

Students' Perceptions and Considerations of English Language Acquisition as a Viable Pathway for Employment Generation in Pakistan's South Punjab

Waqar Mahmood Khan¹, Zahid Bilal², and Habiba Nawaz³



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Abstract

The research report focuses on the beliefs of Southern Punjab students enrolled in English degree programs regarding their preference to become English instructors. It aims to shed light on the rising need for English teachers and its positive aspects in terms of economic development. The research assessed pupils' propensity for English teaching using a questionnaire as a data-gathering tool. The findings indicate a significant growth in demand for English teachers. Research shows a direct relation between English Proficiency and individuals' economic growth. This suggests that pursuing English as a career offers substantial financial rewards, privileges, and social status, surpassing subjects such as Physics, Chemistry, and Biology conventionally perceived as more lucrative options. The paper draws upon the Self-Determination Theory of Motivation, Expectancy-Value Theory, Social Cognitive Theory, Cultural Capital Theory, Job Choice Theory, and Human Capital Theory to rationalize this phenomenon. Additionally, it links instrumental motivation with students' preference for a profession in English teaching because the vast majority of respondents showed a strong leaning towards the instrumental component of choosing their vocation.

Keywords: *Self-Determination Theory of Motivation, Instrumental Motivation, English teacher, English career prospects, Demand for English teachers, Pakistan's Southern Punjab region.*

¹ Lecturer at the Department of English, University of Okara, Pakistan.

² Assistant Professor and Head of Department (DMCS) University of Okara, Pakistan.

³ Assistant Professor, Govt. Postgraduate Degree College, Baghdad Road, Bahawalpur, Pakistan.

Introduction

Around a half-century ago, English teaching became an academic and professionalized discipline of study. Many researchers have undertaken studies on teacher education and training. This attempt was made to highlight the usefulness of the English language as well as the expertise and skills of foreign language teachers in delivering good lectures in the classroom. The developments of international society, as well as English becoming a universally accepted means of communication, are elements that contribute to its popularity among individuals.

Harmer (2007) contends that students of all ages around the world are attempting to acquire English for communicative objectives. Their motivation for learning varies from learner to learner. Some students surely learn English as part of their curriculum at the primary, secondary, higher secondary, or degree levels. However, for some, learning the language may be their preferred

system. A substantial number of people study English because they are members of a target language community and it is a prerequisite for them to be able to operate or communicate successfully in that community. English is used as a medium of communication in the majority of the world's countries. The target language community is a country where English is the official language, such as New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and Canada. Other countries where English is widely used for trade and culture include Pakistan, India, and Nigeria.

Many different types of pupils study English. English for Specific Purposes, or ESP, is required for some. Several distinct subjects are taken by learners under the umbrella of ESP due to their specific demands. Students take ESP classes to acquire legal language, tourism language, banking language, nursing language, and so on. Business English is one of the most notable components of ESP, as it teaches its students how to acquire English in order to communicate in English in the business world. Many others require EAP or English for Academic Purposes to pursue an entirely English-medium course at a college or university, or to access various study content with text in English.

The general English course students have a desire to read, write, learn, and speak English fluently whenever or however it may be useful to them in the future, but they are not very clear about why they are learning the language. The reasons students have for their respective learning do have an impact on what it is, the thing they wish and require to learn, and consequently will have an effect on what they are taught. For example, students enrolled in programs of Business English will pay much of their attention to specific monetary situations and transactions. Meanwhile, the students residing in a target-language community will be required to use the language of English to gain their instant social and practical needs.

Background of the study

English as a language is taught and learned in numerous contexts and a number of class environments. These factors and differences usually have a substantial influence on what strategy we carry out for the process of teaching the language of English. English is taught under the umbrella of use-based ESP i.e., English for Specific Purposes. Having witnessed an enormous inclination towards learning English, the individualistic level of motivation has, at times, been investigated.

The goal of the current study is to examine how people in the South Punjab region feel about pursuing a career as an English teacher. This study looked into people's attitudes toward studying and choosing to become English instructors. Additionally, it has emphasized the benefits of studying and specializing in English. The teaching professionals as well as English language learners across the nation at different levels are anticipated to benefit from and make use of this research.

The Self-Determination Theory of Motivation, as well as the Expectancy-Value Theory, Social Cognitive Theory, Cultural Capital Theory, Job Choice Theory, and Human Capital Theory, all argue that learners can be stimulated by two distinct types of motivation, intrinsic and extrinsic. Intrinsic motivation refers to an individual engaging in something for the pure enjoyment and curiosity it provides, whereas extrinsic motivation refers to an individual engaging in something for the sake of external benefits, outcomes, or rewards, such as obtaining a degree, receiving acknowledgment, admiration, or recognition, or progressing in one's career. Self-determination theory suggests that all humans are driven by three basic psychological needs that include independence/freedom or

autonomy, competence, and relatedness, and these form the basis of their professional or personal growth and development.

When it comes specifically to writing this very research article, instrumental motivation has a paramount role to play. Individuals in Pakistan's South Punjab while selecting their English teaching career have been motivated by the wish to attain external rewards, such as the acknowledgment of academic recognition, attainment of career opportunities, or fulfillment of job market or institutional requirements. The motivation of such individuals seems greatly driven by the instrumental worth of completing the task.

Therefore, Self-Determination Theory offers a framework to understand how instrumental motivation can influence individuals when writing a research article by highlighting the role of extrinsic motivation in pursuing external rewards and outcomes.

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Literature Review

Definition of a teacher

The one who shapes up the future of knowledge seekers and systematically manages to create the leaders and legends of tomorrow is undoubtedly termed a teacher. The evolution of this very process of teaching and learning may be attributed to the first revelation of The Holy Qur'an revealed to the Beloved Rasoolﷺ:

Read in the name of your Lord Who created, [Surah Al A'laq 96:1]

A set of attributes or set standards are implied to account for the cliquishness of various professions in the parochial job market, such as specificity in terms of employment, difficult entry qualifications, extensive training, and social rank, independence including feasible practice, and established behaviors. Such characteristics are usually related to the job trends of the time. Teaching is a job that requires some formality.

A teacher is not the lone representation of his or her subject. Rather, he is the one who awakens society from its slumber of ignorance. Soaps and Assistant Communities Editor, (Mahmood, 2014) and (Lindsay, 2015), consider teaching to be the best job in the world.

Motivation-Instrumental and Integrative

Motivation is primarily an important concept that executes a very constructive effect by enhancing erudition in terms of learning any given second language learning context. Initial work on motivation and individual attitudes by Lambert and Gardner declares motivation to be of two types namely instrumental and integrative motivation. A learner may possess any one of these types or perhaps both types of motivation combined depending particularly on the contextual situation and the goals of learning of the learner. If we consider the contexts of English to be learned as a foreign language, we normally presume that those who are involved in the process of learning the second language possess in them more instrumental motivation (the type concerned with financial perks, materialistic aspects, and benefits). In addition to it, the achievement of learners might greatly be influenced by their respective types of motivation. (Reza Gholami, Negah Allahyar, Shameem Rafik-Galea, 2012)

Instrumental motivation can refer to one being motivated by external or instrumental stimuli or goals in learning a language, such as succeeding in an exam, attaining a particular job, or meeting academic expectations or requirements. Such Individuals having instrumental motivation central focus is on the practical aspects linked with learning a language.

On the contrary, integrative motivation can refer to an individual being motivated by a wish for incorporation, amalgamation, or recognition with the community of the target language. Individuals possessing an integrative motivation have a real curiosity, interest, and partiality in the linguistic, cultural, and individualistic factors associated with the language they are in the process of learning. They hence seek to develop interactive relationships by expressively communicating with members of that very community.

These concepts were initially introduced by Gardner and Lambert in their 1972 article titled "Attitudes and motivation in second-language learning" published in the book "Language Processing in Bilingual Children" edited by E. Bialystok.

An attitude

An attitude is an assessment of a thing or a thought. Attitudes include something an individual holds in mind, which ranges from the routine to the abstractions that comprise things, individuals, their beliefs or ideas, and groups. The majority of the researchers have given a common viewpoint in their core definitions of attitudes, but more intricate representations of the conceptions of attitude vary significantly. (Gerd Bohner, Nina Dickel, 2010)

Attitude is a customary manner of thinking or emotion or simply a performance towards someone or something. The basis of the word 'attitude' initially emanated from the French language and later on from Latin. The word "aptitude (aptus) means apt or fit. (Das, Halder, Mishra, & Debnath, 2014).

Attitude is encouraging or discouraging judgemental feedback towards a thing or some entity presented in an individual's thinking, approaches, or proposed behavior (Myers, p. 36). It may be taken as a societal alignment or an essential leaning to react in line with a specific thing either willingly or disapprovingly. (Fishbein, 1975).

Attitudes are mainly comprehended to be formulated by means of a process of individualistic personal assessment that involves a rational evaluation of expenses and profits. The attitudes are, however, controlled also by affective/emotional responses in addition to other relevant beliefs. Attitude is referred to as an emotional inclination to view a specific behaviour or an object with a mark of agreement or disagreement. (Franca Eirich, Kirstie Corbett, 2005).

In the subject of social psychology, attitudes are taken as understood, universal assessments of an individual, thing, habitation, or case that affects actions and thoughts. To put it in simpler terms, attitudes are fundamental indications or expressions of agreement or disagreement, acceptability or unacceptability. Bem takes attitudes to be linked with liking and disliking. An example in this regard would be to endorse the standards of a specific political party. (Social psychology, n.d.)

Other research hypotheses associated with this study, in addition to the Self-Determination Theory of Motivation, could include:

1. **Expectancy-Value Theory:** According to this theory, individuals' motivation to follow a specific vocation is impacted by their expectations of success in that sector as well as the value they place on reaching that accomplishment.
2. **Social Cognitive Theory:** This theory examines how beliefs, self-efficacy, and observational learning influence individuals' professional choices. It could be used to investigate how students' opinions of successful English instructors, as well as their own self-beliefs, influence their desire to pursue a career in English teaching.
3. **Cultural Capital Theory:** This theory investigates how a person's cultural background, knowledge, and skills influence their social and economic mobility. It can be used to investigate how English language proficiency is seen as a valued asset in terms of economic chances and social standing in the setting of South Punjab.
4. **Job Choice Theory:** This theory investigates the elements that influence people's career choices. It can be utilized to look into the precise reasons why Southern Punjab students view English teaching as a feasible career option, such as job stability, personal interests, and perceived societal needs.
5. **Human Capital Theory:** This theory focuses on how an individual's education, skills, and knowledge contribute to their economic productivity and employability. It can be used to

investigate how English language acquisition is viewed as a means of improving one's human capital and increasing one's chances of finding work in the South Punjab region.

The relationships between career-relevant activities (environmental and self-career exploration, career resources, and training), self-regulatory variables (job search self-efficacy and job search clarity), Theory of Planned Behavior variables (job search attitude, subjective norm, job search intention), and job search intensity were explained using social cognitive theory. We discovered that job searchers who spent more time in career exploration attended more training programs, and used more career resources reported higher job search clarity and self-efficacy in a sample of employed and jobless job seekers. Job search self-efficacy, attitude, and subjective norm predicted job search intention, while job search clarity and intention predicted job search intensity eight months later. The findings of this investigation provide useful information. (*Zikic & Saks, 2009*)

The variables in the current study refer to the opinions and preferences of Southern Punjab students enrolled in degree programs in English on their propensity to become English teachers as a viable career route for employment creation in Pakistan's South Punjab.

Methodology

Research is an organized and impartial sort of resolving a problem by either providing answers to questions or backing propositions/hypotheses by producing verifiable data. The analysis includes both quantitative and qualitative methods which mean the inclusion and deduction of numerical statistics for handling and summing up data. (Bacon-Shone, 2015).

The research includes constructive effort carried out on scientific grounds to augment the treasure of knowledge that comprises the knowledge of a human, his society, and culture, in addition to the application of this treasure of knowledge to formulate innovative ideas and applications. Research is taken as a tool to create factual information, re-endorse the outcomes of research carried out previously, suggest adequate solutions to prevailing or new issues, and develop new theories and supporting propositions.

This part takes various considerations into account such as interrogating, when, and how, things have been researched, what has been the procedure of data collection, what the population has been, and so on.

Type of Research

In this work, the quantitative research approach is suggested as an adequate method for data collection. The main tool for gathering data is the questionnaire. The quantitative approach to research is ideal for the systematic measurement of data. Through a close-ended quantitative methodology questionnaire, the respondents' beliefs have been statistically measured in this study method.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

The purpose of the current research is dual. The first is to explore the attitude of the people who adopt the profession of English teacher in South Punjab and the second is to find out the mental inclination among individuals on why they prefer studying English as a subject for their future career.

Research questions help us in the understanding of a topic that is being studied. These questions help us out in achieving a thorough analysis of the research. This research has investigated the factors or elements, that individuals keep in mind while opting for a degree program in the English language. Secondly, this research work has aimed at getting to know why people mainly in the Southern Punjab region of Pakistan are now more inclined towards becoming an English teacher. What pushes them in doing so and what financial factors are there to play their part in this regard?

Hypothesis of the Study

The views of the people in South Punjab have significantly changed, and they are now much more driven and eager to become English teachers. Their propensity for this line of work is mostly due to increased knowledge and better career options provided by our English teaching employment market.

Scope of the study

The purpose of this research is to look into the opinions and preferences of students in Southern Punjab who want to be English teachers. It seeks to highlight the growing demand for English teachers as well as the positive impact they may have on economic development. A questionnaire is used as a data collection instrument in the study to examine people's interest in English teaching. The results show a large increase in the need for English teachers, implying a relationship between English ability and individual economic success. The study also employs the Self-Determination Theory of Motivation to explain this occurrence and investigates the instrumental motivations that drive students' desire for a profession in English teaching.

Handling of Quantitative Data

The researcher as part of this study has implied quantitative methodology in the process of the collection and analysis of the data. A questionnaire has been implied as a data collection tool.

A student questionnaire has been formulated in order to discover the motivation level among the students (enrolled in degree programs of English), towards their choice of becoming an English teacher.

The participants of this research are the students of four-year BS Hons. and 2-year Masters degree in English at various institutions, who were asked to fill in the questionnaires with their opinion on their motivation for becoming an English teacher and why they have themselves enrolled at BS Hons. or Master levels and have selected English language or literature as the subject of their professional career. Participants were given four options under the Standard Likert scale to choose from. The scale included Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree. The data collected through the questionnaires have been statistically analyzed through SPSS-16 (version).

Data collection includes the research plans to collect data for the conduct of research from students, motivated to become teachers of English. Data has been collected from within South Punjab (Bahawalpur, Mandi Yazman, Kehror Pakka, and Bahawalnagar).

Students of BS 4-year or MA 2-year in English studying at various educational institutions of South Punjab are taken as the population of the study.

Convenience sampling was the method of sampling used in this investigation. Participants in institutions in various parts of South Punjab, specifically Bahawalpur, Bahawalnagar, Mandi Yazman, and Kehror Pakka, provided samples. Based on the number of students at each individual

institution, random samples were chosen. The researcher approached the leaders of these organizations to ask for their permission to collect data to ensure the investigation's success.

As a key technique for gathering data for the current investigation, questionnaires have been suggested. For the students enrolled in degree programs in English literature or linguistics at different educational institutions, a questionnaire was implied.

The reliability of the data was assessed after it was gathered using a research instrument. The researcher visited predetermined research locations to gather data for the event. The administration of the individual institutions demonstrated its generosity by allowing the acquisition of the needed data.

The data gathered through the tool of data collection had been analyzed statistically, organized, and construed. For the analysis of the data collected, SPSS-16 VERSION was used. Values were placed in the system of SPSS and then frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation were obtained and put forth as data interpretation.

Result and Discussion

The researcher performed a survey in diverse areas of South Punjab, including Bahawalpur, Mandi Yazman Bahawalnagar, and Kehrora Pakka in the province Punjab, Pakistan, to learn people's attitudes toward pursuing a career of an English teacher there. The 145 respondents who participated in this survey were all students at various universities that offered the BS Hons (four-year degree) in English and the two-year MA in English programs. A questionnaire with a variety of questions was used as the research tool for the aim of data collection. A questionnaire has been implied as a data collection tool for this research study.

Following have been the research findings:

Responses to the research questionnaire

S. No.	Question	Percentage of responses			
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
	I would like to become an English teacher to fulfill my much awaited dream	1.4	8.3	41.0	41.4
	English is something I love from my childhood.	2.8	18.6	49.7	29.0
	Becoming an English teacher, I would like to inspire my students to do the same.	2.8	17.9	42.8	36.6
	To me, English teaching has a secure and stable job-career	1.4	9.7	47.6	41.4
	I am able to differentiate between Integrative and Instrumental motivation	1.4	17.2	46.9	34.5
	Instrumental motivation has always compelled me to opt for this degree	3.4	17.9	43.4	35.2
	The subject of English gives me better leadership skills	2.8	14.5	46.2	36.6
	English is much better in terms of earning than other subjects like Physics, Chemistry, Biology, etc.	0	21.4	52.4	26.2

My English teachers at school and college level have been a source of inspiration for my preference to go into the same profession.	1.4	7.6	55.9	35.2
By becoming an English teacher, I plan to keep myself up-to-date with the ever-growing developments taking place in English	1.4	10.3	44.8	43.4
By becoming an English teacher, I think I can improve both receptive and productive skills	1.4	11.0	40.7	46.9
In my opinion, English can provide me with good opportunities to go for, the best of which is teaching.	0	13.1	43.4	43.4
I think by teaching English, I would be capable of making my students able to meet the requirements of the present day.	1.4	10.3	51.0	37.2
My country can progress by leaps and bounds if our education system is entirely English-medium	3.4	22.1	44.1	30.3
Our education sector can progress if it is equipped with individuals who are well-versed with the growth and development of English	1.4	23.4	43.4	31.7
In case I get an opportunity to become an English teacher, I would try my best to educate my society with the skills of English language and make it a developed one.	2.8	9.0	52.4	35.9

Frequency: 145 respondents

Findings

The results of a study on the topic of "Analyzing the Attitude of People of South Punjab Towards Adopting the Profession of English Teacher in South Punjab" show that the number of students enrolled in BS Honours in English and MA English programs has increased significantly over the past two to three years. This shows that an English-teaching career has a lot to offer in terms of benefits and privileges, particularly in terms of financial rewards. Respondents agreed that a degree in English provides the potential to earn significantly more and significantly better than other commonly considered subjects of earning such as Physics, Chemistry, and Biology. The majority of respondents favored the instrumental factor. Online educational platforms, in addition to private coaching centers, academies, schools, colleges, and universities of South Punjab sound to have a big thirst for the professionals of English. On account of its effectiveness, proficient teachers of English are in great demand in our educational domains.

The majority of respondents thought that a profession in English teaching is secure and steady. A significant proportion of individuals who agree believe that English proficiency improves one's leadership abilities. The majority of respondents felt that our country can prosper if its citizens are well-versed in English abilities. The paper's objectives have received overwhelmingly positive responses.

The findings of the study support the notion that people in South Punjab are increasingly eager to pursue a professional career in English. Extrinsic values or instrumental factors play an important role in this regard. Individuals select English as their professional language.

In the current study, all objectives have been met. Achieving financial advantages is a major concern for the people of South Punjab, and the subject of English wonderfully provides them. Every day, we see an increase in the number of students registered in English degree programs at various

public and private institutions in the South Punjab region, and the figure continues to rise at a rapid pace. The need for English teachers is rising similarly. This is one of the most crucial reasons why people pick English as their professional language.

Concluding remarks

The researcher can conclude that individuals in Pakistan's South Punjab are strongly inclined to choose English as their field of study for a career. This decision is influenced by the financial benefits, prospects for stability and advancement, and the need for English teachers across a range of educational institutions. The ability to speak English fluently is also seen as a key skill for improving leadership potential and advancing the nation. The findings validate the objectives of the paper and emphasize the necessity for English language instruction to play a prominent role in the region's educational system to meet the rising demand for qualified English instructors.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made in light of the findings:

1. **Improve English language instruction at all levels:** Given the rising demand for English instructors in South Punjab, educational institutions should place a high priority on improving English language instruction at all levels. This can be accomplished through the development and implementation of comprehensive language curricula, the provision of additional resources and training for English teachers, and the creation of an atmosphere that fosters English language competency. Pakistan's South Punjab School, College, and University system of education should prioritize the improvement of the English language. In this regard, more English language courses should be incorporated within the curriculum.
2. **Raise knowledge of English teaching career opportunities:** Educational institutions, government agencies, and career counselors should actively promote the benefits and prospects of a career in English teaching. This can be accomplished through targeted ads, educational workshops, and career advisory programs that stress the financial benefits, security, and social prestige associated with English teaching as a viable avenue for job creation.
3. **Increase investment in English teacher training programs:** To satisfy the growing need for qualified English instructors, comprehensive teacher training programs must be expanded. These programs should emphasize the development of pedagogical skills, language competency, and knowledge of new teaching methods. This will aid in the production of competent English teachers capable of meeting the region's educational needs.
4. **Support professional development:** English teachers in South Punjab should have access to chances for continuous professional development. Workshops, conferences, and online courses focusing on updating teaching approaches, incorporating technology into language training, and fostering a greater grasp of English language acquisition theories are examples of this. Such assistance will allow English teachers to stay current with trends and give quality education.
5. **Encourage collaboration and partnerships:** Collaboration between educational institutions, government agencies, and non-profit groups can significantly boost English language

instruction in South Punjab. Stakeholders can work together to solve the problems of English language learning and create a more conducive climate for job creation in the region by forming partnerships, sharing resources, and exchanging best practices.

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