



A Comparative Study on English Language Learners' Attitude towards English Learning

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Abstract

The study was entitled as "A comparative study on English language learners' attitude towards English learning". The sole objectives of the study was; to make a comparison between public and private English language learners' attitude towards English learning. The current study was a quantitative research. The population of the study comprised all the public and private secondary school students at Sialkot and Vehari district. The questionnaire of the study comprised 13-items. Questionnaire was administered to the sample. Data collected through questionnaire from the 300 hundred public and private secondary school students. The collected data was analyzed through most frequently used statistical techniques of mean score and standard deviation. The study found that all the respondents agree that studying English helps. Public group replies are more constant, whereas private group responses fluctuate. This shows that the private group has diverse language learning backgrounds. A single curriculum may standardize public language acquisition. Personal preferences or learning styles may explain private group attitudes. The constancy of public group replies may indicate systematic language acquisition. The contrasts show each group's dynamics and views.

Keywords: Comparative Study, English Language Learners, Attitude

1. Introduction

Language is a unique phenomenon among human beings, enhancing a person's worth. Language is a powerful tool that allows individuals to express their thoughts, emotions, and ideas with clarity and precision. It enables effective communication and fosters meaningful connections between people from different backgrounds and cultures. Moreover, language empowers individuals to engage in intellectual discussions, seek knowledge, and understand the world around them, ultimately enhancing their personal growth and contributing to their overall worth as human beings (Luthans and Broad, 2022). Language is crucial in shaping our identities and defining who we are. It allows us to share our experiences, beliefs, and values and connect more deeply with others. Through language, we can express our unique perspectives and contribute to the rich tapestry of human diversity. Additionally, language opens up a world of possibilities, providing us with the tools to learn, explore, and expand our horizons. Whether reading books, engaging in conversations, or writing essays, language fuels our intellectual curiosity and enables us to make sense of the world's complexities (Berwick and Chomsky, 2016).

English is Pakistani students' second language, and every student must learn English. English is Pakistani students' second language, and every student must learn English to excel academically and professionally. It is a language of global importance, opening doors to various opportunities and facilitating communication on an international scale. Moreover, English fluency is highly valued in the job market, as it enhances employability and enables individuals to compete in a globalized world. Therefore, Pakistani schools prioritize English education, providing students with comprehensive language instruction from an early age (Haidar, 2017).

This focus on English education is evident in the curriculum, where English is taught as a core subject alongside other subjects like math and science. Students are exposed to English literature, grammar, and writing skills from primary school to higher education. They are encouraged to practice speaking and listening in English through interactive activities and group discussions. Additionally, schools often hire native English speakers or qualified teachers with proficiency in the language to ensure students receive quality instruction. This emphasis on English education prepares Pakistani students to navigate the global landscape and seize opportunities beyond their borders (Healey, 2023).

Researchers are paying attention to the "attitude of learning the English language," despite the fact that a variety of factors contribute to the low rate of English education in Pakistan. According to Alkaff (2013), a student's attitude toward learning any language might impact their excitement for studying the language being targeted. How one approaches anything has a significant impact on the outcomes. Students who go into the process of learning English with a constructive mindset can learn more effectively, and they have no or much less problem doing so. Learning anything depends on attention, commitment, and effort invested. Learning a language is also extremely important for enabling humans to communicate their thoughts and ideas with one another.

1.1. Research Objectives

The objectives of the study was as under;

To make a comparison between public and private English language learners' attitude towards English learning.

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2. Literature Review

According to Tavil (2009), learning is a change in a person's style, attitude, information, aptitude, and habits that takes place slowly but certainly as a result of that person's life experience. The pupils find that dealing with language is the most challenging and specific aspect of learning something. People or students can acquire foreign languages more quickly with the assistance of their mother tongue than with any other method.

Oliveira (1997) found gender differences in students' positive and negative conduct and attitudes. Female pupils behave better in English language study, she noted. Boys can be less severe about language study. Pakistan has about the exact circumstances for second-language learning. Boys learn English faster but do other useless things. Effective language acquisition requires desire and interest, which they typically lack. Due to cultural expectations and gender norms that highlight other activities for males, language learning is not taken seriously. These findings are not general, and there are exceptions to these tendencies. Analyzing pupils' language learning behavior and attitudes requires considering individual characteristics and conditions.

Hashwani (2008) found that primary girls are more optimistic, attentive, and learn new things than boys. Male and female students think differently. Girls must have an advanced union rank to learn English. Hashwani (2008) said ladies' attention is more valuable than boys' higher uneasiness. Girls who acquire a second language are more conformist. Boys are more competitive and want to achieve in math and science. Girls may succeed in language learning, but guys are better at logic and analysis. This mentality difference does not mean one gender is better but shows each gender's skills and interests in schooling. Creating an inclusive and supportive learning environment that celebrates and develops male and female learners' strengths is essential for their development and success.

Schoaib and Dornyei (2005) found that girls are more enthusiastic and dedicated to learning new languages with a positive attitude than guys, who are less interested, dedicated, and optimistic. A cheerful mindset motivates kids to learn the language. Thus, learning English involves positivity, motivation, and dedication.

Attitude is how people's conduct, behaviors, and feelings express their thoughts. Attitudes show things' emotions and movements. Attitude is how people feel, act, behave, and position themselves. Attitude impacts motivation and willingness to learn English. Positive attitudes about learning English encourage interest and enthusiasm to explore new language features. A better grasp and respect of the language contributes to good language learning. With a good mindset, studying English can be more accessible and fulfilling, slowing development. A good attitude, motivation, and dedication are vital for learning English.

Gajalakshmi (2013) distinguished good and negative attitudes. An optimistic person will learn with new beliefs and desires and show a positive attitude and interest in learning a language. Conversely, a pessimistic beginner will show less interest and devotion and unintentionally ignore many vital factors. Motivation and attitude are essential to English language acquisition. Intrinsic motivations include a genuine interest in the language and culture, whereas extrinsic motivations include employment opportunities or communication. Motivation and positivity can help language learners actively seek opportunities to practice and engage with the language, improving their language learning experience. In contrast, a lack of drive might slow language development.

Older adults have consistent attitudes. Mehrens and Lehmann (1987) say people's sentiments and behaviors reveal their beliefs about what they can do or feel about something. Actions in reaction to social concerns are attitudes. Learning is essential to kids' attitudes and environment. The student's language learning attitude—positive or negative—is most important in a setting.

Positive attitudes help pupils learn, according to Bot, Lowie, and Verspoor (2005). Oliveira (1997) believes pupils learn a second language faster and more comfortably with elders' guidance. Abidin, Mohammadi, and Alzwari (2012) say people's attitudes are based on their ideas and actions. That might be good or bad. A person needs to focus and be happy to learn. However, if the individual is not interested, they may have a negative attitude about it, which is terrible. The positive approach significantly improved students' projected topic knowledge. The person's behaviors, ideas, and thoughts shape their attitude. A positive mindset is essential for new things to inspire and motivate kids.

Soleimani (2013) links attitude to an individual's value, faith, encouragement, and despair or a beginner's learning activity. Students see English both positively and negatively. Oliveira (1997) claimed that girls had more time to study and memorize at home. They must be lazy in school and have significant future objectives. Males need to be more interested in studying. Gajalakshmi (2013) says attitude is built on three learning aspects. One is cognitive, and one is behavioral. Thus, student attitude is essential to learning. A positive English language strategy requires a solid cognitive and behavioral learning attitude. A diligent language learner will likely improve. However, a negative attitude might slow their English language learning, like certain men's disinterest. Thus, instructors and parents must encourage all pupils, regardless of gender, to enjoy studying English.

Language performance depends on skill and attitude toward a second or foreign language. It implies that language acquisition should be a civic or mental experience, not only academic. In addition to rational awareness, Padwick (2010) says language learning is emotional and social. Getting the required language depends on the student's ambition

and attitude. Gardner (1999) argued that learners' capacity to acquire a second language is determined by their attitudes, knowledge of the goal language, intelligence, and linguistic skills. The learner's eagerness, curiosity, and readiness to take chances to enhance their language abilities are examples of attitudes and awareness. The learner's social environment, peer pressure, and culture can influence their language learning motivation and attitude. Thus, language instructors must provide a supportive and engaging learning environment that promotes positive attitudes and a strong desire to study and communicate in the target language.

3. Research Methodology

The study was carried out with a quantitative approach by the researchers, and the research itself was descriptive. According to Ezeani (1998), descriptive research is the process of gathering factual information that is both thorough and descriptive of the present situation. Students from both public and private secondary schools in Sialkot and the Vehari District who were enrolled in the ninth and tenth classes were included in the study. The researchers randomly chose 300 secondary school students, splitting them evenly between public and private institutions.

The researchers devised a survey to collect responses from English language students about their mentality. The validity of the questionnaire was established, and it had a reasonable degree of reliability; it had 13-items. The questionnaire above has been tested extensively and shown to have a high degree of reliability; nonetheless, the researchers altered the questionnaire to suit the requirements of the students better. The final version of the questionnaire consisted of 13-item.

According to Mawoli and Babandako (2011), collecting crucial data is the method most suited for descriptive research. The researcher went to each of these schools in person to hand out the questionnaire she had created, gather the information she needed, and then acquire the data she needed from the students who had volunteered to participate in the study. Responding to the questionnaire was divided into parts and outlined in more detail. To get the information, the researchers first needed permission from the head teachers, principals, and headmistresses of the schools they visited. The students had the opportunity to take as much time as they needed to finish the questionnaire. The researchers were given specific time to gather the necessary information throughout their visits.

Data analysis is essential to the research process since it drives both the results and the conclusion. The information gathered through the above instruments was evaluated, tabulated, and interpreted in light of the study's research objectives using the most appropriate statistical tool, the mean score and standard deviation. The evaluation used the SPSS version 21 software (the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences).

4. Data Analysis and Interpretation

The analysis and interpretation of the data is given below;

Table 1

S. No.	Statement	Mean Score		Standard Deviation	
		Public	Private	Public	Private
1	Learning English is essential for my personal growth.	3.44	3.21	1.24	1.55
2	I feel confident in my ability to learn and use English effectively.	3.09	3.35	1.14	1.15
3	English learning enhances my access to global information and resources.	3.08	2.91	1.24	1.14
4	I enjoy practicing English in various real-life situations.	3.41	3.86	1.11	1.04
5	Learning English is a challenging but rewarding experience.	3.67	3.87	1.23	1.41
6	English learning materials are interesting and engaging.	3.44	3.62	1.12	1.17
7	I often find myself motivated to improve my English skills.	2.98	3.26	1.13	1.13
8	English learning is an enjoyable process for me.	3.72	3.77	1.14	1.22
9	I feel anxious about making mistakes when speaking English.	3.54	3.82	1.28	1.30
10	Learning English positively impacts my cognitive abilities.	3.74	4.09	1.22	1.12
11	I perceive English as a language of innovation and technology.	3.81	4.07	1.16	1.17
12	My friends/family play a role in motivating me to learn English.	3.42	3.61	1.21	1.35
13	I think English fluency is a valuable asset in today's world.	3.52	3.71	1.19	1.32

The provided data seems to represent the results of a survey or study where participants were asked to rate various statements related to learning English on a scale. The data includes mean scores and standard deviations for each statement, categorized into "Public" and "Private" sectors. So, we can analyze the mean scores and standard deviations for each statement in both the public and private groups. Let's break down the interpretation step by step:

Mean Score: The mean score represents the average response for each statement. It gives an indication of the participants' overall sentiment or agreement with each statement.

Standard Deviation: The standard deviation measures the dispersion or variability of responses around the mean. A higher standard deviation suggests that the responses are spread out over a wider range, indicating more variability in opinions.

Now, let's interpret the data for each statement:

Item 1 Learning English is essential for my personal growth.

Public Mean: 3.44, Private Mean: 3.21

Public SD: 1.24, Private SD: 1.55

Interpretation: Both groups generally agree that learning English is essential for personal growth. The public group's responses have slightly higher agreement, with a relatively higher variability in the private group.

Item 2 I feel confident in my ability to learn and use English effectively.

Public Mean: 3.09, Private Mean: 3.35

Public SD: 1.14, Private SD: 1.15

Interpretation: The private group shows slightly higher confidence in their English abilities compared to the public group. Both groups exhibit relatively similar levels of confidence, as indicated by the low standard deviations.

Item 3 English learning enhances my access to global information and resources.

Public Mean: 3.08, Private Mean: 2.91

Public SD: 1.24, Private SD: 1.14

Interpretation: The public group sees English as more enhancing for global information and resources compared to the private group. The private group's responses are more consistent, as indicated by the lower standard deviation.

Item 4 I enjoy practicing English in various real-life situations.

Public Mean: 3.41, Private Mean: 3.86

Public SD: 1.11, Private SD: 1.04

Interpretation: The private group indicates a higher enjoyment of practicing English in real-life situations. The responses in the private group are both more positively skewed and less varied.

Item 5 Learning English is a challenging but rewarding experience.

Public Mean: 3.67, Private Mean: 3.87

Public SD: 1.23, Private SD: 1.41

Interpretation: Both groups acknowledge the challenging yet rewarding nature of learning English. The private group's responses have higher agreement and variability.

Item 6 English learning materials are interesting and engaging.

Public Mean: 3.44, Private Mean: 3.62

Public SD: 1.12, Private SD: 1.17

Interpretation: Both groups find English learning materials interesting and engaging, with slightly higher agreement in the private group and similar variability in both groups.

Item 7 I often find myself motivated to improve my English skills.

Public Mean: 2.98, Private Mean: 3.26

Public SD: 1.13, Private SD: 1.13

Interpretation: The private group reports higher motivation to improve English skills compared to the public group. Both groups exhibit relatively similar levels of motivation, as indicated by low standard deviations.

Item 8 English learning is an enjoyable process for me.

Public Mean: 3.72, Private Mean: 3.77

Public SD: 1.14, Private SD: 1.22

Interpretation: Both groups find English learning enjoyable, with similar mean scores and slightly higher variability in the private group.

Item 9 I feel anxious about making mistakes when speaking English.

Public Mean: 3.54, Private Mean: 3.82

Public SD: 1.28, Private SD: 1.30

Interpretation: The private group exhibits slightly higher anxiety about making mistakes when speaking English. Both groups show relatively high variability in their responses.

Item 10 Learning English positively impacts my cognitive abilities.

Public Mean: 3.74, Private Mean: 4.09

Public SD: 1.22, Private SD: 1.12

Interpretation: The private group strongly believes that learning English positively impacts cognitive abilities. Both groups show relatively high agreement, with lower variability in the private group.

Item 11 I perceive English as a language of innovation and technology.

Public Mean: 3.81, Private Mean: 4.07

Public SD: 1.16, Private SD: 1.17

Interpretation: Both groups perceive English as associated with innovation and technology, with the private group's responses exhibiting slightly higher agreement and variability.

Item 12 My friends/family play a role in motivating me to learn English.

Public Mean: 3.42, Private Mean: 3.61

Public SD: 1.21, Private SD: 1.35

Interpretation: Both groups are motivated by friends/family to learn English, with slightly higher agreement and variability in the private group's responses.

Item 13 I think English fluency is a valuable asset in today's world.

Public Mean: 3.52, Private Mean: 3.71

Public SD: 1.19, Private SD: 1.32

Interpretation: Both groups agree that English fluency is valuable in today's world, with slightly higher agreement and variability in the private group.

In summary, the private group tends to show slightly higher mean scores in many statements, indicating stronger agreement with the given statements compared to the public group. However, the private group also generally exhibits higher variability, suggesting a wider range of opinions within that group. The public group, on the other hand, shows more consistent responses with slightly lower mean scores in several statements. Overall, both groups share similar sentiments on the importance and positive aspects of learning English, but the private group tends to show stronger and more varied agreement in many cases.

5. Findings and Conclusion

The provided interpretation analyzes the findings of a comparative study on English language learners' attitudes toward English learning. The data includes mean scores and standard deviations for different statements, categorized by "public" and "private" sectors. The interpretations provide insights into participants' sentiments, confidence, motivations, and perceptions of learning English. The analysis reveals that English language learners in the public and private sectors generally hold positive attitudes toward learning English. However, it is interesting to note that participants in the private sector showed higher levels of confidence and motivation compared to those in the public sector. The resources and support available in private institutions may contribute to a more favorable learning environment. Additionally, the study highlights the importance of considering learners' perceptions of English learning, as these can significantly influence their overall attitudes and success in language acquisition.

In summary, the private group demonstrates slightly higher mean scores across several statements, indicating more robust agreement with the statements than the public group. However, the private group also exhibits more significant variability in their responses, suggesting a broader range of opinions within that group. The public group, conversely, displays more consistent responses with slightly lower mean scores for several statements. It could indicate that the public group has a more homogeneous perspective on language acquisition and a narrower range of opinions. The private group's higher mean scores may reflect a tremendous passion and enthusiasm for language learning, leading to more varied and diverse opinions within the group. On the other hand, the public group's consistent responses could imply a shared approach or educational framework for language acquisition. These findings suggest that both groups have strengths and weaknesses in their attitudes toward language learning.

Both groups generally agree on the importance and positive aspects of learning English. However, the private group has a more diverse range of attitudes within its responses, while the public group's responses are more consistent. This could indicate that the private group consists of individuals with varying backgrounds and experiences in language learning. On the other hand, the public group may have a more standardized approach to language acquisition, possibly due to a shared educational framework or curriculum. These differences in attitudes within the private group might stem from personal preferences or individual learning styles. In contrast, the consistency of responses in the public group might reflect a more structured and uniform approach to language learning. Overall, these contrasting characteristics highlight each group's unique dynamics and perspectives.

It is important to note that these interpretations are based solely on the provided data and descriptive statistics. Additional analyses or contextual information might be necessary to draw more comprehensive conclusions. For example, further examination of individual learning styles within the private group could reveal various preferences, such as visual, auditory, or kinesthetic learning. On the other hand, the consistency of responses in the public group might suggest a standardized curriculum or teaching method employed by the instructor. It would be beneficial to gather qualitative data through interviews or observations to understand the dynamics and perspectives within each

group. Additionally, considering the participants' cultural background and prior language learning experiences could provide a more comprehensive understanding of their language learning approaches.

In conclusion, the comparative study on English language learners' attitudes toward English learning illuminates their public and private perceptions, feelings, and motives. The data show that individuals across sectors are happy about learning English. Separating private and public groups reveals profound distinctions. The study underlines that private-sector participants are more confident and motivated than public-sector participants. This contrast shows that private institutions' resources, support, and learning environments improve English learning attitudes. These findings suggest that a well-resourced educational environment may empower and encourage language learners to engage actively. The study also recognizes that learners' views influence their attitudes toward language acquisition. The private group's slightly higher mean scores and more response variability suggest a variety of opinions. This variety may be due to backgrounds, learning methods, and preferences. However, the public group's more consistent replies suggest a systematic language learning technique. A shared educational framework or teaching technique in public institutions may explain this uniformity. The consequences of these findings go beyond the research. Consider qualitative data, contextual information, and further analysis to develop more thorough findings. Exploring private group learning approaches, public sector educational methods, and participants' cultural backgrounds and past language learning experiences would help explain the observed views.

These findings add to the language education debate. The study emphasizes the importance of a supportive learning environment and individualized pedagogy in molding students' perspectives. It highlights how private universities may boost student enthusiasm and confidence. The study also emphasizes the need for tailored and culturally sensitive language instruction and encourages educators and policymakers to consider learners' perspectives on language acquisition. This comparative research illuminates English language learners' views and the complexity of language teaching. Education stakeholders may make educated decisions to improve language learning experiences for learners across sectors by acknowledging the impact of learning settings, individual characteristics, and cultural considerations.

6. Recommendations

Based on the study's conclusion, it is recommended that public-sector educational institutions invest in improving their learning environments and resources. The research indicates that private-sector participants exhibit higher confidence and motivation, which can be attributed to the better resources and support available in private institutions. Public-sector institutions should prioritize creating a well-resourced and supportive learning environment to empower language learners and foster active engagement. This might involve increasing access to relevant materials, providing additional support services, and implementing teaching methods that encourage self-assurance and motivation. In short, these recommendations address the implications of the study's findings by focusing on improving learning environments, diversifying teaching techniques, and embracing inclusive language instruction. By implementing these suggestions, educational stakeholders can positively impact English language learners' attitudes and experiences, regardless of their sector.

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