

Factors Affecting EFL Teaching Skills at Higher Education Institutions in Pakistan: An Analysis of Teachers' Perspective

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Abstract

This paper attempts to examine teachers' perspectives on the factors affecting English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teaching skills at higher education institutions in Pakistan. A cross-sectional survey has been conducted. The data have been collected from 634 university teachers (private and government). The respondents have been selected using a classified random sampling technique. A questionnaire has been administered based on a pre-planned list of questions. There have been seven predictors and one dependent variable named EFL teaching skills. Data analysis has been done to extract the findings. The key study findings showed that English Language Teaching (ELT) pieces of training and the educational qualifications of teachers have favourable effects on EFL teaching skills in Pakistan. The study asserts that the experience of teaching and usage of digital resources among teachers have a similar nature to the results on the English language teaching skills of the teachers. The crux of the study is that future aspirations and evaluations by students enhanced their English teaching skills. Likewise, the motivation and satisfaction of the teachers also matter for EFL teaching skills at the university level.

Keywords: ELT Training, Educational Qualification, Experience, Digital Resources Evaluation, EFL Teaching Skills

1. Introduction

English as a lingua franca (ELF) has a significant role among people who have different first languages (Akram, 2017; Channa, Manan, & David, 2021; Davis, 2009). It is revealed that for non-English speakers, there is a dire need to conduct pieces of training to ensure the correct use of language among the natives of other languages (Erling, 2017; Gul & Channa, 2022; Haidar, 2019). This issue has been the focus of researchers and scholars across the globe (Haidar & Fang, 2019a, 2019b). The studies have highlighted the issues of non-native speakers speaking English (Hayes, 2017; Mackenzie, 2022; Panezai & Channa, 2017). Although their qualifications are mainly in English, their

accents are not up to the mark (Uztosun, 2017; Yasmin & Sohail, 2018; Zein, 2016). Similarly, they are unable to even pronounce English words and modify them according to their local languages (Alhamami & Almelhi, 2021; Sah & Kubota, 2022). Hence, this study attempts to evaluate the factors affecting EFL teaching skills at the tertiary level in Pakistan.

1.1 Study Context

It has been found that the English language has dominated since the beginning of the colonial era in the sub-continent, particularly through the inclusion of this language in education (Haidar & Fang, 2019b; Hajar & Manan, 2022; Halai & Durrani, 2018). At the time of partition in 1947, there was a majority of "Maddaras," and the medium of instruction was mostly Arabic, Persian, or a native language (Shoaib, 2021). Currently, there are more than 200 degree-awarding institutions in Pakistan that use English as a medium of instruction (Shoaib, Rasool, & Anwar, 2021). As the English language is a foreign language for Pakistani teachers, they face difficulty in teaching (Shoaib et al., 2021). Henceforth, they had to work hard to improve their English teaching skills to deliver knowledgeable skills to the students at higher education institutions. Therefore, this article focuses on analysing the teachers' perspective on the factors affecting EFL teaching skills at higher education institutions in Pakistan.

2. Review of Literature

Several studies have reported that ELF has been an issue of great debate at the higher education level (Uzhegova & Baik, 2022; Van, Lamers, & Admiraal, 2022; Villacanas, Moreno, & Giner, 2022). It has been found that students get an education in the English language but, after even studying over a period of two decades, they are unable to learn the language and thus suffer from ELF issues (Panzai, Channa, & Bibi, 2022; Panhwar & Bell, 2022; Roshid et al., 2022; Sah & Kubota, 2022). This issue is equally faced by students, teachers, and professionals across the globe, including in developed countries (Mackenzie, 2022; Manan & Hajar, 2022; Manan & Tul-Kubra, 2022; Mansoor & Bano, 2022). For example, the natives of Spain and France, like many other European countries, speak their own indigenous languages (Collins, 2021; Villacaas et al., 2022; Wilkins & Huisman, 2021). Similarly, their education is also given in their mother tongue. Moreover, the problems of ELF remain primary to the educational qualifications even after getting degrees and professional training (Macaro & Han, 2020). In such countries, it is noted that, despite having good ELF training, the inhabitants speak English by mixing their local accents (Haidar, 2019; Halai & Durrani, 2018; Mousumi & Kusakabe, 2017). It certainly creates problems with ELF teaching that persist even in contemporary times (Mariam, Anwar, & Shoaib, 2022; Shoaib, Ali, Anwar, & Abdullah,

2022; Shoaib, Anwar, & Mustafa, 2022). In a nutshell, qualified teachers, even in the subject of English, face ELF issues because they are not nave (Shoaib, 2021). Similarly, their motivation and commitment to the teaching of the English language may lead to mastery in the concerned subject (Shoaib & Ullah, 2021a, 2021b). Likewise, their teaching skills may have improved (Shoaib, Abdullah, et al., 2021). However, without ELF training, they are not able to be skilled in teaching English in comparison to the native people (Shoaib, Ali, & Akbar, 2021). Thus, they are unable to transmit the acquired skills to the coming generations (Shoaib, 2021). It is also noted that some of the teachers try to step into the shoes of their predecessors (English teachers), but, due to the different local languages, they are unable to master the English teaching skills (Kester & Chang, 2022; Panezai et al., 2022; Roshid et al., 2022; van der Rijst et al., 2022).

Like in non-English-speaking developed countries, ELF issues exist in developing countries to a great extent (Haidar & Fang, 2019a; Halai & Durrani, 2018; Uztosun, 2017). The English language is considered a benchmark in higher education in most countries (Duckworth, Thomas, & Bland, 2016; Marginson, 2016; Rind & Kadiwal, 2016; Zein, 2016). The students are aspirants in the English language (Dunworth, 2008; Raza, 2008; Safford & Costley, 2008). They are motivated to learn and seek the use of English as long as they grow in the teaching profession (Ali, Hamid, & Hardy, 2020; Manan & David, 2014). In many developed nations, the English language has been a core source for getting prestigious positions in society (Collins, 2021; Geaves, 2015; Hayes, 2017; Wilkins, 2010). The motivation and commitment to the English language and teaching skills remain a constant source of inspiration for aspirants. However, it is noteworthy to know that, despite several efforts and years of hard work, the natives are not able to learn English like a naive. This shows that the issues of ELF persist with teachers in higher education in developing countries. Research shows that teachers, during their education at universities, are not provided with the environment in general or the English language in particular (Shoaib et al., 2021). A few teachers are worthy of translating the accents and knowledge in their spirit (Shoaib, 2021). Similarly, they try to improve their skills, including teaching skills. In addition, teachers, after getting education and learning skills, are not able to transfer knowledge and skills to their students (Anwar, Shoaib, & Zahra, 2021). Most of them are not even given training in ELF. Therefore, they won't be able to transfer and transform their skills. Future aspirations of teachers are important to note down. Though teachers are trained to some extent, due to a lack of ELF training, they have less motivation towards teaching. It is concluded that elf training is important in higher education in developing countries to better deliver and transform society.

Several pieces of research unpacked the fact that students' motivation and evaluation are important. It is noted that less-trained teachers are unable to convey

knowledge to their students (Shoaib, 2021). Consequently, students even with higher scores in academia may not be able to learn English language skills (Anwar, Shoaib, & Mustafa, 2022). Similarly, they might not get any training on ELF in their entire career of education (Houghton, 2019; Karim, Kabilan, Ahmed, Reshmin, & Rahman, 2021; Tamim, 2021). When they enter professional life, they cannot perform well in teaching and may be reduced professionally. The students also make a mockery of the teachers, who are even a bit weaker in their skills.

It is thus concluded that the issues of ELF teaching persist in higher education institutions in Pakistan because the teachers are taught by local teachers and their skills are not transformed according to expectations. Similarly, their training on ELF to improve their language skills also improves their teaching skills. Ultimately, both their personality and teaching are affected at the same time. In professional life, they are less able to deliver and transform knowledge.

3. Research Methodology

The technique of a cross-sectional survey was employed to collect data from the sampled universities. Six hundred thirty-four (634) teachers were selected as a sample using a classified sampling method. It is worth stating that these university teachers were working in the Department of English as regular faculty members with a three-year minimum period of teaching at the university. The responses of the teachers were collected using a questionnaire based on a list of questions. Here, it is worth mentioning that there were seven predictors, including ELT pieces of training, educational qualification, the experience of teaching, usage of digital resources, future aspirations, evaluation by students, and motivation and satisfaction. There was only one dependent variable named "EFL teaching skills." The attitudinal scale of (dis)agreement was opted. Construct, content, and face validity had been measured. For the reliability of the measurement instrument, the value of Alpha was ranging from .704 to .884.

Table 1

Reliability Test

S.N.	List of Variables	Var.Code	<i>f</i>	Alpha.
I	ELT Trainings	ELTT	5	.709
Ii	Educational Qualification	EDQU	5	.820
Iii	Experience of Teaching	EXOT	5	.824
Iv	Usage of Digital Resources	UODR	6	.784
V	Future Aspirations	FUAS	5	.739
Vi	Evaluation by Students	EVBS	5	.704

Vii	Motivation and Satisfaction	MOAS	4	.715
Viii	EFL Teaching Skills	EFLT	11	.884
	Overall		46	.928

After pretesting, the final data were collected and analyzed. Correlation and regression analyses were employed.

4. Results and Discussion

Socio-demographic, descriptive statistics, correlation, and regression analyses constitute this section.

4.1 Socio-demographic

The findings revealed that all the university teachers were teaching at the Department of English in public and private sector universities in the Punjab province of Pakistan. More than half (69%) of the teachers were male, and similar results showed that 68 percent of the teachers belonged to urban residential backgrounds. The educational qualifications of teachers had been ranging from M. Phil. to Ph.D. in the discipline of English, i.e., linguistics and literature. Four years of minimum teaching experience had been reported, and all the faculty members were engaged in teaching and research. Study findings indicated that 88 percent of the teachers were married and had children up to six in number. The majority of the teachers had joint family systems, and a smaller proportion of teachers had been reported to have extended family structures.

4.2 Descriptive Statistics

Table 2 describes the descriptive statistics of the university teachers. Data indicated that the variable range of ELT training was 13; the minimum and maximum values were 7 and 20, respectively. However, the mean values of the variable were 17.73, the standard deviation was 2.549, and a variance of 6.500 had been reported. Similarly, the variable named educational qualification had a range value of 15, 5 minimum scores, 20 maximum scores, a 16.93 mean value, 2.869 standard deviations, and 8.234 variances. Correspondingly, the variable named "experience of teaching" had a range value of 15, 5 minimum scores, 20 maximum scores, a 16.59 mean value, 2.721 standard deviations, and 7.402 variances. Likewise, the variable named "use of digital resources" had a range value of 14, 10 minimum scores, 24 maximum scores, a 20.81 mean value, 3.290 standard deviations, and 10.824 variances. Similarly, the variable named "future aspiration" had a range value of 11, 9 minimum scores, 20 maximum scores, 18.31 mean values, 1.896 standard deviations, and 3.593 variances. Correspondingly, the variable named "evaluation" by students had a range value of 9, 11 minimum scores, 20 maximum scores, 17.93 mean values, 1.924 standard deviations, and 3.700 variances. In the same

way, the variable named motivation and satisfaction had a range value of 9, 7 minimum scores, 16 maximum scores, 13.95 mean values, 1.898 standard deviations, and 3.603 variances. Equally, the variable named "EFL teaching skills" had a range value of 36, 44 minimum scores, 80 maximum scores, 72.25 as the mean, 6.242 as the standard deviation, and 38.963 as the variance.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics (n=634)

Variables	Rang.	Mini.	Maxi.	Mean	Std. Devi.	Vari.
ELT Trainings	13	7	20	17.73	2.549	6.500
Educational Qualification	15	5	20	16.93	2.869	8.234
Experience of Teaching	15	5	20	16.59	2.721	7.402
Usage of Digital Resources	14	10	24	20.81	3.290	10.824
Future Aspirations	11	9	20	18.31	1.896	3.593
Evaluation by Students	9	11	20	17.93	1.924	3.700
Motivation and Satisfaction	9	7	16	13.95	1.898	3.603
EFL Teaching Skills	36	44	80	72.25	6.242	38.963

4.3 Correlation Analysis

The results in Table 3 present the results of the correlation statistical test between the variables. Data depicted that the variable "ELT pieces of training" had a significant positive correlation with the variables including educational qualification, the experience of teaching, usage of digital resources, future aspirations, evaluation by students, motivation, satisfaction, and EFL teaching skills. Similarly, the educational qualification of the university teachers had a similar nature of correlation, i.e., a significant positive correlation, with the variables' names such as experience of teaching, usage of digital resources, future aspirations, evaluation by students, motivation and satisfaction, and EFL teaching skills. However, the study findings also pointed out a significant positive correlation between the variables, including experience of teaching, usage of digital resources, future aspirations, evaluation by students, motivation, satisfaction, and EFL teaching skills. It is worth mentioning here that there was a highly significant correlation (+) between future aspiration and EFL teaching skills ($r = .840^{**}$) among university teachers in the Punjab province of Pakistan. It had been observed that various studies had been conducted to evaluate English teaching skills (Channa et al., 2021; Manan, 2019). Macaro and Han (2020) revealed the teachers' perspective in terms of the medium of instruction in English at the tertiary level in China. Similarly, the study of Channa et al. (2021) evaluated the policy of English teaching in Pakistan as well as the global context.

Table 3

Correlation Analysis (n=634)

Vari.	ELTT	EDQU	EXOT	UODR	FUAS	EVBS	MOAS	EFLT
ELTT	1	.299**	.531**	.767**	.526**	.468**	.125**	.518**
EDQU		1	.430**	.338**	.322**	.456**	.152**	.381**
EXOT			1	.509**	.471**	.467**	.339**	.599**
UODR				1	.599**	.544**	.147**	.565**
FUAS					1	.605**	.290**	.840**
EVBS						1	.293**	.763**
MOAS							1	.647**
EFLT								1

4.4 Multiple Regression Analysis

The results of Table 4 showed the multiple regression analysis predicting EFL teaching skills among teachers at higher education institutions in the Punjab province of Pakistan. Data indicated that ELT pieces of training and educational qualifications had been predicting the EFL teaching skills of university teachers. Similarly, the results also showed the favourable effects of teaching experience, usage of digital resources, and future aspirations on EFL teaching skills. Likewise, the findings also revealed a significant contribution of evaluation by students and motivation and satisfaction resulting in favour of EFL teaching skills among university teachers in the province of Pakistan. The results had been confirmed with the following values: R =.978, R squared =.957, Adjusted R squared =.957, F = 1993.082, and Sig =.000. The findings are in concordance with those of Shoaib et al. (2021) and Shoaib et al. (2020).

Table 4

Regression Analysis [Reference to Dependent Var.=EFL Teaching Skills] (n=634)

Predictors.	Unstandardized Coefficients.		Standardized Coefficients.	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
ELT Trainings	.110	.033	.045	3.354	.001
Educational Qualification	.047	.021	.022	2.224	.027
Experience of Teaching	.205	.025	.089	8.055	.000
Usage of Digital Resources	.066	.027	.035	2.443	.015
Future Aspirations	1.651	.038	.501	43.072	.000
Evaluation by Students	1.019	.038	.314	27.101	.000
Motivation and Satisfaction	1.256	.030	.382	41.973	.000

(Constant)	3.039	.609	4.989	.000
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R = .978, R Square = .957, Adjusted R Square = .957, F = 1993.082, Sig. = .000

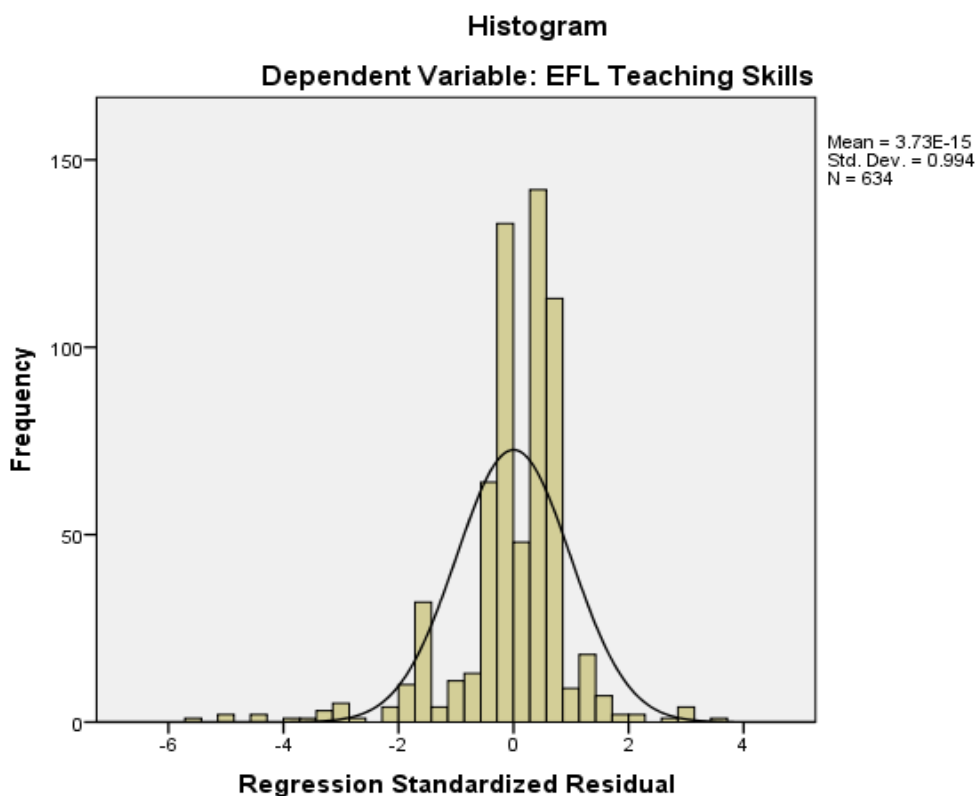


Figure 1: Showing Histogram

5. Conclusion

To sum up, the findings indicated that ELT pieces of training and the educational qualifications of teachers had favourable effects on EFL teaching skills at higher education institutions in Pakistan. The study findings also asserted that the experience of teaching and usage of digital resources among teachers had a similar nature to the results on the English language teaching skills among teachers at public and private universities. The crux of the study revealed that future aspiration and evaluation by students enhanced their English teaching skills. Likewise, the motivation and satisfaction of the teacher also matter for EFL teaching skills at the university.

5.1 Implications and Suggestion

Further research can use mixed-methods research (MMR) with a large sample size. Further, there is a dire need to initiate the ELF teacher training programme to train

the teachers during their education, which will further enhance the capacities of future generations.

5.2 Delimitation

This paper is delimited to the quantitative approach, and data have been collected from university teachers only.

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