



MULTILINGUAL MINDS, GLOBAL CITIZENS

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ABSTRACT

India's rich linguistic diversity is a rich reserve of cultural wealth, with 22 languages recognized by the Constitution, reflecting the country's rich cultural and linguistic diversity. India's Constitution supports this diversity through various provisions, ensuring that linguistic and cultural heritage is preserved and celebrated across the nation with 121 languages and 270 mother tongues and the most significant point is in the acceptance of many languages by individuals to communicate.

INTRODUCTION

As Mahatma Gandhi aptly put it, "Language is the dress of thought." [1] To express the thoughts and ideas among our natives and non-natives urges the desire and demand of learning multi languages. Being multilingual is not just a skill, but a way of life. As it is necessary to be skilled in the modern high tech. era where only getting high educational degrees are not enough to make both ends meet. It is not the age of just white collared jobs. The high skilled person with or without high education always be successful in the world. Such people are not numbered like Ruther Ford, inventor of Ford Car, Steve Jobs inventor of the first personal computer "Apple." However, Steve Jobs after six months of studying left the Reed College considering higher education boring and formal. But this fact didn't prevent him to be a genius Project Manager.

Likewise, Learning language is a skill and only one language learning means keeping oneself shut in a box with few options, whereas being multilingual means we have the shortest route

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for a world journey, smooth and comfortable one too. As Nelson Mandela said, "If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to him in his language that goes to his heart." [2]

Multilingualism opens up a world of possibilities, allowing us to connect with others, build relationships, and foster global citizenship. Language is a means of communication that allows us to express our thoughts and feelings, and build relationships.

In a multilingual country like India, language plays a crucial role in shaping our identities and facilitating communication across different regions and cultures. As Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam said, "Multilingualism is a great asset, and India has a rich tradition of multilingualism." [3]

Being multilingual has numerous benefits, both for individuals and society as a whole. It allows us to connect with different cultures, appreciate their unique perspectives and traditions, and facilitate communication across different regions and cultures. In an increasingly globalized world, proficiency in multiple languages can open up new career opportunities, enhance employability, and provide a competitive edge.

Here I would like to give first hand example that my nephew, Mohit, is MBA from IIM Kolkata and working as a Director of UK bank in London. His proficiency in multiple languages, including English, Hindi, and French, has been a huge asset in his career. He's able to communicate with clients from different countries, understand their requirements, and provide solutions that meet their needs. His multilingual skills have opened up new opportunities for him, and he's now working on projects that involve collaborating with teams from different parts of the world.

However, there's a darker side to India's linguistic diversity. The country is often divided into two parts: Hindi states and non-Hindi states. While the northern region is known for Hindi, the southern part is known for its regional and state languages. Unfortunately, this division has led to linguistic disputes, which have persisted since post-colonial times.

Recently, there is a great fuss over the implementation of three languages in Maharashtra. Unfortunately, it has become a political agenda.

The government plays a crucial role in shaping language policy and promoting linguistic diversity. It can support language education programs, promote linguistic diversity, and encourage the use of different languages in official contexts.

As the National Education Policy recognizes, "Multilingualism has many cognitive, social, and economic benefits." [4] The policy promotes the learning of three languages, including



one's mother tongue and English. This policy aims to promote linguistic diversity and provide students with the skills they need to communicate effectively in a multilingual world.

In conclusion, being multilingual is a strength, not a weakness. As the linguist, Noam Chomsky, said, "Language is a process of free creation; its laws and principles are fixed, but the manner in which the principles of generation are used is free and infinitely varied." [5] By embracing our multilingualism and promoting linguistic diversity, we can foster global citizenship, connect with the world in meaningful ways, and celebrate our unique cultural heritage.

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