

100

English As a Medium of Education In Pakistan

Outline

1. Introduction:

• Hook

• General Statement

• Thesis Statement It is without an iota of doubt that English needs to be adopted and promoted as the medium of education from grade one because it strengthens official functions, provides access to global knowledge, facilitates higher education, connects students with modern disciplines, enhances employability, & enables internal communication and mobility.

2- Advantages of English as a Medium of Education

i) Official Status:

English education equips students to navigate government, legal, and administrative contents efficiently.

ii) Access to Global Knowledge

English proficiency allows students to engage

with international research and resources for academic purpose.

iii) Facilitation of Higher Educations

English education enables students to understand and excel in advanced academic materials at national and international universities.

iv) Connection with Modern Disciplines

English prepares students to access and engage with modern global fields and research.

v) Enhance Employability

English proficiency improves job prospects by enabling effective communication and competitiveness in workplaces.

vi) International Communications

English medium education allows students to engage confidently in global interactions, collaborations, and knowledge exchange.

vii) Academic and Professional Mobility

English-based education enables students to pursue international educational and career opportunities without language barriers.

3- Challenges of English as a Medium of Education

i) Limited Teacher Proficiency:

Many teachers struggle with English, hindering effective teaching and student learning outcomes.

ii) Language Barrier for Students:

Students without a strong English foundation struggle to understand lessons, participate, and achieve academic progress.

~~iii) Social and Economic~~

iii) Dependence on Rote Learning:

English-medium instruction often promotes memorisation over comprehension, weakening conceptual understanding.

iv) Social and Economic Inequality:

Access to quality English education favors wealthier students, leaving low-income students at a disadvantage academically and professionally.

v) High Dropout Rates:

Limited English proficiency leads many

DAY: _____

DATE: _____

Students, especially in rural areas, to leave school before completing their education.

4- Way Forward:

- Strengthening teachers' training
- Introducing a gradual building approach for students
- Reforming examination and assessment systems
- Increasing investment in public and rural schools.

5- Conclusion:

Essay

Pakistan is a land where it is everyone's hobby to indulge in argumentation and debate.

Whether one has knowledge about a topic or not, arguments continue with self-created logic until one side accepts defeat. One of the most frequently debated topics in Pakistan is the use of English as a medium of education. Supporters of English as a compulsory medium emphasize its importance as an international language and the language of a vast body of knowledge and research. Opponents, however, see it as a threat to Urdu, the national language of Pakistan.

While endless debates may continue, decisions based on logic and ground realities provide clarity. It is without an iota of doubt that English needs to be adopted and promoted as the medium of education from grade one because it strengthens official functions, provides access to global knowledge, facilitates

higher education connects students with modern disciplines, enhance employability, & enables international communication and mobility.

First of all, English holds official status in Pakistan and play a key role in administration, law, and governance. Students educated in English gain the ability to understand government policies, legal documents, and formal communication. Early exposure to the language ensures the confident participation in professional and administrative settings. This foundation reduces the gap between schooling and real-world responsibilities. For example, civil service examinations, legal proceedings, and official correspondence in Pakistan are primarily conducted in English, making proficiency essential for effective performance. Thus, learning in English prepares students to meet the demands of official and administrative roles efficiently.

In addition, English provides students with access to global knowledge and contemporary research. Most academic journals, scientific literature, and

modern textbooks are published in English. Learning through this language allows students to explore the latest discoveries and advancements in various fields. It also broadens their intellectual horizons beyond the local context. For instance, international conferences, online courses, and educational platforms primarily use English, giving students direct exposure to global ideas and innovations. Therefore, proficiency in English enables students to acquire knowledge that is essential for academic growth and global competitiveness.

Moreover, English plays a crucial role in facilitating higher education for students in Pakistan. Universities and professional institutions, both in Pakistan and abroad, use English as the primary medium of instruction. Early exposure to English helps students adapt to advanced curricula without facing language barriers. It also enables smoother comprehension of complex subjects and academic materials. As an illustration, most academic textbooks, research

articles, and university lectures in Pakistan are published and delivered in English, making proficiency necessary to fully understand and excel in higher education. Hence, learning in English from early grades prepares students to pursue higher education confidently and effectively.

Furthermore, English connects students with modern disciplines and contemporary fields of knowledge. Many advanced areas, such as science, technology, medicine, and international relations, rely heavily on English for study and research.

Learning in English allows students to grasp new concepts, understand technical terminology, and stay updated with global advancements. It

also ensures their education aligns with international standards. For example, fields like

artificial intelligence, biotechnology, global health, etc., publish over 90% of their research and

journals in English. It requires the same language to access and contribute to cutting-edge

knowledge. However, English enables students to

engage meaningfully with modern disciplines and prepare them for future professional and academic challenge.

Equally important, English significantly enhances students' employability in Pakistan & abroad.

Many employers, especially in multinational companies, corporate sectors, and professional services, prefer candidates who can communicate fluently in English. Proficiency in the language helps individuals perform ^{eff}actively in interviews, presentations, and workplace interactions. It also increases their competitiveness in the job market. For example, multinational firms like IBM, Unilever, and Microsoft in Pakistan require strong English communication skills for recruitment. Consequently, learning English equips students with the language skills necessary to secure better jobs and succeed professionally.

Notably, English enables students to communicate effectively on an international level. English serves as the global lingua franca in diplomacy

business, science, and education. Students proficient in English can engage with people from different countries, share ideas, and participate in international conferences and contributions. This skill broadens their perspectives and strengthens global connectivity. As an illustration, Pakistani students who attend international seminars, online courses or global research projects rely on English to communicate and collaborate successfully with peers worldwide. As a result, English language empowers students to participate confidently in global discussions and international networks.

Last but not least, English expands students' academic and professional mobility both within Pakistan and abroad. Proficiency in English allows students to pursue higher studies, scholarships, and research opportunities internationally. It also helps professionals work in global organizations or relocate for career advancement. This flexibility ensures that talent is not restricted by language.

barriers. For instance, Pakistani students who qualify for scholarships at ^{universities in} abroad demonstrate strong English skills through tests like IELTS or TOEFL, which are prerequisites for admission.

Hence, English equips students with the freedom to access educational and career opportunities worldwide.

While English offers numerous advantages in education and career development, its adoption also presents significant challenges.

Understanding these difficulties is essential to evaluate its impacts on Pakistan's education system effectively.

One of the major challenges of English as a medium of education is the limited proficiency of teachers. Many teachers, especially in government and rural schools, struggle with English language skills, making it difficult to teach subjects effectively in English. This limits clear explanation of concepts and weakens classroom instruction. As a result, students receive less effective learning support.

and fall behind in both language and subject matter. This persistent challenge is underscored by the Punjab government's announcement in October 2025 of a major new Rs. 12 billion initiative, aimed at improving English language skills for both students and teachers. However, limited teacher proficiency stands as a significant barrier to the successful implementation of English medium education.

In addition, students often face a major challenge due to the language barrier created by English-medium instruction. Many students, particularly in public schools and rural areas, begin their education without a strong foundation in English. This makes it difficult for them to follow lessons, understand subject content, and participate actively in class. The gap between their home language and the language of instruction reduces comprehension and limits academic confidence. For example, a study on English as a medium of instruction at secondary schools in Gujarat found that students struggle to comprehend

content delivered in English because it is not their first language, which directly affects their learning outcomes and classroom performance.

Therefore, the language barrier remains a significant challenge, limiting students' overall academic progress in English-medium education.

Furthermore, English-medium instruction often encourages students to depend heavily on rote learning rather than meaningful comprehension.

In many Pakistani classrooms, the assessment system and teaching methods push students to memorize facts, English vocabulary, and textbook passages without truly understanding the concepts. This emphasis on memorisation

limits critical thinking and inhibits critical learners from connecting ideas or applying knowledge practically. Over time, this

weakens academic engagement and deep learning. For instance, the Annual Status of

Education Report (ASER) Pakistan highlights that a large proportion of students are unable to understand or interpret simple English texts despite

years of schooling, indicating that memorization is prioritized over comprehension. Accordingly, dependence on rote learning remains a major challenge that undermines the academic growth in English medium education.

Another significant challenge of English-medium education in Pakistan is the social and economic inequality it creates among students. English-medium schools are often concentrated in urban areas and charge higher fees, making them accessible mainly to students from wealthier families. Those from low-income or rural backgrounds have limited access to quality English instruction, textbooks, and other learning resources. This disparity creates unequal opportunities in both academic achievement and future career prospects. A study published in the Journal of Research (Languages and Islamic Studies) found that students from upper-class families in Pakistan have better access to English education, while students from lower-income households struggle to keep up.

Therefore, social and economic inequality restricts many students from fully benefiting from English-medium education in Pakistan.

Finally, English-medium education in Pakistan contributes to higher dropout rates among students. Many students, particularly in rural areas, struggle to keep up with lessons delivered in English due to limited exposure to the language and a lack of support resources. This difficulty leads to frustration, low academic confidence, and eventually causes some students to leave school before completing their education. The Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) Pakistan indicates that nearly half of rural children in grade 5 cannot read a sentence fluently in English, which significantly increases the risk of dropping out of school due to the inability to cope with English-medium instruction. Hence, dropping out of school undermines the effectiveness of English-medium

Schooling in Pakistan:

A clear and practical way forward lies in reforming the implementation of English as a medium of education rather than abandoning it. Teacher training must be strengthened to improve language proficiency and concept-based teaching, while students should be introduced to English through a gradual and supportive bilingual approach in early grades. At the same time, examination system needs reform to discourage rote memorization and promote analytical understanding. Equal investment in public schools, especially in rural areas, can reduce educational disparities, and interactive classroom practices can enhance student confidence and participation. Through planned reforms and inclusive policies, English-medium education can contribute effectively to educational improvement and national development in Pakistan.

In a nut shell, English as a medium of education

occupies a crucial place in Pakistan's educational framework due to its academic, professional, and global relevance. It equips students with access to global knowledge, higher education, and international opportunities, strengthening their competitiveness in a globalised world. While it offers clear advantages, its implementation has ~~in access to knowledge~~ also produced serious challenges related to language barriers, inequality, and learning quality. These challenges stem not from the language itself but from weak planning and support mechanisms. Therefore, with gradual implementation, trained teachers, fair assessments, and equal access to resources, English-medium education can contribute effectively to educational improvement and national development in Pakistan.