

**The Need and Use of the English Language in  
Pakistan's Administrative Service:  
Policy and Perception**

**THESIS**

**BY**

**MARYA SALEEM ADHAMI**

**[15M01007]**

**Research Supervisor: Dr Fareeha Zafar**

**Co-supervised by: Javed S. Malik**

Thesis submitted to the Lahore School of Economics  
in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of  
MPhil in Development Studies, 2019

## **Abstract**

In Pakistan, to qualify for the written test of the Central Superior Service, it is necessary to pass the component of English in the entrance examination. The percentage of candidates who qualify in English each year is quite low. The purpose of this thesis is to investigate the need and use of English in the Administrative Services of Pakistan to see whether it is justifiable to place such an emphasis on the language in the entrance examination. Qualitative interviews were employed in this research to gauge the perception of 26 officers in the administrative service regarding the issue. The perceptions of these officers were compared against empirical data gathered from various sources. It was found that English is only used in official written correspondence amongst officers. Urdu and local languages are generally used in court proceedings, oral communication amongst officers and for interaction with lower field staff and the general population. Knowledge of English also did not significantly affect the job performance of officers. Rather, officers are able to accustom themselves with the jargon that is required at work during the Common Training Programme, Specialised Training Programme, subsequent trainings and manuals of instruction. A notable finding also indicated that due to the English barrier many capable candidates are being left out of the administrative service. Finally, the paper suggests improvements in the language-in-education policies of the country, choice of language for candidates in the competitive examination and standardising the level of English required by candidates

## Acknowledgments

The journey of a thesis is a long and arduous one and is not possible without support.

I would firstly like to thank Mr Javed S. Malik who always pushed me to do more, read and corrected my draft numerous times and helped me gather data and set up interviews. Sir, this thesis would not have been possible without all your guidance. Thank you.

Thank you Dr Fareeha for ensuring that the paper was intellectually sound and guiding me to the right academic sources.

Thank you Amanullah, for always being there when I needed someone to judge the soundness of my arguments and for reading and rereading my drafts as many times as I asked you to. You have always helped me challenge myself and do things that I did not believe I could.

Thank you parents, Ami and Baba, for never letting me give up. Without your love, prayers and constant encouragement I would not have been able to make it this far.

Thank you Wajeih and Saad, for driving me around the city, getting me to my interviews and also sometimes asking insightful questions during them, yourselves.

Thank you Aunty and Uncle. Your prayers throughout this journey have meant a lot.

Finally, thank you Maham. Thank you for being just a phone call away whenever I needed help with research and with life, in general.