Academic Writing Challenges of EFL Learners and Teachers’ Proficiency in Pakistani Higher Education

* Khalid Mahmood

Abstract

This mixed methods research study is aimed at exploring the challenges of academic writing faced by EFL leaners and teachers’ proficiency at higher education of Pakistan. Explanatory sequential design has been used for collection of data. Survey technique was employed to collect quantitative data from 19 EFL leaners enrolled for MA TEFL in a public sector university of Pakistan. Qualitative data was collected through content focused synthesis of online documents available at official websites of Higher Education Commission (HEC) of Pakistan and a newspaper. The study found salient academic writing challenges of EFL learners: (1) references and citations (2) cohesion and coherence (3) choosing a worthwhile topic (4) language usage and (5) others. However, the proficiency level of teachers found as: (1) loopholes in selection criteria of teachers (2) lack of pedagogical and analytical skills and (3) incompatibility of curriculum. The study recommends revision of teachers’ selection criteria and syllabus of English language.

Keywords: Academic writing; English as Foreign Language (EFL); Higher Education Commission (HEC); Error Analysis.

Introduction

Language is the reflection of mental images through speech and writing. Listening, speaking, reading and writing skills are the natural order of first language acquisition. These language skills are paired under acquisition (listening and speaking) and learning (reading and writing) categories. The acquisition process is outcome of natural setting. However, L2 learning is a conscious process and mostly takes place in classrooms. Vygotsky (1978) elaborates that from the onset, foreign language acquisition is based on cognizant and methodical process. The linguists and academicians should have the insight to consider the relation of speech and inner speech parallel to written language and inner speech. Hence, in L2 learning, the distance of abstract and real inner speech affects the ability of L2 learner as in writing.

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inner speech should completely respond to the situation for intelligibility. Thus writing needs more skill set as compared to other three language skills to minimize the academic writing challenge for the foreign language learners.

According to Abukhattala (2013), learning is preferred to acquisition of language in most of the foreign language classrooms. After imparting new structure of target language, students are supposed to give correct output in terms of grammar and content. Subsequently, learners are assessed on their structural and functional competence and are forced to practice for written examinations.

Academic writing is a vulnerable area in EFL learning which poses certain challenges to the students. Burke (2010) defines academic writing “an activity, offshoot of the brain”. However, piece of writing is a pen picture of society instead of harnessing individuality. Academic writing is problematic both for non-native and native speakers. According to Fadda (2012), most of the native English speakers face problems in writing for academic purposes at university level. However, the situation aggravates in case of EFL learners. The problems of writing for academic purposes faced by the EFL learners are assumed to be due to their multilingual and cultural backgrounds.

Pakistan is a multilingual society of almost 75 regional languages with Urdu as national and official language of the country after the Supreme Court of Pakistan’s verdict in September 2015. Moreover, Punjabi, Sindhi, Pashto and Balochi languages are spoken in different regions of the country. Pakistan remained British colony from 1857 to 1947. Hence, English being the language of former rulers is learned as foreign language for job placement, competitive examinations, prestige and education at schools, colleges and universities. The examination system in Pakistan is mainly based on writing but most of the EFL learners could not master this skill even investing 16 to 18 year for education. The students doing research degrees take months in finalizing their topic and years in writing thesis. The role of teachers and their proficiency is directly linked with the academic writing of EFL learners. Khan (2011) is of the view that TEFL is a challenging task in the non-native settings. The teachers’ proficiency may lack due to loop holes in selection criteria, error analysis, EFL skills and incompatible syllabus. Policy makers, stake holders, teachers’ recruiting agencies, researchers and teachers should join hands to work for viable solution of academic writing challenges of EFL leaners.

In 2004, HEC Pakistan launched the first ever English language teachers’ training program with a futuristic vision of 2020 (available online at http://hec.gov.pk/english/services/faculty/ELTR/Pages/Introduction.aspx) to improve the quality of teaching and learning of English Language in the country. In first phase, 1398 teachers were trained up to 2016 and 1400 teachers will be trained till 2020. The
project has envisaged integration of modern day computer technology and knowledge sharing by international experts to enhance the linguistic proficiency and pedagogical skills of the faculty. But the situation at both teaching and learning ends still needs improvement in the field of academic writing.

Research Objectives
The study will have following objectives:
- Exploring the major academic challenges of EFL leaners in Pakistani higher education.
- Gauging the competency of teachers at higher education in Pakistan for their potential to impart quality academic writing skills to EFL learners.
- Putting forth viable recommendations for improvement of academic writing skills of EFL learners by revising the faculty hiring policies and syllabus.

Significance of Study
The study is a novel addition in the research repertoire on the topic of academic writing problems of EFL learners and teachers’ proficiency to handle this issue. The study has proposed a new model for data collection and analysis to gauge the proficiency of teachers at higher education. The study will prove a beacon for the Federal and Provinicial Public Service Commissions to revise their paper pattern to assess the academic writing skills of potent teachers at Pakistani higher education. It will open up new vistas for the researchers, policy makers and teachers’ recruiting agencies at higher education level in Pakistan to chalk out viable polices to improve the academic writing skill of EFL learners. The study will also be equally beneficial to be applied at college and school wings to brush up the academic writing skills of learners and competency of teachers at an early stage and prepare them for futuristic endeavors to bring them at par with international standards.

Research Questions
Following two research questions have been set for the twofold purpose of exploring the academic writing challenges of EFL learners on one hand and gauging the proficiency of teachers’ to tackle the issue of writing for academic endeavors in Pakistani higher education:
- What are the major academic writing challenges faced by EFL learners in Pakistan?
- How far teachers are proficient to deal with the academic writing challenges of EFL learners at college and university level in Pakistan?
Literature Review

Teaching-learning of English as foreign or second language poses certain challenges both for learners and teachers. In the succeeding sections, past literature has been reviewed to find out the problems of writing for academic purposes faced by EFL learners and proficiency of teachers to tackle this issue at college and university level in Pakistan:

**Academic Writing Challenges for EFL learners**

Writing for academic purposes is an integral part of language proficiency for the EFL learners in non-native English speaking countries. Rao (2007) explored two important areas for academic writing of EFL learners: first, academic writing inculcates motivation among learners to brainstorm, logically sequence their thoughts, make gist of ideas, assess and evaluate. Second, academic writing boosts the learning process which results in better understanding of English language.

As academic writing is learnt in classroom settings, hence EFL learners are the architects of this skill. Standard academic writing is expected from the students on the basis of grammatical rules and structures they learn in classroom. Yugianingrum (2010) has proposed following four salient features of academic writing:

- A central figure for expression and uplift of the community.
- Authors should explore the topics of worth importance and insight.
- The aesthetic pleasure of the readers should be targeted through written text.
- The community is responsible to make available the appropriate resources to the writers to structure their writing.

Teachers are the best judges to monitor and measure the learners’ challenges of academic writing. Al-Shabanah and Maher (2005) pointed out that teachers were regularly of the opinion that non-native speakers of English lack the requisite skills for academic writing. The major sub skills are paraphrasing, making sketch of draft, and summarising. Hence, EFL learners face numerous challenges in academic writing. Can (2009) has explored that students face difficulty to revisit their own drafts due to self-reliance in academic writing.

Giridharan (2012) in a case study identified the gaps in academic writing of EFL learners. The study suggests aptitude, preparation, regular writing tasks and self-assessment as criterion for the academic writing. The author found that vulnerability of academic writing of EFL learners at university level was proportionate to the summative performance of the students. Despite the fact that most of the EFL learners at higher education level had the basic knowledge of grammatical rules, however, at times they failed to produce acceptable academic writing. He further supported the idea that most of the students were even indifferent to their proficiency of academic writing. The study
found that most of the students wrote for pleasure, shared drafts with their class fellows for feedback, and were aware of the referencing and available resources. However, many learners were even not in a position to assess their own work.

Sajid and Siddiqui (2015) in a study conducted on challenges and causes of writing for academic purposes of Pakistani EFL learners as enumerated below:

- The downfall of the early education hampers the academic writing skill of EFL learners.
- Another challenge for Pakistani universities is multidimensional educational background of learners, i.e., public sector Urdu and private sector English medium of instructions. Hence, students face great difficulty to adjust the environment where prerequisite is writing.
- Pakistani EFL learners with poor vocabulary focus on the length of the text instead the content and expression, lacking the academic writing skills.

Proficiency of Teachers at Higher Education Level to tackle Academic Writing Challenges of EFL Learners

The writing weaknesses of EFL learners are directly linked with the proficiency of the teachers. In classroom, teacher plays a role of trainer and monitor. The more the teacher is competent, the more the learners’ output will be in upward direction. It is said that a book is a dead teacher but a teacher is a living book. However, the proficiency of teachers is linked with many aspects, i.e., curriculum, error analysis skills, selection criteria and classroom environment. Arkoudis and Tran (2010) found that teachers at higher education level faced problems to play their role for guiding EFL learners for academic writing. The lecturers acknowledged that providing assistance to the students was mandatory, however, they themselves were unclear about the required guidance.

Apart from providing assistance to EFL learners, teachers’ role as evaluators is also an important factor. Richards et., al. (1992) have explained that the purpose of studying errors was: (1) to identify approaches used by students in EFL learning, (2) to sift out the reasons of learners’ errors and (3) to gather information on common challenges of EFL learners to devise teaching methodologies. Khansir (2012) in a study asserted that error analysis played a vital role in pointing out the learner’s errors to formulate counteractive methods, develop and design textbooks for EFL learners in a hierarchy that the complex items should follow the easier ones and devise pedagogical skills for learning of first and second languages.

Sajid and Siddiqui (2015) in a study encompassing challenges of EFL learners and role of teachers in Pakistani universities highlighted that most of the English language teachers selected for schools or higher level education either do not possess the appropriate qualifications in the field of applied linguistics or not equipped with the
present day pedagogical skills of language teaching, particularly, academic writing skills. In addition to above, the authors also explored that although Information Technology (IT) and Audio Visual Aids (AV Aids) were available in Pakistani universities’ classrooms but were not utilised regularly due to lack of teachers training in handling those tools. Moreover, due to hectic schedule, teachers at higher education in Pakistan do not find time to chalk out exercises which may enhance their own language and writing proficiency.

The above review has revealed that most of the literature is focused on challenges of EFL learners. The researchers have mostly used the essay writing as the main source of data collection for exploring the issues of academic writing faced by EFL learners. Moreover, Pakistan, there is a dearth of research on the teachers’ expertise to tackle the challenges of academic writing. This gap of research on the topic is worth exploring. This study will not only fill the research gap but will be a vanguard for policy makers, recruiting agencies and teachers. Moreover, it will provide a novel technique of data collection to gauge the proficiency of EFL teachers at college and universities level in Pakistan. This study will prove to be a beacon for Pakistan and other countries for preparing trained and skilled EFL teachers.

**Methodology**

**Research Design**

The study has used the mixed methods approach and explanatory sequential design for data collection and analysis. Creswell (2011) elaborates that in explanatory sequential design, quantitative and qualitative data is collected sequentially in two phases (also called a two-phased model) to merge the results. In this design, first quantitative data is collected followed by qualitative data to augment the quantitative results.

A combination of survey and content-focused synthesis was used respectively to collect data in two phases to answer both the research questions. Survey technique was used to collect data regarding challenges of EFL leaners in academic writing. However, lack of research literature on the qualifications, selection criteria, and error analysis skills of teachers at higher education level warranted to use content-focused synthesis to gauge the proficiency of teachers. Majchrzak (1984) is of the view that content-focused synthesis is analysis of information regardless of the data types.

**Population**

All public and private sector universities and colleges’ English teachers and EFL learners under the auspicious of HEC Pakistan and Provincial Higher Education Departments are the population for this study. Moreover, all the policies of HEC and
Provincial Public Service Commission governing faculty hiring and syllabus designing for English degree programs are also the population of this study. The targeted population aptly serves the purpose and objective of the study. And the sample selected out of the above population will provide genuine information for findings and recommendations.

**Sample and Demographics**

19 EFL learners of MA TEFL enrolled for 3rd semester in a regional campus of a public sector university in Lahore, Pakistan were sampled through purposive sampling. According to Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2007), purposive sampling provides flexibility to the researcher to select the participants fulfilling the prerequisites of the study. Purposive sampling technique has been employed for this to tap the appropriate population to address the research questions. For instance the EFL learners of MA TEFL program in a public sector university have been selected as sample as the degree requires thesis writing. And majority of the students leave the program mid-way just for the fear of thesis writing and lack of guidance at the part of supervisors. Hence, this sample will give both academic writing problems of EFL learners and teachers proficiency. Moreover, the faculty hiring criteria and of HEC and Provincial Public Service Commissions’ procedure of MCQ type paper for recruitment of teachers at higher education level have been sampled purposively to find out the loop holes and suggest remedial measures. This multifaceted and multilayered sample set has been selected to address the issue from different angles and compile comprehensive results.

Demographical characteristics of the 19 EFL learners for academic writing challenges are shown in Table 1 below:

**Table 1: Demographics of the participants**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographic Characteristics</th>
<th>Values</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of participants</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program of study</td>
<td>MA TEFL (Teaching of English as a Foreign Language)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age Group</td>
<td>20 – 40 Years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother Tongue</td>
<td>11 Punjabi and 8 Urdu speaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching background</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-teaching background</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The faculty appointment criteria, available online at official website of HEC Pakistan ([http://www.hec.gov.pk/english/services/universities/QA/Pages/Faculty-Appointment-Criteria.aspx](http://www.hec.gov.pk/english/services/universities/QA/Pages/Faculty-Appointment-Criteria.aspx)) has been taken as sample to gauge the teachers’
competency (see appendix A). To further augment the data, selection criteria for appointment of lecturers, assistant professors and professors at higher education department of Punjab through Punjab Public Service Commission, Lahore advertised in newspaper daily The Jang on June 18, 2017 (online available at [https://e.jang.com.pk/06-18-2017/lahore/page13.asp](https://e.jang.com.pk/06-18-2017/lahore/page13.asp)) has also been selected as sample (see appendix B). Revised Curricula 2017 of English for BS / BA (4-Year) & MS / M. Phil programs (available online at [http://hec.gov.pk/english/services/universities/RevisedCurricula/Pages/default.aspx](http://hec.gov.pk/english/services/universities/RevisedCurricula/Pages/default.aspx)) has also been sampled to ascertain the compatibility and availability of courses on academic writing and error analysis.

**Instrumentation**

A survey questionnaire having three sections was adapted from a study *Academic writing difficulties of EFL learners* by Ali, I, and Al Badi, H. (2015) for collection of quantitative data (see appendix C). The instrument was made compatible to the study by making certain changes. The section one is about the basic demographics of the participants. This section encompasses the gender, age, study program and profession of the participants. Section two is based on 10 likert scale statements to find out the common practices of EFL students for learning writing for academic purposes. This section is designed to sift out the existing practices of the sampled participants regarding academic writing for their assignments and research work. The third section is about academic writing challenges faced by EFL. Major academic writing challenges based on previous studies were listed and participants were given the option to write any other challenge they face but not covered in the list. However, qualitative data was collected from the sampled official websites through content-focused synthesis.

**Data Collection**

Data was collected sequentially. In first phase, data was collected from 19 participant EFL learners enrolled for MA TEFL in a public sector university of Pakistan with the prior permission of the university authorities. The participants were ensured that their identity would not be disclosed to any unauthorized person or organization. Hence, column of names of participants was not included in the questionnaire. In the second phase, e-documents were retrieved and analyzed online from official website of Higher Education Commission of Pakistan and newspaper daily The Jang which were publicly accessible. However, principles of ethical considerations proposed by Shamoo and Resnik (2009) were followed in true letter and spirit while collection and handling of data.
Results and Findings

Data was analyzed sequentially, first quantitative followed by qualitative data to address both the research questions:

Major Academic Writing Challenges of EFL Learners

The responses of EFL learners showed that they face five major academic writing challenges: (a) references and citations, (b) cohesion and coherence, (c) choosing a worthwhile topic, (d) language usage and (e) others. These challenges have been summarised in Figure 1 below and further elaborated in succeeding paragraphs:

![Figure 1: Major academic writing challenges of the participants](image)

References and Citations

According to the responses of the participants, a number of EFL learners face the challenge of using proper references and citations. In the Pakistani context, most of the students face this issue because there is no research based learning up to college level. Wallance, Schirato and Bright (1999) are of the view that lack of awareness and stuffing more than required details give rise to this issue. In Pakistan, there is no significant research and citation assignment at school and college level, hence, the
students entering universities for research based degrees face it difficult to refer and cite properly. This becomes a major challenge for their academic writing at higher education level.

**Coherence and Cohesion**

Writing is a blend of properly chosen lexical items, meaningful linear construction of words, phrases and sentences to produce coherent paragraphs. According to data, majority of students (n17), take care of coherence and cohesion while writing their academic assignments. However, still EFL learners considered it difficult to be coherent and cohesive in their academic writing. Wenyu and Yang (2008) explored that learners with preplanned outline remain at ease to develop and interface their ideas. The data showed that 89% students of MA TEFL were used to make an outline and sought feedback of peers before going for the final draft of academic writing but the problem of coherence and cohesion still persisted. Moreover, the majority of the participants responded that they proof read their first draft for any correction.

**Choosing a Worthwhile Topic**

A large number of respondents shared that they followed the set guidelines, consult teachers, brainstorm topics and exchange their ideas with fellows however 24% participants face difficulty in choosing worthwhile and researchable topics. Frank, Haacke and Tente (2003) augment that students mostly remain unaware of the teachers’ foresight for tapping the appropriate published literature. It has been observed that most of the students at higher education in Pakistan pursuing thesis based degrees take considerable time just to choose a workable topic. This challenge at times forces the students to continue their research work even after the deadline by paying huge semester fee.

**Language Usage**

Participants responded that they face difficulty using proper language in academic writing. Use of appropriate language i.e., vocabulary items, ordering the suitable words in their proper position becomes problematic for EFL learners as meanings of the words in target language cannot be mastered without extensive reading. As English is learnt as foreign language in Pakistan, hence, the students face the challenge of proper vocabulary items and even ordering the ideas. The mother tongue interference also hampers to use proper English language for their academic writing.

**Others (specified by the participants)**

Two respondents shared their academic writing challenges other than those six enumerated in the section 3 of the survey questionnaire. One of the participants shared *lack of access to modern technological resources* and the other indicated *difficulty in*
understanding the question and finding or suggesting relevant material as major academic writing challenges. The classrooms of schools, colleges and even universities in public sector are properly equipped with the latest technology, leaving learners in the lurch to gather appropriate information required for their academic writing.

Proficiency of Teachers to Tackle EFL Learners’ Challenges of Academic Writing

Qualitative data collected from online sources was analyzed to gauge the competency of teachers at higher education level in Pakistan as under:

Selection Criteria for Recruitment of English Language Lectures, Assistant and Associate Professors in Pakistan

To ascertain the competency in academic writing and error analysis skills of English language teachers in Pakistan, criteria for hiring of faculty at university level (see appendix A) showed that no special pedagogical or error analysis skills are required for appointment of faculty in universities. To further augment and explore the phenomena, an advertisement of Punjab Public Service Commission, Lahore (Pakistan) published in daily The Jang on 18 June 2017 for recruitment of lecturers, assistant professors and professors (see appendix – B) was also analysed. In this advertisement, no specific teaching certifications were the prerequisites. Only MA, M. Phil and Ph. D degrees were the qualifications required for these posts. Moreover, under syllabus for written test (if held) column of the advertisement, it was clearly notified that MCQ (Multiple Choice Question) paper of 100 marks would be conducted to short list the candidates of lecturers and assistant professors for interview. Hence, there was no mention of gauging writing or assessment skills of the candidates to become EFL teachers.

Curriculum for Potent English Language Teachers

Course outlines of BA / BS (4 Year), and MS / M. Phil literature, linguistics programs and recommendations of the curriculum revision committee 2017 were thoroughly examined online to find whether academic writing and error analysis, forte for potent English language teachers are being taught as core or elective courses or not. BA / BS (English) four years program has literature based syllabus. Academic writing course has been included at BS level in fourth semester but error analysis has not been offered as core course to EFL learners being potent teachers. It is worthwhile to mention that academic writing course has been included in the curriculum in 2017 however it was not part of curriculum revised in 2012.

MS / M. Phil (English Literature) program is also full of literature based courses and no courses on academic writing or error analysis have been included in the syllabus.
M. Phil scholars have to write end term research papers and a thesis of 20,000 to 25,000 words but the essential component of writing for academic purposes has not been included in the curriculum. Even in the syllabus of MS / M. Phil Linguistics, the components of academic writing and error analysis are missing.

**Limitations of the Study**

This study has the limited sample set of a single public sector university in Pakistan. The study conducted with larger sample set from both public and private higher education institutes may come up with different set of findings.

**Conclusion**

The study has revealed the common practices of Pakistani EEL students encompassing aptitude towards writing tasks, structural competence and self-assessment skills. Moreover, loopholes in the selection criteria of teachers and incompatibility of syllabus at higher education have also been identified.

It is assumed that using mixed methods approach and data collection techniques to examine the experiences of academic writing and data analysis will contribute for development of theories. The recommendations enumerated below will help improve the selection criteria and curriculum policies in Pakistan. Moreover, potent researchers in the field may explore the phenomena from different angles at tertiary level by using the model of this study. Comparative studies of different EFL countries across the continents may put forth valuable findings for improvement of EFL academic writing.

**Recommendations**

The study recommends the following ways and means for the improvement of academic writing skills of the learners and teachers proficiency:

- References and citations, cohesion and coherence, choosing a worthwhile topic and language usage skills should be imparted to learners by the trained teachers before embarking on academic writing / research projects.
- Revision of curriculum of all English degree programs accommodating academic writing and error analysis as core courses.
- TEFL, ELT and Applied Linguistics degrees / certification instead of B. Ed. and M. Ed degrees should be made mandatory for recruitment of English Language teachers.
- Teachers recruiting agencies to conduct computer based subjective and objective tests like Apts of British Council and Paper Rater instead of MCQ papers for candidates to assess their academic writing proficiency.
• Establishment of Federal and Provincial Teachers’ Training Academies to impart pedagogical training to all newly inducted teachers at higher education level and successfully passed out candidates be allowed to join the hiring universities.
References
Fadda, H.A. (2012). Difficulties in academic writing: From the perspective of King Saud University postgraduate students. English Language Teaching, 5(3).


## Appendix A

### HEC Faculty Criteria for Pakistani Universities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disciplines</th>
<th>Eligibility conditions for appointment of faculty in All disciplines excluding Engineering, Information Technology, Computing Sciences, Medical Sciences, Law and Arts &amp; Design (Studio Practice) disciplines in all HEIs/DAIs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lecturer</strong></td>
<td>First Class Master's Degree OR equivalent degree awarded after 16 Years of education in the relevant field from an HEC recognised University/Institution with no 3rd division in the academic career.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum Qualification</td>
<td>Condition of no 3rd division shall not be applicable in the qualification of appointment as lecturer in Universities or Degree Awarding Institutions provided that the candidate holds a higher degree vis. M.Phil./PhD or equivalent degree with not more than one 3rd division in entire academic career.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Furthermore, the candidate with 2nd division in the Master’s Degree but holding higher degree i.e. M. Phil/PhD or equivalent degree with 18 years of education may be considered.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>First division (1st Division) in Master of Arts in English is relaxed in favor of the second division (2nd Division) as the minimum eligibility condition for appointment of Lecturers in English for Annual System degree holders for a period of five years w.e.f. 24-02-2007.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience</td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum Number of Publications</td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| Assistant Professor | a. PhD in relevant field from HEC recognized University/Institution b. Master’s degree (foreign) or M.Phil. (Pakistan) or equivalent degrees awarded after 18 years of education as determined by the HEC in the relevant field from an HEC recognised University /Institution. |
| Minimum Qualification | a. No experience required b. 4-years teaching/research experience in an HEC recognized University or a postgraduate Institution or professional experience in the relevant field in a National or International organization |
| Experience | Nil |
| Minimum Number of Publications | Nil |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disciplines</th>
<th>Eligibility conditions for appointment of faculty in All disciplines excluding Engineering, Information Technology, Computing Sciences, Medical Sciences, Law and Arts &amp; Design (Studio Practice) disciplines in all HEIs/DAIs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Minimum Qualification Experience</td>
<td>Associate Professor Ph.D. in the relevant field from an HEC recognised University/Institution. 10-years teaching/research experience in an HEC recognised University or a postgraduate Institution or professional experience in the relevant field in a National or International organisation. Note: After 30th June, 2013, at least 4-years Post-PhD level experience in an HEC recognised University or postgraduate institution or professional experience in the relevant field in a National or International organisation will be required. OR 5-years post-PhD teaching/research experience in an HEC recognised University or a post-graduate Institution or professional experience in the relevant field in a National or International organisation. The applicant must have 10 research publications (with at least 4 publications in the last 5 years in the HEC recognized journals).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum Number of Publications</td>
<td>Disciplines Eligibility conditions for appointment of faculty in All disciplines excluding Engineering, Information Technology, Computing Sciences, Medical Sciences, Law and Arts &amp; Design (Studio Practice) disciplines in all HEIs/DAIs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualification Experience</td>
<td>Professor Ph.D. from an HEC recognised Institution in the relevant field. 15-years teaching/research experience in HEC recognised University or a postgraduate Institution or professional experience in the relevant field in a National or International organisation. Note: After 30th June, 2013 at least 8 years Post Ph.D. level experience in an HEC recognised university or postgraduate Institution or professional experience in the relevant field in a National or International organisation will be required. OR 10-years post-Ph.D. teaching/research experience in a recognised University or a post-graduate Institution or professional experience in the relevant field in a National or International organisation. The applicant must have 15 research publications with at least 5 publications in the last 5 years in HEC recognised journals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum Number of Publications</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: [http://www.hec.gov.pk/english/services/universities/QA/Pages/Faculty-Appointment-Criteria.aspx](http://www.hec.gov.pk/english/services/universities/QA/Pages/Faculty-Appointment-Criteria.aspx)
Appendix B

Advertisement published in daily The Jang of June 18, 2017 for recruitment of Lecturers, Assistant Professors and Professors in Higher Education Department of the Punjab through Punjab Public Service Commission, Lahore (Pakistan)
Appendix C

Survey Questionnaire

Academic Writing Challenges of ESL Learners and Teachers’ Proficiency in Pakistani Universities

I am researcher in the fields of education and applied linguistics, and conducting a survey for my research article “Academic Writing Challenges of ESL learners and Teachers’ Proficiency in Pakistani Universities”. I will be grateful if you would like to answer some questions.

Date: ………………………

Section 1: Personal Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Gender:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Age:</td>
<td>20-25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Mother tongue (First language):</td>
<td>........................................</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Program of Study:</td>
<td>........................................</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Semester:</td>
<td>........................................</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Profession:</td>
<td>........................................</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Section 2: Students' writing practices and behavior

How often do these statements apply to you when writing assignments? Put a tick in the suitable column.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practices</th>
<th>Always (100%)</th>
<th>Mostly (80%)</th>
<th>Frequently (60%)</th>
<th>Occasionally (40%)</th>
<th>Rarely (10%)</th>
<th>Never (0%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I like to write for pleasure in my free time.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>2. I follow the instructions given for writing assignments.</td>
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<td>3. I consult my teacher for any clarification.</td>
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<td>4. I share ideas with my peers before starting writing.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
5. I brainstorm the topic, write down main points and make an outline for my assignment.

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<tr>
<th>Practices</th>
<th>Always (100%)</th>
<th>Mostly (80%)</th>
<th>Frequently (60%)</th>
<th>Occasionally (40%)</th>
<th>Rarely (10%)</th>
<th>Never (0%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

6. I revisit my draft to correct grammar, vocabulary, spellings and punctuation mistakes.

7. I, generally pay more attention to the language (i.e. spelling, grammar, vocabulary) instead of content (i.e. ideas, organization).

8. I pay more attention to the content (e.g. ideas, organization) than the language (i.e. spelling, grammar, vocabulary).

9. I give almost equal attention to both the language (i.e. spelling, grammar, vocabulary) and the content (i.e. ideas, organization).

10. I discuss my work with other students to get feedback to improve it.

Section 3: Students' challenges in academic writing.

Put a tick next to the weaknesses or/and challenges you have faced when writing your assignments.

- Paraphrasing
- Referencing & citation
- Language use
- Coherence & cohesion
- Expressing own voice
- Choosing a worthwhile topic
- Others (specify): ________________________________