

Safeguarding Sindhi Language and Heritage: A Study of Sindhi Students' Attitudes under the NEP 2020 Paradigm

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Abstract

This abstract focuses on exploring the attitude of Sindhi students towards Sindhi language and Sindhi culture in the context of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. The NEP 2020 aims to bring about transformative changes in the Indian education system, including the preservation and promotion of regional languages and cultures. This study delves into the attitude, challenges and opportunities that Sindhi students of junior and degree colleges encounter in maintaining their linguistic and cultural heritage. The sample of 30 sindhi students studying in the colleges of Mumbai was collected by using purposive random sampling technique. A tool in the form of rating scale was prepared by the researchers to find out the attitude of Sindhi students towards sindhi language and Sindhi culture. This study examines factors influencing their attitudes, opportunities and challenges such as language proficiency, educational environment, social dynamics, and personal motivations.

For the present study a descriptive survey method was used. The findings revealed a diverse range of attitudes among Sindhi students towards their language and culture. The NEP 2020 provides an opportunity for revitalising the Sindhi language and culture by emphasising multilingualism, flexibility in curriculum, and promoting local languages. The findings of this study contributes to a deeper understanding of the attitude, challenges and opportunities faced by Sindhi students in relation to their language and culture.

Key words: Sindhi language, Sindhi culture, Sindhi students, Attitude, NEP2020.

Introduction

The Sindhi community, renowned for its rich language and vibrant culture, holds a significant place in the cultural fabric of India. The Sindhi language, with its Indo-Aryan roots and unique script, and the diverse traditions, customs, and artistic expressions of Sindhi culture, embody a heritage that has been passed down through generations. However, in the fast-paced and dynamic landscape of the modern world, the preservation and promotion of regional languages and cultures face numerous challenges.

A key focus of the NEP 2020 is the preservation and promotion of regional languages and cultures, recognizing their pivotal role in nurturing identity, cognitive development, and social cohesion. This policy provides an opportune moment to explore the attitude of Sindhi students towards their language and culture, as well as the challenges and opportunities they encounter in the process.

Rationale of the study

The rationale of the study is rooted in the context of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 in India. The NEP 2020 was introduced with the aim of bringing transformative changes to the education system, emphasising holistic development, skill enhancement, and the preservation and promotion of regional languages and cultures. Keeping this backdrop, the study focuses on exploring the attitudes of Sindhi students towards the Sindhi language and Sindhi culture. The Sindhi community, a linguistic and cultural minority, has a rich heritage and history in India. However, with the rapid globalisation and the dominance of mainstream languages, there may be concerns about the potential erosion of the Sindhi language and culture among younger generations.

Understanding the attitudes of Sindhi students towards their language and culture is crucial for the effective implementation of educational policies that support linguistic and cultural diversity. Like any group, Sindhi students possess individual perspectives and preferences that influence

their attitudes towards their language and culture. The study's location, Mumbai, is significant as it is a diverse metropolitan city, where multiple languages and cultures converge. Understanding the attitudes of Sindhi students in such a cosmopolitan setting can provide valuable insights into the broader challenges faced by linguistic and cultural minorities in similar urban contexts across India.

Significance of the Study

The study's findings will contribute to the preservation and promotion of Sindhi language and Sindhi culture among Sindhi students. It will shed light on the attitude and challenges they face to maintain their cultural heritage within the context of the NEP 2020. Also the study's insights will inform policymakers and educational planners about the specific needs and aspirations of Sindhi students regarding their language and culture. This information can be used to shape educational policies, curriculum development, and resource allocation to support the inclusion of Sindhi language and cultural education.

This study will empower the Sindhi community by highlighting the importance of their language and culture in educational settings. It will provide a platform for community organisations and leaders to advocate for the preservation of Sindhi heritage and collaborate with educational institutions for its promotion.

Overall, this research is significant as it not only contributes to the academic understanding of language and culture but also offers practical implications for policymakers, educators, and community members, supporting the larger goal of preserving India's linguistic and cultural diversity.

Review Of Related Literature

Sindhis in a global community without a place of birth see social capital in different languages in their new settings in place of Sindhi. A greater feasible approach to encouraging them to use their language in the home area and in ethnic encounters is to apply persuasive discourse strategies to persuade contributors of the speech network to see freedom in using their language at the same time as keeping their multilingual repertoire. Few studies are as follows:

Neshfa et.al explored the language mentalities of undergrad English language students (ELLS) towards

Sindhi (their first language) and English language which were impacted through predominant talk of language strategy. The review involved semi organised interviews to gather the inside and out information about language perspectives of understudies towards Sindhi and English language.

Akram and Yasmeen directed concentrate on language perspectives towards Punjabi and English language learning. The review involved the poll for information assortment and the information was investigated genuinely. The exploration presumed that Pakistan is phonetically different nation having what is going on of diglossia in which at least two unique dialects are utilised in a similar society. The discoveries of the review introduced that individuals of Faisalabad have more negative perspectives towards Punjabi language and more uplifting outlooks towards English language since the construction, status, capability and eminence of these dialects are unique (Akram and Yasmeen, 2011).

Soomro (2016) directed the concentration of mentalities of students towards learning and communicating in the English language by utilising a blended system. Survey and semi organised interviews product utilised to gather the information of the review. The discoveries uncovered that members have more uplifting outlooks towards learning and communicating in English language and the vast majority of them saw that utilisation of English language don't danger their primary language.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

To explore the attitude of Sindhi students towards the Sindhi language and Sindhi culture in the context of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.

Objectives:

- To assess the attitudes of Sindhi students towards the Sindhi language and Sindhi culture.
- To identify the role of the educational system in promoting and preserving the Sindhi language and culture.
- To ascertain the impact of globalisation on Sindhi Language and cultural identity.
- To explore the opportunities underlined in NEP2020 for the promotion of Sindhi language and culture.

By addressing these aims and objectives, the study aims to provide insights into the attitudes of

sindhi students related to Sindhi language and Sindhi culture .

Methodology

Research Design: The research design consisted of a survey approach, employing google forms as the data collection tool. The survey gathers information on the attitudes of Sindhi students towards Sindhi language and Sindhi culture.

Sampling: A purposive sampling technique was employed to select sindhi students from junior colleges and senior colleges of Mumbai and HSNL university. It was administered on 30 college going sindhi students who were 15 years and above.

Questionnaire Development: A structured questionnaire was developed, Likert-scale questions. The scale was created by the researchers which focused upon the factors related to attitudes of Sindhi students towards sindhi language and culture.

Data Collection: . Participants were provided with a link to the survey, along with instructions for completion.

Data Analysis: The collected data was analysed using descriptive statistics. Percentages were calculated to determine the distribution of responses for each question.

Findings And Analysis

Objectives: a. To assess the attitudes of Sindhi students towards the Sindhi language and Sindhi culture

Factors contribute to the Attitudes of Sindhi students towards their Language and Culture:

50% of the students believed that family influence, peer influences and educational experiences and exposure to the sindhi heritage contributes towards their attitude, 33% believed that family influence and upbringing, 4% feel that peer influence and societal norms play an important role in the attitudes towards sindhi language and culture and 13% believed that educational experiences and exposure to sindhi heritage can change the attitudes of the students.

Generational Differences in Attitudes:

87% of the students believed that there are generational differences in the attitudes towards sindhi language and culture, 10% were unsure whether generational differences changes the

attitudes or not, 3% believed that attitudes remain consistent across different age groups

Attitudes of the non-Sindhi peers towards the Sindhi

Language and Culture:

67% of the students believed that their peers are respectful and supportive towards sindhi language and sindhi culture, 26% felt that their non-sindhi peers are indifferent, neither supportive nor dismissive, 3% believed that their non-sindhi peers are dismissive and lacking interest and 3% believed that they are Unsure/Undecided about any change in the attitudes of non-sindhi peers toward sindhi students.

Sindhi language is an important part of identity:

70% of the students believed that it's a part of their cultural identity, 23% believed that it's somewhat important, but it does not define their entire identity and 6% stated that they are Unsure/Undecided whether it's an important part of their identity.

Level of importance given to sindhi language and sindhi culture :

60% students felt it's very important that students associate with preserving the sindhi culture and language, 30% felt that it's important and 10% believed it to be important.

Responsibility to pass down the Sindhi Traditions to Future Generations:

60% sindhi students believed that it's their responsibility to pass down their cultural traditions to future generations, 33% believed that they have some sense of responsibility whereas 2% believed that they have no sense of responsibility for passing down the traditions to future generations.

Promoting and Participating in Sindhi Events:

40% of the subjects were actively involved, 40% were moderately involved and 20% were minimally involved.

Expressing pride in their cultural heritage:

58% of the sindhi students believed that by doing these activities like celebrating festivals and traditional events, wearing traditional attire and participating in cultural activities students can express pride in their cultural heritage, 6% believed that only by wearing sindhi attire they can express their pride and 37% of the participants believed that by celebrating festivals and cultural events they can express pride in their culture.

Positive impact on the sindhi community by preservation of sindhi language:

40% of the students believed in maintaining a strong cultural identity, 30% believed in preserving a unique heritage and traditions and 30% believed in enhancing communication and unity within the community.

Objective -b Role of the Education system in promoting and preserving the Sindhi language and culture:

50% of the subjects believed that the education system is somewhat supportive, 40% believed that the system is very supportive, 7% of the students believed that the education system was not supportive and 3% of the students were unsure about it.

Inclusion of Sindhi Language and Cultural Studies in the School Curriculum:

46% of the sindhi students believed that it's highly valuable and essential and 40% believed that it's moderately valuable but not a top priority, 10% believed that it's not necessary or relevant and 4% were undecided/unsure about inclusion of sindhi studies in school curriculum.

Representation of Sindhi culture in mainstream media and education:

34% of the students believed that partially represented, but there's room for improvement, 30% felt that its well-represented and acknowledged, 35% felt that its underrepresented and overlooked and 4% believed that they were unsure/undecided about the representation

Availability of Resources for learning sindhi language:

46% of the students believed that there were limited resources and minimal support towards learning and practice of sindhi language, 33% believed that there were abundant resources and strong support and 20% believed that there were sufficient resources and moderate support.

Representation of Sindhi culture in mainstream Media and Education:

34% of the students believed that it was underrepresented and overlooked whereas 34% believed that it is partially represented but there is room for improvement.

The education system plays a crucial role in promoting and preserving the Sindhi language and

culture, as it serves as a primary platform for imparting knowledge, values, and identity to the younger generation. Here are some key suggestions:
Language Instruction:The education system should offer Sindhi language courses from primary to higher education levels. This includes teaching reading, writing, and speaking skills to ensure that students can communicate effectively in Sindhi.

Cultural Curriculum:Incorporating Sindhi culture into the curriculum helps in preserving traditions, values, and customs. This includes teaching students about festivals, music, dance, cuisine, and art forms unique to Sindhi culture.

Sindhi History and Heritage:Educating students about the rich history and heritage of Sindhi people, including their contributions to literature, art, and science, helps instil a sense of pride and identity.

Literature and Arts:Promoting Sindhi literature, poetry, and arts within the education system encourages creativity and fosters an appreciation for the language and culture.

Language Preservation:Schools can actively participate in preserving the Sindhi language by organising language camps, workshops, and competitions to motivate students to use and value their mother tongue.

Multilingual Education: Encouraging multilingualism by teaching Sindhi alongside other languages, such as English and Urdu, can help students become proficient in both their native language and other widely spoken languages.

Teacher Training:Providing professional development opportunities for teachers to enhance their knowledge of Sindhi language and culture is essential for effective instruction.The education system plays a pivotal role in promoting and preserving the Sindhi language and culture. It is essential to integrate these elements into the curriculum, provide adequate resources and support, and actively involve the community in these efforts to ensure the continued vibrancy of Sindhi heritage.

Objective-C Impact of Globalization on Sindhi Language and Cultural Identity:

60% of the students believed its a positive approach as it promotes cultural exchange and diversity, 13% believed that negatively, as it threatens the preservation of their language and culture and 10%

believed Indifferently, as they believed it had no significant impact and 14% believed that they were unsure whether globalisation is having any impact on the sindhi language and cultural identity.

Perception about the role of cultural exchange programs in promoting understanding and appreciation of the Sindhi language and culture:

43% of the students believed its highly beneficial and supportive, 40% believed that its moderately beneficial yet it has limited impact, 10% believed that it's not effective or necessary and 7% were unsure/undecided about their perception. On a positive note, globalisation has facilitated cultural exchange between Sindhi culture and other cultures around the world. This exchange can lead to the enrichment of Sindhi culture through the incorporation of new ideas, art forms, and traditions.

Conclusion

The result of the study indicates that there is a significant change that has been observed recently among the students as now they are taking keen interest in knowing about the culture and being involved in the promotion of the culture.

The attitude of Sindhi students towards the Sindhi language and Sindhi culture carries both challenges and opportunities, particularly in the context of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.

The challenges faced by Sindhi students include limited language proficiency, a lack of resources and support, social dynamics, and the potential erosion of cultural identity. However, the NEP 2020 offers several opportunities to address these challenges and promote Sindhi language and culture.

Technology and Social media have seemed to have a great influence on the youths as they are creating content in the sindhi language and educating people about the traditional festivals of sindhis. In all we can say that if today's youth are accepting different cultures, they can accept their own culture too.

The NEP 2020 encourages multilingualism, allowing Sindhi students to learn and use their mother tongue as the medium of instruction. The flexibility in the curriculum allows for the inclusion of Sindhi language as an elective subject. Integration

of Sindhi cultural content in the curriculum fosters a deeper understanding and appreciation of Sindhi heritage.

Overall, the NEP 2020 serves as a catalyst for the preservation and promotion of Sindhi language and Sindhi culture. It is imperative for stakeholders, including policymakers, educators, parents, and community organisations, to work collaboratively and implement effective strategies that create an inclusive educational environment supporting Sindhi students' language and cultural development. Through these efforts, the rich heritage of the Sindhi language and culture can be sustained and celebrated for generations to come.

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