

The Impact of English Language Proficiency on Academic and Professional Success at Quaid-e-Awam University, Nawabshah

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to investigate how English language proficiency affects the student's academic and professional success at Quaid-e-Awam University, Nawabshah. The researcher collected data from a focus group of (50) students. Using a quantitative research method, data was collected through an online closed-ended questionnaire distributed via Google Forms. Responses to the questionnaire, which used a likert scale, ranged from 1 (Strongly-Disagree) to 5 (Strongly-Agree). The survey was only accessible to QUEST students, ensuring the confidentiality of the respondents. The questionnaire aimed to assess the influence of English language proficiency in academic and professional contexts. The data was analyzed using SPSS version 22 to find the frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation. The findings indicate that there is a significant positive influence of English language proficiency on both academic and professional achievements. A large number of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that proficiency in the English language plays an essential role in their overall academic performance and their professional careers. The quantitatively analyzed data supports the idea that strengthening English language skills is significant for the students at QUEST, University, Nawabshah, indicating its significance in enhancing academic and career excellence.

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, the English language is widely used and known as one of the most effective way of communication, emerged as a global lingua franca. Learning English is beneficial to education because it is one of Pakistan's most widely spoken foreign languages (Bibi Sadia Shah, 2021). The fact is that English is taught as a compulsory subject from school to university and is also incorporated in national examinations indicates the significance of English in Pakistan (Bibi Sadia Shah, 2021). Quaid-e-Awam (QUEST) University, a prominent institution in Sindh, Pakistan, every year enrolls diverse body of students from every part of the country. This Engineering University offers four year BS English language and literature degree. This university also offers English language course for Engineering students in the initial 2 semesters to equip students with the English language. Many students come from diverse linguistic background, where English language often serves as a second language. According to the (Kamal ud Din, 2018), since linguistic knowledge can also result from cognitive development through the use of other mental faculties, it is inextricably linked to other types of knowledge. A study conducted by (Halliday, 2002), stated that language helps students in expressing content knowledge through portraying and developing ideas for conceptual learning. Amongst the all languages English language plays key role in academic as well as in professional contexts because it is the international language at global level, and second language at country level. For English as a Second Language (ESL) students', having a high level of English proficiency is essential to their academic success (Bibi Sadia Shah, 2021). For non-native speakers, having proficiency in English language can be beneficial for their educational and career opportunities, it will help them advance (Halliday, 2002).

English language proficiency can be defined as "student's ability to use English language to create and communicate meaning in spoken and written contexts, while completing their university studies", (Ghenghesh, 2015), English is commonly used and many individuals learn it to stay up to pursue with developments throughout the country, particularly in the fields of education, research, and technology (Ghenghesh, 2015). In this technological age every field experiencing competition around the world. In this struggle one needs current knowledge and effective communication skills to legitimize their professional occupancy or influence (Bibi Sadia Shah, 2021). Only those with necessary communication skills, can survive. Those with poor communication skills will lose out. English language is lingua franca, it is the language of communication in all over the world which is extensively written and spoken language. In this regard a study was conducted at the University of Indonesia, states that proficiency in English has high demand in the industry as it is mostly linked with practically every aspect of life, from daily tasks to professional industries (Wahyudin, 2020). It suggests the idea that English language proficiency is highly required for the future career because it is linked with every aspects of life. Those students who use English as a second language are require effective English language skills for their academia and career.

Consequently, the proficiency of English language determines the overall performance among EFL students.

In spite of the importance of English proficiency there is a lack of comprehensive research on how different levels of English language proficiency impact the academic performance and professional success among the students of Quaid-e-Awam University Nawabshah. The researcher made the decision to carry out the current study in order to determine whether this proficiency influences the academic and professional accomplishment of EFL students. This study adds existing literature by observing the influence of English language proficiency on academic and professional success. The purpose of this study is to determine how strongly QUEST (EFL) students' academic accomplishment influenced by English language proficiency.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Based on published studies in many parts of world, students acquiring English as a foreign language (EFL) may face academic disadvantages due to their inadequate English ability. In order to provide more light on this, several scholars (Ghenghesh, 2015) (Bela Rizkey Utami, 2022) (Mukattash, 1983) have looked into how students' academic performance is impacted by their English language proficiency. The demands of Language expertise are extremely high in this age of globalization, especially in every field (Bibi Sadia Shah, 2021). Further this study suggests that, the requirements of this age have become even more complex and competitive for all whether it is students, professors, or professionals (Bibi Sadia Shah, 2021).

Language Proficiency and Academic Performance

English has been known as the most widely used language in the today's globalized world with its free-market economies (Furrakh Abbas, 2021). Speaking by millions, English is an international language that is acknowledged as a conduit for information and communication on a worldwide scale (Bela Rizkey Utami, 2022). There are various studies conducted, suggesting that English proficiency has become essential component in the academic contexts. English is a major skill to stand out in the future, among the top sought skills for future employment, (Furrakh Abbas, 2021). As a result, for students, learning and mastering English is a crucial first step. Lack of proficiency in the four language skills—listening, speaking, reading, and writing—hinders learners from progressing in university. Similarly, in a study done on college students in Oman it was examined that the lack of proficiency in English does affect their performance in engineering courses (Sivaramana I, 2014).

In addition, the correlation study conducted by (R Sahragard, 2009) among the students of Iranian university majoring in English Language and Literature suggests that students who are proficient in English more effectively succeed in classes. Furthermore, to find out if there was a connection between the academic success of Iranian EFL college students and their linguistic proficiency a study was conducted by (Sahragard, 2011) showed that the GPA of the students with higher language proficiency test scores were higher.

Similar findings have been observed by other Iranian investigations. For instance (Maleki, 2007) discovered a significant connection between language proficiency and grade point averages (GPA) of academic achievement of EFL students majoring in English translation. In further studies conducted by different researchers from higher education institutions in Nigeria, India, USA and Malaysia suggested that English language proficiency and academic performance are directly related (Aina, 2013), (Kumar, 2014), (Xu, 1991), (AlHaddad, 2004). There are a lot of things to take into account when teaching English in a classroom. Every student has their own personality. Diverse personalities lead to different comprehension levels. Although students have a wide range of personalities, self-esteem plays a significant role in shaping people (Bela Rizkey Utami, 2022).

Language proficiency and Professional Success

In these days and age, learning English may help students become proficient negotiators, communicate with everyone, and provide them more advantages when applying for jobs. English is used in almost every part of life, from daily tasks to professional industries, and it is highly sought after in the industry (Wahyudin, 2020). Many national companies include English language abilities as one of the qualifications that an applicant must meet (Bela Rizkey Utami, 2022). English language, the language of development and progress has been intimidate the political and social spheres around the world. Increasing world-wide the usage of English language has added broad dimensions to the learning of English language. The demands of language proficiency is especially high in this globalization age. English proficiency can improve a person's technical knowledge and talents and is necessary for advancement in both domestic and international firms (Dodo Khan Alias Khalid Malokani, 2023). It creates a foundation for the improvement of "refining skills" that are crucial to rapidly evolving the global work world in which English language proficiency is now becoming progressively essential throughout the world. The one who can communicate well in English is super important for getting the most reliable opportunity across different countries around the world. It's also important to understand and use knowledge effectively. On other hand, in today's globalized world, speaking and listening in English is frequently regarded as a major barrier for international graduates (Dodo Khan Alias Khalid Malokani, 2023). It has been found that when it comes to employment results, immigrants who understand English fare better than those who do not. (Dodo Khan Alias Khalid Malokani, 2023). Additionally, research suggests that immigrants with lower knowledge of the English language suffer for employment in the job market (Muhammad Imran Rasheed, 2020), this can be the hurdle for job loss. According to (Doğan Yuksel, 2021), correlation between proficiency in English language and increased rates of job involvement. A study conducted by (Orfan and Seraj, 2022), showed that the Pakistani government has launched the various projects such as AMES to improve the job seeker's language competence abroad, recognizing the strong relation between English language skills and employability (Seraj, 2022).

METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted by using Quantitative research method, by providing the online closed-ended questionnaire among the students of Quaid-e-Awam University Nawabshah. The data for this study was gathered from a focus group of (50) students from the Quaid-e-Awam University, Nawabshah. The primary data collection instrument used was an online survey conducted via online Google forms, but we make it truly clear with privacy that only students of Quaid-e-Awam University can fill it. Likert scale was used in the survey with the options Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree. The Questionnaire was designed to investigate the importance of having proficiency in English language on both academic and professional career.

Data Collection Method

The data was gathered through distributing the survey link among the students of Quaid-e-Awam University, Nawabshah, through various digital platforms such as Emails, WhatsApp and social media. The access to the online survey was given via provided link after the participant were being informed about the purpose of research. The aim of data collection was to capture the ideas, experiences and prospects of the students of the (QUEST) University concerning the influence of English proficiency in their both Academic and professional perspectives. Then the collected responses were eventually analyzed quantitatively using SPSS to prove the subsequent insights and conclusions, regarding the chosen topic among the students of Quaid-e-Awam University, Nawabshah.

RESULTS

The findings of the study based on the above two primary objectives are presented in the form of charts and tables, which give readers a visual representation of paper's findings or results.

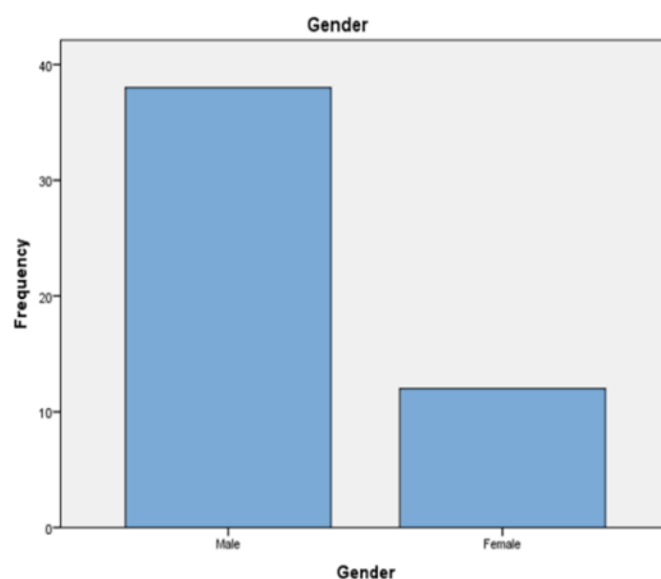


Figure 1. Visual Illustration of Gender in Terms of Frequency

Figure 1 shows the frequency distribution of students according to gender. Out of 50 students who have participated in the study, 38 (76%) are male and 12 (24%) are female. This chart shows the clear overview of gender composition within participant group.

Table 1. There is Significant Relationship Between English Language Proficiency and CGPA

	Frequency	Percent	Mean	Std. Deviation
Strongly Disagree	4	8.0	3.30	1.015
Disagree	4	8.0		
Neutral	19	38.0		
Agree	19	38.0		
Strongly Agree	4	8.0		
Total	50	100.0		

Table 1 reveals the frequency of students, highlighting the relationship between CGPA (Cumulative Grade Point Average) and English language proficiency. The data illustrates that majority of respondents, almost 46% (38% agree with 8% strongly agree) that there is a crucial connection between proficiency in English language and CGPA. However, (38%) of respondents showed mixed ideas about the statement, furthermore, only (16%) strongly disagree and disagree with statement.

Table 2. The English Language Proficiency Skills Are Integral for Better Academic Success

	Frequency	Percent	Mean	Std. Deviation
Strongly Disagree	3	6.0	4.00	1.125
Disagree	3	6.0		
Neutral	4	8.0		
Agree	21	42.0		
Strongly Agree	19	38.0		
Total	50	100.0		

Table 2 shows the responses provided by 50 respondents regarding the importance of English language proficiency skills for better academic success at Quaid-e-Awam University. The distribution of responses are as, majority of students, accounting for (42%) of respondents agree and (38%) of respondents strongly agree, it indicates that majority of students supports the idea that English language proficiency is essential for better academic success. Additionally, (8%) of respondents remain neutral, indicating the mixed opinion on the idea, while the remaining small proportion (6%) of respondents both disagree and strongly disagree with the idea. The mean response is 4.00, with a standard deviation of 1.125, highlighting that most of the respondents finds English language proficiency helpful for better academic achievements.

Table 3.The English Language Proficiency is Required for Making A Presentation to Share My Work Progress

	Frequency	Percent	Mean	Std. Deviation
Strongly Disagree	3	6.0	3.52	1.092
Disagree	6	12.0		
Neutral	11	22.0		
Agree	22	44.0		
Strongly Agree	8	16.0		
Total	50	100.0		

In table 3 the mean of responses is 3.53, with a standard deviation of 1.092, shows that the majority of respondents, nearly (60%), either agree or strongly agree that English language proficiency is beneficial for effectively presenting their work. However, a notable proportion of respondents, (22%) remained neutral, while only, (18%) of respondents disagree and strongly disagree with the idea, indicating that English language skills are generally considered important for presenting presentations.

Table 4. The English Language Proficiency Has Become Very Important in The Age Of Globalization

	Frequency	Percent	Mean	Std. Deviation
Strongly Disagree	2	4.0	4.10	1.147
Disagree	4	8.0		
Neutral	6	12.0		
Agree	13	26.0		
Strongly Agree	25	50.0		
Total	50	100.0		

In table 4 the data shows that a significant majority of respondents, almost (50%) strongly agree, while (26%) agree with the statement that English has emerged as a global lingua franca, highlighting the importance of English language proficiency in the age of globalization. Additionally (12%) of respondents shows the mixed opinion, remained as neutral, while 12% (4% strongly disagree and 8% disagree) don't share views. This small portion of respondents may have differing perspectives on the role of English in the age of globalization.

Table 5. The English Language Proficiency Helps Me Present My Ideas Elaborately

	Frequency	Percent	Mean	Std. Deviation
Strongly Disagree	2	4.0	3.76	0.938
Disagree	2	4.0		
Neutral	11	22.0		
Agree	26	52.0		

Strongly Agree	9	18.0
Total	50	100.0

Table 5 presents the visual representation that most of the respondents individually agree with the statement that English language proficiency is beneficial for presenting ideas in a detailed manner and it also increases the confidence of students through speaking. Approximately, (52%) agree, while (18%) strongly agree. Only a small percentage (8%) strongly disagree and disagree with the statement. Additionally, (22%) of respondents remain neutral, signifying the general opinion.

Table 6. English Language Proficiency is A Critical Factor in Accessing Academic and Professional Opportunities

	Frequency	Percent	Mean	Std. Deviation
Strongly Disagree	2	4.0	3.90	1.055
Disagree	3	6.0		
Neutral	9	18.0		
Agree	20	40.0		
Strongly Agree	16	32.0		
Total	50	100.0		

The table 6 highlights the frequency and percentage of respondents' level of agreement, along with mean and standard deviation of the responses. This table demonstrates that a substantial majority of respondents, (72%) strongly agree or agree considering the English language proficiency as key factor in accessing the opportunities, demonstrating its perceived importance in academic and professional areas. Additionally, (18%) of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed, remained neutral and showing some uncertainty regarding the importance of English proficiency in availing opportunities. However, only small proportion (10%) of respondents either disagree or strongly disagree with the idea.

Table 7. English Language Skills Are Essential for My Future Career.

	Frequency	Percent	Mean	Std. Deviation
Strongly Disagree	3	6.0	4.10	1.147
Disagree	2	4.0		
Neutral	6	12.0		
Agree	15	30.0		
Strongly Agree	24	48.0		
Total	50	100.0		

Table 7 indicates the majority of respondents, nearly (48%) strongly agree while, (30%) agree that understanding English language skills are effective for future. This strong preference highlights that how English language skills are important for future career of students. However, only (10%)

of respondents disagree or strongly disagree with the idea. Additionally, (12%) remained neutral showing the general opinion.

Table 8. English Language Proficiency Predict Success in Professional Environments

	Frequency	Percent	Mean	Std. Deviation
Strongly Disagree	2	4.0	3.76	0.894
Disagree	1	2.0		
Neutral	12	24.0		
Agree	27	54.0		
Strongly Agree	8	16.0		
Total	50	100.0		

Table 8 tells us how English language proficiency predict success in professional environment of students. Its shows that majority of respondents, nearly (70%), either agree or strongly agree, suggesting that English language proficiency is broadly perceived as an essential factor in obtaining success in professional domains. Furthermore, only (6%) of respondents either disagree or strongly disagree. About (24%) of respondents neutral, meaning they neither agree nor disagree with the statement.

Table 9. Individuals Perceive The Impact of English Language Proficiency on Their Academic and Professional Trajectories

	Frequency	Percent	Mean	Std. Deviation
Strongly Disagree	2	4.0	3.68	1.039
Disagree	5	10.0		
Neutral	10	20.0		
Agree	23	46.0		
Strongly Agree	10	20.0		
Total	50	100.0		

This table illustrates that a substantial (46%) of respondents agree, suggesting the majority of students have perceived the impact of English language proficiency on their both academic and professional journey, and (20%) strongly agree. It also reveals that (14%) of respondents, either disagree or strongly disagree, showing no impact. However, about (20%) of respondents remain neutral, indicating the mixed ideas.

Table 10. English Language Proficiency Impacts The Development of Soft Skills (e.g., Communication, Teamwork, Leadership) Among Non-Native English Speakers in Academic and Professional Settings

	Frequency	Percent	Mean	Std. Deviation
Strongly Disagree	2	4.0	4.16	1.057
Disagree	2	4.0		
Neutral	6	12.0		

Agree	16	32.0
Strongly Agree	24	48.0
Total	50	100.0

The table 10 indicates the responses of 50 respondents about the given statement. Overall, (80%), a significant majority of respondents agree or strongly agree, demonstrating the strong belief that English language proficiency serves a vital role in the development of soft skills among non-native speakers of English. Additionally, (12%) of respondents neutral, indicating the general opinion, however, small proportion, (8%) of respondents either disagree or strongly disagree.

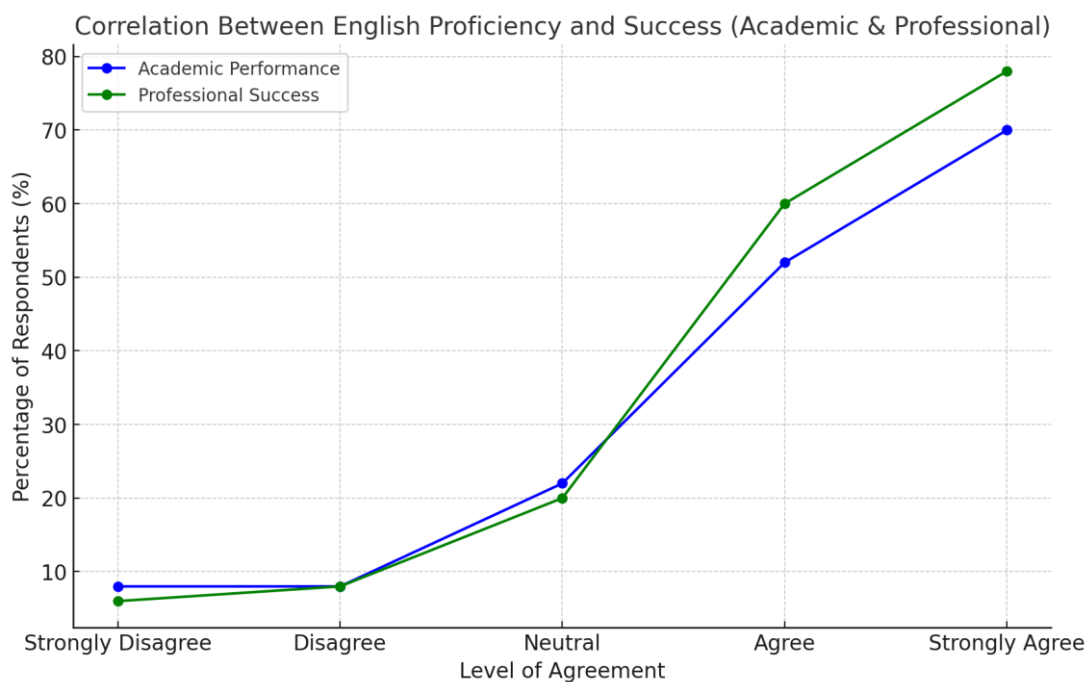


Figure 2. Visual Representation of Correlation between English Language Proficiency and Success (Academic & Professional)

Figure 2 illustrates the connection between two important domains: Success in academic advancement & professional career and English language proficiency. Academic performance is showed by blue line and professional success is showed by green line. The chart demonstrates a positive correlation, indicating that as English proficiency improves (moving from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree"), both academic and professional success tend to increase, as perceived by the respondents. This highlights the significance of English language skills in modern educational and professional landscapes, especially in contexts like globalization, where English acts as a global lingua franca.

DISCUSSION

This study set out to investigate how English language proficiency influence the academic and professional success of the students of Quaid-e-Awam University, Nawabshah. This study used the quantitative research analysis with the help of SPSS version 22. In response to first objective of research (Is there a correlation between English language proficiency and Academic performance?), the significant finding of the correlation analysis indicates that there is an essential role of English language proficiency in academic achievement (CGPA), majority of respondents, almost (46%) agree while, (38%) remain neutral. This result illustrates that English language proficiency is good factor of the academic success among the students of QUEST, Nawabshah. It shows that these two variables are directly interconnected. In accordance with some other research findings such as (Maleki, 2007), (Aina, 2013), also find the relationships between English proficiency and academic success. As English is the basic source of instructions at QUEST, University so, the improvement in English language skills will help students to achieve better academic grades in their courses. Furthermore, the findings showed that English language proficiency plays a vital role in presenting the work of students, making presentations, elaborating ideas more clearly. Additionally, the study may also encourages the students to give more time and efforts in improving English language skills, considering it as a essential factor in enhancing their career at international level.

According to second objective of research (Does higher English language proficiency leads to better professional success among the students?), this study presented the quantitative evidence to shows that English proficiency is the key factor in accessing the opportunities and professional success. The findings in accordance with the findings of other studies (Doğan Yuksel, 2021), (Wahyudin, 2020), indicate that English language proficiency plays a major role in professional success. English language, the language of development and opportunities for affluence and higher education have always been chosen. Having proficiency in English (world-power) language and success in professional life has a significant relationship. Therefore it is a crucial factor in developing career prospects, it facilitate individuals to significantly engage in intercultural work environment. Having strong English language skills, increases their chances in securing international jobs, and opportunities to work at various places. It not only enhance the career opportunities in sense of jobs postings but also open the doors to wide range of getting higher education such as MS and PhD in their relevant fields. Additionally, English language proficiency also foster individuals to navigate through the globalized world of business. Overall improving English language skills is a great benefit in today's linked and globalized world.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In summary, this study has illuminated the crucial role that English language proficiency plays in academic and career success. As the inquiry focused on how English language proficiency influences the academic

performance and professional success. The findings emphasize the ideas that individuals with strong English language skills are well in academic performance and career success, representing them with enhanced growth and success. The study adapted the quantitative analysis of the collected data, indicates that English language proficiency has positive role in achieving better academic grades and enhanced career prospects. The study highlights the significance of learning English for better academic achievement at university level and for career prospective. Looking to the future, institutions should grasp the importance of fostering students' English language skills. Additionally, organizations should implement the language development courses and practical applications. As shown by the findings of this study, such a decision will be the important for both individual and organizational advancements. This study has undeniable insights into the significance of English language proficiency for better academic & professional growth.

FURTHER STUDY

This research still has limitations so further research needs to be carried out on the topic "The Impact of English Language Proficiency on Academic and Professional Success."

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