

**COMPARATIVE STUDY OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
(PED) STUDENTS OF URBAN & RURAL AREAS**

*Dr Akram Ansari
Imdad Hussain Soomro
Allahdino Abro*

ABSTRACT

The importance of English as an international language and language of education has widely been recognized in the almost all parts of the world. In context of Pakistani education where low literacy rate has always been haunting, the quality of education is another issue, the difference between gender and rural, urban divide also put question mark on whole education system. A sample of 120 students was randomly selected from the list of students of Physical Education Departments (PED) belonging to public sector Universities. The data was collected through questionnaire and analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively. Mean standard deviation and T-test was used to test the hypotheses. It was found that English proficiency of learners living urban areas was better than learners having rural back ground. The role of teachers was dismal; however learners' attitude towards English proficiency was positive as they were cognizant to the importance of English and keen to learn English. Parents' role in urban area was encouraging than the parents in rural areas. Students' access to quality education and other basic facilities was less in rural area as compared to urban areas. Overall position of English proficiency was unsatisfactory keeping in view the standards of English.

Keywords: English proficiency, male students, female students, rural area, urban area.

INTRODUCTION

Communication, at local or international level without a language is impossible. It is the only source through which knowledge, ideas, emotions, feelings and thoughts can be exchanged. Wood (2010:10) describes that social relation and interaction among people is impossible without communication. In this regard Clark *et.al.* (1994) affirm that communication needs medium and language which is the only medium of communication. Through language people form rules and regulation and make quick adjustment in this society.

Ever since the globalization has emerged, the need and importance of common medium of communication has risen. English language is fulfilling this gap to a great extent. Coleman (2010:3) believes that English plays “a gate keeping role”. It is widely spoken all over the world. The progress in the field of science and technology has attracted people from the developing countries to learn English. English, now a days is considered as the key to growth and development. All the countries especially developing countries are in the race to develop a manpower fully equipped with English language skills.

English has been given high priority in Pakistan (Akram & Mahmood, 2007:2). Those who have poor English proficiency do not enjoy a prominent position in public sector (Farooq, Zubair-al-Hassan & Wahid, 2012:3). All the competitive examinations in the country are conducted in English. It can be observed that the proficient in English language get lucrative jobs.

Realizing the need, scope and significance of English, it has been taught as a compulsory subject right from primary level to higher grades. In addition, most of the universities in public and private sector, English is being area as a medium of instruction.

Efforts have been made to improve the quality of learning English language. There is need to upgrade the existing opportunities for learning English in rural areas where English is not properly taught.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To compare the levels of English of students belonging to urban and rural areas,
- To compare the levels of English of student belonging to male and female gender,
- To explore the difficulties faced by the learners in learning English,
- To suggest appropriate measures for the improvement of teaching and learning of English.

HYPOTHESIS

- **Ho1:** There is no significant difference in levels of English proficiency between rural and urban area learners.
- **Ho2:** There is no significant difference in levels of English proficiency between male and female learners.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A survey regarding the English proficiency of physical education department learners (class B.A-I) was made. The population of this study consisted of PED learners of public universities of Sindh. A sample was selected through random stratified sampling technique. For this study a sample of 120 learners from class B.A-I had been selected comprising 60 male and 60 female students belonging to rural and urban area. The data were collected through survey questionnaire and test was conducted on the sample of 120 students. Chi-Square test was used for questionnaire analysis, while mean (average) and standard deviation was used to analysis the test results.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- What is the difference in levels of English proficiency between rural and urban area learners?
- What is the difference in levels of English proficiency between male and female students?
- What are the problems and difficulties faced by the students in learning English?
- What measure should be taken for the improvement of teaching and learning of English?

IMPORTANCE OF ENGLISH IN PAKISTAN

English has been given great importance in every nook and corner of Pakistan. It is being used in rural and urban areas equally. Kamal (1996) asserts that importance of English in Pakistan is natural and more importantly due to its manifold roles in the global world, its demand is increasing day by day. Adding to this Akram and Mahmood (2007) describe that English, being the global communication medium, has been made an official language in Pakistan. It is vastly used in different departments of government as medium of communication and educational institutions as medium of instruction. Teaching law, science and technology depends upon English.

Highlighting the importance of English in Pakistan, Coleman (2010:3) states that English is the key of charming and attractive jobs in Pakistan. Without English proficiency, none can think of getting a good job. Ghani, Mahmood & Akram (2008:2-3) states that higher

education, higher job and successful career is impossible without English proficiency. In addition, the entry tests for getting admission in medical, engineering or other reputable universities are also conducted in English. Thus, in order to get quality education and good job, one has to learn English.

There is a great global knowledge in English regarding industry, commerce, business, career, profession, health, fitness, philosophy, law, politics, sociology, science and technology which can be shared easily with the help of technology. The new technologies can also enable the students to learn about the classical, modern and latest theories, researches, inventions and discoveries which are available on internet.

TEACHING LEARNING OF ENGLISH

The world has become a small village and English has become the common language of most of the countries throughout the world. Shahzada (2012:309) describes that “English is a language which is spoken by the people all over the world. English is a link between East, West, North and South”. There is general view that survival of developing countries is in English. Crystal (1997:3) believes that teaching learning of English takes place in more than hundred countries all over the world. In the globalization English is only language that has got a prominent position in many schools, colleges and universities throughout the world.

Teaching and learning of English effectively and efficiently has been the central issue in many developing countries like Pakistan. It has been observed throughout country that the youth of Pakistan lack the English fluency and competency (Janjua, Malik, & Rahman, 2011:1362). Although the scope and significance of English is very high in the country, yet the performance of students in English on different occasions is very poor. Nawab (2012:696) points out that student in Pakistan do not have grasp on English even after completing their schooling. They are not capable to speak fluently, read quickly, write correctly and listen carefully. Their understanding of English in all the four skills is very dismal. As a result, despite of being expert in their field, they are useless for all the government and non-government organizations. No organization is ready to offer them a good job.

Being very talented in their respective fields, Pakistani students often feel ashamed due to their inefficiency in English. English has always been a barrier for Pakistani talented students in getting a charming job, working in a multinational organization and achieving their goals. Shah, Farooq, Shah & Shams (2010:108) believes that “English language often embarrasses our students”.

Despite the efforts made by Government, there is no significant improvement in education sector in Pakistan. Policy makers have failed to achieve the objectives of education policy. There is no direct interaction between curriculum developers and teachers. As a result validity and reliability of teachers’ learning has never been checked by experts. However, the teachers are more responsible for the decline of learning.

FINDINGS

TABLE-1
TEST RESULTS OF STUDENTS

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard Deviation
Urban area male students test result	30	55	75	62.00	6.777
Urban area female students test result	30	50	77	61.57	7.793
Rural area male students test result	30	21	60	37.97	13.828
Rural area female students test result	30	25	59	38.67	9.915
Total urban area students test result (both male & Female)	60	50	77	61.78	7.244
Total rural area students test result (both male & Female)	60	21	60	38.32	11.934
Total Male students test result (Urban & Rural area)	60	21	75	49.98	16.230
Total Female students test result (Urban & Rural area)	60	25	77	50.12	14.543

ANALYSIS OF THE TEST RESULT

Comparing Levels of English of Male and Female Learners’:

The table of test result (Table-3) reveals that score of urban area male students is 62, while mean score of female students belonging to same

area is 61.57. The difference in the mean score between male and female students belonging to urban area is 0.43. At the same time the mean score of male students in rural area is 37.97, where as the mean score of the female students belonging to same area is 38.67. The difference in the mean score between male and female students belonging to rural area is 0.7. This result makes it clear that there is no significant difference in levels of English proficiency between male and female students in the same area.

Rural and Urban Area Learners' Performance Comparison:

The table of test result (table: 3) reveals that the mean score of male students in urban area is 62, while in rural area the mean score of male students is 37.97. The difference in the mean score of male students between urban and rural area is 24.03. In the same way the mean score of female students in the urban area is 61.57, while in rural area the mean score of female students is 38.67. The difference in the mean score of female students between urban and rural area is 22.9. This result shows that there is a significant difference in English proficiency between urban and rural area learners.

TABLE-2
QUESTIONNAIRE ANALYSIS

S. No.	Questions	YES (%)	No (%)	UD (%)	Chi-Square (X ²)
1	Do you think that there is difference in English proficiency between rural and urban area learners?	90.8	7.5	1.7	179.150
2	Do you think that there is difference in English proficiency between male and female learners belonging to same area?	35.8	63.3	.8	70.650
3	Do you think that English teachers belong to urban perform better than English teachers belonging to rural area?	70.8	27.5	1.7	87.950
4	Do you think that English teachers pay more attention on male students than female students?	12.5	85	2.5	145.950

5	Do you think that the students of urban area take more interest in English proficiency than students of rural area?	74.2	24.2	1.7	99.150
6	Do you think that the male students take more interest in English proficiency than female students belonging to same?	25	74.2	.8	100.550
7	Do you think that the parents of urban area pay more attention on the education of their children than parents of rural area?	88.3	5	6.7	163.400
8	Do you think that the parents pay more attention on the education of male children than female children in the same area?	17.5	82.5	00	50.700
9	Do you think that the universities are within easy approach in urban area as compared to rural area?	56.7	40	3.3	53.600
10	Do you think that attending the universities is easier for male students than female students?	8.3	90.8	.8	179.550
11	Do you think that the students belonging to urban area take more interest in classroom reading skill development practice than rural area students?	61.7	35	3.3	61.400
12	Do you think that the male students take more active part in classroom reading skill development practice than female students?	44.2	50.8	5	44.150
13	Do you think that the students belonging to urban area take more interest in the classroom writing skill development practice than rural area students?	65.8	33.3	.8	76.050
14	Do you think that the male students take more active part in classroom writing skill	32.5	67.5	00	14.700

	development practice than female students?				
15	Do you think that the students belonging to urban area take more interest in the classroom speaking skill development practice than rural area students?	65	31.7	3.3	68.600
16	Do you think that the male students take more active part in classroom speaking skill development practice than female students?	27.5	67.5	5	72.150
17	Do you think that the students belonging to urban area take more interest in the classroom listening skill development practice than rural area students?	65.8	25	9.2	61.550
18	Do you think that the male students take more active part in classroom listening skill development practice than female students?	38.3	61.7	00	

ANALYSIS

1. The students (90.8%) accepted that there is difference in English proficiency between students belonging to rural and urban area.
2. The students (63.3%) believed that there is difference in English proficiency between male and female belonging to the same area.
3. The students (70.8%) claimed that English teachers belonging to urban perform better than teachers belonging to rural area.
4. The students (85%) stated that English teachers do not pay more attention on male students than female students. For teachers both male and female students are equal and therefore they pay equal attention to all the students considering both genders equal.

5. The students (74.2%) believed that the students belonging to urban area take more interest in English proficiency than students belonging to rural area.
6. The students (74.2%) told that the male students do not take more interest in English proficiency than female students belonging to the same area, but both male and female students take equal interest in English.
7. The students (88.3%) acknowledge the fact that the parents of urban area pay more attention on the education of their children than parents of rural area.
8. The students (82.5%) believed that the parents do not pay more attention on the education of male children than female children in the same area but for parents both male and female children are equal regarding the education.
9. The students (56.7%) believed that the universities are within easy approach to urban area students as compared to rural area students.
10. The students (90.8%) stated that attending the universities is not easier for male students than female students rather universities are equally available for both male and female students.
11. The students (61.7%) agreed that the students belonging to urban area take more interest in the classroom reading skill development practice than rural area students.
12. The students (50.8%) believed that the male students do not take more active part in classroom reading skill development practice than female students belonging to the same area but they contribute jointly.
13. The students (65.8%) believed that the students belonging to urban area take more interest in the classroom writing skill development practice than rural area students.
14. The students (67.5%) believed that the male students do not take more active part in classroom writing skill development practice than female students belonging to the same area but they participate in the same ratio.
15. The students (65%) stated that the students belonging to urban area take more interest in the classroom speaking skill development practice than rural area students.
16. The students (67.5%) agreed that the male students do not take more active part in classroom speaking skill development

practice than female students belonging to the same area but they participate equally.

17. The students (65.8%) believed that the students belonging to urban area take more interest in the classroom listening skill development practice than rural area students.
18. The students (61.7%) believed that the male students do not take more active part in classroom listening skill development practice than female students belonging to the same area but their participation is mostly same.

TESTING OF HYPOTHESIS

Ho1: There is no difference in English proficiency between learners belonging to rural and urban areas.

TABLE-3
DIFFERENCE IN ENGLISH PROFICIENCY BETWEEN RURAL AND URBAN AREA LEARNERS

Q1. Do you think that there is difference in English proficiency between rural and urban area learners?

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual	Frequency
Yes	109	40	69	90.8
No	9	40	-31	7.5
Undecided	2	40	-38	1.7
Ch-Square	179.150			

ANALYSIS

The table of Ch-Square (No: 3) shows the observed value of Chi-Square 179.150, while the tabulated value of Chi-Square is 5.99 at 0.05 alpha with 2 dif. The observed value is greater than tabulated value and hence the null hypothesis is rejected. It is concluded that there is a significant difference in English proficiency between learners belonging to rural and urban area.

Ho2: There is no difference in English proficiency between male and female learners belonging to same area.

TABLE-4
DIFFERENCE IN ENGLISH PROFICIENCY BETWEEN MALE AND FEMALE LEARNERS

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual	Frequency
Yes	43	40	3	35.8
No	76	40	36	63.3
Undecided	1	40	-39	.8
Ch-Square	70.650			

Q2. Do you think that there is difference in English proficiency between male and female belonging to the same area?

ANALYSIS

The table of Chi-Square (No: 4) shows the observed value of Chi-Square 70.650, while the tabulated value of Chi-Square is 5.99 at 0.05 alpha with 2 dif. The observed value is greater than tabulated value and hence the null hypothesis is rejected. It is concluded that there is no significant difference in English proficiency between male and female students belonging to same area.

DISCUSSION

Difference in English Proficiency Between Learners Belonging To Rural And Urban Area: It was found that there is a great difference in the English proficiency between learners belonging to the rural and urban areas. Students belonging to rural areas could not perform better in the four areas of learning i.e. reading, writing, speaking and listening, while a considerable majority of urban areas could do it better. All children from rural and urban areas were sample from physical education department, so all of them had the same curricula, yet the difference in the English proficiency was observed due to different factors. It was observed that Urban area students had educational rich environment, literate and professional parents, higher socio economic status, rich culture, socially literate peer group, computer and technological facilities, social organizations, enormous market shops, schools within easy reach, parks and hospitals and easy access to television and newspapers. While rural area students had natural environment, strong large joint family structure, inflexible traditional values, strong customs, limited access to computer and technology, uneducated and unprofessional parents, general poverty and limited access to television and newspapers.

Difference in English Proficiency Between Male and Female Learners: It was found that there is no major difference in the English proficiency between boys and girls belonging to the same area. It has been observed that the gender has no effect on the English proficiency in any way. This is quite surprising because the girls in rural environment are usually submissive and withdrawn. There is a fatherly dominant system where girls are neither encouraged at home,

nor they are exposed to external environment. The result pertaining to girls indicates that in rural and urban areas both girls in the four areas of reading, writing, speaking and listening have performed almost equal to boys.

Role of Teachers in Developing English Proficiency: Teacher is a back bone of English proficiency. Trained and highly qualified teachers are the great asset for students. It was found that teachers belonging to rural areas were not regular and punctual. Most of the teachers belonging to rural area were less qualified and untrained, while urban area teachers were mostly regular and punctual. The urban area teachers were interested in taking classes where as rural area teachers often tried to avoid taking class. The urban area teachers were self motivated but rural area remained away from this. This trend of teachers has affected the English proficiency of students greatly.

Students' Attitude towards English Proficiency and Medium of Instruction: All students from rural and urban area were found fond of learning English. The students of rural area cried over countless problems associated with them. No student was found against English subject. On the issue of English as a medium of instruction they remained divided. Some students were in favor of English while others were against the learning performance. The majority of urban area students supported English as a medium of instruction at university level, while the students of rural area were in support of local language. There was no difference between male and female students regarding English as a medium of instruction at university level.

Role of Parents in Improving English Proficiency: The role of parents was observed to be very important in the enhancement of English proficiency of students. All students equally agreed that educated parents provide a great support to students in English proficiency. The students with educated parents were found with more English proficiency. It was observed that parents of most students of rural area were uneducated and as result they were less in English proficiency. On the contrary the parents of most students of urban area were educated and that resulted in better English proficiency. However, the contribution of parents remained same for both male and female students in the same area.

Availability of Physical Education Departments within easy Reach: The availability of physical education departments within easy reach has also great value in enhancing English proficiency. The students were found better in English proficiency that had physical education departments within easy reach. Those who lived away from physical education departments and had no proper arrangement of pick and drop were reported with lower performance. The physical education departments are mostly found in urban area. Moreover, there is a proper pick and drop facility in urban areas. Therefore urban areas students had better English proficiency than rural area students but the male and female students living in the same area were equal.

Skill Development through Classroom Practice: It was found that the students of those departments in which teachers used to focus on the skill-based approach in teaching English in the classes were better than those which made no such practice. Most of the teachers belonging to rural area used to ignore such practices. In such condition more emphasis was given on completion of course from examination point of view. The students of such departments rarely get grip over English learning skills. They remained away from English proficiency. However, the case of teachers belonging to urban area was different. The teachers of urban area mostly made the students to have the reading, writing, speaking and listening practice. As result the English proficiency of students getting education from such teachers was better than others.

CONCLUSION

It is clear from above analyses of result that there is a difference in learning levels and proficiencies of English between students of rural and urban area, while no significance difference between male and female students in the same area at university level was found.

The difference of English proficiencies between learners belonging to rural and urban area was because of environment factor. The urban area children were more exposed to English as compared to their peers living in rural areas. More ever children of urban areas had got literate parents, literate peer groups and more exposed to print and electronic English media. They also had got well trained teachers of English with well equipped infrastructure as compared to their rural peers.

The result further indicated that while there was significant difference in proficiency level of children belonging to rural and urban areas, but there was no difference in English proficiency of boys and girls having same area domicile. The findings suggested that gender differences did not affect the language acquiring skill in anyway.

SUGGESTIONS

- A great difference in the English proficiency between learners belonging to the rural and urban areas has been found. English proficiency is promoted through the better department facilities, better management and environment. It is therefore essential that university administration should provide better facilities, systematic management and complete disciplined environment to all students belonging to both rural and urban area. There should be strict check and balance on teaching learning practice in all classes of university.
- Though no major difference in the levels of English proficiency between boys and girls of the same area was observed but still in fatherly dominated society educational rights are given more to boys. There is a great gap in literacy ratio between boys and girls. This gap should be reduced and every girl should be empowered in such a way that there should be none to crush their educational rights. The provisions and facilities provided to girls should be equal or even more than boys. This gap is more in rural areas. There should be special incentives and seats for girls belonging to rural areas.
- Proficiency in English totally depends upon the qualification and skills of teacher. If a teacher is highly qualified and trained and puts all his efforts for the improvement of English proficiency, the result will be wonderful. Every student regardless of area and gender i.e. rural or urban, male or female can be expert in English. But the case found here is different. University should appoint highly qualified and trained teachers on merit. The teachers should be either M. Phil or PhD in the relevant subjects. The benefits for teachers belonging to rural area should be more than urban area teachers. The salary and social status of teachers should be increased from time to time. Irregular and unpunctual teachers should be dismissed on the spot. The system of check and balance should be improved. There should be no shortage of teachers in any department. English subject experts should be appointed to guide teachers and students.

There should be English teacher trainings from time to time to keep the teachers well equipped with modern techniques and methods.

- Though all the students want to get proficiency in English but still the result was not satisfactory. There are various reasons but the most important is the gap in facilities provided to rural and urban area students. University administration should ensure the equal educational opportunities provided to all students male and female of both rural and urban area. There should be proper motivation and encouragement of students from time to time. Seminars and workshops should be arranged for students in every month. There should be the competition between rural and urban students, similarly between male and female students to find out the weak areas if any, in order to promote English proficiency.
- Child is the reflection of parents. He tries to follow his parents. He learns from his parents since birth. The performance of children also depends upon the environment provided to them by parents. It has been observed that the children of educated parents are better in performance. This is because they encourage their children from time to time. It is essential for university administration to construct a team and make it bound to hold meeting with parents from time to time to make sure that they know about the performance of the children. The university team should make the parents aware from the changing needs of students and global challenges. There should be established a good partnership between parents and children. Parents should be motivated to take care of the educational environment of children.
- The universities are scattered and far from the native place of the most of the students. It has affected the education of many students. University administration should provide pick and drop facility to students of Sociology for further area. There should be university administration to take students from their doors and drop them back even from villages, small towns and other remote areas.
- There are four basic leaning skills of English. All these require more and more practice. It has been reported that in many departments especially teachers belonging to rural areas do not emphasis on this practice. Completion of English courses totally depends upon the lectures which is called a traditional practice. University administration should take the notice of this activity. Every teacher should be kept bound to promote all the four basic learning skills of

English. English proficiency without these skills is impossible therefore teachers should give more emphasis on these skills.

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