

## ROLE OF MOTHER TONGUE IN LEARNING AT PRIMARY LEVEL IN BALOCHISTAN

**Dr. Sajida Naureen** (Assistant Professor, Department of IER, UOB, Quetta)

**Dr. Naseebullah Seemab** (Professor, Department of Pashto, UOB, Quetta)

### **Abstract:**

*The aim of this research paper is to explore and evaluate one of the much debated issues pertaining to the role of the mother tongue while imparting education at primary level in Balochistan, and analytically evaluate the obstacles in learning and the implementation of this concept. Balochistan is a multilingual province where Urdu, although not a mother tongue of any ethnic group, is widely spoken and understood all over the province. Similarly, English, no matter how rudimentary, is also generally understood and spoken amongst a fairly large number of people. Urdu and English words have since long been adopted by every ethnic group and now stand integrated in local languages and are freely used by every ethnic group while speaking their local languages. Urdu and English have been the basic medium of instructions in schools in rural and urban areas since Independence. Regional languages are taught as optional subjects. Lack of employing mother tongue as an initial medium of instructions has come under criticism and often blamed for poor assimilation of the very young students, especially in the rural areas. This paper attempts to explore the prevailing situation of cognitive effectiveness through mother tongue at early grades in Balochistan. Its aim is to focus on research-based data to evaluate this issue and thus help the policy makers, administrators and educationists, to make well considered, logical and realistic decisions regarding medium of instructions at primary level. This research is based on qualitative method. Primary and secondary data was used to find out the answers to the research-questions. Focused group discussions and interviews from educationists, administrators, parents and young learners were conducted to acquire the reliable and up-to-date data on the topic. Finally, it has been concluded that young learners are more comfortable in learning new things in their mother tongues at during the early two or three grades. Students at primary level found it harder to interpret and comprehend the things being taught in Urdu, much less in English, when compared with the medium of their mother tongues. The Balochistan Provincial Assembly Act, 2014 introduced "The Balochistan Introduction of mother languages as compulsory additional subject at primary level" (Government of Balochistan, 2014). The good intentions which prompted initiation of this Act notwithstanding, some hurdles and issues have now emerged and identified in the implementation of this Policy. In order to comprehend the dynamics, do ability, access and impact on the quality of education while keeping the spirit of the initiative alive, the research has suggested some implementation measures as alternatives to introduce and implement this policy for the very young learners, indeed, the beginners in Balochistan.*

**Key words:** Mother tongue, Cognitive Effectiveness, EFA, Learning, Primary Education.