Managing Higher Education Quality Enhancement in Pakistan through Communication Skill to achieve International Opportunities

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Abstract

The objective of the current research study was to examine Communication Skill, which has significantly contributed towards the quality enhancement of the higher education. In line with the research questions/purposes, the survey data was collected by using questionnaire on sample selected by stratified random sampling technique. The data was collected from 300 respondents including faculty members, Administrators and Educationists of twelve public and private universities located at Peshawar, Islamabad and Lahore questionnaire. The data was processed with SPSS ver. 23. To apply the structural equation modeling (SEM) AMOS v.22 was employed for model fitting, hypotheses and proposed theoretical relationship of the study. The results revealed that Communication skill has a major contribution towards enhancement of Quality of Higher Education. It can improve grammatical ability & academic vocabulary which creates confidence, interpersonal skills and self-development in the students which leads to achieve the required goals and opportunities in international seminars and conferences.

Keywords: Quality education, Standardized Curriculum, Quality Enhancement, International Opportunities, Structural Equation Model

Introduction

Nowadays, higher education is being given much importance and considered to be of vital significance for a country interested in the economic and social progress. It is stated that the higher educational departments are under the obligation to equip the citizens of the country with sophisticated knowledge and technology needed for responsible posts in the government, business and other fields. It is well known that the well educated manpower only can cope with the developed knowledge

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and technology. It is stated that without the participation of the well educated citizens in the pace of development, it is really very difficult to develop the country economically and socially (Akhavan, 2005). Above all, it is necessary to make them capable to meet the future challenges in all fields of life. The quality of a higher education system relates to how and through which it meets its targets and authenticated. (Pazagadi et al, 2005). Hence, it seems true that development of a community relies on the level of education in terms of quality and quantity it acquires.

The most acceptable, natural and efficient method for the learners is that they should continuously and freely talk in English either through thinking out solution of the problems or situation as well as by way of the verbal exchange of ideas or, in simple terms, through mutual discussions (Rahman, T., 2001). Communication skills enhance the competence of the faculty as well as of the students which enables them in presenting the research papers in the seminars/conferences and during lectures (ibid).

Literature Review

English language is widely recognized for communication purposes. It has linked the people of different continents who are involved / engaged in trade, business and in education field (Vency and E. Ramganesh; 2013). Skill of academic writing particularly ability of English language should be prerequisite at postgraduate level for promoting and extending research activities in the educational institutions of Pakistan. Further, the present syllabus of the English language courses do not facilitate the students of the university to improve their research writing skills as a number of postgraduates/ scholars don't have the writing capability, particularly, the academic writing skill, which is required for research activity in Pakistan. Hence, a vital practical approach towards developing the educational position, the English language can create improvement in writing competence of the novice writers and their critical and creative thinking regarding the discussion and conference (Woodward-Kron, 2002).

Communication process plays an importance role in changing the peoples' behavior through establishing a network system to provide and enhance the interpersonal skills and effective coordination. Effective communication skills are required among the educational managers and faculties both within and outside of the educational environment. The education administrator should have comprehensive knowledge of humanities, effective communication skills as well as leadership capabilities (Habaci et. al, 2013). Communication plays an effective role

in system and organization. It relates various parts of system and develops sound coordination (Borman & Kimbaal, 2005).

Communication plays an effective part in education especially in administration and teaching and learning processes (Habaci, et. al. 2013). The administration carries out a significant role in improving the quality education and creating an educational environment, which is possible only when there is communication skill. Quality of higher education can be improved through efficiency in English language and through improving the communication skill of a student. English language can improve and enhance the writing competence of the researcher and enables him of critical thinking. Communication is the backbone of any system and organization and relates various parts of system and develops sound coordination (Borman & Kimbaal, 2005).

Problem Statement

In Pakistan there are about 163 degree awarding institutes and universities, but no Pakistani university or degree awarding institution is placed in the top 100 hundred universities of the world (Times Higher Education World University Rankings 2018). Even in Asia no Pakistani university lies in top 100 universities. Main objective or aim the research study was to point out and identify the factors by which the quality education may be enhanced in Pakistan. By studied the literature review it was found that there is no such study conducted to identify the relationship between higher Quality Education through competence of Communication skill/English language in Pakistan. The basic aim of this study was that the research report having recommendations on the basis of results, would help education departments, policy makers and the Higher Education Commission to improve effective higher quality education through Communication Skill in Public & private degree awarding institutions.

Objectives of the Research Study

The following objectives are:

i. To investigate significant role of communication skills/ English language in enhancing the higher Quality Education to achieve international opportunity.
ii. To identify the relationship between communication skills/ English language and Quality Education

Research Methodology

Survey method was applied for data collection. The nature of study was causal and co-relational while the scope of researcher was nominal and

background of study was natural and non-contrived. The unit of analysis was individuals. Nature was cross-sectional. The primary data was collected through questionnaire including male and female respondents by 5. Likert scale i.e. 1 for Strong Disagree and 5 for Strong Agree.

A pilot study was conducted for testing the questionnaire Validity and Reliability and finalized with a use of probability sampling approach. The primary data was collected by filling questionnaires from the relevant experts including male and female respondents (Zikmund, 2003). The sample frame consisted of 300 people including the faculty members, Administrators & Educationists of 12 different selected universities in Public & Private sector at Peshawar, Islamabad and Lahore in Pakistan. The data was analyzed by SPSS v. 23 with the help of structural equation modeling (SEM)/AMOS v. 22 for model fitting and testing the hypotheses and proposed theoretical relationship in the study.

Data Analysis & Discussion

Pilot Study

The pilot study was conducted to find out the reliability and validity of the questionnaire. 20 questionnaires were distributed at random among relevant respondents in various universities of Khyber Pukhtunkhwa but those respondents were not included in final study. The results show that measures taken are free of errors, length of questionnaire is appropriate and will produce valid results.

Main Survey Study

Normality

The normality of the data is examined by simple graphical method Q-Q plot/normal probability plot. The diagram has been plotted for the observed values and expected value.

Homoscedasticity

Homoscedasticity is called homogeneity of variance in case the data is grouped together. Levene's test is most common technique for examination of homoscedasticity (Field, 2009). In the current research study, the Levene's test for metric variables was determined by way of non-metric variable as part of t-test. The table shows values are in the recommended range.

Table 1: Levene's test Homogeneity of Variance

	Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
CS	.682	1	298	.410
QE	2.513	1	298	.114

Much of the received scores were more than the minimum recommended value i.e. $p<0.05$ which is significant value, which shows equal variance for all variables in the groups of male as well as female respondents, so assumption of homogeneity of variance had not violated Thus, the researcher continued without any further treatment.

Multicollinearity

The table 2 and 3 show that values lie in the recommended range which is a sign of no mulitcollinearity.

Table 2: Bivariate Correlations

	CS	QE
CS	1	
QE	.104	1

Table 3: Collinearity Statistics

Factors	Collinearity Statistics	
	Tolerance	VIF
CS	1.000	1.000

a. Dependent Variable: SumG

Non- Response Biasness

In the study, Mann-Whitney U-test was used to find out the non-response biasness. The results shows that significant value of every variable is not lesser than $P>0.05$ or even equal. So, non-response does not generate any issue in the current research study.

Demographic/Profile of the Respondents

Table 4: Demographic Characteristics

		Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	217	72.3
	Female	83	27.7
Academic Qualification	Master	45	15.0
	M.Phil./ Ph. D scholars	103	34.3
	Ph.D.	152	50.7
Designation	Faculty member	144	48.0
	Administrator	97	32.3
	Educationist	59	19.7
Age	25—35	69	23.0
	36—45	106	35.3

	46—55	83	27.7
	56 and above	42	14.0
Total sample		300	100.0

Reliability and Validity

Reliability and validity and item correlation were computed of the research with the help of SPSS technique and values of Cronbach's α, method and item correlation lies in the recommended range as shown in the table , so all items of the related factors were highly correlated with each other. The values of Cronbach's α are .658 and .633 respectively which lies above the acceptance range i.e. .6.

Table 5: Reliability Cronbach Alpha

Factor	Item=	Cronach's α
CS	4	.658
QE	3	.633

CS= Communication Skill
QE= Quality Education

Factor Analysis

The Factor Analysis technique was applied on the data in two forms. EFA is used to assess the variation explained by the role of observed variables for a factor and CFA is to verify the already mentioned factors, involved in theoretical model.

The KMO value is above 0.6 and it proposes that correlation among items is significant and is appropriated for exploratory factor analysis (EFA) to give parsimonious set of factors. While, the significant value of Bartlett's test of sphericity shows the correlation between the items is above 0.3 which explains appropriate for EFA.

Table 6: Factor Analysis

Factors	Items	Cronbach's α	(EFA)	KMO value	Bartlett's Test's	Variance Explained
CS	4	.658	1	.710	.000	50.833
QE	3	.633	1	619	.000	56.943

The results shows that all values of KMO are above 0.6, which confirms sampling adequacy, whereas Bartlett's test value is <.05 i.e. (P<.05), which is significant acceptable.

Structural Equation Modeling (SEM)

Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) is a multivariate method used for estimation of relationship among interrelated unobserved variables simultaneously. The model under consideration is examined and through this technique tested the coefficients of observed and unobserved

variables, such that it becomes consistent with data. According to Geffen et al. (2000) in SEM, there have been two types of models. 1) Measurement model, 2) Structural model. The correlation between observed variable and unobserved variables is called as measurement model. The specified model ensures the relation between scores on underlying factors as well observed indicator variables, which are planned to measure. The same model indicates CFA (Confirmatory Factor Analysis). It indicates the model through which every measure weights on a specific factor. It neither describes the relationship among factors but also focuses on validation of the model. It shows how measured variables get together to explain factors and also utilized to checks reliability and validity.

Similarly, to find out the relationship between latent variables is called as structural model. Structural model identifies the directly or indirectly effect of certain unobserved variables with other unobserved variables. So, it means structural model is used to explain the relation among factors and are utilized for testing hypotheses.

Validation of the Measurement Model: Psychometric Checks

A Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was obtained, utilizing AMOS v. 22. The Validity of measurement model depends on acceptable levels of goodness of fit for the specified model and determines the factor validity.

Content validity and factor reliability is ensured by applying Cronbach's α technique on the research model have already been calculated and other checks of the questionnaire may also be applied here. Convergent validity is presented at the time when every measurement question strongly correlates with its assumed theoretical factor. It means that a question which indicates a factor shows high proportion of variance in common. The value ranges between zero and one (0 – 1). The convergent validity was verified for each factor loading and all are found significant i.e. $p < 0.05$. The table indicates factor loading and having value above .60, but few of them are closer to .60.

Model Identification

In SEM, there are three types of structural model. First one is Just Identified, second is over identified and last one is known as under-identified. The over identified model is proposed for the current research study having value of degree of freedom is 13 as indicated in table 6 drawn from the AMOS output.

Table 7: AMOS Results: Computation of degrees of freedom

Nos. of distinct sample moments	28
Nos. of distinct parameters to be estimated	15
Degrees of freedom (df) (28 - 15)	13

In the research study, the model has 28 distinct parameters which are needed to estimate with 13 degree of freedom, so value is >0, which is positive and model is over identified.

The Measurement Model

Figure 2, the proposed model consists of 2 factors. Each factor is measured at least 3 to 4 observed variables. The reliability of which is influenced by random measurement error, as indicated by the associated error term. The factors are measured by the help of observed variables. There are total 2 factors and all factors are inter-correlated.

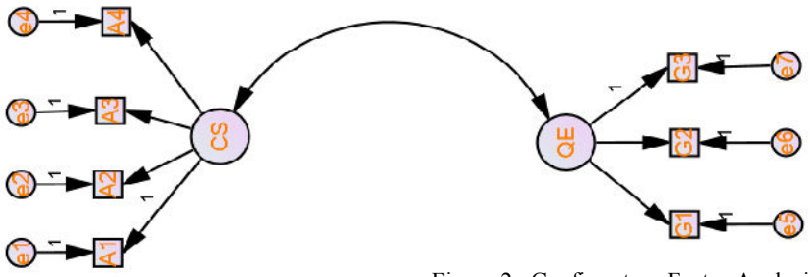

Figure 2 : Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Model Evaluation Criteria: Goodness of Fit

The main interest in SEM is to fit the data on a hypothesized model, or check whether there is some deficiency present in the hypothesized model and the fitted data. The assessment of a model fit can be tested through several criteria. In table 7**,** a list of different commonly used model-fit measures are listed which are used in this study.

Table 8: Fit statistics of the measurement model

Fit Statistic	Obtained value	Recommended value
χ^2 (chi-square)	11.51	---
Df	13	---
χ^2 significance	0.000	p<=0.05
χ^2 / df	.884	< 5.0
GFI	0.989	Closer to one
AGFI	0.976	
NFI	0.962	
RFI	0.938	

CFI	1.000	
TLI	1.009	
RMSEA	.000	Closer to zero
RMR	0.022	

In the model fitting, the values are also an indication of good fit. Root Mean Square Error Absolute is well below the recommended value of 0.05, and Root Mean Square Residual is also indicating good model fit. Therefore the specified model is an over identified model.

The (CFA) confirmatory factor analysis explained an acceptable overall model fit and hence, the theorized model fit well with the observed data**.** It can be finalized that the hypothesized factor CFA model fits the sample data very well.

The Structural Model Path Diagram

The structural model depicted in Figure 3, presents the formulated study hypotheses. Before discussing the results, it is essential to explain this structural model path diagram. From figure 3, it is clear that 02 unobserved latent factors and total 07 indictor variables are used. These 07 observed variables are reflecting their respective underlying latent variables. With each indicator variable, there is an error term, which is denoted by E1, E2 up to E7.

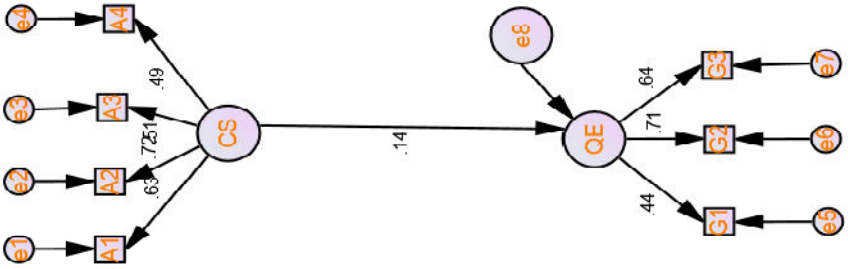

Figure 3. Structural Equation Model (Unstandardized estimates)

Assessing Structural Model Fitness

The same process can be adopted for establishing the structural model's validity as was followed previously. The "GOF" and other indices are used for assessing the structural model fit. These GOF fit indicates are tabulated in table 8 along with its recommended values.

Table 9: Fit statistics of the measurement model

Fit Statistic	Obtained value	Recommended value
χ^2 (chi-square)	11.51	---
Df	13	---
χ^2 significance	0.000	p<0.05
χ^2 / Df	.884	< 5
GFI	0.989	
AGFI	0.976	
NFI	0.962	Closer to one
RFI	0.938	
CFI	1.000	
TLI	1.009	
RMSEA	.000	Closer to zero
RMR	0.022	

The "model fit indices" also present a reasonable model fit for the structural model. "Goodness of Fit index (GFI)" obtained is 0.989. The Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index "(AGFI)" is 0.976. The Normed fit Index "(NFI)", Relative Fit index "(RFI)", Comparative Fit index "(CFI)", Tucker Lewis Index "(TLI)" are also so closer to one. Hence it is better to refine the model by considering Modification Indices.

Testing Structural Relationships

From the analysis conducted and illustrated on previous pages, it may be finalized that the hypothesized model revealed good fit with fitted data. The analysis also indicates the path estimates in the structural model and variance explained (value) in each dependent variable. From the results, it is clear that all the six hypothesized paths are significant (P value <0.05), and hence supported. The standardized regression weights of the hypothesized model and the results of their associated hypotheses, providing support for hypotheses H1 is presented in table 9.

Table 10: Standardized Regression Estimates of the Hypotheses under study

No.	Hypothesis	Standardized path coefficients	Hypothesis Rejected/ not rejected
1.	CS has a significant influence on QE at HE	0.250	Not rejected

Summary and Conclusion

Higher education is critical in the development of society and known as a capital investment. It is of supreme importance for the country's economic and social development. In the rapidly changing world of today, there is a need for continuous improvement in any system, which stands truer for the higher education sector than many others. The main purpose of this research paper was to examine the communication

skills/English language factor that enhances the quality of the higher education and relationship with quality Education. The present study focused to investigate the significant effect of Communication Skill/English language on quality education.

A proposed theoretical model was established and it gave us a good understanding of underlying factors that influence quality of higher education. The analysis /structural equation model revealed that Communication skill has a major contribution towards enhancement of Quality of Higher Education. It can improve grammatical ability & academic vocabulary which creates confidence, interpersonal skills and self-development in the students which leads to achieve the required goals and opportunities in international seminars and conferences. So, the policy makers should pay more attention in developing the communication skill in enhancing the quality education

Recommendations

Pakistan is active in devising plans, policies and making suggestions for improvement in all fields of life. Where it falls short, is the 'implementation' of those plans and policies. Following measures and suggestions should be implemented by the concerned authorities for enhancing the quality in higher education through communication skill.. On the basis of analysis and results, the study suggests some recommendations for enhancing the quality education in Pakistan;

- To adopt proper methodologies in both public and private recognized institutions for improving communication skills.
- Teachers must be fully qualified and competent in relevant and specialized area/ communication skill/English language ability.
- Curriculum of communication skills should be frequently reviewed and designed to make it more feasible at workplace.
- Educational conferences, seminars and workshops should be arranged frequently at international as well national level for updating knowledge and confidence in communication.
- Competent faculty should be engaged in new teaching strategies and they should adapt them to make it interesting, effective, interactive, communicative and attractive for enhancing the quality of higher education.
- To design the various types of English language courses to meet the needs of the students in enhancing the quality education.
- Communication with faculties at university level must be ensured in English to build up confidence with each other.

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