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**A STUDY OF LANGUAGE POLICY IN THE INDIAN
EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM**

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ABSTRACT

India had a multilingual society even before the arrival of the East India Company and the British Empire. When the British finally got their economic footing in India, they started to show an interest in the country's educational system. They reasoned that due to India's linguistic diversity, all of the states should make English the official medium of instruction. Lord Macaulay had a significant role in making English the universal language of instruction in Indian schools, displacing a number of regional tongues. After an order from British India's Governor-General Lord William Bentinck in 1835, the English Education Act was passed by the Council of India to make the directive official. British policymakers shifted funds from the East India Company to promote literacy and other cultural activities in India. After supporting Islamic and Hindu academies for generations and encouraging literary works to be written in the local learned languages of Sanskrit and Persian, they decided to fund schools that teach the Western curriculum in English. Because of these and other efforts, English is now officially recognised as one of the languages spoken across India, overtaking Persian as the language of administration and the highest law courts. Memorandum on Indian Education, written by Thomas Babington Macaulay and published in 1835, is known for its scathing critique of European supremacy in education and culture. He argued that only via the medium of English could the superiority of Western education be communicated. So that "a class of persons, Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in ideas, in morals, and in intellect" could be educated to adapt Western knowledge into India's local languages, it was crucial that colleges in India provide teaching in English. Macaulay also advocated for a complete break from traditional



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education and the immediate cessation of all East India Company production of Arabic and Sanskrit literature. It might be argued that the government's decision to make English education obligatory in institutions throughout India has negatively impacted the lives of hundreds of thousands of Indian youngsters. This is due to the fact that English is the sole language offered in all states' schools, both as a first language in private English medium institutions and as a second or third language in the great majority of schools. The policy aim of nation building via equal educational opportunities for all citizens is undermined by the widespread belief that vernacular medium learners are treated unfairly in a free India. Therefore, instructors of languages other than English need sensitivity to the cultural, social, and linguistic contexts in which their students are immersed in order to design learning goals and practises that are congruent with their students' actual experiences.