

## Failure in the English Subject in Government High Schools for Boys in District Mardan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Pakistan.

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### Abstract

*This descriptive study investigates the failure in the English subject to find out the causes of failure in the English subject in Government High Schools for Boys in district Mardan, so viable suggestions to overcome the failure rate in the English subject in district Mardan, KP Pakistan are proposed. The population of this research is all public high Schools of district Mardan, which were 380 in number. 64 schools were selected through Stratified sampling technique. Questionnaire as research instrument was used for data collection. The collected data was analyzed, interpreted and results were shown in percentage in tabular form. The findings of the study highlighted the failure (33%) in English, (02%) Urdu and (04%) in Pakistan studies. Causes of failure like lack of qualified and well trained teachers, overcrowded classrooms, non-availability of language laboratories and A.V Aids, inappropriate teaching method and lack of Principals' supervision were identified. At the end provision of qualified and competent teachers, facilities like language laboratories and A.V. Aids, principals' Proper supervision of classrooms for teachers' better performance are recommended.*

### Key Words:

Failure, English Subject, Government High Schools, Mardan District

### Introduction:

English Language has a great significance both at the national and international levels. It is used as the lingua franca for the world due to its highly acceptable status and position in modern technologies. It is, indeed, technologically developed and most use as well as it is the language of current science, technology, economy, commerce and communication. It is a symbol of survival for many of the countries around the globe.

Rahman (2005) expressed that English is the official dialect of Pakistan. It is

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utilized as a part of the considerable number of areas of government like organization, military, legal, business, media, training and research. Individuals, today, are prepared to put resources into it for the fate of their youngsters.

According to Ahmad (2011), English is an international language as well as the language of science and technology. It has all employment opportunities. It is thought to be a gate way to Higher Education in Pakistan.

Since Pakistan came into being, its citizens are committed to get command over English for better communication. English language is equally valued and accepted by the general public because it makes sure jobs opportunity. In the same way all competitive examinations like CSS, PMS and ISSB are taken in English language and those who have no knowledge of English, can no longer succeed. In view of the importance, the government of Pakistan has made English a compulsory subject at school and college levels.

English is a compulsory subject at secondary school level. At this level, the basic purpose of the English subject is that students should be made fully skilled in pronunciation, vocabulary building, sentence structure and comprehension. It is essential for an individual to have the ability to communicate in English with the rest of the world.

But it is a matter of great concern that at present the result of English subject particularly in Government High Schools in District Mardan is not encouraging. Mostly, students are weak and show very poor performance in English. As a result, they always fail on a large scale in board and other examinations.

## **Review of Literature**

Sa'ad, *et al* (2014), identified at length the causes of failure in the English subject. He found out that dominance of mother tongue, lack of qualified English teachers, absence of language laboratories at schools and students' negative attitude towards English learning were some of the leading factors responsible for failure.

Bashiruddin (2014) expressed that the instructive foundation of the greater part of the educators in Pakistan isn't pertinent to instructing English. The information gave by the Aga Khan University, Institute for Educational Development about the in-service educators, it is obvious that just 20% are to some degree met all requirements to show English since they are furnished with some expert capabilities. The staying 80% don't have capabilities to educate English. Henceforth, educators with degrees in disciplines other than English, for example, Islamic Studies, Science, Social Studies and Pakistan Studies are instructing English.

Tuan, *et al* (2015) conducted a study on the topic in Vietnam. He held the teacher responsible for failure in the English subject. According to him if he or

she is committed to his or her job, students can make progress in the learning of English language. English teacher should engage students while teaching English. They should be involved in creative activities of language skills.

Golam (2012) identified that those students who only depend on textbooks and doing nothing practical always result in low achievement. He indicated that students preferred mother tongue in the classroom which was not a good sign. They were not using English as a source of communication. According to him students should be given opportunity to practice language skills,

Mosha (2014) underlined those basic causes and reasons which effect students' linguistic performance in the subject of English. They are lack of qualified teachers, classroom environment, lack of teaching facilities, overcrowded classrooms and absence of debates in schools.

Kabir (2012) explored the reasons of learner's failure in English subject. He determined that students always consider English as a difficult subject which puts a negative impact on their learning process. He suggested that trained and qualified teachers can teach English subject better. Abu-Agla, *et al* (2015) recommends multimedia, language laboratories and teacher professionalism for high achievement in the English language.

Hussain (2005) accepts the direct method and rejects the grammar translation method in teaching English subject at the secondary level. He says that direct method enables students to develop their English language skills. Along with that he recommends language laboratories with trained English teachers. Modi (2012) indicates that the use of technology is one of the new trends in the English language teaching. He says that internet facilities, digital camera, E-mail, Computer game and presentation software are some of the features of technology.

Shamim (2011) documented that maximum number of teachers were untrained or half trained in language teaching or qualifications in the teaching of English and that very few teachers take interest in any creative or professional development activities in Pakistan.

Matthias (2013) says that if understudies at the optional school level need to pick up authority of the English dialect, they should be instructed well. On the off chance that they need to show well, educators must make utilization of different techniques to improve their instructing.

According to Smith (2010), there are many reasons that our students do not write well. We blame television, internet or the lack of homework but the most obvious reason that our students do not write well is that they do not get guidance in writing.

Mukoroli (2011) says that scholastic cognizance and comprehension get enhanced when understudies know the significance of words. Words are imperative for correspondence. At the point when understudies have rich vocabulary, they can enhance all territories of correspondence, in particular

talking, tuning in, perusing and composing. Current models of perusing in the English for Academic purposes consider vocabulary learning a vital wellspring of perusing understanding.

Nicholas (1998) reported that in the educating of English, the instructors for the most part utilize Translation Method which is a conventional strategy for educating. Because of which our understudies can't get order over English dialect, as obvious from the way that there are an extensive number of understudies who bomb in English at the Secondary level.

Mother tongue is the major hurdle which is faced by most of the students in the third world nations because there English is a mostly deal with as second language. It is also fact that the dominant nature of mother tongue never leaves the students as well as the teacher to communicate freely in English. They feel shy and hesitant while they speak English. The result is that they do not strive to use it inside or outside the classroom.

## **Objectives of Research**

1. To know the failure ratio in English for the last five years.
2. To explore the causes of failures in English at the high school level.
3. To evaluate the main causes of the failure in English at high level.
4. To give viable suggestion to overcome/minimize the failure rate in the English subject.

## **Research Methodology**

This research study was about investigating the main causes of matric students' failure in English. It is observed that matric students were failing in English more than any other subjects. Therefore, the study would make an attempt to find out those causes where learners faced failure in English. The methodology used is given as under.

## **Population**

The population was all the Government high schools for boys of District Mardan which comprised 76 principal and 76 English teachers.

## **Sample of the Study**

Stratified random sampling technique was used in order to have a chance of suitable representation of principals and English teachers. 64 principals and 64 English teachers were selected by using Krejcie and Morgan's table of sample specification 1970.

## Instrument for Data Collection

Two questionnaires for (principal and English teachers) were used for the data collection. Questionnaires were developed and then personally distributed among the respondents. The researcher analyzed the collected data by using tabulated and percentage method. The researcher simplified the data with the help of discussion.

## Analysis and Interpretation of Principals' Data

**Table 1. English Teacher has the Relevant Qualification. (M.A in English with B.Ed.)**

Respondents	SDA	DA	UD	A	SA
Principals	45 70.37%	10 15.68%	00 00%	04 5.25%	6 9.37%

Table 1 shows principals' responses regarding English subject teachers having relevant qualification. A majority (86%) of the respondents strongly disagreed or disagreed with the suggested statement. Similarly, around 14% respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the given statement which indicated that a majority teachers were teaching the subject without having relevant qualification.

**Table 2. English Teacher has the English Competence at the Secondary Level.**

Respondents	SDA	DA	UD	A	SA
Principals	38 59.37%	13 20.38%	05 08%	03 4.68%	5 7.89%

Results indicates that (80%) of the respondents strongly disagreed or disagreed with the given statement. Similarly, around 12% respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the suggested statement. This means that a majority of English teachers did not have the English competence at the secondary level.

**Table 3. English teacher has in-service training.**

Respondents	SDA	DA	UD	A	SA
Principals	32 50%	19 30%	03 04.68%	03 4.68%	7 11%

Data depicts that (80%) participants strongly disagreed or disagreed with the suggested statement. In the same way around 16% respondents agreed or strongly

agreed with the given statement. This means that English subject teachers did not have in- service training.

**Table 4. He Follows the direct Method of Teaching in the Class.**

Respondents	SDA	DA	UD	A	SA
Principals	64 100%	00 00%	00 00%	00 00%	00 00%

Data identifies that (100%) sampled strongly disagreed or disagreed with the suggested statement. Similarly, response in favor of agreed or strongly agreed was NIL. This means that English teachers did not follow the direct method of teaching in the class.

**Table 5. I have Command over the English language.**

Respondents	SDA	DA	UD	A	SA
Principals	35 55%	16 25%	03 4.68%	04 5.25%	06 9.37%

Results that (80%) were strongly disagreed or disagreed with the given statement. Similarly, around 15% responded agreed or strongly agreed with the suggested statement. This means that a majority of the principals had no command over the English language.

**Table 6. Audio Visual Aids for Teaching English Subject are Available at School.**

Respondents	SDA	DA	UD	A	SA
Principals	51 80%	08 13%	00 4.68%	03 4.68%	01 02%

Indicates that (93%) were strongly disagreed or disagreed with the given statement. Similarly, around 7% respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the suggested statement. This means that majority of schools did not have Audio Visual Aids for teaching English subject.

**Table 7. I as Principal Always Keep a Check on the English Teacher About his Performance.**

Respondents	SDA	DA	UD	A	SA
Principals	28 44%	20 31%	00 00%	08 13%	07 11%

Result highlights that (75%) was strongly disagreed or disagreed with the given statement. Similarly, around 24% respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the suggested statement. This means that a majority of principals did not keep check on the English teachers regarding their performance.

**Table 8. English Language Laboratory is Available at School.**

Respondents	SDA	DA	UD	A	SA
Principals	64 100%	00 00%	00 00%	00 00%	00 00%

Data reflects that (100%) sampled strongly disagreed or disagreed with the suggested statement. Similarly, response in favour of agreed or strongly agreed was NIL. This means that all schools had no English language laboratory.

**Table 9. Maximum Failures Occur in the English Subject.**

Respondents	SDA	DA	UD	A	SA
Principals	03 05%	03 05%	00 00%	44 68.74%	14 22%

Table 9 depicts that around 10% of the respondents strongly disagreed or disagreed with the given statement. Similarly, a majority (91%) of the sampled strongly agreed that maximum failure occurred in the English subject at the secondary level.

**Table 10. Parents Emphasize English to be Taught to their Children.**

Respondents	SDA	DA	UD	A	SA
Principals	19 30%	13 20.37%	09 13%	22 34.68%	00 00%

Result shows that (51%) members of the study strongly disagreed or disagreed with the given statement. Similarly, around 35% respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the suggested statement. This means that majority of parents did not emphasize English to be taught to their children.

### Analysis and Interpretation of Teachers' Data

**Table: 1. I have the Relevant Qualification of Teaching English at the Secondary Level.**

Respondents	SDA	DA	UD	A	SA
Teachers	22 34.34%	19 30%	01 02%	10 16%	11 17%

Table data shows that (64%) sampled members were disagreed with the suggested item. Similarly, around 33% responded agreed or strongly agreed to the given statement. This means that majority of the English teachers did not have the relevant qualification for teaching English subject.

**Table 2. I teach English by Using Grammar and Translation Method.**

Respondents	SDA	DA	UD	A	SA
Teachers	00 00%	03 04%	00 00%	56 88%	05 08%

Data depicts that (96%) were strongly agreed and 4% respondents disagreed with the given item. Therefore, most English instructors were teaching English by using grammar and translation method.

**Table 3. Classroom of English Subject is Overcrowded.**

Respondents	SDA	DA	UD	A	SA
Teachers	51 80%	06 10%	00 00%	02 03%	04 07%

Table results show that (90%) “Of the respondents strongly disagreed or disagreed with the suggested statement. Similarly, around 10% respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the given statement. This means that classrooms of English subject are overcrowded”.

**Table 4. I have Got Special English Language Course Like TOEFL.**

Respondents	SDA	DA	UD	A	SA
Teachers	64 100%	00 00%	00 00%	00 00%	00 00%

Data explains that (100%) of the respondents strongly disagreed or disagreed. Response towards agreed or strongly agreed was NIL. This means “that all the English teachers did not get special English language course like TOEFL”.

**Table 5. Failure Ratio in English Subject is Higher than the Other Subjects.**

Respondents	SDA	DA	UD	A	SA
Teachers	03 04%	04 07%	05 08%	43 67%	10 16%



Shows that (11%) of the sampled were disagreed with the item. Similarly, around 83% respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the given statement. This means that failure ratio in English subject was higher than the other subjects.

**Table 6. Syllabus of the English Subject is Lengthy for Students.**

Respondents	SDA	DA	UD	A	SA
Teachers	03 05%	04 06%	03 04%	42 65%	13 20%

Indicates that (11%) targeted sample were strongly disagreed. Similarly, around 85% respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the given statement. This means that syllabus of the English subject was lengthy for students.

**Table 7. Textbooks of the English Subject focus English Language Skills and Grammar.**

Respondents	SDA	DA	UD	A	SA
Teachers	05 03%	01 02%	00 00%	58 90%	02 04%

Results identifies that (05%) were strongly disagreed or disagreed. Similarly, around 94% respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the given statement. This means that textbooks of the English subject were focusing English language skills and grammar.

**Table 8. Audio Visual Aids are Available at School.**

Respondents	SDA	DA	UD	A	SA
Teachers	35 54%	18 18%	00 00%	05 08%	06 10%

Data shows that (72%) were strongly disagreed or disagreed. And 18% were agreed or strongly agreed with the given statement. This means that Audio Visual Aids were not available in majority of schools.

**Tabl 9. Students Feel Shy and Hesitant While Speaking English Language.**

Respondents	SDA	DA	UD	A	SA
Teachers	38 60%	08 12%	03 05%	08 13%	06 10%

Table 9 depicts that a majority (72%) of the respondents strongly disagreed or disagreed with the suggested statement. Similarly, around 23% respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the given statement. This means that majority of the students were feeling shy and hesitant while speaking English language.

**Table: 10. I Engage my Students in Creative Activities Like Dialogues and Essay Writing.**

Respondents	SDA	DA	UD	A	SA
Teachers	29 46%	20 32%	05 08%	03 05%	06 10%

Table 10 shows (78%) members were strongly disagreed. Similarly, around 15% respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the given statement. This means that a majority of the English teachers did not engage their students in creative activities like dialogues and essay writing.

## **Conclusions**

The main causes which the study found were mainly related to the teaching staff and teaching strategies at high school level. Those causes are to be addressed properly by the concerned authorities and the result would be better and smooth then at this particular level in English.

- Majority of the respondents supported that English teachers lacked the relevant qualification at high school.
- Majority of English teachers were having no competence of teaching English subject.
- It was found out that maximum number of English teachers had no in-service teacher training.
- The study reflected that in majority of schools, Audio Visual Aids were not available for English teaching.
- Classrooms of the English subject were found to be overcrowded.
- It was indicated that a majority of English teachers were using grammar and translation method in the English subject teaching.
- A majority of the respondents reported that English language laboratories were not available at schools.
- Syllabus of the English subject was found lengthy for students as reported by a majority of the respondents.
- The study pointed out that a majority of parents did not emphasize English to be taught to their children.
- A majority of the principals were found having no command over the English language.

- The study revealed that a majority of English teachers were having no English language course like TOEFL.
- The respondents reported that failure ratio in the English subject was higher than the other subjects.
- The study also highlighted that a majority of principals had no check on English teachers regarding their performance.
- The respondents reported that English teachers did not engage their students in the creative activities like dialogues or essay writing.

## **Recommendations**

- The study indicated that English teachers neither had relevant qualification nor in-service teacher training. It is recommended that the education department Khyber Pakhtunkhwa should select those English teachers who have the relevant qualification. They should be, further, given in-service training through PITE or RITE.
- It was revealed that English teachers were using grammar translation method in their classes. It is, therefore, suggested that they should follow the direct method of teaching in order to get better exposure of English language rather than mother tongue.
- As reported by the respondents, there were no English language laboratories in schools. It is recommended that the government should manage to install language laboratories in schools. The teachers concerned should be given training regarding their correct usage.
- The study also indicated that a majority of the principals had no check on the English teachers. It is suggested that the principals should supervise English classes in order to evaluate teachers' performance.
- The respondents reported that English syllabus was lengthy. It is recommended that the curriculum planner should make it brief yet concise in order to be completed in time.
- The study revealed that a majority of parents did not emphasize English for their children. It is prescribed that the teacher concerned should bring in them an awareness regarding the importance of English language through proper rapport.
- As shown by the study, the English teachers were not engaging their students in the creative language activities, it is suggested that the teachers should practice discussion, debates, essay writing, storytelling and newspaper reading in the class. This will enable students to improve the language skills.

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