

Exploring The Perceived Socio-Cultural Factors Affecting the Attitude of ESL Learners Toward Language at Intermediate Level in District Kohat

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the influence of socio-cultural factors on the attitudes of intermediate-level students towards learning English as a second language (ESL) in District Kohat, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. By using an explanatory sequential mixed-methods design, quantitative data were collected from 451 students through a structured questionnaire, followed by semi-structured interviews with four English language teachers. The major findings of study indicate that students generally hold a positive but predominantly instrumental attitude towards English, associating it with academic success and future employment. Teacher's support, parental encouragement, and motivational intensity emerged as the strongest positive influences, while anxiety, limited exposure to English outside the classroom, and inadequate learning resources negatively affect English language learners' attitudes at intermediate-level. Likewise, qualitative insights further revealed the impact of family background, peer interaction, community environment, and cultural identity on English language learning. Grounded in sociocultural theory, Gardner's socio-educational model, and Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis, the study highlights the need for culturally responsive pedagogy and supportive learning environments to enhance ESL learning outcomes in District Kohat, KP, Pakistan.

Key Words/Phrases: Socio-Cultural Factors, Attitude of ESL Learners, English Language Learning, Intermediate Level, District Kohat, Pakistan, ESL,

Introduction:

Nowadays, English contributes to the global community of speaking, studying science, technology, or just moving across the borders (Rao, 2019; Gul et al., 2022). In the place such as Pakistan, full of various languages and cultures. It is not simply another school

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subject, but it can create possibilities of higher grades, employment, and recognition in society (Abbas et al., 2025). Access to college and a career and global connectivity can be connected to learners of higher secondary school in Kohat, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, knowing English well. Due to it, the attitudes of the students towards English and the cultural or social factors influencing them are increasingly gaining importance among teachers, rule-making leaders, and academics as well (Kifayatullah et al., 2019; Ishtiaq et al., 2022).

In the district of Kohat, where Pashtun culture is strong, generally close nuclear families and vibrant community life also influence the way individuals acquire the English language. The learning process does not take place in a vacuum; the perceptions of the language associated with kids are developed based on expectations of their parents, opinions of their friends, actions of their teachers, programs available in the schools and television shows, and the general attitude of the surroundings. All of these contribute not only to getting students to work harder but also to developing self-confidence, psychological readiness, and the utility they perceive English to be as a tool within and outside of the classroom.

Probably, this concept of Krashen (1982) indicates that negative emotions, anxiety, enthusiasm, self-confidence, or self-esteem may either promote or inhibit the learning of a new language. The external factors, such as the welcoming or tough feeling of school, opinion of the teacher, the pressure of classmates, and perception of others about the English language, influence those feelings, and hence they influence the process of language acquisition.

Although the role of sociocultural variables has been realized, little studies have been done on the sociocultural variables in both urban and rural areas like District Kohat. The proposed study is aimed at bridging this gap by comparing the effect of sociocultural factors on student attitudes and, in turn, on ESL learning outcomes.

The study relies on such popular concepts as the model by Gardner that considers motivation, personal interest, and practical goals. It connects with the opinion of Vygotsky: learning develops by talking and acting with people. Then there is the concept of emotions by Krashen, which demonstrates the fact that stress or self-belief may interfere or promote the acquisition of a new language. The combination of these ideas allows interpreting the responses of survey participants.

The current research is a study of an apparent socio-cultural influence on the attitudes of intermediate-level students in District Kohat to approaching learning English as a second language (ESL). Since the attitudes of students play a critical role in their performance, it becomes necessary to learn more about these socio-cultural determinants to formulate powerful pedagogical interventions and language policies.

Statement of the Problem

Even though English has a high social status in Pakistan, learning the English language at the intermediate level in the District of Kohat is a challenge to the students. Past experiences and several regional research studies indicate that negative attitudes of learners, low motivation, lack of parental support, lack of exposure to English beyond school, cultural restrictions, and unfavorable classroom conditions can hinder the learning process of learners (Shakeel et al., 2025). Previous researchers indicate that

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culture and society influence the attitude of students towards learning English and their motivation, as well as their achievement (Lantolf and Thorne, 2006; Norton, 2013). Nevertheless, these impacts appear varied based on the location. At Kohat, children have problems such as limited opportunities to speak English, parents who do not contribute much, old methodology of teaching, or limited exposure to English TV and books. These issues are likely to produce stress, poor self-belief, and negative attitudes and decelerate development. These problems in the Kohat district should be studied closely to identify what is impeding the students or contributing to their improved performance. Otherwise, emerging teaching strategies may be missing the actual student problems.

Despite such concerns, not much empirical research has been done in the District Kohat context to determine how different socio-cultural factors influence students' attitudes. Without this knowledge, educators might keep employing inefficient tactics, and legislators might ignore important factors affecting students' performance and motivation.

Research Questions

What are the perceived socio-cultural factors that may contribute to the attitudes of ESL learners at the intermediate level in District Kohat?

How do these factors affect the attitudes of ESL Government Higher Secondary Schools' students towards English language learning at the intermediate level in district Kohat?

Research Objectives

The purposes of this work are the following:

To identify key social and cultural elements that define the perception of the intermediate level learners towards picking up English in Kohat district.

To examine the ways through which cultural and social contexts influence the motivation of learners in English learning contexts by using real life examples drawn in classes in various cities and concentrating on daily factors rather than on theories at large.

To test the effect of family on perceptions of English when taking into consideration the effect of friends and then viewing the contributions of the teachers, both daily interactions with local groups and influence on opinions are also a contributor to changes in opinion.

Rationale of the Study

There are different scholars who have created taxonomies of the elements that influence the attitude of second language learners, which in turn influences their language competency. These elements include social, educational, and personality-oriented elements, as well as others like age and sex.

Therefore, the current research study's goal is to investigate and identify the elements influencing intermediate-level higher secondary school students in the Kohat district's attitudes towards studying English as a second language. Additionally, the researcher thinks that by examining these sociocultural elements, our pupils may be able to afford

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various circumstances when learning English. It is often acknowledged that students' attitudes towards learning a second language are a significant indicator of their performance in that language. Students who view learning English as a worthwhile and enjoyable experience are less likely to have second language anxiety in situations when English is being learned as a second language.

Keeping in view all the factors explored by the previous studies, the current study intends to explore the perceived effects of all the factors on students' attitudes towards English learning at the intermediate level in district Kohat, KP, Pakistan.

Significance of the Study

This study matters for several reasons. Academically speaking, it helps us grasp how people learn English in Pakistan, especially how social norms and cultural settings shape progress in spots often ignored. Most focus goes toward big urban centers, take Islamabad or Lahore as those hitting rough patches in remote regions such as Kohat get left behind.

For those making decisions, this research offers clues on shaping school programs, guiding how teachers are taught, or updating education systems to break down cultural hurdles in learning English. Knowing what students think, hope for, or struggle with can shape smarter rules ones that listen closely to real experiences. Similarly, students learn better when class feels welcoming, so teachers should focus on creating upbeat vibes while using teaching styles that put learners first, also keeping in mind how culture and background shape a student's mindset and results. When educators get where their students come from, they can build lessons that grab attention and spark effort.

For parents and the community, the study illuminates how their support, attitudes, and interactions contribute to students' perceptions of English. As primary socializing agents, families play an essential role in shaping students' motivation and confidence. Ultimately, the findings hold the potential to improve ESL learning outcomes by addressing attitudinal and motivational factors deeply rooted in sociocultural dynamics.

Literature Review

In the higher secondary schools (around 11-12 in Pakistan), students are now moving to higher education, the level at which socio-cultural standards have a potent impact on education attitudes. A particular situation is offered in District Kohat (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province): the blend of the rural and urban environments where the old norms and emerging education in English are clashing (Hassan et al., 2023). This review investigates the perceptions of a combination of socio-cultural aspects, such as gender norms, family and peer context, teacher-student relationships, media exposure, community values, and religious perceptions, to be the reason behind the attitudes of intermediate students towards learning English in Kohat. To put these factors into perspective, we will employ sociocultural theory (Vygotsky), the idea of the habitus and cultural capital that Bourdieu formulated, and the Input Hypothesis (especially, the affective filter) as proposed by Krashen. We compile international, national (Pakistan), and local (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa/Kohat) literature on English-learning attitudes and reveal gaps in the research on the topic.

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The focus of this literature review is to understand the international and Pakistani views concerning the socio-cultural predictors of the attitudes of ESL learners, especially the intermediate level learners in District Kohat.

Socio cultural Theory of Vygotsky focuses on the fact that learning is a social cultural phenomenon. Vygotsky believed that cognitive development in children happens when they engage in a guided interaction with individuals who have more knowledge (teachers, parents, peers) (McLeod, 2025). One of the main tools of thought, a language itself, internalizes itself into inner speech (social speech) (McLeod, 2025). In the case of ESL learning, this implies that the social contexts of the intermediate student influence his/her attitude towards English e.g., teacher and peer encouragement (or criticism), and in-home encouragement. The social environment will have a positive impact on the attitude towards the English language (making it useful or prestigious), and, therefore, the learners can adopt a positive attitude towards it; otherwise, they will have a lesser motivation and be less comfortable. The concept of the Zone of Proximal Development (learning with support) offered by Vygotsky also means that the confidence (and, consequently, attitude) of a learner enhances in the case of a socially scaffolded learning.

The Habitus and Cultural Capital of Bourdieu. According to Bourdieu, people have their dispositions (habitus) and opportunities to gain cultural capital (skills, knowledge that are appreciated in society) due to their social class and cultural background (Huang, 2019; Sajjad et al., 2023). Even the English fluency as such is regarded as a cultural (and economic) capital in Pakistan (Gerhards, 2014; Habib et al., 2025). As Amin et al. (2024) observe, people view English language as an element of cultural, social, and economic capital, a key to success. Therefore, students with a higher level of educational means or families already endorsing the value of English (i.e. high cultural capital) will be in a better position and disposition (tutors, media, schools). On the other hand, students who do not have this capital might feel sidelined or they might view English as irrelevant. The implication of Bourdieu regarding the concept of habitus is also that attitudes are influenced by norms (e.g. of gender roles or, tradition); learners do not start learning English in a vacuum but rather under socialized expectations.

Pakistan's Language Ecology and Attitudes to English

The ecology of multilingualism (English-Urdu-provincial languages like Pashto) of Pakistan gives English a stratified symbolic meaning (Gul et al., 2023). Empirical studies have recorded English as a high status, high stakes language linked with elite education, tertiary education, bureaucratic recruitment and globalization (Rahman, 1996, 2002; Mansoor, 2004). The policies of national policies have at times advocated the use of English as a medium of instruction (EMI), particularly of STEM and of higher education, and have enhanced its gatekeeping functions (Coleman, 2010). It is also found to have stratification effects with private schooling in the English-medium more likely to develop positive attitudes, better attitudes, and more proficiency whereas the constraints of the public-sector (high classes, scanty resources, exam focus) can dampen zeal or curb attitude to mere instrumentalism (Shamim, 2008; Sehrish et al., 2025). Meanwhile, according to the scholars, there is the tendency of ambivalence, as English is perceived to be needed to achieve socioeconomic mobility, but it could be

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viewed as the threat to local language and cultural continuity--generating multifaceted, even contradictory attitudes (Rahman, 2002; Phillipson, 1992).

Students' Self-Interest and Attitude

Self-interest and intrinsic motivation of learners are the key to acquisition of second language. The socio-educational model proposed by Gardner (1985) points to the importance of attitude and motivation as the elements in the formation of the positive language learning outcomes. Dornyei (2005) points out those positive attitudes improve willingness of the learners to communicate and participate in the classroom activities. The research in Pakistan (e.g., Ahmed and Rao, 2012; Rehman et al., 2014; Ahmed et al., 2025) has indicated that learners that have a high self-interest in English tend to be more successful because of their unstoppable interest in academic and social mobility.

International and Theoretical Insights. Many SLA studies underscore the interplay of socio-cultural context and learner attitudes. Gardner and Lambert (1959) famously showed that integrative and instrumental motivations (attitudes toward the target language community vs. pragmatic goals) predict success. Although mostly Western, their work implies that learners' cultural identifications and societal values influence attitude and effort. Khalid's (2016) findings show that a positive attitude regarding the English language was found in 16 years old Pakistani students, along with its strong instrumental orientation (perceiving English as a language for education and employment), while still respecting Urdu language. It was also found in Khalid's (2016) research that public school students considered Urdu to be important and therefore, did not think that it was a problem regarding English and its position in the hierarchy of languages. This phenomenon illustrates the post-colonial dimensions of English as a language of capital, which is seen with a lot of value (Amin et al., 2024).

National (Pakistan) Studies General. Pakistani specialists displayed some extent of duality. Khalid (2016) indicated that learners appreciate and value both English and Urdu; however, they prefer Urdu English classes when considering job prospects. Despite this, some English studies continue to indicate that different areas record different English studies. Shamim (1993, 2007) described how the pattern of dominion and modernization of a society controls the processes of educational institutions; in his view, the English language is a gift of civilization or prestige or a foreign element. In the large-scale survey (Arshad et al., 2013), many learners in Pakistan believed that English illiteracy is widespread, coupled with negative social attitudes towards the English language, as it is deemed difficult and irrelevant in the local socio-cultural context (Arshad et al., 2014). The study, which involved 430 students in the middle level of education, shows that a wide gap exists between urban and rural areas. Students in urban areas perceived themselves as more resourced in educational TV programs and parental encouragement, while students in rural areas perceived educational isolation (Arshad et al., 2014).

Regional Studies – Kohat and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Kohat, research is scarcer but illuminating. Gul et al. (2023) conducted two relevant studies in Kohat. At the intermediate (secondary) level, they surveyed Class 10 students in five government high schools in Kohat and reported that social, psychological, and cultural factors were key challenges to speaking English, while full details are limited, these categories likely include family pressure, community stigma around speaking

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English, and anxiety or shyness. The abstract explicitly notes that these factors hinder English-speaking proficiency Gul et al. (2023). In a related study of Kohat University undergraduates, the same authors identified concrete issues like poor grammar, lack of practice opportunities, and fear of mistakes (a psychological factor) as major causes of low English fluency. Notably, lack of classroom speaking practice and L1 interference were mentioned, reflecting that cultural comfort zones (using Pashto or Urdu) can block English usage.

Theoretical Framework

Theoretical Lenses: Sociocultural, Identity, and Capital

Sociocultural views suggest learning changes with tools and interactions while picking up common group habits (Vygotsky, 1978). From this angle, attitudes toward learning aren't fixed; they form by taking part in things others care about. Bourdieu's take on language as a kind of capital or quiet force explains why English often feels prized where gaps between people exist positive vibes usually link to rewards like work options, climbing higher, being noticed (Bourdieu, 1991). On top of that, Norton brings in "investment," mixing identity, power shifts, and opportunities at hand; this makes sense of the push-pull feelings learners face when access to important circles stays blocked (Norton, 2013). Ajzen's model links how people feel to what they plan to do, pointing out social pressure and sense of control (Ajzen, 1991). Because of this, looking at attitudes through both small-scale settings like classrooms and larger forces such as policies or beliefs makes sense.

Methodology

The study employed an explanatory sequential mixed-methods design consisting of:

Quantitative Phase → administration of a structured questionnaire to students

Qualitative Phase → follow-up semi-structured interviews with ESL teachers

This sequence allowed quantitative patterns to guide deeper qualitative exploration (Creswell, 2018). Such a design is appropriate for socio-cultural studies since attitudes toward ESL emerge from social experiences, interactions, and cultural contexts (Vygotsky, 1978). Quantitative data helped identify trends in socio-cultural influences, while qualitative interviews provided explanatory insight consistent with Gardner's (1985) socio-educational model, Krashen's (1982) affective filter concept, and sociocultural theory.

Population and Sampling

Population

The population comprised all government higher secondary schools of District Kohat. The district includes diverse rural and urban communities, providing a suitable context for studying socio-cultural influences on ESL attitudes.

Sampling Technique

The study adopted convenience sampling, a non-probability method, due to:

Accessibility of institutions

Administrative feasibility

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Time constraints

Easy to approach

Convenient sampling is commonly used in educational contexts when researchers need readily available participants from accessible settings (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2018).

Sample Schools

Out of the population, rural areas GHSS Shadi Khel and GHSS Dhoda, and urban areas GHSS No. 1 Kohat City and GCHSS school, were selected based on easy accessibility and accordingly willingness to participate. This rural-urban distribution ensured contextual diversity while still fitting the convenience sampling framework.

Sample of Students and Teachers

Students: All enrolled and available intermediate-level students from the four schools were invited to participate. Out of 569 enrolled students selected from four schools, 451 responded to the questionnaire, and the remaining 108 did not show consent to participate in it.

Teachers: After analyzing the student data, four English teachers, subject specialists (SS) in English (one from each school), were interviewed to gain deeper insights into socio-cultural influences.

Purposive selection of teachers ensured that only experienced ESL practitioners contributed to the qualitative phase (Patton, 2015).

Data Analysis Techniques

Quantitative Analysis

Data from questionnaires were analyzed using Excel. Frequency and mean were found out for each item and theme separately. These analyses helped establish patterns and connections consistent with educational research norms (Field, 2018).

Qualitative Analysis

The transcripts of teachers' interviews were analyzed thematically (Braun & Clarke, 2006):

Familiarization

Coding

Theme identification

Theme review

Refinement

Interpretation

Analyses and Discussion

This section gives a full quantitative analysis of the questionnaire that was given to intermediate-level students of four public-sector schools (two urban and two rural) in District Kohat. The analysis aims to see the socio-cultural perceived factors that influence students' attitudes towards learning English as a second language (ESL).

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There are 35 items in the dataset, which fall under nine thematic areas. These are learners' attitude, media and community influence, motivational intensity, anxiety, classroom influence, English teacher, language material, parental role, and peer influence. The socio-cultural theory, Gardner's socio-educational model of motivation, and Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis interpret each theme. There are several charts attached to each theme that show the responses.

Learners' Attitude towards English

The information regarding the learners' attitudes towards English indicates that the intermediate level learners of District Kohat have positive but less uniform attitude. According to item-wise means, most students consider English as an essential language for both academic success and future mobility. However, their attitudinal orientation towards English is a mixed one. With respect to the importance of learning English there were some statements like "English is important for my future career" or "Learning English is useful for communication" scored high mean. So it suggests that most learners have strong instrumental motivation. Students are aware that a good command of English will help them academically and fulfil their aspirations in higher education and jobs. Moderate to high agreement on items indicates a practical orientation towards English learning.

On the contrary, the cluster shows that affective engagement, whether to do with enjoying English, feeling confident or seeing English as culturally engaging, is less consistent. Items that reflect students' interest, enjoyment or intrinsic motivation tend to have slightly lower means. This indicates that while students appreciate English for instrumental or external reasons, their emotional connection to the language is being developed more slowly.

As per Gardner's socio-educational, model, it is believed that instrumental motivation is in majority in South Asian EFL context. Most students don't want to belong to English speaking cultures but they do appreciate utility value.

Furthermore, looking through the prism of the sociocultural theory developed by Vygotsky, it becomes evident that the attitudes of students are predetermined by their social surroundings, family values, school standards and social pressures related to the success in English medium. They are motivated not by the perceived benefits of immersive interactional exposure but by social worth and academic prestige that is accorded to the English language. This can facilitate instrumental drives, but can also lead to performance pressure, which affects the feelings of the students towards English.

The Hypothesis of Affective filter offered by Krashen is applicable here: positive beliefs about the importance of English, which are held by students reduce the affective filter, but inconsistent confidence and enjoyment can increase the affective filter. Students can appreciate English and feel anxious or not have supportive environments that can support them to take risk in communication.

On the whole, the attitudinal cluster shows that the students of District Kohat have a positive attitude towards the English learning mostly due to the social, educational and employment requirements. The task of teachers is to shift this strongly instrumentalist orientation to a higher-level involvement through multiplication of the frequency of

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communicative engagements, promotion of cultural inquisitiveness, and inspirations of self-confidence. Enhancement of intrinsic motivation can result in more self-directed and sustainable language learning.

Parental Role and Home Support

The parental role cluster findings depict that families have a great impact on the attitude of the students towards acquiring English. Parental encouragement, availability of English materials at home and expectations of parents have moderate-to-high means. Based on the answers, parents encourage most of the students verbally and this helps them positively in terms of attitudes and confidence. Parents also seem to know the importance of English in academic achievement, and they frequently pressurize children to excel in the subject.

Emerging however, the material support is varied as opposed to emotional and motivational support that is evident. Not every family has access to English storybooks, digital media, and constant exposure to English media. The difference is a manifestation of larger socio-economic differences in the district. Families in the middle classes are inclined to invest more in English materials, and students with lower income families prefer to use the instruction in schools. Such a disconnect affects the preparedness and future lingo of students. The importance of parental education is also implicitly apparent. In cases where the parents are to a certain extent familiar with English, children have a better linguistic environment. In cases where parents do not speak English, their assistance is motivational as opposed to being instructional. This is in line with the concept of Vygotsky that learning is scaffolded by more experienced individuals; in most households, the scaffold is restricted.

In the view of Gardner, the role played by the parenting element helps in terms of instrumental motivation. Parents are manipulating students to English as they feel that this is the way up the ladder. However, integrative motivation is less cohesive as, families do not appreciate the English language based on its cultural linkage but rather on its usefulness. The affective filter of Krashen is also in contact with the home environment. Positive family attitudes can reduce anxiety and improve confidence whereas pressure-oriented families have the unwanted effects of increasing the levels of stress among students. On the whole, parental role in the District Kohat is a strong inspirator, yet disparities in terms of resources influence the consistency. Improving community libraries, access to digital and school-home engagement programs may be used to decrease this disparity.

Peer Influence and Classroom Social Dynamics

Peer influence becomes a prominent socio-cultural issue that influences the attitude of students towards English. According to the majority of students, peers influence their self-esteem, their motivation, and their desire to speak English. Means of items that point at peers facilitating or discouraging participation are moderate and this proves that peer interactions may either promote or discourage language learning.

The performance of some students motivates other students with them being considered as role models. Some of them, though, feel anxiety or pressure to compare, particularly

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when talking in English in front of more competent students. This two-fold effect corresponds with the affective filter proposed by Krashen: support person groups reduce anxiety, and competitive or judgmental settings increase it. The sociocultural theory of Vygotsky can be applied here in a great way. The zone of proximal development (ZPD) involves peer collaboration. Students study optimally when they are with relatively more competent students. The evidence indicates that students are more positive in terms of attitudes where it is promoted to perform group work, peer discussions and collaborative assignments.

The findings also indicate that positive peer influence enhances integrative features of motivation that students start to develop towards the learning of English as a way of belongingness, involvement, and identity to the social group. On the other hand, there is fear of embarrassment or unpleasant linguistic judgments which decrease the desire to communicate. The classroom culture, therefore, is of key importance. Peer support thrives in a low-pressure atmosphere that teachers create. The results highlight the significance of group assignments, mixed interaction and confidence-building speaking tasks.

Teacher Influence and Pedagogical Practices

The most significant thematic cluster in the dataset is teacher influence that has the largest overall means. There is unanimity among students that the attitudes towards English are greatly influenced by the behavior of teachers, their teaching style, and the classroom atmosphere. The questions concerning teacher motivation, the clarity of explanations, classroom equity, and supportive feedback response are all consistently positive. The defining role in this context is that of teachers who act as main gatekeepers of the English learning experience. Students show motivational effects when instructors employ interesting approaches, communication opportunities, and constructive feedback. This is in line with the socio-educational perspective by Gardner, in which the teacher-student attachment improves both the instrumental and integrative motivation.

In addition, the framework by Vygotsky makes the teacher a key mediator of learning. The scaffolding of intricate linguistic tasks, modeling of proper use, and regulating classroom talk are some functions that teachers perform. The elevated average scores indicate that good pedagogical actions have a significant positive impact on the confidence level of students and their anxiety. The Affective Filter Hypothesis by Krashen is no exception: an atmosphere of stress-free support by the teachers contributes to the reduction of the affective filter in the students that allows them to acquire it better. Such negative or too strict teacher activities are less common but are associated with lower enthusiasm and increased apprehension.

Since the strongest themes are the teacher influence, professional development, reflective teaching, and communicative methodologies are to be given the first priority in all institutions of District Kohat.

Media and Community Influence

This was a theme that was investigated on the influence of media exposure and the perceptions of the community on the orientation of the learners towards English. The

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outcomes of the research were rather contradictory but positive, with most students admitting that English media (films, social media, music) promotes their interest in studying the language. The attitudes of the community, urban exposure in particular, were also involved in shaping learning attitudes.

The results agree with the focus of Vygotsky on social context: media presents a strong cultural instrument that acts as an intermediary in language learning. In addition, positive community evaluation of English enhances instrumental motivation as explained by Gardner to influence learning objectives of students particularly in the rural-urban comparisons.

Motivational Intensity

Motivational Intensity is a measure of effort being put that students apply in learning English. The results of the analysis indicated a high to moderate degree of motivation and some of the items were expressed to be highly willing to become more proficient. Objects that represent hard work, perseverance, and willpower have always high mean scores.

This is quite parallel to the socio-educational model proposed by Gardner in which motivational intensity is an important element in achieving language acquisition. The statistics indicate that the structural issues are observed, but students are motivated by effort, which may be supported by academic, social, and profession-related objectives.

Anxiety

The results of the theme of anxiety revealed moderate anxiety in connection with languages. Students complained about making mistakes, talking in front of people, or being evaluated. Even though they are not severe, these nervous characteristics may influence the performance of language.

Krashen Affective Filter Hypothesis describes how anxiety increases the affective filter which blocks the input processing and understanding. The findings provide strong support of the necessity of supportive learning conditions to lower fear and consider language risk-taking.

Classroom Influence

The interactions in the classroom such as the teaching method, class participation, and collaboration with peers had conflicting effects. Other students mentioned positive classroom experiences and others complained about the lack of engagement in classroom.

This helps to confirm the claim that made by Vygotsky that interaction in the classroom influences cognitive and lingual development. The difference implies the fact that the practices of pedagogy and the interaction between teachers and their students vary considerably within the schools.

Language Material

The accessibility and suitability of language material text books, audio- visual aids and extra materials were slightly satisfactory. Students acknowledged that materials supported understanding, but some believed there was not enough or outdated

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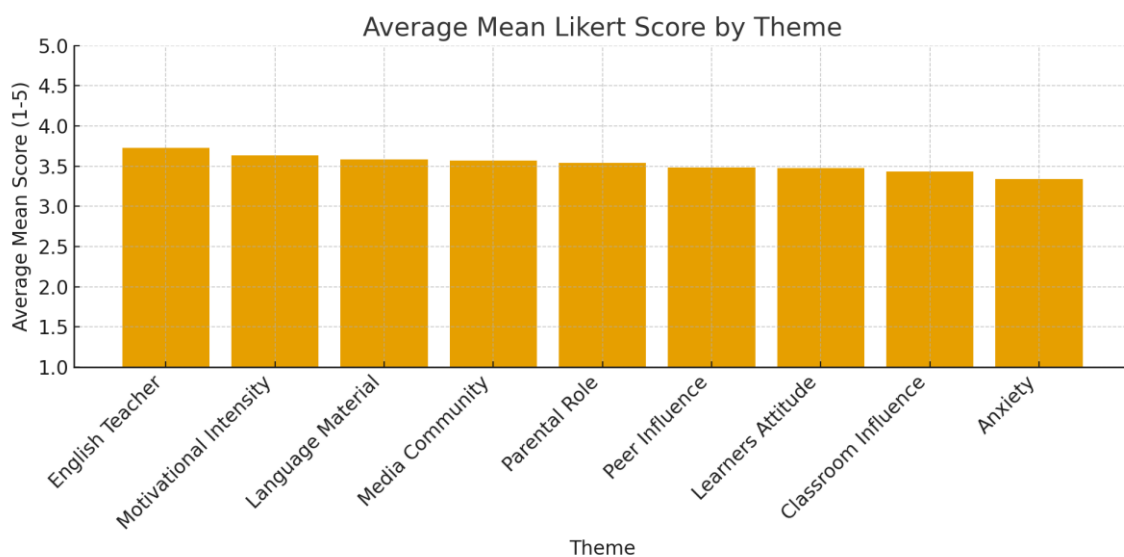
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resources.

Authentic input is also paramount in Krashen's input hypothesis wherein the level of comprehensive means that acquisition (i.e. learning) will take place at a faster rate. Material is potentially insufficient for exposure outside the classroom.

The overall score chart reveals that 'English Teacher,' 'Motivational Intensity,' and 'Parental Role' are the strongest positive socio-cultural influences. In contrast, Anxiety and some aspects of 'Learners' Attitude' show moderate to weaker trends. These findings reinforce the interconnectedness of socio-cultural, emotional, and instructional factors in shaping ESL attitudes in District Kohat.



Thematic Analysis

Family and Parental Influence

The family background is mentioned as the most important variable that determines student attitudes. The presence of low literacy rates, insufficient exposure to English as well as lack of parental support provide a conducive environment in which English is underrated. The ignorance of parents on its usefulness continues to create apathy. Nasir also points to the difference between generations: students may be interested in learning English, but their ignorance or lack of interest (on part of parent) kills the passion.

Peer Influence and Social Circles

Usually students come from similar backgrounds, their views tend to match up. When everyone seems alike, drive tends to fade out. With no real push from classmates, effort drops off. This setup keeps things stuck instead of moving forward.

Educational Material and Curriculum

Textbooks often get called dull or shallow. Some say they should add stuff that grabs attention, something kids can connect with this could spark real interest. When lessons feel

empty, when lessons miss the mark, it often reflects deeper flaws in how education is built.

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Role of the Teacher

Teachers play a key role in driving change. Even when facing tight budgets or dull materials, Nasir argues that an engaged educator can shift how students feel about learning. In his view, instructors act like guides who turn lessons into something lively and worth paying attention to. That points to trust in teachers' ability to shape real progress - putting their energy at the heart of successful language teaching.

Anxiety and Confidence

Nasir sees strong nervousness around using new languages mostly when talking. Some learners worry about mistakes or getting laughed at, plus they see English as distant from their own culture. That stress isn't just a result of weak skills; it also makes them worse by reducing involvement. The way classes run doesn't help students feel safe trying things out.

Community and Societal Environment.

Outside school, students almost never meet people who talk in English. Being cut off like this means they hardly ever get to use the English language so not using it becomes routine. According to Nasir, if your surroundings don't speak English, expecting fluent speakers or ones sounding local is unrealistic.

Religion and Cultural Identity

A big issue seems to be the clash some feel between cultures. Some learners see English tied to Western ways, sometimes even linking it to **Christian beliefs**. As Nasir points out, there's a worry among pupils that "picking up English could shift their faith." That strong feeling shows wider anxieties about self-identity and culture in schools shaped by colonial history.

Conclusion

This research confirms that attitudes towards English learning are not just theoretical constructs but are closely connected to the socio-cultural background of the learners. In the case of District Kohat, a significant change in ESL learning would mean the implementation of comprehensive, culturally sensitive, and mentally supportive measures that engage not only teachers but also schools, families, and policymakers. By working together, the learners' motivation to use English can be enhanced, thus resulting in higher language skills and fairer access to worldwide opportunities. Hence, the socio-cultural landscape of District Kohat produces a unique motivational profile. Students are highly driven by economic aspirations but hindered by anxiety, limited exposure, and inconsistent support systems. Teachers remain central agents in shaping attitudes and reducing affective barriers. Meanwhile, media provides a powerful external stimulus, partially compensating for gaps in community exposure.

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