Relationship of Anxiety and Academic Success/Failure: Standpoint of Pakistani EFL Undergraduates

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Abstract

The present study aimed at examining the relationship between foreign language anxiety and academic achievement of Pakistani undergraduate students to show how it affected their performance. The study also investigated students' Foreign Language Anxiety level variations according to their gender and discipline of study. Data were collected from 232 undergraduate participants majoring in English, Psychology, Economics, BBA, Urdu, Zoology, Botany, and Chemistry from a major public college of Sialkot, by using a mixed method approach: quantitatively through questionnaire and qualitatively through semi-structured interviews. Mean scores, t-test, Pearson Correlation and one-way ANOVA were employed to analyze the data. The results revealed that participants in this study had high level of reading and writing anxiety and moderate level of speaking anxiety raised mostly by the fear of incorrect pronunciation, speaking without preparation, fear of reading English aloud, and unfamiliarity with English culture and ideas. Conversely, negative correlation between students' level of anxiety and their academic achievement was prevalent in the data. In terms of gender, male students were found to be more anxious than female students. Besides, a significant difference between English major and English non-major students was noted as English non-major students had high level of anxiety. Apart from that, the interview results elucidated on the role of the teachers in the success or failure of language learning process. Finally, the study suggests that the classroom atmosphere should be stress free and learner friendly to successfully achieve second language learning.

Keywords: foreign language anxiety, academic achievement, gender, discipline, coping strategies

1. Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

The rise of new technology has given prestige to English language learning priorities. According to Crystal (2012), English language has become a global language because of the advancement of technology, source of higher education and power of its natives. Despite the fact that it is usually considered as a threat for the native languages,

people are motivated to learn English. It has entered completely into the international spheres of business, mass media, entertainment, education and politics. The computer software industry is reliant on English language these days. Another example would be broadcasting and film industry. Even though film industry is experiencing growth in other countries, English language films still govern the world by providing highest-grossing films. Similarly, a large amount of world's knowledge is in English especially in the fields of science and technology. That's one of the main reasons English has become an official language in many countries. However, learning English is subject to many difficulties such as Foreign Language Anxiety (FLA).

1.2 Foreign Language Anxiety

In order to define FLA, it is important to explain anxiety as a general term. According to Vanin and Helsley (2008), anxiety is a "vague, uneasy feeling of discomfort or dread accompanied by an automatic (self-controlling) response" (p. 1). The term FLA was first coined by Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope in 1986, who defined language anxiety as "a distinct complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings and behaviours related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of language learning experience" (p. 128). In other words, it is the tension, frustration, distress and negative emotions aroused while learning a second language other than the mother tongue.

1.3 Foreign Language Anxiety in Pakistani Context

English language learning has become an integral part of the educational and professional learners of Pakistan. It is given impotence at every academic level in Pakistan as it has become the language of opportunity because professional and academic certificates cannot be obtained without learning it. As it is learnt as a foreign language in Pakistan, so the dilemma of FLA exists in the country at every level because of its non-native status. In Pakistani culture, where the literacy rate is very low, students start learning English as a compulsory subject at school level. Garcia (2014) mentions how English in Pakistan is "taught as a subject in public and private schools, colleges and universities and many educational institutions and has been adopted as the medium of instruction" (p. 2). At university level, it becomes even stronger as a compulsory subject. Still learners face many difficulties as far as proficiency in communication is concerned.

1.4 Statement of the Problem

As mentioned earlier, the demand of acquiring good communication skills in English language is increasing day by day. However, English language learning is a complex process where learners often express feelings of anxiety while learning it. It is because emotional factors like anxiety and motivation influence learning process and are very important in its success or failure. According to Rathus (2015), "academic problems

and anxiety" is linked with depression, and it is a barrier to foreign language proficiency as learners feel difficulties in exhibiting their knowledge (p. 222). This language anxiety may lead to lower academic achievement. Therefore, a detailed analysis of FLA is essential and significant. So, the present study aims at examining the relationship between FLA and academic achievement among Pakistani undergraduate students in order to show how the higher language anxiety can lead towards the lower language acquisition. Besides, the study explores if this anxiety differs according to students' gender and discipline or not.

1.5 Research Questions

- What are the factors that cause FLA among Pakistani undergraduate students?

- How academic achievement of Pakistani undergraduate students is affected by FLA?

- Are there any differences of anxiety level among undergraduate students based on their gender and discipline?

2. Literature Review

Anxiety level can differ according to the factors like motivation, age, gender, and socio-economic status etc. Gender is a very complex variable in the field of FLA which has been embodied as a "dichotomy- male vs. female" (Mitchell, 2018, p.11), and where individual differences can be noticed. Several studies have explored the difference of anxiety level between male and female learners with contradictory results. For instance, Krohne et al. (2001) documented evident differences between males and females regarding "cognitive responses to an aversive situation" (p. 125). Females were attentive and careful in their attitudes than males who displayed more averting behaviour in anxiety generating circumstances. Differently, Cakici (2016) highlighted that as "girls essentially are afraid to fail... [They] are more apt to suffer from anxiety." On the other hand, "males are more defensive about admitting anxiety because it might be seen as threatening to their masculinity; they are trained to cope with anxiety by denying it or by finding ways to overcome it" (p. 195). Study from Abidin, Mohammadi, and Alzwari (2012) highlighted significant gender differences in terms of FLA among Libyan students. Even though female students' behaviour was positive but generally they displayed negative attitude towards learning English. Like that, Ali (2017) looked at learners' FLA (in classrooms) regarding gender and achievement in Iraqi context. The study announced that females had more anxiety as compared to males. However, Fariadian, Azizifar and Gowhary (2014) observed the contribution of gender in FLA among 80 Iranian learners with different result. The result exhibited those male learners

were highly anxious as compared to female learners although they were well- prepared for tests.

In contrast, Alshahrani and Alshahrani (2015) examined the association between FLA and gender among male (n=146) and female (n=114) elementary school students. The study found no significant gender differences. Likewise, Tang and Tian (2019) investigated the impact of gender on 313 graduate learners' FLA. The study found no link between students' anxiety and gender. In addition, Hwa and Peck (2017) examined gender differences in FLA among 237 ESL learners in Malaysian context. They explained that they failed to find any significant difference in male and female participants based on learners' ESL speaking anxiety with reference to three affective factors, i.e., perception factor, social-environmental factor, and ESL classroom anxiety. (p. 108).

Achievement, which comprises of students' perception about language performance, grades in course work and other outcome measures, has a close relationship with FLA. A number of studies have examined the relationship between FLA and academic achievement of the learners. Whereas some researchers positively link anxiety with learners' performance, others agree that it affects learners' performance negatively. For instance, Dornyei and Ryan (2015) indicated that positive emotions in language learning process can assist very effectively, and learners can actually benefit from them as they strengthen metal capabilities. Dawaele et al. (2019) indicated the effects of positive emotions on learners: Positive emotions "allow students to absorb the FL better … erase the after effects of negative emotions. [And] finally…help build students' longer-term resiliency and hardiness to overcome future negative events" (p. 3). MacIntyre and Gregersen (2012) observed that positive classroom activities by instructors reduce learners' anxiety.

In the recent years, many studies have suggested that FLA is a hindrance in learners' academic achievement. For example, Alsowat (2016) examined the anxiety level of 373 graduate students of Taif University in Saudi context and revealed that students' academic achievement suffered because of anxiety. Like that, Subekti (2018) investigated the relationship between FLA and learners' oral performance in Indonesian context. The study found that anxiety affected learners' performance as a remarkable negative association was found between "students' academic achievements and the three related situation specific anxieties (text anxiety, fear of negative evaluation, and communication apprehension)" (p. 15). Ahmad and Nisa (2019) investigated the factors that can cause FLA and affect the performance of Pakistani learners. They found that learners' performance was affected by the anxiety caused by teachers who utilized lecture-based teaching methodology. Like that, Hussain (2018) examined the anxiety and

attitude of 10th grade Pakistani students and indicated significant differences as far as anxiety, attitude and language performance were concerned.

As literature review manifests, the earlier conducted studies do not particularly focus on exploring the different levels of anxiety among English major and English minor undergraduate students. Neither these studies highlight the strategies to overcome the issue of anxiety in detail, so more studies are still needed. Therefore, this study tried to fill the gap by not only exploring the level of anxiety among English major and non-major male and female students but also by recommending the strategies that can help in resolving the issue of FLA among Pakistani students.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design

The present study employs a mixed method design as it combines both qualitative and quantitative approaches. Questionnaire and semi-structured interviews are used as tools of mixed-method design in the present study. To authenticate the findings, the results attained from the questionnaires are compared with those of the semi-structured interviews as the interviews allow a more explanatory analysis of FLA from students' and teachers' perspectives in order to cope with the issue. This design is also known as concurrent triangulation strategy in mixed methods research.

3.2 Sampling

This study involved 250 undergraduate participants selected from a major public sector college of Sialkot, from which 18 participants didn't bring back their photocopies of questionnaire. Out of 232 participants, 87 were males and 145 were females as the percentage of female students was high in the institution. The age of participants ranged between 18 to 21 years, and they had learned English as compulsory subject for at least 12 years. The demographic information about participants like gender, age, language, grade in English and academic major was also collected through questionnaire. All the participants belonged to fourth semester, majoring in English language and literature, Psychology, Economics, BBA, Urdu, Zoology, Botany, and Chemistry. Even though the participants were drawn from different departments, yet they were similar in culture and mother tongue with 111 Urdu and 121 Punjabi speakers, thus matched the purpose of the study. All these departments had offered English as a minor subject in previous semesters. Besides, English major students had taken the courses, Academic Reading and Writing and Advance Academic Reading and Writing, which mainly focused on English writing, speaking, reading, and listening skills.

This particular college was chosen as the site of the research as it has co-education, and it was convenient to collect sampling from the departments with all those students who were easily reachable. Besides questionnaire, interviews were conducted with 6 volunteered male and female students from the faculties of Natural Sciences, Social Sciences and Business Administration, in order to authenticate the data. 3 English language teachers were also interviewed whose teaching experience ranged between 18 to 20 years at numerous levels, for a deeper analysis of the learners' FLA. The semi-structured interviews were recorded and transcribed while some of them were translated from Urdu to English. Thematic analysis was used to interpret the gathered information.

3.3 Instrument

The instruments used in this study were questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. The questionnaire had two parts. The first part was intended to obtain participants' demographic information like, mother tongue, department, gender, age, and grade in English. The second part contained an adapted scale called Foreign Language Anxiety Scale (FLAS) by Yassin and Razak (2018), to investigate the level of anxiety in four skills. The scale consists of forty-eight items scored on a five-point Likert scale ranging from "Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree and Strongly Agree." Out of 48 items, 1-13 items are used to investigate the level of anxiety in speaking and listening skills; 14-33 items are for reading skills and 34 to 48 items are used to examine the anxiety level in writing skills. Two items 21 and 23 from original questionnaire, related to English symbols, were excluded as English letters are not usually considered funny and Pakistani students have familiarity with them since childhood. Moreover, Likert points in the original instrument included five levels, which were changed to four points by excluding "neutral" response. The rationale behind this decision is to get most accurate responses from participants. Furthermore, the word "foreign language" in the original scale is replaced by "English language". For each item, participants were asked to mark appropriate number like strongly agree (4), agree (3), disagree (2), and strongly disagree (1). Items 4, 29, 44, 46, 48 are negative so they were scored in opposite way.

Besides questionnaire, semi-structured interviews with fifteen open-ended questions (eight with instructors and seven with students) were used to collect qualitative data. Interview questions with instructors and students were particularly designed to elicit information concerning their experiences with FLA, their beliefs about causes of anxiety and the strategies that can be applied to overcome the issue. Interviews with instructors were recorded in English language, however, interviews with students were conducted in Urdu language in order to facilitate them as well as to encourage rich responses from them. These interviews were then translated and transcribed. In order to keep anonymity, the name of the institute was not revealed, and pseudonyms were used for interview participants.

3.4 Data Collection and Analysis

The data was collected qualitatively through semi-structured interviews and quantitatively through questionnaire filled by the participants. Before the analysis of data, the items in the questionnaire were grouped according to the skills such as speaking, reading, listening and writing. Statistical values like strongly disagree = 1, disagree=2, agree=3 and strongly agree = 4 were allocated to students' responses in the questionnaire, in order to simplify the process of data analysis. Further, descriptive and inferential analysis were carried out to find answers of the questionnaire. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used for this purpose after the data from questionnaire was entered into an excel sheet. Standard deviation and means of the level of language anxiety among undergraduate Pakistani students, coefficient test to find the correlation between students and their academic achievement, independent samples t-test to find out gender differences as well as ANOVA to find out variance in English major and minor students were employed. Besides, the recorded semi-structured interviews were transcribed and translated in English as well as thematically interpreted to obtain results.

4. Results

For data analysis, two categories are made: The first category is related to the analysis of the questionnaire and second category is related to the analysis of semi-structured interviews.

4.1 Reliability Analysis

An analysis of item reliability was calculated by using SPSS. The results can be seen in Table 1, which shows that the reliability of the items is satisfactory as Hulin, Netemeyer, and Cudeck (as cited in Ursachi, Horodnic & Zait, 2015) maintain that alpha value of "0.6-0.7 indicates an acceptable level of reliability" (p. 681).

Table 1

Item Reliability Statistics

Questionnaire (Items)	**Cronbach's Alpha**	**N of Items**
Speaking Anxiety	.603	10
Listening Anxiety	.648	3
Reading Anxiety	.683	18
Writing Anxiety	.734	15

4.2 Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics, presented in Table 2, shows that participants have high level of reading and writing anxiety, moderate level of speaking anxiety and low level of listening anxiety.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics of Anxiety Scores in Language Skills

	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation
Speaking Anxiety	232	1.00	4.00	2.7345	.67241
Listening Anxiety	232	1.00	4.00	2.1638	.54201
Reading Anxiety	232	1.00	4.00	2.8807	.66858
Writing Anxiety	232	1.20	3.85	2.8264	.46177
Valid N (listwise)	232				

Research Question 1

To answer the first research question about the factors that contribute to students' FLA, descriptive statistics like means and standard deviations were calculated. For this purpose, the items in the questionnaire were categorized to measure the sources of students' speaking, listening, reading and writing anxiety. According to the results shown in Table 3, incorrect pronunciation is the biggest factor that cause anxiety among students as it has the highest mean value of (M=2.87). Some other high-ranking factors are speaking without preparation, volunteering in the class, fear of reading English aloud and unfamiliarity with English culture and ideas.

Table 3

Factors of Foreign Language Anxiety

Item. No	Factors	N	Mean	SD
20	Incorrect pronunciation	232	2.87	.896
2	Speaking without preparation	232	2.84	.856
3	Volunteering in the class	232	2.83	.802
30	Fear of reading English aloud	232	2.82	.939
22	Unfamiliarity with English culture and ideas	232	2.81	.950
45	Writing being chosen as sample of discussion	232	2.78	.841
10	Fear of being laughed by the peers	232	2.75	.920
15	Being unable to understand the topic completely	232	2.72	.811
18	Unknown grammar	232	2.71	.720

9	Being overwhelmed by the number of rules to learn	232	2.70	.898
43	Worry of derision on written composition	232	2.66	.842
34	Writing under time pressure	232	2.63	.773
37	Writing unexpectedly	232	2.57	.890
6	Attitude of teachers	232	2.56	.861
12	Being unable to understand teachers' corrections	23	2.55	.948
13	Being unable to understand other people's English	232	2.49	.811

Research Question 2

The second research question of this study was about the relationship between students' level of anxiety and their academic achievement based on the grades in English language course. The results are attained through the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation. According to the results presented in Table 4, Pearson's r is -.239 which is negative and the Sig (2-tailed) p value is .000 which is less than 0.001. The result shows that grades and anxiety of the students are significantly correlated as students' level of anxiety increases, their grades in English course decreases.

Table 4

Correlations between Students' Grades and Foreign Language Anxiety

Grade and Anxiety	**N**	**Correlation**	**Sig.**
	232	-.239**	.000

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level

Research Question 3

The third research question of this study was about exploring students' FLA differences based on their gender and discipline. The independent samples t-test was performed to find the results. According to the results in Table 5, difference is statistically significant as the Sig. (2-tailed) p-value is 0.000, which is smaller than 0.05. The mean level and standard deviation of male students' FLA (M=4.97, SD=2.428) is greater than that of the female students (M= 3.61, SD=2.082), which suggests that male students are significantly more anxious than female students.

Table 5

Independent samples t-test for Gender and Foreign Language Anxiety

Gender	**N**	**Mean**	**Std. D.**	**Std. E.**	**T**	**Df**	**Sig.**

Males	87	4.97	2.428	.260	51.016	231	.000*
Females	145	3.61	2.082	.173			

* The mean difference is significant at the .05 level

One-way ANOVA test was performed to determine if there was a significant difference between English major and English non-major students regarding their level of anxiety. The results shown in Table 6a indicate that there is a statistically significant difference between the mean values of both groups as the significance value is 0.000 (p = .000). In order to know the significant differences between different disciplines, the results of LSD Post-Hoc test of multiple comparisons is displayed in table 6b. It shows that the biggest mean differences are between English and Urdu.

Table 6a

ANOVA of Foreign Language Anxiety in Different Disciplines

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Anxiety	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
English	42	2.5078	.30743	Between Groups	5.772	7	.825	4.248	.000
Psychology	30	2.9000	.43549	Within Groups	43.485	224	.194		
Economics	35	2.8133	.39169	Total	49.257	231			
Chemistry	24	2.7382	.32424						
Botany	12	2.7917	.35272						
Zoology	49	2.7337	.38701						
BBA	21	2.7067	.34200						
Urdu	19	3.0316	.54407						
Total	232	2.7264	.46177						

Table 6b

Least Significant Difference Post-Hoc Test of Multiple Comparisons

(I) Discipline	(J) Discipline	Mean difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
Psychology	English	.22591*	.09265	.007
Economics	English	.20960*	.10084	.014
Chemistry	English	.17554*	.11274	.027
Botany	English	.18794*	.14422	.029
Zoology	English	.16627*	.10532	.016
BBA	English	.11706*	.11776	.020
Urdu	English	.29785*	.12182	.000

* The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level

4.3 Interview Analysis

4.3.1 English Language Proficiency

Even though the participants were aware of the importance of English language learning, they seemed anxious about their lack of proficiency and poor performance in English language skills particularly in speaking and writing since they were habitual of making mistakes because of tension. For instance, female subjects from Psychology and Zoology agreed on how English language learning affects their grades especially in creative writing as they are not familiar with the right vocabulary and grammatical rules. Apart from students, all three instructors have also observed that their students make glaring mistakes when they are asked to put questions or to participate in any discussion in class. As a result, their grades are affected. One instructor noticed:

> Students usually make mistakes because of 1st language interference. If I give a sentence to students for translation "Pakistan ne India pe hamla kar dia" mostly would translate it as "India attacked on/upon Pakistan." They are using prepositions even though preposition is not needed here. So they are not aware of the rules. Usually, when students are worried or tensed, they won't be able to concentrate on studies.

4.3.2 Demonstration of English Language Anxiety

On question about anxiety-provoking classroom activities, female participants reported high anxiety during oral tests and presentations. Speaking in front of others particularly made them worried as they were conscious of their performance in the presence of their teachers as well as classmates. However, male subjects were not afraid of speaking in front of others, rather writing tasks caused tension and anxiety among them. For instance, the subject from department of English described that creative writing tasks cause high anxiety in him as he feels insulted when he is unable to shape his ideas into a fine English piece of writing.

As far as physical and psychological demonstration of anxiety is concerned, female subjects reported symptoms like blushing face, fast hear beat, shaking legs and hands during presentations and oral quizzes. Male subjects reported symptoms like dried throat, shaking hands, disorganized and confused thoughts during writing activities. In line with this, all three instructors go along with the view that their students exhibit speaking anxiety usually by avoiding eye contact with teachers or when they are asked to come on stage for the sake of presentations.

4.3.3 English Language Anxiety Differences among Learners

When the instructors were questioned about finding any anxiety differences between English major and English minor students or between male and female students in their classrooms, they had mixed opinions. One instructor was of the view that English major students feel less anxious in foreign language classrooms as compared to English minor students:

> Students of English language and literature, they are students by choice and they have better ability to cope with all the mistakes that are being committed. But students whose major is not English, their interest is not as profound, keen and refined as students with English major.

Another instructor observed that minor English students are not very interested in learning English language as they don't find its contents very interesting and sometimes inappropriate to learn. As far as foreign language learning differences between males and females is concerned, all three instructors agreed that they find females shyer and more worried but competitive in language learning situations.

4.3.4 Possible Sources of English Language Anxiety

One of the major sources of anxiety mentioned by the selected sample was related to the indifferent attitude of their language teachers in the classrooms. Besides, the fear of being judged negatively by the teachers during tests and presentations, fear of being disgraced by teachers' correction with derogatory remarks and fear of being mocked by the peers were major sources of anxiety among them. The female subject from Psychology pointed out: *I feel ashamed and my self-respect is hurt when I speak English incorrectly and as a result people laugh at me.*

Most of the participants of the study described that they don't feel at ease with English as medium of instruction in the classrooms and even consider themselves reluctant to talk to teachers. Besides, limited vocabulary and poor grammatical knowledge were cited as the main sources of anxiety by the male respondent from department of English. Apart from students, the instructors were of the view that mostly students do not feel comfortable when they use English as medium of instruction in the class. As one of the instructors observed: *Persistent use of English would frustrate the students. They want teachers to use Urdu while giving answers so that they can grasp the whole answer.*

5. Discussion and Conclusion

The results of the first research question revealed the factors behind students' FLA. Mean and standard deviation of the items informed that fear of incorrect

pronunciation was the biggest factor that caused anxiety among students. Speaking without preparation in the class, fear of reading English aloud, and unfamiliarity with English culture and ideas, are some other factors that contributed to students' anxiety. These factors are in line with the findings described in the study of Pappamihiel (2002), who found them as most common causes of students' anxiety. Besides, the present study revealed that participants had high level of reading and writing anxiety and moderate level of speaking anxiety. The results of second research question demonstrated a negative correlation between students' level of anxiety and their academic achievement as students' level of anxiety increased, their grades in English course decreased. In other words, more anxious students displayed low language proficiency and like that their achievement was affected. The results seem to support previous studies (Alsowat, 2016; Subekti, 2018), who found that high level of anxiety is related with poor academic performance.

The results of third research question indicated a statistically significant anxiety difference based on students' gender and discipline. The result indicated that male students were more anxious than female students. Female students were more eager to learn the language as compared to their male counterparts who were less motivated. However, qualitative data is used to deeply analyze the reasons behind male anxiety. The results of this study are in contrast with other studies (Ezzi, 2012; Al-Saraj, 2014; Cakici, 2016), who found female students more anxious as compared to male students. Regarding discipline, one-way ANOVA test indicated the anxiety difference between English major and English non-major students. In addition, the results of LSD test of multiple comparisons showed that the biggest mean difference is between English and Urdu. Students from Psychology, Economics, Botany, Chemistry, Zoology, and BBA had high to low level of mean values respectively. Thus, it can be concluded that English non-major students were more anxious as compared to English major students. The reason behind it could be related to the kind of the courses English major students typically take as they are being taught different genres of literature, creative and analytical writing, and discussion-based subjects. So, they have a better grip on language skills unlike English non-major students, who do not take much interest in the contents related to grammar and communication.

The results of the interviews show that most of the subjects admitted that English language anxiety affects their grades because they are not familiar with the use of right vocabulary and grammatical rules. Regarding anxiety-provoking classroom activities, female subjects reported high anxiety during oral tests and presentations with physical and psychological symptoms like stuttering, blushing face, and shaking legs. However, male subjects were not afraid of speaking in front of others, rather writing tasks caused anxiety among them as they were unable to shape their ideas into a fine piece of writing due to

limited vocabulary and poor command on grammar. They reported symptoms like dried throat, shaking hands, disorganized and confused thoughts during writing activities. The interview results also revealed the observations of the instructors regarding the difference between English major and English non-major as well as male and female students. English major students feel less anxious in foreign language classrooms because they have better ability to cope with all the mistakes that are being committed, unlike English non-major students, who are not very interested in learning English language. As far as Foreign Language learning differences between males and females is concerned, they found females shyer and more anxious but competitive in language learning situations, which is related to the cultural values as in Pakistan, boys are not much interested in studies. These results are contrary to the results of questionnaire where males were found to be more anxious.

In addition, the interview results revealed the possible sources of FLA in learners. Most of the subjects reported indifferent attitude of language teachers, fear of being judged negatively by the teachers, fear of being disgraced by teachers' remarks, fear of being mocked by the peers, use of English as medium of instruction in the classroom all the time, limited vocabulary and poor grammatical knowledge as major sources of their anxiety. The interview findings seemed consistent with the findings of questionnaire, in which the major factors that contributed to learners' anxiety were mostly same.

6. Implications and Future Recommendations

Based on the results and findings, the present study offers some implications, such as the suggestions to reduce students' anxiety. First, it is suggested that the environment of the classroom should be stress free, encouraging, and friendly. The language teachers should help the students to confront their fears and make them realize that committing mistakes is natural in learning a foreign language. Second, a language teacher should sometimes use Urdu language in classrooms as the use of mother tongue, particularly in providing examples, will make a concept clearer and more understandable for the learners. Third, there is a dire need of introducing more practice-oriented courses since most of the students find reading, writing and speaking in English very challenging. Fourth, a special focus should be given to the reading, writing and speaking anxiety of students, particularly of male students since they were found to be more anxious than females in this study. To alleviate their reading anxiety, students should be motivated to read aloud in the class. Teachers should introduce students to vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar, and English culture. Also, they should provide background information related to the topics before reading. Like that, their fear of incorrect pronunciation, unfamiliarity with English culture and ideas, and nervousness with unknown topics can be controlled. To lessen students' writing anxiety, language teachers should not give harsh feedback on their written tasks when chosen as sample of discussion in the class, rather they should be appreciated on their efforts. Similarly, students' anxiety in speaking which is mostly related to speaking without preparation in the class and fear of being laughed by the peers

can be reduced by increasing students' willingness to participate in speaking activities as well as by inculcating tolerance in them for other students.

The research study also has some recommendations for future researchers. The present research is conducted on undergraduate students. It excludes the elementary school students. So, the future researchers can focus on English language anxiety of young learners. The present study revealed that anxiety disturbs the learners academically and psychologically, however, it may have positive impact on learners as it can enhance their motivation by pressurizing them. Thus, the future studies can be carried out on anxiety's positive impact on learners' language learning ability or foreign language enjoyment. In the present study, the researcher had taken gender, achievement, and discipline as influencing factors on students' FLA. The differences based on other variables like motivation, students' urban and rural background, and parents' educational background can also be investigated by future researchers. Finally, the questionnaire used in this research was adapted and had only 3 items 11, 12, and 13 to measure the listening anxiety. Future studies can add a greater number of items in this questionnaire to measure the listening anxiety.

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