



LOCAL LANGUAGES IN EDUCATION - GS II MAINS

Q. The foundational years of education lay the cornerstone for a child's future intellectual growth. Critically analyse the impact of inducting education in local language. (15 marks, 250 words)

News: *CBSE Schools Can Now Teach in Local Languages*

What's in the news?

- In a major move to promote multilingual school education, the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) has allowed schools to offer education in Indian languages from pre-primary to Class XII.
- Currently in majority of the CBSE-affiliated schools, the medium of instruction is English and in some, education is imparted in Hindi.

Significance of Teaching in Regional Language:

- **Language as an identity:**
 - In a diverse and culturally rich country like India, language is more than just a means of communication.
 - It is the essence of our identity.
- **Crucial skills:**
 - The foundational years of education lay the cornerstone for a child's future intellectual growth.
 - It is imperative that children acquire and enhance their Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN) skills and language should not hinder the development of these crucial skills.
- **Fosters inclusivity:**
 - It makes Right to Education under Article 21A a 'substantive right'.
 - By offering education in regional languages, it breaks down language barriers, making education accessible to a wider audience and ensuring that no child feels left behind.
- **Preserve linguistic heritage:**
 - Embracing regional languages in education helps preserve India's linguistic heritage.
- **Enhance language proficiency:**
 - Research suggests that multilingual individuals tend to have stronger communication skills, greater adaptability and improved cognitive abilities.
- **Build an equitable education system:**
 - It will ensure unbiased education and will be culturally and academically inclusive with better learning outcomes.



- **Incredible learning experience:**

- It allows the students to absorb the knowledge effectively leading to a higher level of optimism among students and boost students self-confidence.

Challenges:

- **Industry placements:**

- Graduates trained in regional languages might remain a question mark.
- For instance, many public sector units accept Graduate Aptitude Test in Engineering (GATE, conducted in English) scores for entry-level positions.

- **Availability of faculty:**

- The availability of faculty for regional-medium courses.
- Given the English-medium legacy of higher education in India, attracting and retaining quality teachers who are willing and able to teach in regional languages would be a challenge.

- **Disadvantage at global level:**

- Delivering technical courses in regional languages may prevent students from competing in global labour and education markets, where fluency in English yields a distinct edge.

Initiatives:

- **National Education Policy 2020:**

- It states that wherever possible, the medium of instruction must be in the mother tongue or local languages.

- **NIPUN Bharat:**

- National Initiative for Proficiency in Reading with Understanding and Numeracy is launched under National Education Policy 2020.
- It promotes mother tongue-based instruction as an integral aspect of achieving Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN) goals.

- **Bhasha Sangam:**

- It is an initiative under the 'Ek Bharat Shreshta Bharat' mission implemented by NCERT.
- It aims to teach 100 sentences in 22 scheduled vernacular languages in 22 scheduled vernacular languages in Devnagri script with translation in English language.

- **Publication grant:**

- The Commission for Scientific and Technical Terminology is providing publication grant towards the publications of University Level Books in regional languages.

- **National Translation Mission:**

- It is implemented by the Central Institute of Indian Languages (CIIL), Mysore.



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- **Centre for Endangered Languages in Central Universities:**
 - It is implemented by University Grants Commission (UGC) to promote regional languages in higher education courses and supports 9 Central Universities.

WAY FORWARD

- Developing a clear and coherent language policy.
- Providing adequate training and professional development for teachers who teach in local languages or teach other languages to learners who speak local languages.
- Developing relevant and quality curriculum materials and assessment tools that are based on the local languages.
- Raising awareness and advocacy among parents and communities about the importance and benefits of using local language in education.

