguistic minorities in India include the right to a declaration of minority languages as a second official language in districts where persons who speak such languages constitute 60% or more of the population and other measures.[21]

MLE is part of UN Standard-setting instruments[22], an array of UNESCO conventions[23] and part of Asian regional frameworks[24]. These bring to the forefront a commitment to quality and non-

[15] https://www.unicef.org/rosa/media/3036/file/Early%20literacy%20and%20multilingual%20education%20in%20South%20Asia.pdf

[16] https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2021/03/these-are-the-top-ten-countries-for-linguistic-diversity/

[17] https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ954614

[18] https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ954614#:~:text=In%20spite%20of%20this%20diversity,three%20years%20of%20formal%20education

[19] https://learningportal.iiep.unesco.org/en/blog/the-language-of-instruction-controversy-in-papua-new-guinea

[20] https://www.epw.in/journal/2017/23/special-articles/breaking-chaturvarna-system-languages.html#:~:text=The%20Indian%20language%20policy%20is,the%20state%20and%20the%20centre.

[21] https://pib.gov.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=104087

[22] UDHR- Article 2, 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child; the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Persons belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities (1992, Article 4); the ILO Convention 169 concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries (1989, Article 28); the 1990 International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (Article 45); and the 2007 United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

[23] 1960 Convention against Discrimination in Education, Recommendation on the Development of Adult Education (Article 22); the 1978 Declaration on Race and Racial Prejudice (Article 9); the 1995 Declaration and Integrated Framework of Action on Education for Peace, Human Rights and Democracy (Article 29); and the Action Plan for implementing the Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity (2001b, Article 6).

discrimination based on language, the desire to encourage the histories, traditions, language and culture of minorities and the right to express their culture and traditions. Minorities have the right to have adequate opportunities to learn and to have instruction in their mother tongue. This needs to be accompanied by adequate measures to attain fluency in the national or one of the official languages of the country. Citizens have the right to, wherever practicable, be taught to read and write in their indigenous language or in the language most used by the group to which they belong. When this is not practicable, competent authorities are tasked with undertaking consultations to evolve other measures to achieve this objective. Minorities likewise have the right to establish and control their educational systems and institutions providing education in their own languages, in a manner appropriate to their cultural methods of teaching and learning. In effect, they look at multilingualism as a guarantee of cultural diversity.

Boundaries demarcating languages and dialects are not always clear with the distinction between the two forming more of a political than a linguistic question. The Indian Census (2011)[25] yielded 19,569 responses to the question of languages spoken in India which were then classified into 1369 rationalized MTs, and 121 legitimized languages (including 22 scheduled and 99 non-scheduled) which are part of four language families.[26] The 8th Schedule of the Constitution includes 22 "Schedule Languages" [27]enjoy a commitment to their promotion including through their use in the bureaucracy, judiciary, education, and the media. Of these, only three Bodo, Manipuri (Maitei) and Santali are tribal languages. However, many non-schedule languages have a fairly large number of speakers. Thus, the largest of the non-Schedule languages, Bhili/Bhilodi, a tribal language, has 10.4 million native speakers.[28] In contrast, Sanskrit is an official language despite being claimed by only 24,821 people as their spoken language. Bhilli was spoken by 40.41% of speakers in Dadra and Nagar Haveli, but Hindi and Gujarati are the Official languages, despite being spoken by a fraction of the state's residents. There is a demand for 38 languages to be included in the 8th Schedule, many of them tribal.[29] States can also specify their own official languages through legislation.

At the same time, while many languages have relatively few speakers, the total population of India that speaks a language with under 10,000 speakers is 18.6 million which is more than the population that speaks Hindi (16.7 million), India's largest language.[30] India has stopped reporting information regarding languages with less than 10,000 speakers since the 1971 Census.[31]

At the same time, the absence of clear linguistic foundations in the classification system in India means that the estimates of the number of Indian languages vary wildly. The People's Linguistic Survey of India (2012) identified more than 780 languages in 66 scripts[32]. The People of India project of the Anthropological Survey of India lists 325 languages used by 5633 communities.[33]

[24] ASEAN Human Rights Declaration (2012), SAARC Agenda for Culture (2005)

[25] https://censusindia.gov.in/2011Census/C-16_25062018_NEW.pdf

[26] https://osf.io/sjxc6/download/?format=pdf

[27] https://www.mha.gov.in/sites/default/files/EighthSchedule_19052017.pdf

[28] https://www.theindiaforum.in/article/what-census-obscures?utm_source=website&utm_medium=organic&utm_campaign=featured-articles&utm_content=Homepage

[29] https://www.mha.gov.in/sites/default/files/EighthSchedule_19052017.pdf

[30] https://osf.io/sjxc6/download/?format=pdf

[31] https://www.downtoearth.org.in/blog/governance/seven-decades-after-independence-many-tribal-languages-in-india-face-extinction-threat-73071

[32] https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/language-survey-reveals-diversity/article4938865.ece

[33] Banerjee, Paula; Chaudhury, Sabyasachi Basu Ray; Das, Samir Kumar; Bishnu Adhikari (2005). International Displacement in South Asia: The Relevance of the UN's Guiding Principles. SAGE Publications. 145.

The status of languages has, however, been a political issue since independence. The process of reorganization of states has largely been undertaken on linguistic grounds which provided space for some non-scheduled languages to be adopted as state official languages. However, in most instances, these processes have mainly resulted in the promotion of a single dominant state language, not the full diversity of tribal languages used in a state.

The use of language in educational settings has also been part of the policy process. The Dhebar Committee 1961 highlighted the criticality of using tribal languages for the first two years of schooling, but it recommended that states should concentrate on the large tribal languages.[34] Education in the mother tongue has been reiterated in successive National Education Policies and Curriculum Frameworks. The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 states that the "(f) medium of instructions shall, as far as practicable, be in child's mother tongue." The principle of instruction in multiple languages is also part of the Three Language Formula (1956). The latter's focus on state languages, however, places learners speaking minority tribal languages at a disadvantage.[35]

IF YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND, HOW CAN YOU LEARN?[36]: UNESCO GLOBAL EDUCATION MONITORING REPORT'S INSIGHTS

1. Children should be taught in a language they understand, yet as much as 40% of the global population does not have access to education in a language they speak or understand.
2. Speaking a language that is not spoken in the classroom frequently holds back a child's learning, especially for those living in poverty.
3. At least six years of mother-tongue instruction is needed to reduce learning gaps for minority language speakers.
4. In multi-ethnic societies, imposing a dominant language through a school system has frequently been a source of grievance linked to wider issues of social and cultural inequality.
5. Education policies should recognize the importance of mother tongue learning.
6. Linguistic diversity creates challenges within the education system, notably in areas of teacher recruitment, curriculum development and the provision of teaching materials.

EXISTING INTERVENTIONS FOR MTB-MLE BY INDIAN STATES

Odisha remains the only State with a dedicated policy on MLE. The NEP 2021 prioritizes the use of the home language/mother tongue as the medium of instruction. The SARTHAQ list of tasks for its implementation includes linguistic mapping, sensitization of educational administrators, the orientation of teachers, creation of learning materials and phased introduction of MLE to most schools. Exit from the L1 is to be delayed at least till Grade 5. These are positive steps that offer the potential for action on MLE. However, the policy also often appears to conflate the mother tongue, local and state languages creating unnecessary ambiguity.

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[34] https://www.jstor.org/stable/4401912
[35] https://www.academia.edu/35867757/Language_Complexity_and_Multilingual_Education_in_India_A_Policy_Perspective_1
[36] UNESCO- Global Education Monitoring Report, Policy Paper 24 February 2016
   http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0024/002437/243713E.pdf

While policy provisions have been limited, the centre and several states launched programmes with MTBMLE components. Thus, the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan promoted the use of MLE and in 2013 the central government introduced a scheme for the galvanization of endangered languages, known as the Scheme for Protection and Preservation of Endangered Languages of India (SPPEL).[37] 2022-23 saw a 20% increase in the budget allocations for the national institutions for the promotion of Indian languages[38].

THE TRIBAL STATES IN CENTRAL INDIA

Odisha

Work on MLE in the state started in 1997–1999[39] when training was undertaken for 20,000 teachers on the beliefs and attitudes about tribal languages and cultures. Bilingual primers for six tribal languages were prepared with community involvement. The project ended after a change in leadership in the state Education Department, but another initiative was resurrected in 2006-07 when the Odisha government started the MLE programme at the primary level (classes 1 to 5). It started with 10 languages and added others over time. However, it remained far from being universally implemented since it is rolled out where 90% of children belonged to a single MT and children had little understanding of state MOI. This is preceded by a community agreement to use MT as MOI in the school and community support was obtained for the preparation of curriculum and reading materials. The infrastructure requirements were high with schools in question being expected to have at least five classrooms and five teachers (at least 2 MT teachers).

It involved the use of tribal language in the first three grades, followed by a gradual transition to Odiya in Grades III ending in a complete transition to Odiya in Grade VI. Curriculum and materials were prepared by resource persons trained for regular monitoring and support to teachers. Resource groups were prepared for each language. Academic Support was provided at the district and sub-district levels. Textbooks in 21 languages for Grades 1–5 were prepared with the involvement of local teachers and the community. Supplementary material including storybooks, big books, and picture conversation charts reflecting local context was also put in place. Volunteers from the tribal communities were brought on board as 'language teachers' in the MLE schools and received 15 days of training on the approach. They were then expected to build a mother tongue bridge across all curricular subjects.

Children in these schools had better achievements in language and mathematics, higher attendance, and greater self-confidence and the schools had good community feedback. However, given the low educational qualifications and limited time spent on building teacher capacities, the full ambition is not always realized. The MLE teachers have limited capacity to act as agents of change who can "empower new learners towards reclaiming and revaluing their languages and cultures stands severely questioned.[40]" At the same time, this program still does not cover all tribal children and is marked by a somewhat early exit from tribal languages.

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[37] https://www.sppel.org/

[38] https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/union-budget-2023-24-promotion-of-indian-languages-receives-impetus-101675363111810.html

[39] https://gdc.unicef.org/media/3841/download

[40] Urmishree Bedamatta (2014). The MLE Teacher: An Agent of Change or a Cog in the Wheel? The Australian Journal of Indigenous Education, 43, pp 195-207 doi:10.1017/jie.2014.25

Andhra Pradesh

Andhra Pradesh started its MTB-MLE in 2004. It started by incorporating eight tribal languages in 220 schools for Grades 1-5 and currently covers 1,350 schools.[41] A detailed curriculum plan and bilingual textbooks and multilingual dictionaries were prepared, and the participation of communities and language experts was promoted.[42] In Telangana, the government introduced textbooks in four tribal languages[43]. In Jharkhand, state-level interventions have included the development of bilingual picture dictionaries, a school readiness package for ECE, draft textbooks for classes 1-2 in 16 languages supplied to 1000 schools in 10 districts and encouraging schools to compile learning resources from the community and to undertake institutional revitalization of endangered languages.[44] Chhattisgarh initiated an MLE program in 2005 and extended it to seven languages in 2010[45]. Tribal languages have been introduced as the medium of education in the preschool[46] and tribal dialects have been introduced once a week[47]. The Minister has told officials to formulate a plan for students of tribal areas based on a linguistic survey undertaken by the state[48]. Maharashtra has published a series of 12 educational books in 10 languages.[49] In Rajasthan, the Tribal Area Development Department has supported an MTB-MLE program in four districts[50]. In Uttarakhand, efforts were made to develop books in Garhwali, Kumaoni and Jausari[51]. Kerala has developed a Tribal Education Methodology highlighting the tribal heritage and oral traditions for instruction[52] and developed digital content in tribal languages.[53] Similar initiatives have been supported in states like Gujarat[54] and MP[55]. Several civil society organizations have experimented with MLE interventions contributing to the knowledge of what works in the field and providing support to government interventions.

[41] https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/visakhapatnam/script-less-tribal-languages-to-get-a-boost-in-andhra-pradesh/articleshow/97245359.cms

[42] https://www.academia.edu/1841346/Preservation_of_Linguistic_Diversity_in_India_through_Mother_tongue_based_Multilingual_Education_Reality_and_Myth

[43] https://newsmeter.in/primary-school-textbooks-in-ts-to-get-more-inclusive-include-tribal-languages/

[44] http://publications.azimpremjifoundation.org/2554/1/9_Learning%20in%20a%20Multilingual%20Context_Binay_Pattanayak.pdf

[45] https://www.academia.edu/1841346/Preservation_of_Linguistic_Diversity_in_India_through_Mother_tongue_based_Multilingual_Education_Reality_and_Myth

[46] https://indianexpress.com/article/governance/chhattisgarh-education-reforms-tribal-languages-to-be-a-medium-of-education-in-pre-school-6271547/

[47] https://www.newindianexpress.com/nation/2022/sep/08/tribal-languages-to-be-part-of-chhattisgarh-school-curriculum-2496052.html

[48] https://www.dailypioneer.com/2022/state-editions/prepare-edu-plan-as-per-linguistic-survey--minister.html

[49] https://scroll.in/article/819962/by-introducing-bilingual-education-maharashtra-hopes-to-keep-adivasi-children-in-school

[50] https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/jaipur/rajasthan-students-in-tribal-districts-get-lessons-in-local-dialects/articleshow/88255501.cms

[51] https://www.dailypioneer.com/2018/state-editions/edu-deptt-to-include-garhwali-kumaoni-languages-as-medium-of-training.html

[52] https://kdisc.kerala.gov.in/index.php/tribal-education-methodology

[53] https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/kerala/2019/apr/06/kerala-makes-digital-content-in-tribal-languages-for-the-first-time-in-country-1960734.html

[54] https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/vadodara/books-in-local-dialects-ease-communication-in-tribal-schools/articleshow/71863167.cms

[55] https://www.academia.edu/10469824/Issues_and_Challenges_of_Education_in_Tribal_Areas

North-eastern India

Ethnically tribal populations form the majority of the population in several of the states in the northeast creating a fundamentally different dynamic in terms of how language policies are rolled out. 12 languages are used as MoI at the elementary stage and 10 are used in secondary education in the northeastern states of India.[56] Nagaland, Sikkim, and Arunachal Pradesh use English as the sole official language; English is accompanied by Khasi, Puar and Garo in Meghalaya, by Mizo (in Mizoram), Bengali (in Tripura) and Assamese and Bengali (in Assam).[57] Despite this somewhat anomalous status of the English language, the region has some of the most vibrant MT-MLE interventions in the country.

Tripura: Bengali and Kokborok are the two most spoken languages in the state. In the 1961 Census, only three women declared the Kokborok language as their mother tongue, but by the 2001 Census, 762,000 people called it their mother tongue.[58] This is the result of a process of promoting the use of this language. A Kokborok Advisory Board and a Tribal Language Cell in the Education Department were established. Kokborok training programmes have been introduced for government employees to support communication with the tribal population.[59]

In 2005 the Education department of the state decided to adopt Kokborok as an MoI at the primary level.[60] Kokborok has since been introduced as a subject in the CBSE in the state[61]. Four DIETs undertake teacher training for teaching Kokborok[62]. While there were no university courses in Kokborok, a diploma course in the language is available at Tripura University[63] and teachers were encouraged to learn the language. The Education Department in the Tribal Areas Autonomous Council has a Language Wing to promote the use of Kokborok including the compilation of textbooks (including a Kokborok Textbooks Sub-Committee), workshops for the collection and compilation of vocabulary and terminology and teacher training. It also promotes the use of the language through the celebration of a Kokborok day, promotes participation in Book Fairs, provides awards for contributions to the use of Kokborok and runs a Book Museum having a collection of Kokborok books and books related to tribal life and culture in Tripura[64]. Schools are reported to maintain a 'Language Preference Register' to indicate the preferences of linguistic minority pupils and students opt for the languages as per their preferences[65].

Assam: Assam has eight notified mediums of instruction which are being extended to 20 mother tongues[66]. SCERT and the Sarba Siksha Abhiyan Mission will undertake a language mapping exercise

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[56] http://www.languageinindia.com/aug2017/sarajubalathreelanguageformulanortheastfinal.pdf

[57] https://mdoner.gov.in/about-north-east

[58] https://www.academia.edu/937213/Linguistic_Human_Rights_in_India_Policy_and_Practice

[59] https://www.northeasttoday.in/2022/07/05/tripura-government-officials-must-have-thorough-knowledge-on-kokborok-language-says-education-minister-ratanlal-nath/

[60] https://indiatogether.org/kokborok-education

[61] https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/agartala/kokborok-included-in-tripura-cbse-schools/articleshow/91244374.cms

[62] http://164.100.166.181/annualreport/52ndReport_CLM_English.pdf

[63] https://indiatogether.org/kokborok-education

[64] https://ttaadc.gov.in/sites/default/files/education%20LANGUAGEWINGWEB%20VERSION.pdf

[65] http://164.100.166.181/annualreport/52ndReport_CLM_English.pdf

[66] https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/guwahati/govt-to-map-schoolkids-locations-to-impart-edu-in-mother-tongue/articleshow/98056158.cms

in the state[67]. However, the decision to use English as the medium of instruction to teach science and maths from Class 3 in government schools has been opposed by cultural organizations in the state.[68] In 2022, the introduction of four additional tribal languages as mediums of instruction was announced after discussions with various tribal organizations.[69] Under the new policy, Sadri will be used in tea gardens with Assamese being taught. Bodo is the medium of instruction in schools in the Bodoland territorial areas. in 1963, Bodo was introduced as a medium of instruction in primary schools up to Grade 3, and later, in higher secondary levels up to Grade XII. In 2003, Bodo was granted the status of a Scheduled language. Between 1981 and 1991, the number of those who declared Bodo to be their mother tongue increased by 4170%.[70]

Manipur: The Tribal Research Institute, Manipur is providing tribal languages financial assistance to partially cover the printing costs of approved educational textbooks for the 18 approved tribal language groups[71]. Meiteis and Meitei Pangals speak Meiteilon/Manipuri. It is a Tibeto Burman Language with 1.2 million speakers[72]. It is reported to be one of the oldest languages in Southeast Asia with coins dating to 568-658 A.D.[73] In 1907, the then King passed a resolution on the use of the mother tongue as the medium of instruction at the lower primary level; in 1924 this was extended to Matric and by 1976 it was used for PG and PhD[74]. In 1979, 'The Manipur Official Language Bill' declared Manipuri as the language for official purposes. The script was listed in the Manipur Gazette in 1980. 1987 onwards saw a protest for the recognition of Manipuri in the 8th Schedule. It was eventually recognized in 2003. Since 1965, 18 tribal languages have been used as mediums of instruction or subjects in the state and the list is growing.[75] Language societies of the concerned languages develop with the support of the Tribal Research Institute.

Nagaland: Four Naga local dialects have been approved for use as a medium of instruction and 18 local dialects were approved up to the elementary school level as a subject[76]. An Institute of Naga languages (within the Directorate of School Education) is also being set up. A Language Officer is appointed for every tribe, who is aided by Assistant Language Officers and Language Assistants to develop textbooks for schools for all the approved official tribal languages. Tenyidie is taught up to PhD level, Ao is taught up to the Bachelor's level, Lotha and Sema are taught up to Class XII, and the remaining 13 languages are taught up to the level of Class VIII.[77]

[67] https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/guwahati/govt-to-map-schoolkids-locations-to-impart-edu-in-mother-tongue/articleshow/98056158.cms

[68] https://scroll.in/article/1033440/why-the-assam-governments-new-measures-in-education-have-triggered-a-political-backlash

[69] https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/guwahati/studies-in-tribal-languages-in-schools-of-assam-soon/articleshow/89535640.cms

[70] https://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1122&context=iaccp_papers

[71] http://e-pao.net/epPageExtractor.asp?src=education.Common_future_of_Manipur_view_from_tribal_languages_perspective_Part_1_By_Ragongning_Gangmei.html

[72]

[73] http://rdmodernresearch.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/120.pdf

[74] https://www.worldwidejournals.com/global-journal-for-research-analysis-GJRA/recent_issues_pdf/2019/August/August_2019_1565095970_5706527.pdf

[75] https://www.worldwidejournals.com/global-journal-for-research-analysis-GJRA/recent_issues_pdf/2019/August/August_2019_1565095970_5706527.pdf

[76] https://thenewsmill.com/2019/08/nagaland-govt-approves-education-in-mother-tongue/

[77] https://scroll.in/article/806722/eight-things-you-may-not-have-known-about-language-education-in-india

Sikkim: Eleven languages are taught in schools.[78] In Arunachal Pradesh, the Arunachal Institute of Tribal Studies offers a three-month certificate course in three tribal languages.[79] Textbooks have been introduced in eight tribal languages in collaboration with the SCERT and community-based organizations of several of the state's tribes.[80] Mizoram has five mediums of instruction, including Mizo which accounted for 55% of elementary schools in the state in 2015-16[81].

MLE POLICY- ODISHA

Odisha is the first state to have a dedicated MLE Policy introduced in 2014. This commits the state to extend MLE to all tribal children in the state. It covers dimensions including the choice of the medium of instruction in tribal areas, the process of language transition, teacher training, curriculum, assessment and pedagogic materials and the role of DIETs and block and district-level officials concerning the same. A process of review of the policy has been provided.

AN OVERVIEW OF MT-MLE FOR INDIA'S TRIBAL POPULATIONS

This looks at some of the challenges concerning the implementation of MTB-MLE programs in the country and identifies some of the building blocks of any policy on this issue.

1. LANGUAGES OF INSTRUCTION

The former UN Special Rapporteur on the right to education, Tomaŝevski pointed out that the use of a dominant official language as the language of instruction in primary schools is the main feature of "collapsed models of schooling" which reinforce inequality[82]. India is yet to find the right balance between the right to learn the dominant language and the freedom from an involuntary shift away from children's indigenous languages.

It has seen a sharp decline in the number of languages used as the medium of instruction. This declined from 80 in 1981 to 47 in 2001 to 34 in 2009. In 2015-16, only 28 languages were used as the medium of instruction in schools[83]. Additionally, 69 languages were used as subjects.[84] In 2001, only 6 non-scheduled languages were being used as MoIs, mainly in northeast India.[85] The 6th All India Educational Survey shows that of the 41 languages used in schools, only 13 were tribal languages.[86]

In effect, India has had a non-mother tongue education system where the state language is the default MT of all children residing within the same. Some estimates suggest that less than 1% of the tribal children have any real opportunity for education in the medium of their mother tongues[87].

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[78] https://scroll.in/article/806722/eight-things-you-may-not-have-known-about-language-education-in-india

[79] https://scroll.in/article/806722/eight-things-you-may-not-have-known-about-language-education-in-india

[80] https://news.abplive.com/news/india/arunachal-pradesh-introduces-books-on-3rd-language-for-classes-6-8-1480503

[81] http://mzuir.inflibnet.ac.in/bitstream/123456789/313/1/Ellie%20Lallianpuii%20(Education).pdf

[82] https://archive.unu.edu/globalization/2008/files/UNU-UNESCO_Mohanty.pdf

[83] https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10993-015-9397-4

[84] https://iie.chitkara.edu.in/index.php/iie/article/view/39

[85] https://gargicollege.in/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Hundreds-of-Home-Languages-in-the-Country-and-many-in-most-Classrooms-Coping-with-Diversity-in-Primary-Education-in-India_-DHIR-JHINGRAN-.docx

[86] https://archive.unu.edu/globalization/2008/files/UNU-UNESCO_Mohanty.pdf

[87] https://www.academia.edu/533563/Overcoming_the_language_barrier_for_tribal_children_MLE_in_Andhra_Pradesh_and_Orissa_India

Additionally, tribal children must navigate the divide between the major regional languages and tribal languages (Vernacular-Other divide) and English and the major regional languages (English-Vernacular divide)[88].

> **RECOMMENDATIONS:**
>   a) In accordance with the recommendations of the Commissioner for Linguistic Minorities ensure that the Census mentions every language spoken, not just those with over 10,000 speakers.[89]
>   b) In line with the SARTHAQ list of tasks, undertake regular language surveys to capture the number of speakers of various languages, the dialects used, the spatial distribution of the various languages, and the domains in which the various languages are used.
>   c) All schools must at the time of admission record (i) the mother tongue of the child; (ii) the first language/medium of instruction preferred; and (iii) the optional/third language preferred by the parent to enable schools to provide adequate facilities to ensure that linguistic minority children can learn their mother tongue.[90]
>   d) Introduce and strengthen the instruction in the mother tongue at the pre-primary level as part of the rollout of government interventions on Foundational Literacy and Numeracy.
>   e) Expand the number of mother tongues used as the medium of instruction and taught as subjects in India's tribal states to ensure that the majority of the tribal languages are used in educational settings.
>   f) Given that many tribal languages lack scripts, a process would be needed to undertake their development and adopt a process of testing, revising, and approving the use of these new alphabet systems.

2. CLASSROOM RESOURCES INCLUDING TEXTBOOKS AND ASSESSMENT

Limited materials are available only in (selected) tribal languages[91] and these are often of poor quality (uneasy balance between pedagogic expertise and language skills). Textbooks and other teaching materials in minority languages are also often not promptly supplied at the beginning of the academic session[92]. The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Social Justice and Empowerment has highlighted that the development of bilingual primers is delayed[93]. At the same time, processes of assessment would need to be adapted to support instruction in the mother tongue.

> Recommendations:
>   a) Promote the development of textbooks and other materials in tribal languages. Support may be taken from the associations of tribal communities and civil society for the same.
>   b) Ensure the quality of the materials so that they are interesting, clear, in line with the learning objectives for non-minority speakers, age-appropriate and appropriate to the local culture.
>   c) Ensure timely distribution of textbooks in tribal languages at the start of the academic session.
>   d) Ensure that materials in tribal languages developed are available in the public domain by

[88] http://wrap.warwick.ac.uk/113880/
[89] http://164.100.166.181/annualreport/52ndReport_CLM_English.pdf
[90] http://164.100.166.181/annualreport/52ndReport_CLM_English.pdf
[91] http://schoolofeducators.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/Resources-for-Multilingual-Education-in-India.pdf
[92] http://164.100.166.181/annualreport/52ndReport_CLM_English.pdf
[93] http://164.100.60.131/lsscommittee/Social%20Justice%20&%20Empowerment/16_Social_Justice_And_Empowerment_49.pdf

3. BELIEFS ABOUT LANGUAGES

Teachers in India often have a "monolingual mindset" and resist 'diluting' the classroom by allowing the use of languages that they believe are dialects.[94] Teachers felt conflicted about their use of a language other than the stated medium of instruction which is often explicitly discouraged.[95] This attitude is often ingrained during the process of teacher training. The three-language policy itself principally provides for instruction in the national or the regional language. The NEP aims to create State Resource Groups and a multilingual education cell in the states to contribute to building multilingual awareness for teachers and addressing their beliefs and attitudes.

The use of English is a class marker and is seen as an instrument of social mobility. Only 1.6% of Indians from the bottom quintile can speak English, compared to 41% from rich families; an upper-caste person is more than three times more likely to speak English than someone from a scheduled tribe and a rural speaker is four times less likely to be an English speaker than someone from an urban area.[96] While less than 0.02% have English as their first language or MT, over 40% of school children in India are in English medium schools and the number of children in such schools is growing by over 10% every year.[97] It is the second language of 83 million and the third language of another 46 million people.[98]

There is parental demand for English education, including from marginalized communities who see it as an instrument of social mobility. While research suggests that learning in the mother tongue results in improved learning outcomes, parents from poor families often aspire to be educated in English which is seen to be the language of power making it difficult to introduce instruction in the mother tongue.[99] However, research shows that students taught in the mother tongue perform better cognitively; recent research in South Africa shows that mother tongue instructions boosts both mother tongue and English reading skills, while improving teaching of English literacy negatively impacts mother tongue literacy for struggling students[100]. students from poor families are disadvantaged in English acquisition since they frequently lack English language socialization practices at home and experience poor instruction in schools, particularly low proficiency among the teachers themselves, which results in poor English outcomes. Early learning of English also has subtractive effects on children's MT and the expansion of English has adversely affected linguistic diversity.[101] Despite this, Governments find it difficult to deny parental aspirations. Thus, the Karnataka government introduced MT as the medium of instruction at the primary level in 1994, but

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[94] https://www.tatatrusts.org/Upload/Content_Files/no-teacher-no-class-state-of-the-education-report-for-india-2021.pdf

[95] https://learningportal.iiep.unesco.org/en/blog/india-investigating-multilingual-classrooms

[96] https://www.livemint.com/news/india/in-india-who-speaks-in-english-and-where-1557814101428.html

[97] Multilingualism, education, English and development: Whose development? Ajit Mohanty
https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/sites/teacheng/files/pub_Multilingualisms%20and%20Development_low%20res_FINAL.pdf

[98] https://www.livemint.com/news/india/in-india-who-speaks-in-english-and-where-1557814101428.html

[99] Mohanty, Panda and Pal 2010 in Multilingualism, education, English and development: Whose development? Ajit Mohanty
https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/sites/teacheng/files/pub_Multilingualisms%20and%20Development_low%20res_FINAL.pdf

[100] https://www.cgdev.org/blog/what-effect-does-learning-home-language-have-reading-skills

[101] Multilingualism, education, English and development: Whose development? Ajit Mohanty
https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/sites/teacheng/files/pub_Multilingualisms%20and%20Development_low%20res_FINAL.pdf

the move was challenged by parents and the Supreme Court eventually struck down the order.[102] Accordingly, while the premature introduction of English should be resisted, serious consideration may be given to its introduction in senior classes.

> **RECOMMENDATIONS:**
> a) Launch schemes for the promotion and development of specific minority tribal languages. Tribal students must develop fluency in their mother tongues and the official languages used in the state, while also learning and appreciating their own unique languages, heritage, culture, history, and ancestry through the prism of language.
> b) Build awareness about the best practice in English language education to resist its premature introduction. English education may be introduced later after competence in the mother tongue has been acquired.

4. MODALITIES OF INSTRUCTION

India lacks a national framework for MLE methodology or preserving multilingualism through education or retaining the multilingual character of society through education. India has often adopted soft assimilation programs that support language shift/ transition programmes resulting in an early exit from tribal language use[103]. State MT-MLE Interventions have often been sporadic, patchy (covering only some languages) and not enough time is devoted to either developing the first language or bridging. A single language may be using multiple scripts which creates difficulty in mutual comprehensibility across state borders.

While the best practice on MLE shows that at least seven or eight years of instruction in the MT as the medium of instruction is necessary for the development of a high level of multi-lingual competence,[104] tribal children in India tend to receive two to three years to learn the language.[105] Failure to plan for this transition by introducing education in the state language early means that the learning of content starts late. In the interim, there is passive participation in classrooms that largely consists of children copying alphabets and numbers from blackboards or textbooks and very little conversation or oral work. While most teachers use some language mixing (or code-switching) to teach languages, most lessons involve teacher-centred practices.[106]

A Socio-linguistic survey in Jharkhand found that 96% of children spoke in their tribal or regional languages at home; Hindi was the mother tongue of only 3.7% of speakers but was largely used for speaking with visitors like government officials and NGO workers.[107] 92% of surveyed children reported that teachers used Hindi for interacting with students; 41% of children used their mother tongue for communicating with teachers.[108]

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[102] https://indconlawphil.wordpress.com/2014/05/08/supreme-court-rules-on-medium-of-instruction-in-schools-free-speech-and-freedom-of-occupation/

[103] https://archive.unu.edu/globalization/2008/files/UNU-UNESCO_Mohanty.pdf

[104] https://archive.unu.edu/globalization/2008/files/UNU-UNESCO_Mohanty.pdf

[105] https://archive.unu.edu/globalization/2008/files/UNU-UNESCO_Mohanty.pdf

[106] https://learningportal.iiep.unesco.org/en/blog/india-investigating-multilingual-classrooms

[107] https://www.academia.edu/4227936/Language_Diversity_in_Jharkhand

[108] http://publications.azimpremjifoundation.org/2554/1/9_Learning%20in%20a%20Multilingual%20Context_Binay_Pattanayak.pdf

While transitional programmes for teaching tribal learners are helpful, they also promote the acquisition of the dominant language at the cost of developing the children's own languages. Even well-meaning measures like segregating the tribal children for mother tongue education risk working against multilingual, multicultural dynamics in which people with diversely plural identities interact.[109]

> **RECOMMENDATIONS:**
> a) The curriculum must provide time for students to gain a basic level of fluency in their mother tongue before introducing the state language.
> b) Delay any exit from the use of the mother tongue to the end of elementary education.

5. TEACHERS

Teachers in schools in tribal India often have limited knowledge of the diverse languages of learners in their classrooms. Thus, a study in Bastar and Sukma districts in Chhattisgarh found that only 50% of teachers said they understood the local tribal language.[110] Few states explicitly prescribe language qualifications for government teachers to be placed in areas with a high proportion of tribal learners. Many are outsiders to the tribal culture, there are status differences between teachers and taught and many of the teachers themselves carry deep-rooted biases about tribal children.[111] This triggers low expectations and low performance among tribal learners.

Responding to this, some states like Odisha hire dedicated MLE teachers. While these may possess greater tribal linguistic skills, they are functionally para teachers.[112] Reliance on untrained teachers for tribal students promotes educational inequality and runs counter to the commitment of the state to ensure that all teachers in India are professionally qualified, trained, and motivated.

> **RECOMMENDATIONS:**
> a) Recruit fluent tribal language speakers as language teachers without compromising on the principle that all students are taught by qualified, trained, and motivated teachers.
> b) Improve local teacher training facilities in minority languages in DIETs to ensure that adequate numbers of trained teachers are posted for the benefit of children belonging to linguistic minority groups in the States/UTs[113]
> c) Undertake pre-service training of teachers on processes of language acquisition and sensitization of teachers to issues of tribal identity. Supplement this with regular on-site support and in-service training.
> d) Develop a continuous process of teacher training of all stakeholders including teachers, parents, and bureaucracy to promote the use of Adivasi languages.

6. ROLE OF ACADEMIC SUPPORT STRUCTURES AND OTHER INSTITUTIONS WITH A MANDATE ON TRIBAL LANGUAGES

[109] Urmishree Bedamatta (2014). The MLE Teacher: An Agent of Change or a Cog in the Wheel? The Australian Journal of Indigenous Education, 43, pp 195-207 doi:10.1017/jie.2014.25

[110] http://csdindia.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Chhattisgarh-Project-Report-2018.pdf

[111] https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0898589822000341

[112] https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/australian-journal-of-indigenous-education/article/abs/mle-teacher-an-agent-of-change-or-a-cog-in-the-wheel/6AFADD4CFDD1126C02873B281CC9C29C

[113] http://164.100.166.181/annualreport/52ndReport_CLM_English.pdf

At the same time, teacher training facilities in minority languages are often neglected by States/UTs.[114] Many states having MLE programmes tend to have State Level Resource Groups for teacher training, contributing to the creation of a state resource group on the issue. Support of the SCERT, the State Education Department and other academic institutions like the Academy of Tribal Language and Culture in this regard. DIETs have a critical role in the development of materials in the tribal languages, training teachers, supporting block personnel and overall support for the implementation of the MLE interventions.

The promotion and development of languages should be given due attention and importance by all the States/UTs. The government has established the Central Institute of Indian Languages (CIIL) under the MoE and the Tribal Research Institute (TRI) under the Ministry of Tribal Affairs to promote and protect tribal languages. While some states have Academies/Institutions to serve a similar purpose at the state level, these are often functionally defunct.[115]

RECOMMENDATIONS:
  a) Establish core resource teams having clarity on global and national trends in MLE and the ability to support and sustain initiatives across the various tribal languages.
  b) Strengthen institutions for the development of tribal languages and MLE including the various language academies (nationally and at the state level) and SCERTs. Ensure the establishment of dedicated language cells for the various languages being rolled out as part of state MLE interventions.
  c) Strengthen DIETs to enable them to play a supportive function to BRCs and CRCs to enable them to extend support to MLE teachers and provide the technical expertise to support the development of supplementary learning materials in the tribal mother tongues.
  d) Staffing the above functions would be particularly important given the experience of vacancies in many of these institutions.

7. GOVERNANCE

While the linguistic rights of minorities are protected by India's Constitution, most States/UTs have not notified the specific safeguards provided for linguistic minorities, particularly the consequences for these provisions being violated. At the same time, many of the past MLE interventions have suffered from the lack of consistent support from the administration with initiatives taken often being coterminous with the term of specific officials or political administration. The implementation of MLE interventions often suffers from limited availability of data and limited efforts to monitor, document, and learn from past interventions. Interventions on MTB-MLE have also lacked consistent funding.

RECOMMENDATIONS:
  a) Put in place machinery for implementation of safeguards for minority languages, including publicity of safeguards and rights already available.
  b) Build political consensus on the need for MTB-MLE across party lines and provide political support and oversight for interventions to ensure the continuity of any interventions.
  c) Put in place mechanisms for the sensitization of officials to ensure that the administration is sensitive to the challenges and opportunities arising from the use of MTB-MLE.
  d) Improve the availability of data on MLE interventions by including relevant fields in DISE data

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[114] http://164.100.166.181/annualreport/52ndReport_CLM_English.pdf
[115] http://164.100.166.181/annualreport/52ndReport_CLM_English.pdf

> including the share of schools having tribal language speakers, the number of schools with MTB-MLE interventions and the timely availability of textbooks and other materials in minority languages.
> e) Support community-based monitoring systems for review of MLE interventions, research into interventions undertaken and documentation of good practices learned. A stronger focus on the northeast would be particularly important in this regard.
> f) Strengthen convergence with allied departments including tribal affairs and MWCD for the rollout of MLE interventions.
> g) Ensure that the necessary financial support is available to roll out and sustain a quality MLE intervention.

8. ROLE OF THE LANGUAGE COMMUNITIES AND THE COMMUNITY AT LARGE

The elevation of some tribal languages to Scheduled Language status is born primarily through political considerations and the result of mobilization by these communities.[116] Historically, the demand for the use of language as an official language has been based on the size and power of a population, the strength of their collective sense of identity, the community's demand for high-status languages and the extent of the state's willingness to respond to these demands. As such, any process of promoting the use of tribal languages in educational settings calls for engagement with the specific linguistic community to improve the social status of their language. The examples from the Northeast highlight the role of tribal associations and tribal rights movements in ensuring linguistic revival.

This provides the basis for the demand for the adoption of the tribal language for instruction and supports community dialogue to strengthen the intergenerational transmission of languages. in AP, many minority language households believe that was better to study in state language medium schools since it helped in selections for government jobs.[117] In contrast, a similar survey in Manipur found that 97.1% of parents felt that the mother tongue needs to be promoted and around 60% of parents and students want to finish at least primary education in the MT[118].

Building support for the use of tribal languages requires promoting a wider ecosystem that would support its use outside the educational settings. Thus, Santhali has become India's first tribal language with its own Wikipedia edition.[119] This includes the adoption of tribal languages as part of official processes. The Commissioner for Linguistic Minorities has recommended the adoption of a minority language as the "second official language" in districts where more than 60% speak the minority language and to ensure that the various rules, regulations, and notices issued are translated in all languages spoken by at least 15% of the population at the district or sub-district levels[120].

> RECOMMENDATIONS:
> 1. Solicit the support of tribal leaders to foster tribal language use across the state and in individual districts. Establish networks and partnerships to publicize and support programmes

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[116] Shivakumar, J & Agarwal, A (2921) https://osf.io/preprints/socarxiv/sjxc6/

[117] https://www.researchgate.net/publication/330926549_Barriers_in_Making_the_School_Inclusive

[118] http://www.languageinindia.com/june2019/sarajubalamothertongueeducationfinal1A.pdf

[119] https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/santhali-becomes-india-s-first-tribal-language-to-get-own-wikipedia-edition/story-fUP5LRZI0lEBlVGNCjW5cK.html

[120] http://164.100.166.181/annualreport/52ndReport_CLM_English.pdf

and jointly undertake reviews of the progress of the interventions with tribal organizations and civil society.
2. Undertake awareness raising on the benefits of MTB-MLE among the community, particularly parents, to convince them of the value of such interventions and with community leaders to leverage support for MT teachers and officials.
3. Embed the MTB-MLE program in other efforts to promote tribal identity.
4. Build awareness about MTB-MLE interventions by using traditional, mainstream, and social media.
5. Leverage community expertise in the education system by supporting outreach to collect MT stories including undertaking creative writing workshops to collect stories in the MT.
6. Work with SMCs and Panchayati Raj institutions to support MTB-MLE interventions to support local ownership of interventions.

CONCLUSION

The landscape outlined in this paper suggests the need for a three-pronged strategy that involves
  a) the introduction of dedicated mother-tongue-based multi-lingual education policies by states having tribal populations.
  b) Addressing the implementation gap of the existing dedicated State programmes and schemes for multilingual education adopted by the various states.
  c) Working with communities, particularly the organizations of the concerned tribal groups, for the revival of the tribal languages and creating demand for the adoption of the concerned language in educational settings.

MLE Policy

MLE Programmes

Work with ommunity
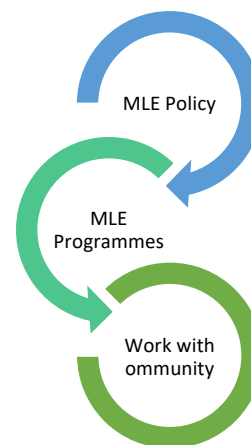
Components of MLE Reform

This will need to be accompanied by efforts to address the larger questions of the quality of tribal education by ensuring all schools adhere to the RTE norms, improving the availability of quality early childhood facilities, undertaking the upgradation of elementary schools up to secondary education, stopping consolidation of tribal schools and investing in teacher training.

Author
Anjela Taneja
Inputs from: Noopur and Akshay Tarfe (Oxfam India)
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