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Impact of English Teaching on Students' Academic Performance at Higher Secondary School Level

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Abstract: *The current study investigated the diverse dimensions of English teaching that influence students' academic performance at the higher secondary level, with a focus on refining teaching methodologies and tackling challenges in English learning experiences. Using a methodical research approach, the study focuses on the critical role that teachers play in English instruction for both students and teachers from government higher secondary schools in the Dir Lower area of KP. The use of a quantitative research strategy, in conjunction with a pilot study and a specially created questionnaire, guarantees the validity of data gathering and analysis. Through the use of SPSS software, data analysis can yield a wealth of information on students' perceptions and experiences with learning English. The results emphasize the value of good teaching strategies, the advantages of integrating technology, and the necessity of continual professional development for teachers. Regression analysis also shows a significant relationship between better academic achievement and improved English teaching methods. The recommendations of the study supported various efforts to enhance vigorous teacher training with improved and latest technology. The study has provided very useful information for the development and improvement of instructional strategies for English teachers at upper secondary schools.*

Introduction

In today's fast and interconnected world, proficiency in English is very important because people need to communicate with each other verbally, in written form, and on online platforms. They need to communicate in English, so knowledge of the English language is a priority and compulsory for professional and academic development. Another factor here is very eminent that proficiency in English provides students with access to a wealth of global information, fostering active engagement in academic fields and enhancing learning opportunities (Crystal, 2003).

According to Cummins, (2000) and Kintsch (1998) English proficiency is also closely linked to critical thinking and cognitive development which in return enable students to grasp multifaceted texts, build logical and coherent arguments, and engage in analytical reasoning.

Björkman (2011) stated that in this fast-paced world, effective communication skills, especially in the English language, are essential for academic and professional success. People with proficient English can speak very fluently, easily, and clearly articulate ideas, and simply they can compete with the people in the job market.

The latest research studies underscore the relationship between English proficiency and academic achievement across various subject areas. Strong language skills enhance reading comprehension and

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facilitate better performance in academic tasks and assessments (August & Shanahan, 2010; Grabe & Stoller, 2019).

Swain and Tocalli-Beller (2002) and Pica (2010) reported that in today's world, educational institutions prefer that their staff be fluent in English, especially during verbal conversations and also during presentations and discussions, contributing to academic success. As per one study, effective English instruction cultivates students' writing abilities, which are considered essential for academic expression and scholarly communication (Hinkel, 2003; Hyland, 2015).

English language proficiency plays a crucial role in facilitating social mobility and economic opportunities in today's interconnected world .For global communication this is increasingly prevalent to become proficient in English that enable individuals to participate more actively in international trade, diplomacy, and cultural exchange. conducted a study and stated that English proficiency is often a prerequisite for participation in academic conferences, research collaborations, and study abroad programs, highlighting its significance on a global scale.(Dressler et al., 2021).

A study conducted by (Lee et al., 2017) stated that exposure to English literature, media, and cultural artifacts broadens students' perspectives and enables them to engage more meaningfully with the global community. With the help of better English language skills, students develop empathy for different cultural perspectives and gain insights into the shared human experience.

According to one study, individuals with better proficiency in English enhance their ability to navigate digital spaces and leverage online resources for learning, communication, and collaboration. In another study, it was stated that fluency in English empowers individuals to access plenty of information, participate in online forums, and pursue opportunities for personal and professional growth. In today's technological world importance of English proficiency in digital literacy and online communication cannot be overstated (Wang & Chen, 2022).

According to Dornyei and Kubanyiova (2014) English language skills are essential for promoting democratic participation and civic engagement in multicultural societies for students and academicians. In a democratic society proficiency in English empowering citizens to express their views and engage in informed conversation.

Buxton et al. (2017) stated that recent research has emphasized the importance of adopting innovative teaching methodologies that cater to diverse learning styles and preferences. By embracing a variety of teaching methods that prioritize student involvement and meaningful interaction, educators can create dynamic learning environments that foster language acquisition and academic achievement.

Nowadays, educators are leveraging technology to enhance the English learning experience because virtual learning platforms, interactive multimedia resources, and online collaboration tools offer new opportunities for engagement and flexibility in English instruction (Dashtestani & Hojatpanah, 2021). By connecting the potential of digital resources and emerging technologies with proficient English language skills, educators can create dynamic and interactive learning environments that can fulfill the needs of diverse students and their language preferences (Cheung & Wong, 2010)).

In higher secondary schools, the instruction and teaching of English are very important for students' success in language proficiency for their future lives in various academic and professional fields. Whatever the field of interest, English is essential at every step of academic and professional life. According to Graddol (2006), in today's world, English proficiency is crucial for students and academicians to achieve better job success and practical life. It is a reality that the relationship between English instruction and students' academic achievement is very strong, and all the stakeholders, legislators, and educators need to put effort into improving English instruction at schools.

There are many recent studies that prove that there is a very intricate association between students' academic achievement and the instruction of English teaching at schools. In 2022, Hattie (2023) reported that a high level of proficiency in English is directly linked to improvement in academic performance reason is that this can enable students to engage themselves logically with academic course material, understand complicated concepts, and better communicate.

There is another important element of better English proficiency which impact students positively is this that when they are proficient in English then it help them for their future careers and academic life. With good English command and proficiency many doors of success open for them and they get better prospects for higher education and excellent job options at national and international level.

It is also a bitter truth that not all students get that much proficiency and understanding in English due to so many factors, and they can't achieve that much academic success compared to others. According to Bynner and Parsons (1997), student's academic performance and proficiency in English can suffer badly in some scenarios due to their socioeconomic issues and status, their language issues from the beginning or from origins, and exposure to different approaches of teaching at school life. Therefore, it is mandatory for teachers to consider all these factors while teaching English instruction at schools. While considering these factors, teachers can work with students more and more to improve their English proficiency.

In one of the study Warschauer, (2004) reported that the recent landscape of English teaching in education is changed due to the vast impact of technology and various new teaching strategies. These latest teaching strategies and technologies otherwise impacting students differently and students are improving in academic performance and language proficiency too.

Teachers at the upper secondary school level are involved in teaching, but due to their teaching, students' academic achievement is also impacted one way or another because these teachers have very little experience with the latest strategies and techniques of English teaching, and this is then directly influencing students academic achievement because English is a main subject which is used in every field and other subjects too, due to their weak English they lack in different things, and their academic achievement becomes low. Due to this issue, students become dissatisfied with the teacher's instruction of English at the school level. Teachers at this level also have this belief that English instruction is very difficult, so they don't prepare accordingly for English teaching at the school level. There are many issues that students are tackling in schools, which are the lack of qualified teachers, the lack of the latest resources and materials for English learning, and, above all, the negative attitude of teachers and students towards learning English.

According to one study conducted by Collier (2013), the qualifications and experience of English teachers play an important role in the academic achievement of learners. Another study conducted by Oh, K. (2016) stressed that student's academic achievement is also impacted by the curriculum and assessment practices used in the design of the English curriculum. The learning environment and resources at the school level greatly influence students' engagement, academic success, and English learning.

Brown and Larson-Hall (2012)examined the fact that proficiency in the English language is very important for better higher education prospects, getting good jobs, and participating in the day-to-day activities of this modern society. Also, communicative and student-centered approaches, such as task-based learning and project-based learning, were more effective in enhancing students' language skills compared to traditional teacher-centered methods.

Research objectives

1. To find out the factors in teaching English that affect students' academic performance at the higher secondary level.
2. To investigate strategies for enhancing English teaching techniques at the higher secondary school level.
3. To identify the issues that higher secondary school students have with English learning and to find solutions.

Research Questions

1. What are the elements in teaching English that affect the student's academic performanceat the higher secondary level?
2. What are the methods or techniques for improving English teaching at the higher secondaryschool level?
3. What are the solutions available for the problems faced by students in English learning athigher secondary level?

Significance of the Study

The current study may be helpful in overcoming the difficulties for other English teachers as well as policymakers in the form of professional development, classroom management, staying updated, and continuous feedback. For English teachers, using the audio-lingual technique can produce greater results, i.e., improved pronunciation, fluency, language accuracy, and improved overall language proficiency, etc. This study is also helpful in understanding that teachers may have specialized Training that enhances teaching skills, helps stay informed, supports students' diversity, and encourages innovative teaching methodologies. The study might inspire teachers to prepare English classes before instructing higher secondary school pupils. They may recognize their efforts, foster collaboration, and create a positive working environment.

Operational Definitions

Academic Performance: This is defined as the quantifiable results and achievements of students in their academic pursuits at the upper secondary school level, including grades, test scores, assignments, evaluations, and overall cognitive growth.

Audio-lingual Technique: This iss a language teaching method emphasizing oral practice, repetition, and pattern drills to enhance language abilities, with a focus on speaking and listeningactivities to improve communicative competence, fluency, and pronunciation.

Specialized Training: It involves concentrated education to enhance English teachers' pedagogical skills, subject knowledge, and teaching methods, typically through seminars, classes, or professional development programs.

Grammar Acquisition: This denotes the process by which individuals learn and internalize the rules, structures, and patterns governing language use, focusing on students' comprehension and application of English grammatical principles.

Research Design

This study employs a quantitative research design tailored to analyze the factors influencing student interest in English at the higher secondary level, particularly focusing on the role of teachers. It follows a systematic procedure for data collection andanalysis, ensuring the integrity of the research process from inception to conclusion. By adopting this methodology, the study aims to generate reliable findings that contribute significantly to the understanding of English education in the higher secondary school context.

Population

The research targets students and teachers from government higher secondary schools in district Dir Lower, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, as the study population.

Sample Size

The study sample was 110 government higher secondary schools in district Dir Lower. The sample includes 75 high schools and 35 higher secondary schools. A simple random sampling technique was employed to ensure the sample was representative. The sample comprises 190 students out of a total of 500 and 110 teachers out of 200.

Table 1

Participant type	Total population	Sample size
Students	500	190
Teachers	200	110

Pilot Study

For the current study, before the collection of data, the pilot study was also conducted to ensure the reliability of the questionnaire used in this research. Thus, after doing a pilot study, it was ensured that the research was adhering to ethical principles.

Table 2

S. No	Objective	Cronbach Alpha
1	Objective 1 (10 items)	0.891
2	Objective 2 (10 items)	0.921
3	Objective 3 (10 items)	0.826
4	Objective 1 (10 items)	0.891

The above table shows the reliability statistics findings used in the current study. The purpose of the test was to check internal validity of the instrument used for the data collection. The result showed that the items included in the objectives were found reliable as the valueswere found more than .70.

Tools of Data and Data Analysis

For the current study Self Report Questionnaire was used and the data was collected through closed ended questionnaire. The data was further analyzed through the statistical tools of social sciences (SPSS) etc. The results of this analysis were presented in a clear, tabular format, facilitating easy interpretation and understanding. This approach ensures that the findings are not only statistically sound but also accessible and meaningful to a wider audience, including educators, policymakers, and researchers in the field of education.

Results
Distribution of Sample Respondents (Teachers) Based on Age Group
Table 3

Age Group	Frequency	Percentage
21 to 30	25	23%
Above 31	85	77%
Total	110	100%

In analyzing the age distribution among teacher respondents, the sample was divided into two distinct groups: individuals aged 21 to 30 and those aged above 31. Among the respondents aged 21 to 30, there were 46 participants, comprising 42% of the total sample. Conversely, the group of respondents aged above 31 consisted of 64 individuals, representing 58% of the overall sample.

Distribution of Sample Respondents on the basis of Experience
Table 4

Experience	Frequency	Percentage
1 to 5 years	58	53%
Above 6 years	52	47%
Total	110	100%

Among the respondents with 1 to 5 years of experience, there were 58 individuals, constituting 53% of the total sample. Conversely, the group of respondents with above 6 years of experience comprised 52 individuals, accounting for 47% of the total sample.

A regression analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between academic performance, serving as the Dependent Variable and English teaching, the Independent Variable.

Regression Model
Table 5

Variable	Coefficient	Standard Error	t-value	p-value
English Teaching	0.678	0.042	16.143	<0.001

The regression analysis revealed a significant positive relationship between English teaching and academic performance ($\beta = 0.678$, $t = 16.143$, $p < 0.001$). The coefficient of 0.678 indicates that for every one-unit increase in English teaching, academic performance is expected to increase by 0.678 units. The low p-value (<0.001) indicates that the relationship observed is statistically significant, supporting the validity of the findings.

Findings

The data gathered from various tables reveals significant findings regarding the perceptions and experiences of respondents regarding English learning.

Firstly, a majority of respondents find teaching methods in English classes attractive, particularly in reading, writing, speaking, and grammar.

Similarly, respondents generally perceive their English teachers as knowledgeable, feel comfortable asking questions in class, and note parental involvement in their learning, all of which were supported by statistically significant p-values indicating agreement.

According to the data, another finding were a lack of motivation among respondents in classroom learning, but they recognize the positive role of technology's impact on their understanding and engage in self-directed learning activities, emphasizing significant agreement among respondents.

Findings showed that majority of the respondents' favoured interactive teaching methods with multimedia presentations, beneficial classroom activities, and increased interaction between teachers and students. In findings respondents believed in the effectiveness of certain techniques and methods for understanding English concepts and recognized the importance of extracurricular English language activities.

The data also highlighted the necessity of visual aids, the helpfulness of resources, and the significance of expression in English learning, all supported by statistically significant p-values. Overall, the survey data revealed findings of various challenges, perceptions, and strategies within the realm of English learning, providing valuable insights for educators and policymakers alike.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the research methodology employed in this study serves as a fundamental guide for navigating the complexities of scholarly inquiry, providing a systematic framework that ensures the integrity and reliability of research findings. The study effectively analyzes the factors influencing student interest in English at the higher secondary level, particularly focusing on the role of teachers. The study concluded that the attractiveness of teaching methods, the knowledge of teachers, and the importance of parental involvement are all essential. It is also concluded that challenges such as lack of motivation and limited access to resources are acknowledged, underscoring the need for targeted interventions in English education. The findings also emphasize the positive impact of technology, self-directed learning activities, and interactive teaching methods, providing actionable insights for educators and policymakers.

Recommendations

The following are the recommendations of the study:

- Incorporate English language teaching into other subjects like math, science, and social studies to enhance students' understanding and application of language skills.
- Provide teachers with professional development opportunities to improve their English teaching skills and stay updated on best practices.
- Encourage interactive and collaborative learning methods that promote active student participation and engagement.
- Use of influence digital resources and tools to support English language learning and enhance student engagement.
- Regularly monitor student progress and provide constructive feedback to improve their language skills and academic performance.

- Encourage parents to support English language learning at home through resources and activities.
- English language support programs: Establish programs for struggling students, such as extra tutoring or language support classes.
- Curriculum development: Review and refine English language curricula to align with academic goals and student needs.
- Encourage reading and writing practices: Foster a culture of reading and writing among students to improve their language skills and academic performance.

Recommendations for Future Researchers

Since the study was limited to the Dir District, it is recommended that additional research should be conducted in other regions of the KP.

- The study only took into account a male sample. To come to very clear conclusions, a study can be conducted on females and mixed genders.
- The current study only collected data from schools. The study can also be conducted on college and University teachers and students.
- It is also recommended that future studies be conducted in private schools, colleges, and universities.

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