

Challenges of Hindi-Medium Education in Private Schools

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Abstract

Language is very important in school, and teaching in the student's first language helps them understand, participate, and learn better. Hindi is widely spoken in India, but English is often the language of instruction. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 says that mother tongue or regional languages, like Hindi, should be used, especially in primary school. This study looks at the needs and problems that teachers face when using Hindi as a language of instruction. We used a descriptive mixed-method design with 80 teachers from private schools who were chosen on purpose. We used a structured questionnaire with both closed and open-ended questions to gather data. Some of the biggest problems are a lack of trained teachers (86.66%), poor infrastructure (90%), a lack of good materials (60%), a lack of digital content (76%), parents' preference for English (93.66%), low student confidence (73.66%), translation problems (70%), a lack of job opportunities (76.66%), and problems teaching STEM subjects in Hindi (63.33%). The study stresses the importance of training teachers, providing high-quality resources, making parents aware, and using the same terms. Under NEP 2020, promoting Hindi-medium instruction helps with fairness, inclusion, and good learning.

Keywords: NEP 2020, Hindi-medium instruction, mother-tongue education, teacher perspectives, and language problems.

1. INTRODUCTION

Language is very important in the school system. Not only does it help people talk to each other, but it also helps them think, understand, and learn. Students learn best when they are taught in a language they use every day. Students can readily understand ideas, ask questions without fear, and take part in class activities when the language of instruction is familiar. India speaks a lot of distinct languages. According to the 2011 Census of India, Hindi is the most widely spoken language. A huge number of people, mainly in North and Central India, use it as their first language. People still assume that English is the most useful language for jobs and around the world, so it is still the major language of instruction in many schools.

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 is making a huge shift to India's education system. It suggests that the language of instruction should be the student's mother tongue or a regional language, especially in the early years of school. The policy suggests that children should learn in their mother tongue, home language, or regional language at least until Grade 5 and, if possible, until Grade 8.

Hindi is both a mother tongue and an official language of India, which makes it a good choice for teaching. Studies show that students who learn in their mother tongue understand better, develop their brains more, and feel safer emotionally. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2003) strongly supports mother-tongue education because it improves learning and lowers dropout rates. But there are a lot of concerns with utilising Hindi as a language of education. Some of reasons are not having enough certified

teachers, not having enough teaching materials, having bad infrastructure, parents wanting their kids to learn English, and worries about career chances. Teachers are the ideal persons to uncover these problems because they are the ones who make educational policy work.

This study attempts to find out what instructors think and what they have seen about the needs and problems that come up when Hindi is utilised as a language of instruction under NEP 2020.

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

A lot of scholars have looked into how Indian schools teach and how language might be a problem. Shweta (2012) studied Hindi-speaking students in teacher education programs and concluded that not having enough academic materials in Hindi harmed their confidence and performance. The study made it clear how crucial it is to have adequate Hindi reference books and textbooks. Javalgekar (2012) noted that it is hard for students who speak a vernacular language to switch from vernacular-medium to English-medium higher education. Teachers pointed out that there aren't any good bilingual support systems in place.

Saikia (2013) found that language teachers didn't get enough training and relied too much on traditional grammar-based ways of teaching. The study suggested that teachers should keep learning new things. Yadav and Yadav (2023) looked into how NEP 2020 would affect language education and found that students from Hindi-speaking backgrounds have trouble at higher levels because they have to switch to English-speaking schools.

Ghugre (2024) pointed out that students who study in non-English mediums often feel socially inferior and have low self-esteem, which affects their academic engagement. These studies show that mother-tongue education, such as Hindi-medium instruction, is helpful, but it needs to be planned well, teachers need to be trained, and resources need to be available for it to work.

3. NEED FOR THE STUDY

Hindi is one of the most spoken languages in India, but not much research has been done on its use as a language of instruction in schools, especially since the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. Most of the research that has been done so far has looked at English-medium education, problems with learning English, or language policy issues in general. This implies that there isn't much information on the real challenges teachers face when they try to teach Hindi.

This study is crucial since it looks into important areas like:

- Are teachers ready to teach subjects in Hindi, especially maths and science, which aren't language subjects?
- Availability of teaching materials: Are Hindi textbooks, reference books, and digital resources easy to find?
- Support for infrastructure: Are the classrooms ready for teaching in Hindi? Do they have things like computer labs and other places to work?
- How do parents feel about Hindi-medium education versus English-medium education, and how does this affect the students?
- Concerns regarding employment: Do students who study Hindi face greater challenges in gaining college admission or securing employment?

This study examines these factors to provide school administrators, policymakers, and educators with pertinent information on enhancing Hindi-medium instruction. It also helps to fill in the gaps in research on language education, especially when it comes to understanding how teachers think.

4. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The following goals guided the study:

1. To find out what teachers think about the problems they face when trying to use Hindi as a language of instruction under NEP 2020.
2. To look into how important and necessary it is for schools to teach in Hindi.

These goals are meant to look at both the problems and the benefits of teaching in Hindi, so that we can get a full picture of how it works in schools.

5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

5.1 Research Design

We used a descriptive mixed-method research design to collect both quantitative and qualitative data. The quantitative part used structured questions to find out how common certain problems were, while the qualitative part looked more closely at what teachers thought and suggested. This method made sure that we fully understood the problems that teachers face when teaching in Hindi.

5.2 The Population and the Sample

The study looked at teachers from private schools that teach Hindi as a subject or as a way to teach other subjects. 80 teachers from 40 schools were chosen using purposive sampling. There were teachers from different subjects among the participants:

- Hindi
- English
- Math
- Science
- Studies of society

This variety made it possible for the study to get a range of views on the problems with implementing language, especially in STEM and non-language subjects.

5.3 Tool for Gathering Data

A structured questionnaire with 20 questions was used to gather data. It was split into two parts:

1. Closed-ended questions: Teachers used a 5-point Likert scale (Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree) to rate statements about problems with teaching in Hindi.
2. Open-ended questions: Teachers gave a lot of detailed advice and opinions on how to make Hindi-medium instruction better.

5.4 Analysing the Data

- Percentage analysis was used to look at quantitative data from closed-ended questions, which were then shown in tables.
- Thematic analysis was used to look at qualitative data from open-ended questions and find common themes, such as what teachers need to learn, what resources are missing, and how parents feel.

6. RESULTS AND INTERPRETATION

6.1 Major Challenges in Implementing Hindi as Medium of Instruction

Challenge	Percentage of Teachers Reporting
Shortage of trained Hindi-medium teachers	86.66%
Inadequate infrastructure	90%
Lack of quality Hindi teaching materials	60%
Limited ICT and digital content in Hindi	76%
Parental preference for English-medium education	93.66%
Inferiority complex among Hindi-medium students	73.66%
Translation and terminology issues	70%
Limited employment opportunities	76.66%
Difficulty teaching STEM subjects in Hindi	63.33%

Interpretation of Key Findings

1. There aren't enough trained teachers 86.66% of the time. Many teachers indicated they don't know enough about Hindi, math, physics, and social studies to teach them. It's tougher to study and teach when there aren't enough resources.
2. Inadequate infrastructure (90%) Most schools didn't have the proper classrooms, libraries, labs, and computers for teachers to teach Hindi. Teachers indicated that this affects how much youngsters learn and how much they take part.
3. 60% of the time, there aren't enough good things to teach with. Teachers can't execute their duties successfully because there aren't enough Hindi-language literature, reference materials, or devices that work in more than one language.
4. Limited access to ICT and digital content (76%) The majority of online learning platforms are in English. Teachers noted that Hindi-speaking students have a hard time using digital resources like Hindi-language educational applications and online tutorials.
5. 93.66% of parents want their kids to study English. A lot of parents send their kids to schools where they speak English because they hope it will help them find work. Teachers remarked that this social pressure makes youngsters less driven and sure of themselves.
6. 73% of pupils think they're not good enough. Teachers have found that kids who speak Hindi often feel worse than kids who speak English. This could make kids less willing to speak up in class and feel horrible about themselves.
7. Problems with terminology and translation (70%) Hindi translations of technical and scientific words in STEM domains may not be very good. Teachers mentioned they had to speak English a lot in class.
8. There aren't many jobs open (76.66%) Getting into college, finding a job, and passing demanding tests are all hard for people whose first language is Hindi. Teachers were concerned about the future of their students.
9. Teaching STEM subjects (63.33%) It's challenging to teach physics and maths in Hindi since there isn't one way to explain topics. Students don't always understand why teachers need to use both Hindi and English when they explain things that are hard to understand. Getting the Main Results 1. There aren't enough trained teachers (86.66%).

6.2 Data from the Questionnaire Closed-ended Question

Do you think that not having enough trained Hindi-speaking teachers hurts students' learning?

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	50	62.50%
Agree	19	23.75%
Neutral	6	7.50%
Disagree	3	3.75%
Strongly Disagree	2	2.50%

Interpretation:

A total of 86.25% of teachers strongly agreed or agreed that Hindi-medium teachers don't get enough training, which has a big effect on how well students learn.

Themes for Open-Ended Questions:

- **What teachers need:** ongoing professional development in Hindi-language teaching.
- **Resource Development:** Making Hindi-language digital and print resources and textbooks.
- **Raising Awareness among Parents:** Teaching parents about the benefits of Hindi-medium education.
- **Standardised Terminology:** Making sure that all Hindi words used in STEM subjects are the same.

7. NEED AND IMPORTANCE OF HINDI AS MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION

Students grasp concepts more easily when taught in their mother tongue, especially at the primary level. Teachers reported increased participation and better comprehension when lessons were in Hindi.

1. **Inclusive Education:**

Hindi-medium instruction supports students from rural areas and economically weaker backgrounds, ensuring that language does not become a barrier to learning.

2. **Reduced Dropout Rates:**

Students feel comfortable and confident learning in Hindi, which encourages better attendance and lowers dropout rates.

3. **Cultural and Linguistic Identity:**

Teaching in Hindi strengthens students' national identity, preserves cultural heritage, and fosters respect for Indian languages.

4. **Equitable Career Opportunities:**

Although employment remains a concern, Hindi-medium education provides access to government jobs and regional opportunities where Hindi is used.

8. DISCUSSION

The results of the current study are in accordance with the previous studies (Shweta, 2012; Javalgekar, 2012; Saikia, 2013; Yadav & Yadav, 2023; Ghuge, 2024), which emphasize the advantages of mother-tongue education.

Key Discussion Points:

1. Teacher Training:

Teachers need continuous training, especially in Hindi-medium teaching. Training sessions and workshops are necessary for quality teaching.

2. Infrastructure and Resources:

Schools must have libraries, laboratories, and ICT infrastructure for Hindi-medium teaching. Good quality textbooks, reference books, and digital content in Hindi are necessary.

3. Parental Attitudes:

Parents are interested in English-medium teaching due to job opportunities. Awareness programs should focus on the intellectual, social, and cultural advantages of Hindi-medium teaching.

4. Language and Terminology:

Translation of technical and scientific terms is necessary for STEM education. Standardized terminology in Hindi can help in avoiding confusion and effective teaching.

5. Balanced Approach:

While promoting Hindi-medium teaching, English language skills should also be encouraged. A balanced bilingual approach will help in preparing students for higher education and job opportunities.

9. CONCLUSION

The implementation of the Hindi medium of instruction, as per the NEP 2020, is beneficial but also creates some difficulties for the teachers.

Recommendations:

1. The training of the teachers on the use of the Hindi medium should be improved.
2. Quality textbooks and other learning materials should be developed in the Hindi medium.
3. Awareness programs for the parents on the benefits of using the Hindi medium of instruction should be conducted.
4. More job and competitive exam opportunities should be provided to students studying in the Hindi medium.
5. Technical terms in Hindi, especially in technical subjects, should be standardized. The use of Hindi in education is important for ensuring equity in learning, as per the NEP 2020.

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Cite this Article:

Vijayaraghavan, M.K. (2026). Challenges of Hindi-Medium Education in Private Schools. International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research in Arts, Science and Technology (IJMRAST), 4(2), 53–58.

Journal URL: <https://ijmrast.com/>

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.61778/ijmrast.v4i2.229>



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