JOSSAMS **Journal of Social Sciences and Media Studies**	**Sindhi and Urdu Speaking Parents' Attitude to Teach Mother Tongue to their Children in Karachi**

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative study investigated the attitudes of Sindhi and Urdu-speaking parents in Karachi towards teaching their mother tongues to their children. The study investigated the patterns of language choice, reasons, and preferences for mother tongue transmission in a multilingual metropolitan situation, as language is a crucial component of identity and cultural preservation. The findings of the study reveal that children from Urdu-speaking households showed a preference for English communication, influenced by educational environments that value the language. On the other hand, Sindhi-speaking children demonstrated proficiency in multiple languages, enabling them to navigate various contexts. Language preferences were altered by socio-demographic factors, including socioeconomic status and cultural background. The results have highlighted the need for community involvement in plural language policies that enhance language pluralism to promote the national and regional languages of the country.

Keywords: Mother Tongue, Language Choice, Indigenous Languages, Culture, Heritage

INTRODUCTION

At the time of birth, children do not possess any language; instead, they acquire their first language at home, which is often the L1, or mother tongue. However, parents' use of L2 leads to bilingualism and affects proficiency and the ability to learn both languages (McLaughlin, 1984). Therefore, languages are compassionate to their speakers. According to Fishman (1991), intergenerational transmission of language is the transmission of a language by parents to their children, which includes the language used at home, as it decides the destiny of any regional language. This model (Fishman, 1991) highlights two major linguistic phenomena, i.e., Language maintenance and language shift. Language maintenance is an effort to endorse a living language by its promotion and perseverance, whereas language shift is the decline of speakers of any specific language for any reason (Baker, 2001, p. 59). One of the major reasons for language shift is bilingualism; without that, it is not possible (De Klerk & Barkhuizen, 2005).

Nevertheless, the transmission of the mother tongue should not be restricted by bilingualism, as learning the mother tongue is one's prior right and essential to building mental and intellectual ability (Zaman et al., 2025). In this regard, in 1953, UNESCO promoted the fact that every child has a right to get primary education in their mother tongue. In response to this, many countries, including Asian countries like India, China, and others adopted a multilingual education policy. Contradictory to this, many children are not exposed to their mother tongue due to the needs and demands of the globalized world, to fulfill economic needs or for career and professional development (Henne-Ochoa & Bauman, 2015). Hence, in most cases, parents transmit their mother tongue to the next generation; besides, few parents do not transmit or restrict transmission for other worldly benefits, leading to language shift, from indigenous languages to mainstream languages.

Pakistan is highly rich with a variety of languages in all regions and provinces. Urdu is the official and national language of Pakistan (Ali, 2011; Bughio, 2014; Iqbal, 2018), whereas English enjoys the role of the second official language of the country as well as the medium of instruction (Zaman et al., 2025). Similarly, Sindhi is one of the biggest regional languages of the country, spoken by a large community and taught at schools in Sindh province. These languages are still struggling to compete with each other rather than having settled

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positions or status. Interestingly, all three languages are used for educational purposes, and to an extent, they influence the mother tongue of the speakers of other languages

Earlier studies show that English and Urdu have obtained enormous importance, while the importance of indigenous languages has been downplayed. The study is very important as it demands serious changes in language planning, which leads to creating a balanced development of all languages and a positive attitude towards indigenous languages (Abbasi et al., 2020; John, 2015; Khan, 2013; Rahman, 2006). Furthermore, no significant research has been found to figure out the attitudes of Sindhi and Urdu-speaking parents to teach their mother tongue to their children (Abbasi et al., 2023). Iqbal (2018) argues that the research on other languages shows that there is an intense need for significant policy with its implementation, to give importance to indigenous languages. There is an intense code-switching of English while speaking Urdu and other regional languages. Therefore, there is an intense need to analyze the language attitude of Pakistani parents towards their mother tongue. The researchers explore the attitudes of parents towards their mother tongue, parental interest in teaching their mother tongue to their children and identify the patterns of language choice among Urdu and Sindhi community members in different social domains in Karachi. Moreover, the researchers also aim to find out the factors that motivate parents to use their mother tongue or another language with their children.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. To explore the attitudes of parents towards their mother tongue.
2. To examine the extent of parental interest in teaching their mother tongue to their children.
3. To identify the patterns of language choice among Urdu and Sindhi community members in different social domains in Karachi.
4. To investigate the factors that motivate parents to use their mother tongue or another language with their children.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What is the attitude of parents towards their mother tongue?
2. How far are parents interested in teaching their mother tongue to their children?
3. What are the patterns of language choice among Urdu and Sindhi community members in different domains, who are living in Karachi?
4. What motivates parents to use their mother tongue or any other language for their children?

LITERATURE REVIEW

The research shows that the majority of Pakistanis are trilingual as they are familiar with at least three languages at a time, which include their mother tongue, i.e., regional language, Urdu, and English as national and official languages of the country, respectively. Hence, Pakistan is enriched with almost 74 languages, which include six major and sixty-nine indigenous languages (Panhwar et al., 2019; Rahman, 2002). Although Urdu has less than 8 percent of L1 users as native speakers who migrated from India, it enjoys the status of national and official language of Pakistan and serves as lingua franca (Channa, 2017). It provides a common medium of communication for people hailing from different linguistic backgrounds. Similarly, English enjoys the status of an official as well as a foreign language of ex-colonizers (Kothari, 2015; Rahman, 2005). In Pakistani society, the English language is considered the language of the elite and educated class, making it 49% of the population who can speak and understand English (Khan, 2014; Rehman, 2002). However, exceptionally, Pakistanis are born with remarkable admiration for the English language (Rafiq, 2010) due to its status as the language of education, law, science and technology, research, etc. (Mansoor, 2004; Rahman, 2002). Rahman (2002) considers Urdu and English Languages as the "languages of rulers". It has been noticeably critical that other languages are not included in the power structures of federal or provincial governments as the Sindhi language in Sindh.

Farida (2018) argues that Sindhi is the largest regional language of Pakistan concerning its electronic and print media channels and newspapers, research publications and literature, medium of instruction, and population. She has further explained that to preserve the Sindhi language, the Sindh government has made the teaching of the Sindhi language compulsory for students in the Sindh region. Additionally, in the interior parts of Sindh, Sindhi is the medium of instruction too. However, in urban areas, including Karachi, the situation is crucial. Despite having Sindhi as the official language of Sindh province along with English and Urdu, it is not used in Karachi city for education, office, law, trade, and business. Karachi is the capital city of Sindh province, and people from diverse languages and cultural backgrounds live here (Ali, 2017). Karachi city has more speakers of indigenous languages than Urdu language speakers, which includes Sindhi, Punjabi, Saraiki, Pashto, etc. According to Khan (2014), the major obstacle in regional languages in Pakistan is the misunderstanding that may affect the cultural identity and integrity of the country and may contradict Islamic ideology. Urdu is acquired by minority language speakers when they migrate to urban

areas for education, business, and other reasons (Ali, 2017). Mansoor (1993) also highlights a similar situation in the case of Punjab, where English and Urdu are spoken more frequently than other regional languages due to socio-economic reasons. However, an individual's language choice varies from one domain to another, depending on the situation or objectives of discourse where it is spoken (Scotton, 2006). Every individual has variations in choices to use a particular language in different situations. According to Fishman (1991), language choice varies depending on situations or the domains in which language has to be used. These situations differ depending on social situations or certain beliefs, or values. The major domains that are figured out by Fishman (1991) include religion, education, family, employment, and friendship. However, it is not limited to them, and there can be more platforms in one's life where an individual can make a difference in language choices. Shah et al. (2022) argue that language politics in Pakistan has exaggerated social tensions and is creating hurdles in maintaining true unity in the country, particularly in Sindh province, where Sindhi language is widely used except in Karachi.

This variation in the choice of using different languages in different situations builds up a language attitude. In general, the term attitude is defined as one's feelings, thoughts, and behaviors or as characteristics of having an objective, direction, and intensity with the structure to be followed and learned (Rai, 2010). Dörnyei (2003) describes attitude as an evaluative response to the target, like situation, person, organization, or institution, etc. It usually exists in the human brain. These attitudes have roots in the human brain due to our past experiences or because of the people who live around us, as a society or community. This leads to consistency in bringing change. Language attitude as one's feelings about own language as well as other languages. Various theorists have defined various components that lead to language attitude, including integrative and instrumental motivation and social prestige. Hence, if the speakers of any language are not motivated to learn and speak that language, they shift themselves to any other available or existing language that gives them socio-economic benefits.

According to Sim (2012) and Abbasi et al. (2019), language attitude can be positive, negative, or neutral. The individuals with a positive attitude consider their ethnic, cultural, or regional language as crucial for their group's survival. Those with negative attitudes prefer to ignore language and find no harm if they or future generations forget it. Language attitudes within the community can also be used to assess a language's prestige. Youth attitudes and the role of elders are two aspects of shift prestige; nevertheless, youth attitudes are more important in determining the shift towards a specific community and language. This attitude makes it possible for researchers to identify changes in a language.

Language shift occurs when the speakers of any language give up their mother tongue in favour of any other language (Anthonissen, 2009). Umrani and Memon (2016) define language shift as the decrease in domains in which language is used in urban settings. Fishman (1991) defined shift as the non-use of a heritage language. Webb and Sure (2000) argue that "language shift is a process in which the speakers of one language begin to use a second language for more and more functions, until they eventually use only the second language, even in personal and intimate contexts." Clyne (2003) claimed that if a language is replaced even in a single domain of life, it is a language shift.

Cheng (2003) delved into a fresh aspect of language shift research by examining transformations across five generations within diverse communities, including those in Malaysia and China. The results showed that each generation began to adopt English and Malay, with the process often commencing in the second and third generations. By the fifth generation, there was a complete shift, though the fourth generation's language shifted to Thai and Malay. pointed out that in Malaysia, the choice of language in mixed marriages among Sino-Indians is shaped by factors like age, the context of communication, attitudes, and identity. Meanwhile, David and Caesar (2009) explored various minority groups in Kuching, Malaysia, to understand the motivations behind the language shift among these groups. They found that younger generations were more comfortable speaking English and Malay at home, influenced by Malay's role as a common language and the economic importance of English. Wright (2008) looked into language use in Hong Kong, comparing situations before and after 1997, and how language policies affected these changes. The study revealed a shift towards English, driven by its prestige. Additionally, there's a swift rise in diglossia and cross-functional bilingualism, which stems from personal beliefs in the value of either language. This perspective also encourages a shift in language within a generation. Bodomo et al. (2009) carried out a study in Accra, Ghana's capital, focusing on the language practices of various age groups and the significance of local languages. The results indicated that youngsters from cities were learning ex-colonial (British) languages as their primary language, alongside a local language. Both languages were becoming increasingly significant among the youth, while proficiency in the native language was decreasing. Consequently, there appeared to be a multilingual shift in these areas, moving from the native language to the local language, and eventually to the language of the majority. For example, in the Eastern region: Nabit to Gurenne to English.

In the case of Pakistan, a study by Abbasi et al. (2019) presented alarming findings of the study that Sindhi and Gujarati speakers are shifting to mainstream languages, i.e., Urdu and English, which has challenged the vitality of these languages. The researchers also claim language loss in some cases, which should be taken seriously. Trudgill (2000) and Lee (2008) find that language shift is a gradual process that replaces dialect with the dominant and

prestigious language. Another study by Abassi et al. (2023) aimed to examine language usage by young Sindhi migrants. The study concluded that young Sindhis are more inclined to use the dominant languages of Karachi, i.e., Urdu and English, and for that, they present many reasons, which include social, economic, political, and cultural reasons for which they prioritize other languages over their mother tongue (Sindhi).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Design

The researcher of the present study employed a qualitative research design.

Targeted Population

The targeted population for this study consisted of Urdu-speaking and Sindhi-speaking parents in Karachi, Pakistan.

Sampling Technique

The sampling technique of the present study is a purposive sampling technique.

Sample Size

A total of 40 participants were included: 20 Urdu-speaking parents and 20 Sindhi-speaking parents.

Data Collection Tools

Data were collected through an open-ended questionnaire developed specifically for this study. The instrument was adapted from Fishman's (1991, 1996) model of language maintenance and shift, focusing on language choice across three social dimensions.

Data Analysis Tools and Procedure

Data were analyzed through thematic analysis following Braun and Clarke's (2006) framework. An inductive coding approach was used, allowing themes to emerge naturally from the participants' responses.

RESULTS

The data collected through the questionnaire were thematically analyzed. Before data analysis, codes were assigned to Urdu-speaking parents' participants as UP, followed by a number, and Sindhi-speaking parents' participants as SP, accompanied by a number.

Theme 1: Language Spoken at Home

Table 1: Details of the Theme 1

Mother Tongue	Language Spoken at Home	Frequency
Urdu	Urdu only	3
	English only	8
	Urdu & English (code-mixing)	6
Sindhi	Sindhi	0
	Urdu	7
	Sindhi & Urdu (Code mixing)	7
	English & Urdu (code-mixing)	5
	English only	1

The participants use Urdu and English in a code-mixing form at home; for them, it conveys the message, and children learn English vocabulary too. According to UP 6,

"We are habitual to using Urdu and English at the same time in a sentence. I feel no harm in it, and this way my kids learn English too."

However, interestingly, 6 participants use the English language at home because either their children are studying at a convent or elite schools. "*We are heavily investing in our children; they are going to an elite school. If they won't be able to speak English fluently, our all efforts would be useless."* (UP10) or they want to immigrate to

English native countries, *my husband wants our children to be have native like frequency in English because we want to shift to Canada…* (UP 8) hence they want their children to be fluent in English same like native speakers.

In the case of Sindhi language speakers in Karachi, out of twenty participants none of them speak Sindhi only with their children at home as they feel *it's not the language here* (Karachi), SP 12 or feel less educated, "*people consider us uneducated* if we spea*k Sindhi*" (SP 15) and less confident if they speak in Sindhi language while living in Karachi, therefore they don't want to give the similar exposure to their children, "*I don't want my children to face the same embarrassment that I go through(by speaking Sindhi) in this city."* (SP 5)

However, code-mixing of Sindhi and Urdu (*it's normal at our homes to use both languages* -SP 10) and Urdu and English is found normal among most of the Sindhi speakers as stated by SP 18: "C*hildren by themselves do that because they are studying in a good school where they practice English as they prefer to use it over any other languages but we adults use Sindhi, Urdu and English for communication".*

One participant (SP 20) claimed to speak English only with her children. According to her, the reason was "*to get my children to the targeted convent school",* where the admission criteria are command over English besides academics. In such situations, parents do not regret for not teaching their mother tongue to their children *to achieve higher goals* (SP 20).

Theme 2: Children's Preferred Language for Communication

Table 2: Details of Theme 2

Mother Tongue	Children's Preferred Language	Frequency
	Urdu only	0
Urdu	English only	8
	Urdu & English (code-mixing)	12
Sindhi	Sindhi	0
	Urdu	8
	Sindhi & Urdu (Code mixing)	4
	English & Urdu (code-mixing)	8
	English only	1

The study shows that Urdu-speaking children do not prefer or practice speaking in Urdu solely. However, they use Urdu language by mixing it with English and feel themselves comfortable and confident in doing so, "*using English and Urdu together is common these days* (UP 02), *we can't use Urdu language alone*, *we don't know too much of it but esay hi kaam chal jata ha* (but it's enough for communication) (UP 12)". Furthermore, 8 participants declared that they only speak in English with their children, and the same is done by their children because "*we have our own objectives (migration to native country*) UP 08", hence, it can be said that English is the language of their home or family. "*People in our circle speak English, and it's a status symbol too* (UP 14)," so they do the same as what is happening in their social circle.

In the case of Sindhi-speaking children, 8 participants out of 20 speak Urdu at home, and English and Urdu are used by the children of 8 families, according to the Sindhi parents' participants. According to SP 4, having children of ages 11 and 13 explains, "*they can understand Sindhi, but they themselves prefer to speak English with Urdu".* Another participant mentioned that "*my wife doesn't want my kids to speak Sindhi".* This thought is linked with intercultural marriage where the father speaks Sindhi and the spouse is Urdu speaking; hence, they understand the Sindhi language but don't speak it. SP 8 mentions, "*in routine conversation Sindhi is spoken at our home, but when we teach children, we use Urdu and English",* the switch of language is done to increase the comprehensibility of the topics children study. Besides education, another perspective of code-mixing is socializing. When Sindhi language speakers meet their older relatives, including parents and grandparents, in their hometown, they are expected to speak Sindhi, and they do that; however, the children of such families take the support of code-mixing for better communication. So, if in Karachi they use Urdu and English only, in their hometowns, they use Sindhi, Urdu, and English. "*In the village, my children speak Sindhi with my parents and Sindhi Urdu mixed with my siblings",* mentions SP 5. Hence, the findings show that even if Sindhi-speaking children are not directly exposed to their mother tongue, they know to some extent which language helps them to communicate in their mother tongue with those who are monolingual or prefer to speak their mother tongue. However, SP 20 claims, "*my child's first language is English",* the families who do not speak any other language at home except English, their children also only speak one language, i.e., English.

Theme 3: Read Literature in the Mother Tongue by Children

Table 3: Details of Theme 3

Mother Tongue	Children's Preferred Language for Reading	Frequency
Urdu	Urdu only	0
	English only	15
	Urdu & English (both)	5
Sindhi	Sindhi	0
	Urdu	0
	Sindhi & Urdu (both)	1
	English & Urdu (both)	8
	English (only)	9
	Sindhi, English, and Urdu	2

The data shows that Urdu-speaking children prefer to read English literature. 15 out of 20 participants shared that "their children read English literature or books they *don't like Urdu* (UP 2), *for them, Urdu is difficult to read* (UP 8)*, and they don't have any interest* (UP 15) in it, etc". Almost similar kinds of responses were provided by the parents. However, there were only 5 participant who claimed that their children read both English and Urdu literature.

"I was fond of reading Urdu stories in my childhood, so do my kids too, but they read both Urdu and English books and newspapers (UP 13)".

Another participant highlighted though her children read Urdu, but only when they are forced by the parents or by the teachers at school, when the teacher gives a reading task, or when we force them to read Urdu books, they read them, but never read Urdu by choice.

Whereas, 8 Sindhi-speaking parents shared that their children read Sindhi, English, and Urdu literature, "*the school gives them a reading task each week, so whether they want it or not, they have to read* (SP 18), *read textbooks of all subjects* (SP 10)". However, only 1 parent participant mentioned that his child reads Urdu and Sindhi literature, "*in government schools, children have better Urdu than English, that's why he reads Urdu better*" (*Government schools ma bachon ki Urdu English sy Kafi behtar hoti ha is leye wo urdu parh leta ha*).

Theme 4: Understanding and Usage of Idioms and Proverbs of Children

Table 4: Details of Theme 4

Mother Tongue	Understanding and Usage of Idioms and Proverbs	Frequency
Urdu	Urdu only	0
	English only	5
	Urdu & English (both)	15
Sindhi	Sindhi only	0
	Urdu only	0
	Sindhi & Urdu (both)	3
	English & Urdu (both)	11
	English (only)	0
	Urdu Sindhi & English	5

Since the data which was collected from the participants was from the families, where children go to school from early ages, and parents are well qualified too, most of the Urdu-speaking parent participants believe that their children know both English and Urdu idioms because *they learned them at school* (UP 10, UP4, UP 12, UP 15, UP16). Only 5 parents believe that their children just know idioms in English because either they only speak English at home, or they are in a convent or grammar school where more focus is on the English language rather than Urdu or any other regional languages. Furthermore, children who are under the age of 5 years are unfamiliar with any idiom and proverb in either language because neither are they taught idioms at school nor are parents using them. UP 3 state, "*my children are 3 and 5 years old, they don't know these things.*"

According to 5 Sindhi-speaking parents, their children know idioms in Sindhi, English, and Urdu languages. SP 6 states that "*though we don't speak Sindhi all the time, we use proverbs and idioms in Sindhi, Urdu, and English learnt at school, we speak Sindhi and Urdu at home, so we use its idioms too*" (SP 10). Interestingly, English and Urdu are spoken or known to the children of 11 Sindhi speaker families *because either don't speak Sindhi at home (SP 20) or don't use such things"* (SP 12) (proverbs and idioms) with their children, but children learn idioms and proverbs at school.

Furthermore, Sindhi and Urdu proverbs and idioms are used by the children of only 3 families. These children either go to government school or have parents from both cultures and languages. *We speak Sindhi at home, and he learns Urdu from school (*SP 17), "*My children learnt a little Sindhi from grandparents because we only speak Urdu with them as my wife is Urdu speaking. (SP 8)*."

Theme 5: Preferred Language to be Used at Work Public Places (shopping malls, restaurants, Parks, etc.) with Children

Table 5: Details of Theme 5

Mother Tongue	Children's Preferred Language for Reading	Frequency
Urdu	Urdu only	1
	English only	9
	Urdu & English (both)	10
Sindhi	Sindhi	0
	Urdu	7
	Sindhi & Urdu (both)	1
	English & Urdu (both)	8
	English (only)	2
	Urdu Sindhi & English (code-mixing)	2

Code-mixing is the most popular mode of communication among Urdu language speakers. The data reveals that out of 20, 10 participant families prefer to use English and Urdu together in their sentences, and they feel proud of it by their own by, considering it the language of educated, groomed personal of society. We frequently use both languages (English and Urdu) UP 8*, "most people use English and Urdu together, and that is always felt good* (UP 2), *we use mixed Urdu with English* (UP 12)."

9 participants claimed that they use English in public places because it gives them respect (UP 15), people admire them (UP 6), "*it gives everybody's attention and respect* (UP 20), etc. It is becoming a common belief among people that if someone speaks English in public places, they are given more respect and attention by the people around them. UP 15 described that in a restaurant, if they speak English with waiters, they get everyone's respect, and even the waiter gives them priority to serve food. Hence, they use the English language on a priority basis in public places.

Urdu is spoken by just one participant, who speaks Urdu only in public places, according to UP 3 "*my family speaks Urdu everywhere, it's our language.*"

Urdu is spoken by 7 Sindhi-speaking participants because this helps them *in adjusting to the environment* (SP 18) or *feel like Karachiites* (SP 6), and are comprehensible in their communication as*, we are understandable to the people around us (SP 10).* In addition to this, SP 5 speak*s* about the social attitude if she and the family speak Sindhi while living in Karachi a public place. SP 5 states that, while living in Karachi, *if we speak Sindhi in a public place, everyone stares at us differently, which makes us uncomfortable. So, we avoid using Sindhi and prefer to use Urdu in public places.*

Therefore, it can be concluded here that both the Urdu and Sindhi speaking community switch their languages due to the people they communicate with or the place they visit, for convenience and maintenance of power and authority.

Theme 6: Language Preferred by Parents at Workplace for Communication

Table 6: Details of Theme 6

Mother Tongue	Children's Preferred Language for Reading	Frequency
	Urdu only	4

Urdu	English only	2
	Urdu & English (both)	14
Sindhi	Sindhi	0
	Urdu	8
	Sindhi & Urdu (both)	3
	English & Urdu (both)	7
	English (only)	0
	Urdu, Sindhi & English	5

At the workplace, 14 Urdu-speaking parents do code-mixing because "*everyone speaks in this way* (UP1, UP 3, UP 5, UP 9), *it is convenient and understandable* (UP 7), and *it sounds professional. If we can't speak a hundred percent English* (UP 10), *people around us can't understand, that's why I use both English and Urdu* (UP 13)". The finding shows that people prefer to use the English language at the workplace, but at the same time, if it is not the culture of their organization to speak in English, people respond to them differently. To avoid that, they frequently code-mix or code-switch the languages from English to Urdu. Contrary to this, 2 participants speak in English at the workplace. According to them, "*power position demands English* (UP 18) and *English is the language of communication at my workplace (UP 15)"*. The data reveals that those who are working in multinational organizations and/or have a '*power position*' or "higher designation at workplace" are bound to use the English language with their subordinates and co-workers to maintain their authority. Interestingly, only 4 participants accepted that they speak Urdu only at their workplace. "*Main ek Urdu teacher hun tou Zahir ha Urdu ma hi baat karun gi bachon sy bhi or sathi asathza sy bhi* (Im an Urdu teacher, so, obiously I speak in Urdu with students and with my colleagues too). "UP 14 states, in *my office most of the people belong to Sindhi community, so we all speak in Urdu".* However, he further mentioned that, "*in case of any work at government departments I use Sindhi, Kaam asani sy ho jata ha (I get my work done easily)."* This response indicates that the people who belong to the same language support each other too on the basis of similar language and cultural identity.

In the case of Sindhi-speaking participants, none of them uses the Sindhi language at his/her workplace in Karachi. However, 8 participants claimed to use the Urdu language at their workplace because in government offices, this is the only language people can understand, "SP 12 (*sub ko urdu zaban hi samajh ati ha*) and "*no one knows Sindhi at my workplace, I'm the only Sindhi language speaker there (SP 10)."* Three participants mentioned that they use both Sindhi and Urdu at the workplace. In government departments, we have Sindhi colleagues too, so I speak in Sindhi with them and Urdu with Urdu language speakers and the public (who visit government offices for their work) (SP 14). Seven Sindhi language speakers use both English and Urdu languages at their work places because *people get impressed by it, it makes us more powerful* (SP 9), *I feel myself more understandable to those I am communicating with* (SP 19), *the position I have at my office demands this* (SP 6), if Sindhi is spoken in front of Urdu language speakers especially those who are parallel to us in designation they act and behave as if we are incompetent. So, I prefer using the language that they use (SP 4), "*I feel myself more educated when using these (English and Urdu) languages (SP 18), these are my only languages now, I don't speak Sindhi anymore* (SP 20)". Urdu, Sindhi & English languages are used by five respondents at their workplace. According to SP 2, "*while living in Karachi, I have learnt to use the right language at the right place",* I use Sindhi with my Sindhi colleagues, Urdu with Urdu-speaking colleagues, Urdu English mix with people coming to us for their work, and with seniors (SP 8).

The study shows that Sindhi language speakers are inclined towards the Urdu language and consider it the language of educated people. Furthermore, there are some Sindhi language speakers who are influenced by the English language too, and hence they prefer using Urdu or Sindhi at their workplace. Similar to Urdu language speakers, some Sindhi language speakers also believe that English is the language of authority and power, and the person who has a higher position at the workplace should use the English language to maintain the decorum of the position they attain.

DISCUSSIONS

The study's findings shed light on the intricate dynamics of linguistic attitudes and usage among parents in Karachi who speak Sindhi or Urdu, especially with regard to the transmission of their mother tongue to their children. The data analysis unveiled significant patterns that shed light on linguistic preferences, habits, and motivations.

The study revealed that parents exhibit diverse patterns of language choice in different domains based on factors such as educational aspirations, social mobility, cultural heritage, and perceived societal norms. While Urdu-speaking parents prioritize English proficiency for academic and professional success, Sindhi-speaking parents emphasize the preservation of cultural diversity and language heritage as mentioned by Abbasi et al. (2020) by

encouraging the use of indigenous idioms; to give relevant example to their children (SP 6) alongside Urdu and English which they either learn at school use at home by their parents (SP10, SP 12).

The data indicated that children's language preferences are influenced by educational settings, social groups, and perceptions of convenience and challenges associated with different languages. It means that the speakers of both Sindhi and Urdu languages have different choices to opt for a particular language in specific social, cultural, and/or educational settings, as mentioned by Dörnyei (2003). Urdu-speaking children often prefer English for reading due to its perceived advantages, i.e., symbol of the elite class, convent and grammar schools, good jobs, respect in society, etc. (UP 6, UP 15, UP 20). Whereas, while living in Karachi, Sindhi language speakers prefer to speak Urdu to feel like the residents of the biggest city of Pakistan (SP 6) or to be comprehensive for the people with whom they are communicating (SP 10). However, while travelling to their homeland, i.e., Sindh, Sindhi language speakers use their mother tongue with their family and relatives. Sindhi-speaking children demonstrate a broader repertoire of languages for communication and literacy, reflecting a multilingual environment, enabling them to use English, Urdu, and Sindhi in various contexts. As a result, communities that speak Sindhi are capable of adjusting and using their language in diverse situations.

The study highlighted that both Urdu and Sindhi-speaking parents engaged in code-switching or code-mixing between languages in public or professional settings for pragmatic reasons such as clarity, adherence to norms, and professional standards. This practice underscores the dynamic and adaptive nature of language use in multilingual contexts. This is motivated by pragmatic factors such as the need for clarity, adherence to societal norms, and meeting professional standards. English is widely recognized as the official language of business, particularly among Urdu-speaking parents, who view it as a symbol of achievement and power.

The data reveal that schools play a crucial role in establishing choices among young learners. As most schools focus on the English language, the students are also inclined towards it and prefer to read and speak the same language. As UP 2, UP 8, and UP 15 mentioned that their children have learned idioms and proverbs in English and Urdu at schools, as it is taught to them according to the syllabus. Similarly, Speakers of the Sindhi language emphasize that their children learn English and Urdu idioms and read literature of other languages because they are taught these subjects in schools according to the curriculum followed in local schools (SP 17, SP 18, SP 10). Therefore, the research emphasizes the role of educational activities and policies in shaping language preferences and literacy practices among children from Urdu and Sindhi-speaking households. It emphasizes the importance of inclusive language practices, cultural heritage preservation, and addressing socio-economic disparities in promoting linguistic diversity and language sustainability.

The findings of the study demonstrate that language use is influenced by both individual and societal factors. The study also reveals people often make strategic decisions about which language to use based on social norms, power dynamics, and identity considerations, which are similar to Fishman's Model and analysis of Language use (1991). Language maintenance and shift within a community are also key aspects of the Fishman Model, which is observed in the current study, too.

Based on the findings, the study suggests the need for community-driven efforts to promote and advance indigenous languages, ensuring their continued prosperity in a globalized society. It calls for educational initiatives that support multilingualism, recognize the value of diverse language practices, and empower individuals to navigate linguistic diversity inclusively.

To conclude, the study contributes valuable insights into the complex dynamics of language attitudes and behaviors among parents in Karachi. It sheds light on the intersections of language, culture, education, and identity in shaping language use and transmission within multilingual communities. The research underscores the importance of understanding and supporting linguistic diversity as a means of fostering social inclusion, cultural preservation, and mutual respect within diverse socio-linguistic contexts.

CONCLUSION

This study highlights the complex dynamics of language attitudes and transmission among Sindhi and Urdu-speaking parents in Karachi. Findings reveal that Urdu-speaking families prioritize English for academic and professional success, while Sindhi-speaking parents emphasize cultural preservation alongside strategic use of Urdu and English. Children's language preferences are shaped by schools, peers, and perceptions of utility, with Sindhi-speaking children demonstrating broader multilingual repertoires.

The research underscores how language use reflects identity, social norms, and power relations, resonating with Fishman's (1991) model of language maintenance and shift. It calls for inclusive educational policies and community-driven efforts to sustain indigenous languages while promoting multilingualism, cultural preservation, and social inclusion in Pakistan's diverse socio-linguistic context.

IMPLICATIONS

1. Future studies should explore intergenerational code-mixing.
2. Parents should encourage balanced multilingual use.
3. Curricula should support mother tongues.
4. Sindh should promote Sindhi media and review policies.

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