

Problems of English Teachers at Secondary Level in Azad Jammu & Kashmir

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Abstract

The teaching of English language holds an important position in the educational curricula of the whole world. The educationists of all times have advocated the study of more than one language for multi purposes. In the past classical languages like Persian, Arabic and Sanskrit in the East, and Latin and Greek in the West were held in high esteem. The study of one or more of these languages was considered vital for the complete education of the young people. In current era, the study of only modern and living languages is considered important because of the mass communication at the national level for students in the middle and western middle schools; the modern language is the second language. (Abbott, 2012).

Keywords: Problems, Teachers, Secondary Level, AJ&K, Curriculum, Classical languages, schools.

English is the international dominant language of the 21st century. English is a great demand for teaching in the world. It is considered very important by almost quarter of the world's population. Consequently, English plays in the place of an international language. It is used by billions of people around the world. By 2020, 2 billion people use it to learn or use it. English has become an essential part of educational curriculum in every school in almost every country of the world. First of all teaching English as a foreign language is a challenging task in developing countries in general and in Pakistan and AJ&K is particular. Secondly, coping with the demands of the modern era of information explosion and the efficient use of the internet makes learning English as a necessity. Thirdly, mastery of English facilitates cultural exchange among nations including the proposal of the dialogue among civilizations (Rashidi, Saadat and Zanganeh, 1995).

Problems of English Teachers at Secondary Level in Azad Jammu & Kashmir

There were many problems that English teachers faced in the past. Today English teachers are also facing many problems. Some of these are; academic, professional, environmental and resources problems. In Pakistan, although English is a second language, this is not the case actually. An average Pakistani and Kashmiri student learns his/her mother's tongue first which may not be Urdu and Punjabi, Pashto, Balochi, Sindhi and Kashmiri. When a student comes in, he has to learn Urdu because it is a national language. After learning these languages he/she learns English. For English language teaching, it is necessary that classroom may not be congested. In Pakistan mostly classes are overcrowded. The teachers cannot pay individual attention. Some traditional A.V aids such as black board, charts, pictures and flash cards are available in our schools but tape recorder, lingua phone and multimedia are not available. The non-availability of these A.V aids can make the teaching of English non effective in Pakistan. In Pakistani schools, English teachers still use the faulty teaching methods. New method - structure and location are not welcome by our teachers. The evidence is neither appropriate nor appealing. Students can read them just to pass the test. These books have no practical use. In Pakistan, at the secondary level, teachers need not explain the goals and objectives of English teaching. The English teacher teaches this topic because it is included in the course. Many teachers have not enough knowledge and are not aware of modern methodology and techniques. The forms of letters of English and their writing from left to right and construction of sentences basically different from Urdu. English not only differs in grammar and Urdu expression, but also has different ways of thinking and expression. The vast majority of students come from families whose parents and other family members do not understand English. At school, all subjects are taught in Urdu. Without any physical help, he left the English teacher alone to fight. Modern methods emphasize oral English teaching. They also get many objects in the form of themes, images, graphics, graphics, charts and maps to heat an interesting element with a clean course. Pakistan due to its poverty can't afford modern A.V aids. In Pakistan every trained teacher is called upon to teach English whether he/she possesses ability for teaching or not (Haq, 2013).

In Pakistan, the role of English teachers has been controversial for many years. In Pakistan, English is taught as a mandatory language. Teachers only pay attention to spelling, practice, sentence structure, morphology, grammar rules, cramming and vocabulary. But the recent trend of teaching English in Pakistani schools is the challenges and problems teachers face (Ahmad, 2012).

English is a compulsory subject in Pakistani schools, colleges and universities, but students still cannot communicate in English with confidence and success. Educational programs are designed for specific management goals and are useful for the theory and practice of book connection. Teaching English in Pakistan is almost imaginary. The deliberate aspect of the language is not a complete opinion, which has led to the failure of the current generation of English skills, referring to many refusals (Ahmed, 2012)) also experimental that the condition of learning English at secondary level is worse and there is need to address these problems on priority bases (Govt. of Pakistan, 2006).

Aware of the necessity and importance of English, the Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJ&K) governments work with the British Council and the English Teaching Association to provide professional support to teachers at all levels of the country. However, English teaching has

Problems of English Teachers at Secondary Level in Azad Jammu & Kashmir

not yet improved, and more work is needed to achieve the best results. It should be agreed that our first and foremost task is to teach English to our students. The teaching of English to secondary classes in schools is designed to fulfill a number of demands, some of which conflict with others. Among these demands are; the need to pass the external examination, the necessity for achieving a minimum degree of competence in the use of English language, the need to teach a fairly large number of students in a limited time, the demand to stay within the limit of resources available in the schools. Because of the external examination systems, the teacher is not entirely free to select his own books, his own syllabus and his own considerations of what is important (Teevno, 2011).

Secondary school certificate level is a fundamental ground for the students. This is a plate form which guides the students to their destination in coming future. It is observed that the results of SSC level are not satisfactory in AJ&K. The result of Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education (BISE) Mirpur AJ&K shows that the result of English subject is very low. Most of the students got fail every year in BISE AJ&K Matriculation results.

Statement of the Problem

There has been development of new means of communication among countries with the advancement of educational technology. The world has now become a global village where people communicate and connect with each other through a common language i.e. English.

The English is being taught at secondary level in Pakistan and Azad Jammu and Kashmir as compulsory subject. English teachers are facing the problems of teaching and learning English at secondary level. Therefore, this study attempts to study the problems of English teachers in secondary schools in Jammu and Kashmir.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study were;

1. To evaluate the academic problems faced by teachers during teaching at secondary level.
2. To find out the professional problems faced by teachers at secondary level.
3. To explore environmental problems that takes place during the teaching of English at secondary level.
4. Compare teachers' opinions on problems encountered in teaching English.

Research Questions

The following were the questions of the research study;

1. What academic problems do the teachers face in the classroom while teaching English?
2. What professional problems do the teachers face during teaching English?
3. What environmental problems that takes place during the teaching of English at secondary level.
4. At the SSC level, what is the difference between the views of female and male teachers in teaching English?

Significance of the Study

This study will help the English teachers to understand the problems and find ways to teach

Problems of English Teachers at Secondary Level in Azad Jammu & Kashmir

effectively and efficiently. It will also help the head teachers to identify different problems and ways to improve English teaching in government schools in District Kotli AJ&K. The result of this study will be helpful for teacher trainers as it will enable them to know the different types of English teachers problems as a result they can better train the new English teachers accordingly. Finally, this study will be a way to other researchers to find out the other murky areas where improvement can be done for English teachers problems.

Delimitation of the Study

The study was delimited to English teachers of secondary schools at district Kotli AJ&K.

Operational Definitions of Key Terms

English Teacher: An English teacher is a person who teaches English in public secondary schools at secondary level.

Academic Problems: Academic problems refer the problems that can interfere with an individual's ability to focus, concentrate, and absorb material being presented. This can be a teaching style difference, a teaching disability, or a teaching challenge.

Professional Problems: English teachers who do not reach or maintain professional standards may show professional problems.

Methodology

Following methodology was adopted to conduct this research;

Research Design

The study was descriptive in nature and a cross-sectional data collection survey was conducted. The purpose of this study was to discover the problems of secondary school English teachers. In addition, the research focus was on exploring the problems faced by English teachers. The study was undertaken in public schools of district Kotli AJ&K.

Population of the Study

The population was 405(255 male and 150 female) Secondary School English teachers in the District Kotli AJ&K.

Sample of the Study

Universal sampling technique was used for the collection of the data. Therefore, all 405 English teachers (255 male and 150 female) were included in sample. Following table 1.1 described the detail of the sample;

Sample of the study

Gender of Teachers	Population	Sample	Percentage
Male teachers	255	255	100 %
Female teachers	150	150	100 %
Total	405	405	100 %

(DEOs Male & Female Offices Kotli AJ&K, 2017)

Section A: (Analysis of the academic problems)

Problems of English Teachers at Secondary Level in Azad Jammu & Kashmir

1. To evaluate the academic problems faced by teachers during teaching English at secondary level.

Table

I Feel Easy to Teach English

Options	SA	A	PA	DA	SDA	Mean	S.D
Frequency	118	130	157	--	--	3.90	.819
%	29	32	39				

Table 1 indicates result about the statement “I feel easy to teach English at secondary level.” It shows that 61% of the respondents strongly agree and agree with statement. While the value of Mean is 3.90 and S.D is 0.819. It means that teachers are in favor the statement. It clearly states that I feel easy to teach English at secondary level.

Table 2

I feel difficulty to teach English at secondary level

Options	SA	A	PA	DA	SDA	Mean	S.D
Frequency	128	139	20	94	24	3.62	1.300
%	32	34	5	23	6		

Table 2 illustrates result about the statement “I feel difficulty to teach English at secondary level.” It indicates that 66 % of the respondents are agree and strongly agree with statement. While the value of Mean is 3.62 and S.D is 1.300 It means that teachers are in favor of the statement. It clearly states that I feel difficulty to teach English at secondary level.

Table.3

I feel easy to enhance reading skills at secondary level

Options	SA	A	PA	DA	SDA	Mean	S.D
Frequency	-	159	148	98	-	3.15	.783
%	-	40	37	23	-		

Table 3 shows result about the statement “I feel easy to enhance reading skills at secondary level” It indicates that 77 % of the respondents are agree and strongly agree with statement. While the value of Mean is 3.15 and S.D is .783 It means that teachers are in favor of the statement. It clearly states that I feel easy to enhance reading skills at secondary level.

Table.4

I have different teaching skills in teaching of English

Options	SA	A	PA	DA	SDA	Mean	S.D
Frequency	15	241	45	78	26	3.35	1.036
%	4	60	11	19	6		

Table 4 elaborates result about the statement “I have different teaching skills in teaching of English.”It indicates that 64 % of the respondents are agree and strongly agree with statement, While the value of Mean is 3.35 and S.D is1.036. It means that teachers are in favor of the statement. It clearly indicates that I have different teaching skills in teaching of English.

Section B: (Analysis of the academic problems)

2. To examine the professional problems faced by teachers while teaching English at secondary level.

Problems of English Teachers at Secondary Level in Azad Jammu & Kashmir

Table.5

I have professional training for teaching English at credit

Options	SA	A	PA	DA	SDA	Mean	S.D
Frequency	7	6	53	174	165	1.80	.847
%	2	2	13	43	40		

Table 5 is about the statement “I have professional training for teaching English at credit.” the table reveals that 339 (83%) out of 405 respondents are disagree with this statement. The value of Mean is 1.80 which is less than the average value also supports this result. It means that opinions of teachers are against the statement. It clearly states that they do not have professional training for teaching English at credit.

Table.6

I arrange a class test regularly

Options	SA	A	PA	DA	SDA	Mean	S.D
Frequency	28	255	113	8	-	3.75	.605
%	7	63	27	2	-		

Table 6 indicates result about the statement “I arrange a class test regularly” It shows that 70 % of the respondents are agree and strongly agree with statement. While the value of Mean is 3.75 and S.D is .605. It means that teachers are in favor of the statement. It clearly states that time I arrange a class test regularly.

Table 7

Refresher courses for teaching English are given to me every year

Options	SA	A	PA	DA	SDA	Mean	S.D
Frequency	-	7	10	45	343	1.21	.567
%	-	2	3	11	84		

Table 7 mentions the statement “Refresher courses for teaching English are given to me every year. “This table specifies that 388 (95%) out of 405 respondents are disagree with this statement. The value of Mean is 1.21 which is less than the average value also supports this result. It means that opinions of teachers are against the statement. It clearly states that refresher courses for teaching English are not given to us every year.

Section C: Analysis environmental problems

3. To explore the environmental problems that takes place during the teaching of English at secondary level.

Table 8

Classrooms of English are congested

Options	SA	A	PA	DA	SDA	Mean	S.D
Frequency	306	99	-	-	-	4.76	.430
%	75	25	-	-	-		

Table 8 indicates result about the statement “Classrooms of English are congested” It shows that 100 % of the respondents are agree and strongly agree with statement. While the value of Mean is 4.76 and S.D is .430. It means that teachers are in favor of the statement. It clearly

Problems of English Teachers at Secondary Level in Azad Jammu & Kashmir

shows that Classrooms of English are congested.

Table 9

I communicate in English with students in class

Options	SA	A	PA	DA	SDA	Mean	S.D
Frequency	-	230	147	27	-	3.60	2.106
%	-	57	36	7	-		

Table 9 reflects result about the statement “I communicate in English with students in class.” It shows that 57% of the respondents are agree with statement. While the value of Mean is 3.60 and S.D is 2.106. It means that teachers are in favor of the statement. It clearly shows that I communicate in English with students in class.

Table 10

I encourage English discussions in class

Options	SA	A	PA	DA	SDA	Mean	S.D
Frequency	12	193	184	16	-	3.50	.624
%	3	48	45	4	-		

Table 10 reflects result about the statement “I encourage English discussions in class” It shows that 51% of the respondents are agree and strongly agree with statement. While the value of Mean is 3.50 and S.D is .624. It means that teachers are in favor of the statement. It clearly shows that I encourage English discussions in class.

Table 11

Classes of English are overcrowded

Options	SA	A	PA	DA	SDA	Mean	S.D
Frequency	333	49	-	23	-	4.71	.741
%	82	12	-	6	-		

Table 11 indicates result about the statement “Classrooms of English are overcrowded” It shows that 94% of the respondents are agree and strongly agree with statement. While the value of Mean is 4.71 and S.D is .741. It means that teachers are in favor of the statement. It clearly shows that Classrooms of English are congested.

Section F: gender wise Comparison

Table 12

Gender Wise Comparison of Academic Problems

Group	N	Mean	SD	T	P
Male	255	28.44	4.075	6.690	.000
Female	150	30.47	2.002		

df 3.92

Table 12 shows results of independent sample t-test. It indicated that there was a statistical difference in the mean scores of teachers of male and female secondary schools (N=255, Mean=28.44 and SD=4.075) and t (6.690) p=0.00 female scores were (N=150, Mean=30.47 and SD=2.002). Although table 4.55 also indicated that male English teachers were slightly better while the female teachers faced more academic problems than the male secondary school teachers.

Problems of English Teachers at Secondary Level in Azad Jammu & Kashmir

Table 13
Gender Wise Comparison of Professional Problems

Group	N	Mean	SD	T	P
Male	255	34.25	2.961	5.757	.000
Female	150	35.40	.882		

df 323.90

Table 13 shows results of independent sample t-test. It showed that there was a statistical difference in the mean scores of respondents of male and female secondary schools (N=255, Mean=34.25 and SD=2.961) and $t(5.757)$ $p=0.00$ female scores were (N=150, Mean=35.40 and SD=.882). It indicated that male English teachers faced less professional problems as compared to the female secondary school teachers.

Conclusions

The following conclusions were drawn on the basis of analysis of data and results;

1. It was concluded that there were male and female teachers in the study. Most of the male and female teachers were masters and bachelor degree holders. Majority of the teachers were holding B. Ed and M. Ed degrees. Majority of the teachers have teaching experience between 6-10 years (Findings1, 2, 3, &4).
2. Majority of the teachers were agreed that they feel easy to teach English and were in favor that text book of English is boring. Most of the teachers were in favor to enhance reading skills. Majority of the teachers have teaching skills to teach English and were also qualified experienced in teaching.
3. Majority of the teachers were disagreed that text book of English was not interesting and was not fun for teachers and teachers felt difficulty during teaching and found that text book of English was not user friendly.
4. It was concluded that English teachers were not given teaching tanning, refresher courses and workshops at regular basis during the academic session. Majority of the teachers were unable to teach at secondary level. Teachers were unable to use A.V. Aids during the teaching
5. It was concluded that English teachers were given professional instructions and guidance by the department heads. Teachers broke down the lesson in small segments, took tests regularly and explained the background of the lesson before start the class.
6. It was concluded that a large number of the respondents were agreed that English class rooms were congested and overcrowded. Teachers communicated in English in class and encouraged the students too. Parents did not give support to enhance English communications at home. Students were also having anti English background.
7. It was found that students were very lazy towards learning English and suitable guidelines were not present in effective teaching. Culture of multi-medium instructions was also a great problem in teaching English.
8. It was concluded that majority of English teachers had no easy access towards using latest technologies and libraries had no relevant material for English classes.
9. It was observed that secondary school teachers were agreed that lack of resources affect the growth and development of teaching English. Teachers were agreed that teacher guides were great source of enhancing knowledge but teachers were inherited a poor

Problems of English Teachers at Secondary Level in Azad Jammu & Kashmir

system of education. Anyhow teachers were satisfied with their job.

10. It was found that secondary school English teachers had not official accommodation and political groupings affect the performance of teachers. It was concluded that communication between policy makers and teachers was not present directly. Favoritism and nepotism affected the environment of teaching badly. Transfer at remote areas and transportation were major problems that teachers face.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made in the light of the analysis of the data by the researcher;

1. Teachers should encourage students to use English as a means of communication not only in the classroom but also at home. Child-centered activities should be used in class.
2. Teachers should also try to use current methods of teaching including communicative method in the class room. Students should be given innovative home work.
3. Teachers should also try to encourage students to read English news papers and newspapers should be provided to schools.
4. Teachers should prepare lesson plans and should deliver them with the help of modern audio visual aids which could create reasonable circumstances for teaching of English.
5. Students are advised to use English language in the classroom so that, they can get good practice. They should ask questions from the teachers in the classroom and get their concepts cleared.
6. Teachers should try to watch English programs when they get free time, specially listen to English speeches. If possible teachers should try to use internet for teaching English.
7. The curriculum should be modified after a period of time. All stakeholders, including students, teachers, parents, and administrators, must participate in the Curriculum Review Committee.
8. Curriculum should be child centered and activity based and should be based on up to date teaching methodologies.
9. Teachers should be trained keeping in view the changes made in the curriculum. More creative exercises based on teaching skills should be included in the text book of English.
10. Workshops and refresher courses should be conducted for the teachers at suitable times, so that teachers may teach English classes effectively.
11. The influence of the politicians should be banned in educating department as political groups badly affect the teaching atmosphere.
12. The transfers in remote areas should be discouraged by the government for the betterment of teaching.

Topic For Further Research

The following topics are covered by the researcher for further research in the field of education in Azad Jammu and Kashmir.

- i. The present study was carried out in district Kotli government secondary schools.
- ii. The research also can be conducted in private schools of AJ&K.
- iii. The research may be conducted in schools by adding more innovative instructional tools by using variable classroom environment.

Problems of English Teachers at Secondary Level in Azad Jammu & Kashmir

- iv. Experimental research may be conducted in Primary and Elementary schools.
- v. The research also can be conducted in other districts of AJ&K.

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Problems of English Teachers at Secondary Level in Azad Jammu & Kashmir

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