

DETERMINING THE ROLE AND STATUS OF VARIOUS LANGUAGES SPOKEN IN PAKISTAN

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Developing economies in South and South East Asia are faced with numerous socioeconomical, political and cultural challenges. The multilingual and multiethnic makeup of these societies including Pakistan shows a marked confusion to come to terms with a uniform language policy. At the roots of this confusion is the growing ascendancy of English globally as against the downward trend or at least stagnation in local languages for failure of these states to have comprehensive strategies to render them vital. Language planning and determining the value of local languages in Pakistan has always been a point of debate in the political, legal and constitutional history of the country. In the pre-partition era, the sub-continental history was marked by Urdu-Hindi controversy while after 1947, the later was replaced by Bengali that remained a great source of unrest and ultimately proved an impetus in the division of Pakistan and Bangladesh into two separate countries (Mustafa, 2011). While the country is still grappling with the issue, it is assumed that revising its own past policies and the conscious efforts of Malaysia, Switzerland, Nigeria and Canada shall serve as a road map and shall inform the stakeholders to avoid time-tested mistakes. This study, thus, takes into consideration the history of language planning in Pakistan and presents cases of other countries that have already embarked on such policies to varying degree of success.