



ORCID of the Journal: <https://orcid.org/0009-0000-0723-9485>

DOI Number of the Paper: <https://zenodo.org/records/13362414>

Edition Link: [Journal of Academic Research for Humanities JARH, 4\(3\) July-Sep 2024](#)

Link of the Paper: <https://jar.bwo-researches.com/index.php/jarh/article/view/506>

HJRS Link: [Journal of Academic Research for Humanities JARH \(HEC-Recognized for 2023-2024\)](#)

## EXAMINING THE EFFECTS OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE IMPERIALISM ON THE PSYCHOLOGY OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS: A CASE STUDY OF PUBLIC SECTOR UNIVERSITIES OF SINDH IN PAKISTAN

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### Paper Information

#### Citation of the paper:

(JARH) Siddiqui, A., Aamir, F., & Mumtaz, S., (2024). Examining The Effects Of The English Language Imperialism On The Psychology Of Undergraduate Students: A Case Study Of Public Sector Universities Of Sindh In Pakistan. In *Journal of Academic Research for Humanities*, 4(3), 177–186.

#### Subject Areas for JARH:

- 1 Humanities
- 2 The English Linguistics
- 3 Psychology

#### Timeline of the Paper at JARH:

Received on: 31-07-2024.  
Reviews Completed on: 20-08-2024.  
Accepted on: 28-08-2024.  
Online on: 31-08-2024.

#### License:



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#### Recognized for BWO-R:



#### Published by BWO Researches INTL.:



#### DOI Image of the paper:

DOI [10.5281/zenodo.13362414](https://zenodo.org/records/13362414)

### Abstract

#### QR Code for the Paper:



In recent years, English as a language has gained popularity throughout Pakistan. Students prioritized English prioritized their native language, Urdu or Sindhi, to study and communicate effectively. Exploring the impact of The English language hegemony on students' psychology, the study investigates the perceptions of students upon the doctrine of The English colonization as a danger towards Urdu or any of their native languages as language for national designation. The present study is primarily quantitative by nature. The study comprises 100 participants from both graduate and undergraduate courses from three public sector universities of Sindh; University of Sindh Jamshoro, GC University Hyderabad, and the Shaheed Benazir Bhutto University (SBBU), Nawabshah. A self-administered questionnaire was employed to collect the data from participants. The study also examined how English-speaking imperialism affects students' psychology. The study found that several psychological elements had a considerable impact on the well-being of students. Most of them are seen as a symbol of success throughout their educational and professional initiatives.

**Keywords:** The English, Imperialism, Language, Psychological, Initiatives.

## Introduction

Humans are social creatures, but language distinguishes them from other living things. Charles Darwin believed that humans had originally evolved linguistic skills to appeal to the opposing gender (Yule, 2017). Linguists along with academicians have often sought to describe language, and this remains a topic of discussion in several fields. Spolsky (1999) argues that language represents an important aspect of human beings. Once someone speaks, one frequently forms assumptions concerning their sexual orientation, level of education, aging career, as well as background. Furthermore, language reflects societal as well as racial behavior along with various personalities. (Rai, Syed, 2023), Today's globe is multilingual, with hundreds of different languages represented. Certain languages have greater significance than others owing to having strong military, financial benefits, historical foundation, and massive speaking population.

## Problem Statement

Imperialism of Language refers to the supremacy or impact of a single dialect over others as well, resulting in changes in how people interact as well as cultural dynamics. The frequent utilization of English throughout their undergraduate stage at university affects their psychological well-being. The research project explored students' views and motivations regarding learning English and how they perceive English as a threat to their culture, language, or national identity.

## Research Objectives

- 1.To determine perceptions of undergraduate students on the learning and use of English.
- 2.To find the motivation amongst the undergraduate students to study as well as communicate in English.
- 3.To Investigate the opinions of undergraduate students on how English poses a danger to Urdu or Sindhi.

## Research Questions

- 1.What are the perceptions of undergraduate students on the learning and use of English?
2. What motivates undergraduate students to study as well as communicate in English?
3. Why do students perceive English as a danger against Urdu or Sindhi?

## Significance of the Study

This research highlights students' motives for studying and employing English, as well as what they think of English. The research sought to shed light on the current state of English language learning throughout Pakistan. It was also noted how the current position regarding English poses an imminent danger against the Urdu or Sindhi tongue.

## Literature review

### *The English as a Global Lingua Franca*

For more than two centuries, English remained the globe's predominant spoken language. According to Morrison (2002), the language used is now the current lingua franca. It is still widely utilized in several fields, including commerce, international relations, higher education, cultural activities, technology, and science. English is frequently considered among the most significant languages in several fields, including higher education, economics, politics, sociology, and even linguistics. According to Doms (2003), the language's significance is not determined by its unique structure, terminologies, literary works, or association with a major faith or society. According to Crystal (2003), civil authority, namely legal especially naval authority, is the main explanation for linguistic globalization. English is spoken by around 1.5 billion people, accounting for 20% of the global population (Lyons, 2021). English is widely used to be a foreign language across the world. Kroulek (2017) stated that a worldwide study found that India contains around 125 million English-speaking people. Pakistan has surprisingly ranked third within the ranking, with 49% of the people speaking English. The world's most prominent broadcast firms (BBC, CBC, ABC,

NBC, and CNN broadcast in English. These shows are viewed by billions worldwide. The language of English includes a vast lexicon. The The English Dictionary published by Oxford University Press has around 500,000 entries. Non-The English-speaking countries often use English as their sole medium of instruction throughout university courses. Departments of English have emerged in many educational institutions worldwide. These educational institutions have significant programs for literary studies in English as well as linguistics. According to Fishman (1977), Asia accounts for 43.3% of foreign learners enrolled in English-speaking educational institutions, while Africa accounts for 31.6%. These statistics highlight English's growing importance as a worldwide language.

### ***Imperialism of The English***

According to ancient chronicles, the use of English has been continuously imposed on peripheral populations throughout the western region of the globe. The English language fought for dominance throughout Europe over other European languages throughout history. According to Canagarajah (1999), English has become deeply ingrained throughout our society and is often considered strange. Imperialism refers to the exploitation of a dominating tongue upon various individuals. Phillipson (1992) defined imperialism of language as being in control of the language of English. According to Canagarajah (1999), English influenced the customs, languages, and scientific understanding of weak neighborhoods, as well as their psyche. According to Kirkpatrick (2007), this was evident throughout the British colonization of the Indian subcontinent. The concept of imperialism can also refer to colonization. The British Empire's expansion of trade, power in warfare, plus linguistic dominance led to the spread of English throughout various subdominant societies. The US boasts the highest proportion of multilingual individuals globally. There existed a pressing need for

establishing a single tongue for the national dialect. In 1983, the phrase "The English only" became popular Viskova (2016). Critics argue that the campaign aims at establishing English as the dominant language above others. They dismissed the campaign as "language imperialism." As a result, followers of the campaign started arguing for it. They argue that the English tongue protects minority people's rights as well as languages and provides everyone an equal opportunity to survive, rather than being driven by linguistics through imperial rule. Crawford (1992), in his book "Language Loyalties," James Crawford supported the group, stating the movement prioritizes the liberties of linguistic minorities over enforcing a language of power. According to Filppula et al. (2016), an influx of speakers of native English compared to the British Isles, the extermination as well as the expulsion of indigenous individuals, as well as the gradual extinction of their language native in nature led to the adoption of The English. According to Rodriguez and Fortier (2007), despite its global dominance, English remains a language foreign to many cultures and faiths. Some people associate it with colonialism, while others see it as a symbol of science, knowledge, civilization, and power (Jenkins, 2007). Historical scholars have praised the English language's development; however, it additionally has contributed to a loss of language variety across the entire globe (Filppula et al., 2016). Trudgill defined the imperialism of English to be a language environmental catastrophe.

### ***Role of The English in Pakistan***

(Syed, Samina, Ishrat, 2023), Given an imperial past, the newly created nation possessed the option of adopting the tongue used by its rulers as its official language. English serves as a second language throughout Pakistan. According to Kachru's three-circle structure for English cultural dissemination, Pakistan has been embedded within the outer circle since The English originated there by British rulers

throughout the colonization period (Doms, 2003). Kachru grouped countries into three circles: inner, outer, as well as expanding. The very first circle included native countries, including the UK, USA, New Zealand, as well as Australia. The second circle included countries like India, Singapore, Bangladesh, and Pakistan along with others that utilize English as simultaneously a second tongue along with the official one. According to Kachru (1985, 1998), the 3rd wheel includes Nepal, Japan, China, and other countries wherein English remains a language for foreign use. The English hegemony in outer loop nations is perceived as democratized, liberating, yet dangerous (Coupland & Jaworski, 2008). Zakaria (2014) stated that the UN Educational, Social, & Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) reports that indigenous tongues throughout Pakistan are beginning to disappear due to identical pro-English pressures as elsewhere. The National Commission for Education Reforms reported in 1959 that within the world of today, neither country is entitled to separate itself due to fast advancements in technology and science. According to Moss (1964), the schooling system in Pakistan ought to incorporate instruction in a well-known foreign tongue. The constitutional structure of the nation recognizes its significance along with references to it. English occurs frequently within legal paperwork, covering both fundamental and sophisticated topics. Rasool & Mansoor (2007) stated that it is used in public service as well as bureaucracy, including provincial and federal administrations. Throughout Pakistan, both Urdu as well as English are used to disseminate knowledge via both traditional and digital media. National news will be broadcast in English as well as Urdu across television and audiovisual outlets (Abbas; 1993). Shamim (2010) mentioned some that are the English language's weekly and biweekly publications including "The Cricketer", "The Herald", "The MAG" as well as

"The Young World". Historically, leaders such as Yahya Khan, Zia ul Haq, and Ayub Khan, have expressed support for the dialect of Urdu, but have not taken significant steps to adopt it in positions of authority. According to Siddiqui (2010), English has emerged as the primary means of authority across Pakistan.

### ***Attitude towards Language***

According to Edwards (2006), people's psychology as well as attitudes towards the language is crucial for its success. Attitudes and actions reflect ideas and beliefs. When a dialect gains social power and notoriety, it acquires an "elite" as well as a "proletarian" identity. Das (2005) found that historical imperialistic views continue to influence language usage now. Within the first decade of the twentieth century, approaches to learning shifted. Within 1975, multiple states made English the primary language for instruction within institutions of learning, leading speakers of native languages to disregard their native languages (McArthur, 2005). An attitude includes three components: preparation toward action, emotion, along cognition (Baker, 1992). Throughout Pakistani society, wealthy as well as higher-middle-class individuals felt ready to accept English becoming the dominant language because of their psychological commitment towards the West along with shared ideals. According to Edwards (2006), the positive attitude regarding English has led to its domination as a second language throughout the whole nation. In 2001, September, English was established to be the primary language of teaching for technological advances, economics, law, and foreign business programs across all Pakistani higher educational institutions (Ngugi 1993). Middle along with lower-middle-class Pakistanis feared studying English. They saw it to be an innovative kind of imperialism that posed a danger to the values of society and religion. As a result, they formed a positive attitude regarding the English tongue (Raza, 2015). Pakistan's lower class, which maintained native languages, struggled with learning to

read as well as communicate Urdu. Students have to learn English at a rudimentary level, leading to an absence of an intellectual acquaintance with the language's syntax. They were humiliated since they couldn't find suitable employment owing to how limited their English abilities were. According to [Raza \(2015\)](#), they continued to voice their rage and resentment towards the structure including the language of English. Pakistani attitudes among individuals towards The English have evolved and continue to shift throughout time. According to [Melitz's \(1999\)](#) investigation into "The English-language dominance, literature, and welfare," The English flu is becoming increasingly prevalent throughout Pakistan.

### **Research Methodology**

#### ***Design of Research***

The present study follows a quantitative approach. According to [Labaree \(2006\)](#), quantitative research focuses upon goals, and measures, including statistical interpretation of information acquired through questionnaires, polls, or surveys. It also uses computer approaches to analyze previously collected information. To accomplish the research's aims, a thorough questionnaire was constructed for gathering data. The self-structured, closed-ended questionnaire has been used to obtain information on how imperialism of the English language affects students' psyche.

#### ***Variables***

The study employed both dependent and independent factors. The independent factor was (1) Imperialism of the English language, whereas the dependent factor was (2) Student psychology. The dependent variable has divisions. The first group included students' perspectives, while the second group focused on their motives. The third and final one included the concept of danger. Imperialism of The English language has been recognized as an independent factor, as it influenced the psychology of students.

#### ***Collection of Data***

Information was acquired through the University of Sindh, GC University Hyderabad, and Shaheed Benazir Bhutto University, Nawabshah. The University of Sindh was chosen as a semi-government university with students from various socioeconomic backgrounds. Furthermore, it was a reliable source for gathering various data. The bulk of students at this institution are from Sindh's rural districts and come from the middle and lower income brackets.

#### ***Theoretical Framework***

According to [Nordquist \(2019\)](#), the notion of imperialism of language dates back to the 1930s. Imperialism of Language is primarily associated with the spread of the English tongue, which has a significant impact on the social linguistics perspective of developing countries. This is often viewed as a modern-day continuation of colonization as well as annexation. According to [Khan \(2013\)](#), all the Nazis as well as the Communist bloc previously opposed linguistic colonialism and promoted English being the emblem of the global economy. The theory of Sapir-Whorf supports the premise that language and mind are interdependent. This hypothesis suggests that individuals' thoughts and behavior are impacted by the linguistic framework they use frequently. According to Whorf, various languages alter perception and therefore categorize events, leading to varying behaviors. According to [Asraf \(1996\)](#), the language of English skills is often associated with career possibilities, global connectedness, and even modernization. Yet, these arguments indicate a significant concern related to local cultural and linguistic diversity. According to [Hejazi and Fatemi \(2015\)](#), this might lead to a loss of trust within the community's culture as well as the language's ability to adapt to modern times. [Pennycook \(1999\)](#) argues that English's worldwide dominance represents a risk to different languages. Imperialism of The English language has been defined by its dominance

and promotion of "globalization". Teachers of English manage the social context along with language for foreign pupils by imposing Western ideals and viewpoints. This research is based upon Phillipson's (1992) Linguistic Imperialism theory, which states that the widespread adoption of a language around the world breaches the fundamental liberties of different languages and causes them to disappear from their correct structure and form. Khanda et al. (2021) stated that Language imperialism led to the downfall of various languages, including French throughout Senegal and English across Nigeria. Urbanization led to the immigration of ancestral lands, similar to colonial settlement trends. Unlike compelled relocations across rustic towards metropolitan areas, individuals willingly moved to areas where the dominant languages were used. (Asal, Yousuf, et. al, 2023), This decision was motivated by an urge to take an active role within the city's economy and capitalize on the possibilities offered by urbanized society.

### **Population**

The research included students enrolled in graduate and undergraduate degrees from the University of Sindh, GC University Hyderabad, and Shaheed Benazir Bhutto University Nawabshah during the 2022/2023 academic year.

### **Size of Sample**

The present research included a sample that measured 100 individuals. They attended classes at both graduate and undergraduate programs at the University of Sindh Jamshoro, GC University Hyderabad, and Shaheed Benazir Bhutto University in Nawabshah. Participants ranged from 18 to 36 years old. Both men and women were selected.

### **Technique for Sample**

The questionnaire was sent to participants employing the convenience sample approach. This approach was used since the study dealt with the psychological influence of students. Furthermore, this method of sampling enables

researchers to include people who participated in data collection. Galloway (2005) suggests that convenient sampling works well for studying attitudes as well as perspectives.

### **Analysis**

Data acquired through surveys was analyzed employing the SPSS program (v. 26). Descriptive analysis has been employed to determine the frequency and percentages of every question. Tables were used to illustrate the percentage of replies for every closed-ended question. A graphical depiction of the measure of statistics has been shown. Participants' decisions impacted both their psychological as well as academic goals. After contrasting respondent replies, a discussion of statistical metrics was presented to aid understanding of the statistical results. The study aimed to explore the viewpoints of respondents and psychological factors related to learning and expressing in English.

### **Results**

#### **Demographic Information of Respondents**

The results of this research were gathered from 100 individuals. The respondents in the research ranged from age from 18 to 36. They were from various departments across three chosen Sindh institutions. The group consisted of 50 men and 50 women who spoke Urdu, Sindhi, as well as Saraiki as their main means of communication. The first section of the survey asked respondents for personal as well as demographic information (questions 1, 2, 3, and 4).

#### **Perceptions of Students in Learning and Utilizing The English**

The present research aimed to investigate the effects of imperialism on The English language upon students' psyche and the elements that influence it. The subsequent component of the survey focused on students' impressions concerning how they learned and utilized English. The questionnaire's questions 5, 6, 7, and 8 focused on the beneficial influence of English on students' psychology.

Questions focused on the perspectives of students regarding imperialism of The English. It displays the proportion of replies received for questions 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12. Positive attitudes were more prevalent in answers to questions five and six compared with disagree as well as strongly disagree replies. Question 7: "Speaking English indicates to others that I have been a knowledgeable person" had a high majority of favorable replies. Yet, there was a minor rise in disagreed answers. In question 8, respondents have posed the question if studying English develops acceptance towards different faiths. 41.7% of the respondents agreed with what was said, while 30% disagreed. Questions 9, 10, 11, and 12 addressed the motives to learn English. If asked, "I will be deemed a low-class individual since I do not know English," 40% of those surveyed agreed. A substantial percentage of respondents disagreed with question number 10, indicating that studying English does not constitute the primary necessity for modernization. The ratio of affirmative replies to question number eleven increased significantly.

### ***Perceptions of Learners in Learning and Speaking English***

The third portion of the survey assessed what motivates students to communicate while learning English. Questions 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, as well as 20 focused on students' motivation to achieve while using English. A large number of undergraduates across three institutions reported favorable improvements to their personality traits as well as behaviors, leading to favorable impressions of English. This supports Sapir Whorf's idea that language influences speakers' thoughts along with behaviors. Some argue that utilizing English represents modernity, whereas not understanding it represents lower status. Although these assertions pose a significant danger to local cultural and linguistic diversity, nearly all of the responders representing three universities disagreed.

### ***Motivation of Students to Learning and Speaking English***

The third segment includes questions about students' motives for developing and using English. It displays the proportion of replies received for items 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, as well as 20. For items 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, and 19, positive attitudes (strongly agree or agree) outnumbered negative attitudes (disagree as well as strongly disagree). When respondents were subsequently questioned if studying English might westernize them, the majority disagreed or strongly disagreed (question 20). Approximately 30% of individuals disagreed overall the statement, while 33.3% disagreed strongly.

### ***Speaking and Learning English as a Danger***

The fourth component of the survey focused on learning and communicating in English being a danger. Respondents from all three universities emphasized the need to study English for future promise and better possibilities. Their drive to learn English stems from a desire to improve their future career as well as lifestyle. According to [Phillipson \(1992\)](#), English has grown in appeal among students because of its worldwide position and inclusion within numerous national curricula. Questions about expressing and studying English were considered a danger. The graph displays the proportion of replies obtained for items 21, 22, 23, 24, as well as 25. The proportion of respondents who disagreed or strongly disagreed with questions 21–23 was greater. In item 24, 45% of those surveyed disagreed with the notion that studying English distances them from their neighborhood. The ratio of agreeing as well as strongly disagreeing replies remained constant at 23.3%. For the number of questions 25, 30% strongly disapproved, whereas 43% disapproved. Respondents viewed native language as having rich form as well as shape. They cherish using English but also desire their native language to survive and operate properly in the freshly established culture as well as the

framework. Although English is often recognized as a worldwide language, [Phillipson \(1992\)](#) argues that its presence has an impact on different languages. Thus, it poses a danger to Urdu. Participants cited psychological along academic variables as driving their eagerness to learn along communicate English.

### **Discussion**

This study examined how The English cultural hegemony affects the psychology of undergraduate students. The study found that learning English has a favorable influence on Pakistani students psychologically. According to [Vadivel et al. \(2022\)](#), psychological state has a significant impact on English language proficiency. The research found that students' desire to learn as well as communicate in English depends on their psychological along academic demands. According to the study, Pakistani students recognize the importance of learning and speaking English within today's culture. Pakistani students exhibit enthusiasm for learning English, but their perspectives as well as psychological requirements vary. [Ryan & Deci \(2017\)](#) introduced self-determination theory (SDT) along with identifying three psychological factors that motivate students to succeed. It encompasses competence, independence, and resemblance. [\(Aslam, Khan, et. al. 2023\)](#), The research found a strong correlation between the imperialism of The English language and students' psychological demands. Throughout Pakistan, specifically in Sindh, undergraduate students are eager to acquire English for their mental health but do not see this as an imminent danger to their personality, religion as well as language. English has become an integral part of students' daily lives, and many take pleasure in their ability to converse effectively with the language. However, it may be necessary to admit these psychological demands remain continuous for consciousness or the soul's existence. Unsettling behavior might be motivated by psychological needs. According

to [Phillipson \(2008\)](#), the imperialism of The English language constitutes psychological phenomena that occur when the language controls students' brains along with lifestyles. This problem leads to individuals relying only upon English for learning, employment, status in society, governance, justice management, and philosophical thought, among other complex realms. The current English-centric strategy could corrupt particularly those who are ethically decent members of an ethnic group. According to [Hejazi & Fatemi \(2015\)](#), communities could ultimately lose their capacity to acknowledge and cherish their native languages' entirety. Students throughout Pakistan view this as both promising as well as concerning, given the language transition is still in its early stages. [McKay \(2002\)](#) argues that the increasing usage of Western English within Pakistan leads to language shifting and other issues. According to [Holmes \(2001\)](#), a "linguistic shift" causes people to subconsciously embrace a new sense of self including social customs associated with the new dialect. The effect of a different culture and language can cause the original tongue's distinctiveness to fade or become obscured. Research aims to reduce the impact of English on local language and cultural backgrounds. A comprehensive language strategy for planning must be implemented throughout the nation to prevent a "language shift" from occurring.

### **Conclusion**

The research study examined how English is getting more popular throughout Pakistan specifically in Sindh province, perhaps displacing Urdu being the primary language for learning and conversation. The study found that English domination has a considerable influence on students' psychological well-being for numerous reasons. The study found respondents saw English competence primarily as a sign of professional and academic achievement, rather than a danger against their native language as well as



ethnicity. In reality, it is recognized to be an official tongue. They see this as a sign of achievement throughout their work as well as academic endeavors. Students feel that learning and speaking English makes sense for social recognition and socioeconomic status within the world of today. The study concluded that students had favorable attitudes about studying and employing English, but were motivated to improve their abilities. The study found that students are self-motivated to improve their English, rather than being compelled to do so. Instead, their attitude regarding English seems mature as well as positive. Several students are driven by psychological reasons to improve their command of English, making it more than just a requirement. Their psychological demands stem from the recognition of the significance of using English within school, career possibilities, as well as worldwide communication. They approach studying English with real curiosity as well as knowledge of its benefits. Neglecting a tongue can lead to its eventual replacement by an increasingly dominating language, according to popular belief. Urdu's strong literature along with vocabulary may be overshadowed by English whenever it does not receive adequate promotion as well as recognition, both domestically and internationally.

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