

## **English as a Foreign Language and Job Achievement: Moderating Role of Test Anxiety**

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### **Abstract**

The purpose of this research study is to explore the moderating role of test anxiety in the relationship between the English language proficiency and job achievement in Pakistan. There was a dire need to carry out this research to highlight the components of the test anxiety faced by the job-candidates to find out how they can deal with them to perform better in their English language test/interview. The quantitative tool of FLCAS helped find out that English language test has a positive impact on job achievement, and test anxiety plays a moderating role between EFL test and Job achievement, whereas, the qualitative tool of interview served the purpose of finding the factors causing anxiety among the test-takers/interviewees. The major factors among these are lack of EFL training, failure apprehension, negative evaluation and level of comfort. Descriptive statistics measured using SPSS 20 (mean, standard deviation), correlation matrix and regression analysis were used to test the propositions or hypotheses, whereas the qualitative data was then given a graphical representation form followed by the interpretative analyses of the responses. Anxiety was found to be the consequence of inadequate skills required to use the target language. The major recommendations, which surfaced as a result of the research in the present study included i) the understanding of the importance of the English language in job achievements so as to introduce English language learning from the early age, ii) having more exposure of English language in the field through some means like simulations, etc., giving/getting more exposure to the culture of the place where English is spoken, iii) and controlling anxiety by having focused training or practice of the English language skills required in the job. All this may help reduce the test anxiety and facilitate in job achievement.

**Keywords:** *test anxiety, EFL, job achievement, moderating role*

### **Introduction**

Researchers, educationists and language scholars all agree that there is a strong influence of affective variables on language learning and production. These variables filter the amount of input into the language acquisition device. Anxiety is considered one very important affective variable as it significantly predicts the level of English language learning attainment. In an EFL scenario like the one in Pakistan, there are many factors which may contribute to increase the level of anxiety in the

learners. These factors may be personal, social or psychological. In an EFL context, the learners may feel anxiety due to many factors: s/he may find it difficult to comprehend or fear getting tested in unknown or unfamiliar areas or having negative marking. This article inquires the factors that contribute the most in generating anxiety in EFL tests and its impact on job achievement in Pakistan.

This study is significant for fetching forth the impact of English language skills on the career development. It focuses on the affective impact of English language test that is deemed to help in getting better work opportunities. In other words, it studies the impact of English language test anxiety on the achievement of good career. The study provides some guidelines for increasing the chances of getting good jobs in today's world by improving the English language skills and overcoming EFL test anxiety.

In Pakistan, English proficiency test is a mandatory part of recruitment process for the candidates in almost every field. It has created a craze for studying English as a foreign language (EFL), and high-stakes EFL tests abound (Lapkin et al., 2011; Ratte, 2005) asserted that learning any foreign language helps to develop students' sense of achievement. Second language learning enhances particularly the areas which the learners are not used to excel in during their academic career. The remarkable results shown in different subject areas due to foreign language acquisition creates a sense of achievement, enhances self-confidence, self-esteem and self-image, and brings forth satisfaction.

Most past studies have studied anxiety as a very affective feature of second language students and found out the direct connection between English language test anxiety and job achievement. These also studied how all the aspects of test anxiety were correlated to job achievement. However, these studies did not contemplate on the effects of each constitute of test anxiety on performance measures of second language tests. Previous studies focused on job test performance measures and second language test anxiety as an entity, but they did not focus on the direct relationship between performance measures and English as a foreign language test with mediating effect of test anxiety. Further, the previous researches were conducted in other parts of the world, and not in Pakistan.

Therefore, the present research focuses on job test performance measures and English language test anxiety in Pakistan. There is dire need of more research work to be done in order to study the relationship of English as a foreign language test anxiety and motivation that interacts collaboratively to determine better career achievement.

Since, in this competitive world, organizations want their employees to be English language literate, the English language proficiency test has become integral part of recruitment process. Many candidates find it difficult to get appropriate jobs because of lack of English language skills. This is mainly due to the test anxiety. In private schools in Pakistan, English language proficiency test has become a mandatory part of recruitment. The scores of the ELPT affects the position in the organization, thus, salary is also affected. This study intends to assess the moderating role of text anxiety on the relationship between EFL test and job achievement.

### **Research Questions**

1. What impact does the EFL test have on job achievement and career development?
2. What is the role of test anxiety on the relationship between EFL test and job achievement?

### **Objectives of the Study**

1. To study the impact of English as a foreign language test on job achievement
2. To assess the moderating role of recruitment test anxiety on the relationship between English as Foreign Language Test and Job Achievement

### **Literature Review**

The impact of English as a foreign language seems to have been of great interest to linguists, educationists and psychologists. English as foreign language study develops profound understanding of how language functions and enhances the capability to solve problems, and accelerates the thinking process. Cummins (1981) exclaims that early language study produces many more noteworthy abilities in multiple ideas, thinking and innovation. Furthermore, English as foreign language helps to increase a long run capability to interact with people coming from different countries and divergent social backgrounds. It provides other benefits including better overall school performance and prevalent critical thinking abilities. Dumas (1999) found out that often in standardized subject specific tests, second language students persistently outperform the control groups.

Second or foreign language learning has been found to have a very positive impact on learners' overall growth of personality. Mastering the grammar, vocabulary and sentence formation helps the students to be sharper in reading skills and develops better comprehension skills. It also enables the students to be innovative, creative and imaginative by thinking out of the specific box of one particular language and culture. Andrade (1989) explained that as the language travels through the culture and

affects the thinking of individuals, second language acquisition enhances comprehension, reading and writing abilities of the learners. According to Dumas (1999), second language learning is beneficial for the students of average IQ as it changes the way of learning. Hence it lessens the gap to high achievements. Foreign language learning renders many benefits such as higher order thinking, innovative and creative imagination. Various studies exposed that those individuals who learn any foreign language prove to be more innovative and creative and they tend to solve complex conflicts in a better and logical way. Supporting this case Bamford & Mizokawa (1991) in their study claim that language learners show more prominent and strong cognitive flexibility, higher order thinking skills and better problem solving in their work and interaction. Cummins (2000) indicates that foreign language learners or those who are bilingual score higher marks in competitive exams and standardized exams.

Language can be learned by two ways i.e., either by acquiring naturally from the environment or by learning consciously within classroom environment. In both cases, the purpose remains the same. However, the language learned within classroom context is full of challenges for the learner. The learner may have to encounter totally a new cultural environment that might be different from the one the learner is abiding in. Most importantly, the challenge that is difficult for the learner to overcome is anxiety (Wu, 2010).

Anxiety is defined in many ways in different contexts. Generally in psychology, anxiety is a state of fear and apprehension that is associated with any object (Scovel, 1991). Anxiety is a set of quite complex feelings, beliefs, self-perceptions, behaviors and fear that are related to learning a foreign language within classroom context. Samimy and Tabuse (1992) explain that anxiety is a situation of uneasiness, worries and fear about change, future and unpredictability of next moments. Similarly, Zeidner (1998, p.17) explains test anxiety as the set of psychological, behavioral, and physiological responses that brings forth concern about possible negative consequences or failure on any evaluative situation.

Anxiety beholds many subtypes such as trait anxiety, test anxiety, social anxiety, and situational anxiety. It is pertinent to know that anxiety has been found to affect various kinds of learning. Particularly, when it is in learning foreign language, it is called as foreign/second language learning anxiety. The researchers explain target language anxiety as a sensation of fear, stress, apprehension, nervousness, and unconsciousness that is related with the learning of targeted language. Young, (1991) calls it a very complex and multidimensional phenomenon.

Both motivation and anxiety play overwhelming role in affecting language learning results. In a foreign language environment, learners tend to learn a foreign language for any useful purpose instead of just for the sake of learning any language. They learn to improve their career growth as a part of academic curriculum. Due to less practice of the targeted language, they often get nervous, hesitant and panicked when they have to use that target language with other practitioners. In foreign language learning, both aspects of motivation and test anxiety are considered negatively associated with each other. For instance, the learner who is more anxious about learning the language can be seen as less motivated intrinsically but quite more motivated extrinsically by the class room or learning environment. Black (2005) claims that test anxious learners consider achieving good scores only in exams as more important than practically using and understanding the target language. Therefore, their performance depends upon test scores; hence it creates consciousness and anxiety in them. Similarly, Ayden et al., (2006) find out during a survey in Turkish EFL context that test anxiety produces psychological troubles for learners which are followed by less motivation, less confidence in speaking and writing and less self-esteem. Test anxiety prevents learners from showing actual performance as they are more concerned about their scores and not about their performance. According to Hall (1991), test anxiety renders quite negative effects on students' communication, reading, writing and comprehending skills specifically in formal situations, during interviews or tests. Krashen (1981) stresses that test anxiety levels and degree of self-confidence are some factors that distinguish between high achievers and low learning overall. He further claims that in the domain of foreign language learning there is always a circle that goes from high anxiety level to low or bad performance, and poor or low performance again brings forth high level of test anxiety and nervousness. MacIntyre (2002) points out a very important issue that the learners who have high anxiety levels have low expectations about their own strengths.

The higher the anxiety level, the lesser the chances for the learner to communicate in the target language. Thus, by not communicating with the other fellows, they cannot practice the new language. As it is said, language is a game of practice, as it needs more practice particularly communicating with others. Keeping the risk of failure during learning a new language, Hambree (1988) did analysis of approximately 562 previously done studies that showed that test anxiety was an overwhelming reason of failure and poor performance by the learners. Further, test anxiety has tremendous effects on the self confidence level of the learners. It is evident that anxiousness can occupy some parts of the brain that are important and needed in learning any language, particularly in resolving conflicts and in developing critical thinking. Chapell et al.,

(2005) affirms that there is a quite negative impact of test anxiety on poor performance. By worrying or fretting over things, our working memory can get damaged that causes cognitive impairment. Cognitive impairment consequently leads to useless thoughts and increases anxiety.

Brown (2000) identifies three components in foreign language anxiety: "Communication, inculcating fear from learners' inability to convey their thoughts, opinions and different ideas about anything; 2. Apprehension of negative evaluation of tests, and being negatively portrayed in the society; 3. Foreign language anxiety over academic test results" ( p.151). Communication apprehension refers to the apprehension of interacting with other people. Apprehension for the learners of being negatively evaluated by others is one of the important causes of anxiety. Test anxiety is all about fear and apprehension of assessment tools like exams, assignments, quizzes and presentations in order to evaluate learners' performance (Wu, 2010). Communicative apprehension has been defined as one's apprehension related with communication with other people (Xiaoyan, 2009). Horwitz et al., (1986) exclaim that stress or fear is the consequences of tests or evaluative circumstances. He further explains that language learning is affected by the stress level that increases where there is fear of social evaluation, fear of failure and fear of communication. Certainly, there are many other factors that have impact on foreign language learning such as motivation, self-esteem, self-efficacy, attitudes, expectations etc. In some other researches like the one done by Dalkilic (2011), it has been found out that test anxiety is one of the most important factors that is a hurdle in learning any foreign language. Evaluative circumstances lessen the chance of performing well.

Unfortunately, over a period of time, taking tests is considered very important as many tests decide the future career of the individuals. In most of the large and small enterprises, specifically in schools, taking test has become mandatory to hire for the job. Tests are taken to check the mental and academic caliber of the individuals to be hired followed by an interview. Since tests have become integral part of recruitment process, many of the candidates face anxiety during tests, as it decides their future career. Involvement of job tests in the recruitment process tends to increase tension and apprehension for the candidates applying for the job.

In addition to test anxiety, there are some other factors too such as poor preparation for the exams, lack of confidence, lack of understanding of the questions, lack of techniques of attempting questions in exams etc. that may lead towards failure. However, learners who have prepared very well for the exam may also face anxiety that they might forget whatever they have learned and that can have trouble in retrieving the information (Berinbaun & Nasser, 1994). There are various personal,

social and cognitive factors such as personality, intelligence, education, age, motivation, gender, anxiety, and others that have profound impact on the learning of a foreign language.

Therefore, there is an increasing need of knowing about test anxiety and how one can control test anxiety. To know more about test anxiety, researchers need to first analyze symptoms and causes of test anxiety that will further help them to mitigate this issue in a better way.

Many researchers have worked on the relationship between job achievement and test anxiety as both variables have succeeded in maintaining pertinent correlation. Previous literature shows that there are many factors in this regard that create test anxiety such as evaluative circumstances, fear to maintain status quo, inappropriate content material, social responses, time limit, clarity of question statements in tests, test attempting techniques, less practice of the target language, less exposure to the related culture, etc. (Anane, 2013; Hancock, 2001; Putwain, Woods & Symes, 2010).

There are many symptoms that show the existence of anxiety among test takers. Among these, the most important are lack of focus and concentration, over thinking, being blank minded, and fear of failure. The second type is related to physical changes that show the level of stress such as headache, sweating, biting nails, nausea, scratching head, faintness etc. Zeidner and Mathew (2005) elaborate test anxiety as a threatening feeling of appraisal or failure that results in physical, psychological, cognitive and behavioral changes. These changes are very important in predicting the test anxiety during test by showing through testers playing with pen, sweating, biting nails, scratching head or nose, etc.

Anxiety brings forth many effects. First of all, anxiety causes nervousness that includes having difficulty in understanding and reading the questions on the question paper. It also includes encountering trouble in one's thoughts in collecting or organizing the right answer for the question and using prior knowledge about the answer. Furthermore, it also entails forgetfulness due to exertion, or lack of time and lack of proper preparation for the test. The second effect is all about mental blocking and thinking. It is related to going unconscious or blank at once while attempting the question and remembering the correct answer after the exam is over. The third effect is trivial fretfulness and worries about result, social status, fear of failure, losing of self-image and anxiety about how others are performing. All these factors increase test anxiety and render negative results.

Test anxiety can be reduced by adopting some strategies. Strategies for eliminating or reducing test anxiety take different

techniques that depend upon the kinds of learners: high achievers or low achievers. The trainings on test attempting techniques are good for those who are high achievers while those who are low achievers must be trained on how to learn things easily and effectively. High achievers are affected by factors that might differ from those of low achievers.

### Research Methodology

The researchers chose the education sector in Islamabad to study the effectiveness of learning English in finding good career opportunities. The data has been collected from the employees working in private schools. This is a cause and effect study where hypotheses are developed to explore the influence of English as a second language test on the job achievement with moderating effects of anxiety. Here English as a foreign language served as an independent variable, while job achievement served as a dependent variable with moderation of test anxiety.

### Hypotheses

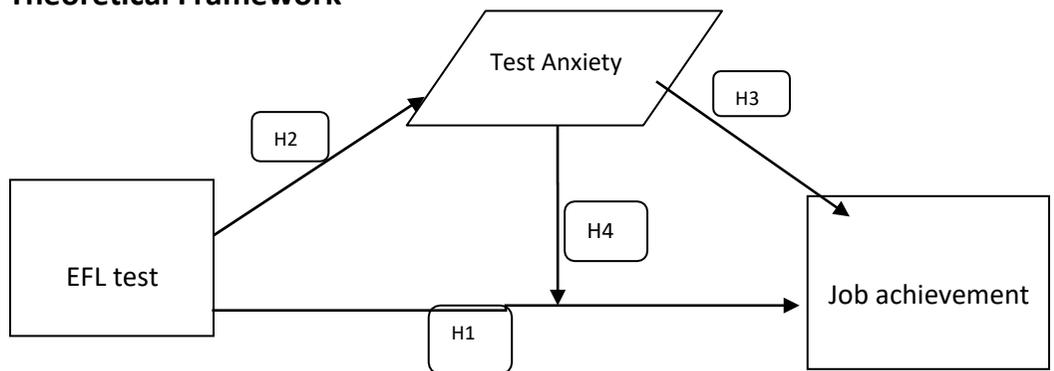
H1: English foreign language test has positive impact on job achievement.

H2: English language skills and test anxiety have positive relationship.

H3: Test anxiety plays an important role in job achievements.

H4: Test anxiety has a moderating role between EFL test and Job achievement.

### Theoretical Framework



In the present study, data collection tools are both questionnaire and interviews. Mixed method design of qualitative and quantitative are used to achieve the research aims. Mixed approach provides better understanding of the research problem. Thus, quantitative data is collected through questionnaire and for qualitative data, interviews are used. Moreover, the combination of both quantitative and qualitative approaches counterbalances the strengths and weaknesses of both.

For the survey, the data was collected using an adapted form of Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) prepared by Horwitz (1986). The questionnaire has items based on 5 point Likert scale starting from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree”. The scale has demonstrated internal reliability, achieving an alpha coefficient of .93 with all items producing significantly correct item-total scale correlations. Test- retest reliability over eight weeks yielded an  $r = .83$  ( $p < .001$ ) (Horwitz et al., 1986, p.129). The theoretical range for FLCAS is from 33 to 165; the higher score obtained means high level of anxiety, while in contrast, the lower score obtained indicates lower level of anxiety. The items presented are reflective of communication apprehension, test-anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation in the foreign language classroom. These items have helped to explore the relationship between different variables which make the job candidates achieve better jobs by understanding how to control anxiety level while taking English language test. Back up interviews are taken from respondents to get the qualitative data. Qualitative data is then given a graphical representation form. For interviews, the questions were adapted from the same scale to get an idea about how the participants feel about the anxiety caused by EFL and how it affects job achievement.

In this particular study the employees working in private schools were taken as population. The researcher chose private schools located only in Islamabad. Non probability convenience sampling method is selected for this research that helps gathering data from the people who are easily available. The researcher distributed 150 questionnaires in different schools located in Islamabad. The questionnaire was filled by employees of all levels and, of different age groups. 134 questionnaires were returned and processed for testing. The researcher conducted back up interviews from 15 respondents who have been working in the education sector for last two years. The results of the interviews were then interpreted.

There are two variables with the moderating effect of test anxiety. The questionnaire is one of the tools of collecting quantitative data from the respondents. The questionnaire consisted of items that addressed the influence of English language skills on achieving good jobs with moderating role of test anxiety.

<b>Sr. No.</b>	<b>Variable Name</b>	<b>Variable Types</b>	<b>No. of Items</b>
1.	EFL	Independent	11
2.	Test anxiety	Moderator	15
3.	Job achievement	Dependent	6

## Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics measured using SPSS 20 (mean, standard deviation), correlation matrix and regression analysis was used to test the propositions or hypotheses. The questionnaire was administered to the sample of participants for pilot testing. The value of Cronbach Alpha should be greater than 0.70 (Nunnally, 1978). The internal consistency i.e., the reliability of the items which was greater than point seven (0.71) assured that the instrument was reliable and researcher could proceed with it. All of the utilized constructs are well supported in the prior literature. Through the operationalization of these well supported and validated items, content validity has been established (Straub, 1989).

The software used is SPSS version 20.0, as it is easily available. Further, it is adequate software for testing relationships between variables. In this study the, regression model is run for evaluating results. This study also uses the correlation and descriptive analysis. Reliability of variables was checked before the Correlation was run. Regression was run to test the hypothesis.

### Reliability Statistics (N=134)

Variables	Cronbach's $\alpha$	N of Items
EFL	0.92	11
Test Anxiety	0.91	15
Job Achievement	0.87	6

Reliability of data was tested through Cronbach alpha. There were multiple questions against each variable. To test the reliability, Cronbach alpha is used to establish internal consistency. The above mentioned results show that job achievement variable has the reliability value of 0.87 and English as a foreign language test with the reliability value of 0.92 which is above 0.7. These values reflect that scale for those variables is adequate for further investigations.

Reliability of test anxiety is 0.91 which is higher than 0.7 which shows that scale used for test anxiety characteristics explains the job achievement characteristics, so further analysis can be conducted.

Frequency	
Male	70
Female	64
Total	134

Total sample size was 150 from which 134 respondents responded. Out of 134 respondents, 70 were male and 64 were female. Target Population was teachers working in private schools in Islamabad. It is very pertinent to know the role of English test scores for getting jobs in private schools.

	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>	
	Statistics	Statistics		Statistics
<b>EFL</b>	134	3.17		.73
<b>Test Anxiety</b>	134	3.25		.62
<b>Job Achievement</b>	134	3.23		.70

The descriptive analysis of the responses is based on English as a foreign language test and test anxiety and their impact on achieving good jobs. It can be observed that the mean value of EFL is 3.17, test anxiety 3.25, and job achievement 3.23. Standard deviation for all the variables varies from 0.62 to 0.73.

<b>Correlations</b>			
	EFL	TANX	JACH
EFL	1		
TANX	.667**	1	
JACH	.552**	.639**	1

\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Correlation table reflects that all the variables correlate with one another. Double asterisk shows high correlation between all variables.

The Pearson correlation test is used to find out the relationship between all the variables. The results in the above table demonstrate that there is a strong correlation that exists between the variables. The values of the variables with double asterisk and above 0.5 indicates a positive correlation among the variables.

## EFL → TEST ANXIETY → JOB ACHIEVEMENT

### Moderation Analysis using Barron and Kenny (1986) (N=134)

Steps		R <sup>2</sup>	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	F	B	t
<b>Step-1</b>						
EFL (IV)	Job Achievement (DV)	0.305	0.299	57.83	0.531	EFL (IV)
<b>Step-2</b>						
EFL (IV)	Test Anxiety (MV)	0.445	0.441	105.83	0.572	EFL (IV)
<b>Step-3</b>						
Test Anxiety (MV)	Job Achievement (DV)	0.408	0.403	90.90	.716	Test Anxiety (MV)
<b>Moderation</b>						
EFL (IV)	Job Achievement (DV)	0.436	0.428	50.721	0.21	EFL (IV)
Test Anxiety (MV)					0.54	5.53

\*\* $p < 0.01$

The regression was run to determine the relationship of all the variables. First, English language was regressed on job achievement. The above mentioned table provides the value of R<sup>2</sup>. The R value shows the simple correlation. Here R value is .552<sup>a</sup> which shows high correlation. The R<sup>2</sup> value explains that how much English language test has impact on job achievement. Here R<sup>2</sup> value is 0.29 which means that 29% of the English test predicts the achievements of good jobs. This result also shows the importance of English test that 29% of the achievement of good jobs can be explained by how better the candidate knows English language. F value shows fitness of model which is 57.83. It means that model is fit. T value is 7.60 which means that EFL has a positive and a significant impact on the achievements of good jobs.

The beta value is measured in the units of standard deviation. That explains one unit change of standard deviation will result in percentage change in dependent variable. It means that the higher the value of beta the higher is the impact that will be on dependent variable. In case of English test and the achievements of good jobs, it means that one unit change in standard deviation will bring 0.531% change in the achievements of good jobs. This beta value suggests that one unit change in EFL will highly affect the achievements of good jobs.

In the second step, impact of EFL on test anxiety is regressed. The R value is 0.639 which indicates that there exists the high correlation between EFL and test anxiety. The  $R^2$  value is 0.40 which means 40% of English language skills have impact on the test anxiety.

In the third step, impact of test anxiety on job achievement is regressed. The R value is .652<sup>a</sup> which indicates the high correlation exists between test anxiety and job achievements. The  $R^2$  value is 0.425 which means 42% of test anxiety has impact on the job achievements.

In the next step, the moderating role of test anxiety was regressed on achievement of good jobs. The R value is 0.81 which indicates that the high correlation exists between test anxiety and the achievements of good jobs. The  $R^2$  value is 0.403 which means 40% test anxiety has impact on the achievements of good jobs. The F value is 90.91 that means that the model is fit. F value shows the fitness of the model. T value is 9.53 which explains that test anxiety has a significant impact on job achievement.

The beta value is 0.71 which is on the higher side. It means that one unit change in test anxiety brings that much change in job achievements. This values shows that the impact of test anxiety is high on the job achievements.

In the last step, the relationship of English language test with moderating role of test anxiety on the achievement of jobs was checked. English language test with moderating role of test anxiety were taken collectively as an independent variable and job achievement was taken as a dependent variable. The R value is 0.64 which shows a high correlation, so the significance is there. The  $R^2$  value is 0.428 which means that collectively English language test with moderating role of test anxiety can impact 42% of the job achievements. Collectively these both variables affect the job achievements. Both the variables have significant impact on job achievements. The F value is 50.721 which shows the fitness of these variables in the model. T value is 5.53.

The beta value of is 0.21 which is reduced when collectively run with EFL and test anxiety. Here these both variables collectively show that one unit change in standard deviation of these variables will bring significant impact on job achievements. These results show that English language skills have direct positive relation with job achievements, but with moderating effect of test anxiety has negative relation with the job achievements.

On the basis of these results following hypotheses are accepted.

H1: English foreign language test has positive impact on job achievement.

H2: English language skills and test anxiety have positive relationship

H3: Test anxiety plays an important role in job achievements

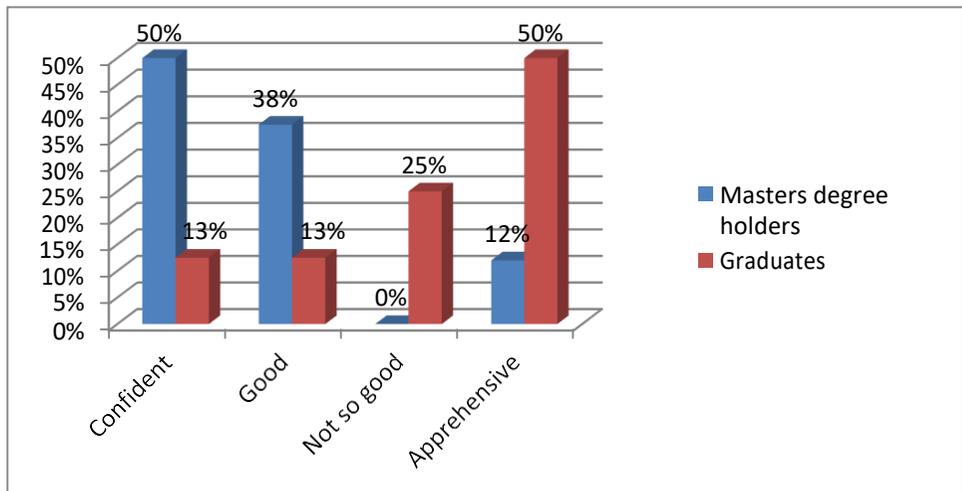
H4: Test anxiety has a moderating role between EFL test and Job achievement.

The variable of English as foreign language shows that overall it has significant impact on the job achievement. Results also show that English as foreign language skills has great tendency to be influenced by test anxiety. As test anxiety plays an important role in job achievement, any change in test anxiety will have impact upon job achievement. Hence, test anxiety has a moderating role between EFL test and Job achievement that can affect both the variables.

### Qualitative Data Analysis

The researcher used interviews as a tool of collecting qualitative data. The researcher conducted back up interviews with 15 teachers working in different schools by using structured questions (Adapted from Horwitz et al. 1986). The responses were recorded and then analyzed:

**Introductory question:** How do you feel when you speak English?



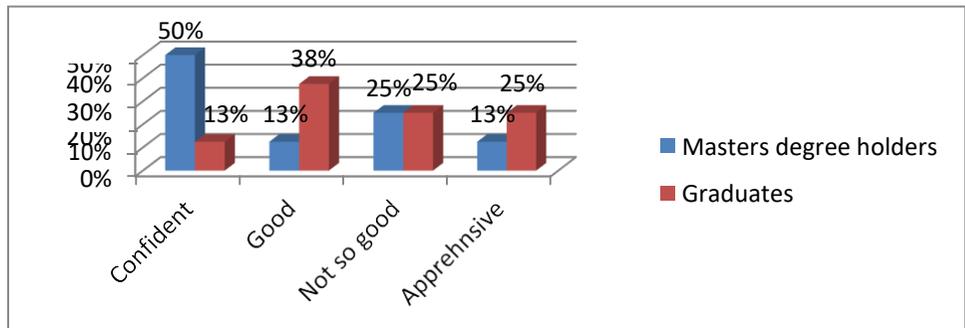
The above graph shows that teachers who have done masters, 50% of them feel confident when they speak in English. 38% of them feel good when they converse in English language, none of them feels not “so good” and 13% of them are apprehensive. On the other hand, those who are graduates, 13% of them feel confident while speaking English, 13% of them feel good, 25% of them feel not so good, and 50% of them are apprehensive while speaking English. Therefore, it can be assumed that teachers holding masters degree are more confident in speaking English

than those who are only graduates. One major reason could be their higher level of learning and more exposure to the English language. Therefore, it can be concluded that more training in English makes a candidate more self-assured and confident in communication in the second language.

After articulating clearly what their choice was, some of the teachers further explained their answers. One of the respondents said, “. . . well! It depends at times . . . when I have someone senior or more experienced in front of me, I may hesitate a little . . . but in general communication in English, I think I’m confident.” Another respondent was of the view that the listeners attitude mattered a lot. She said, “I think if your listener takes interest in what you are saying . . . I will get confident in expressing myself . . . but if he looks critical or disinterested, no matter how confident I may start, I may start feeling not so good . . . and wish to turn to Urdu.”

**General Question:** Can you talk about your experience of having the job interview in the English language?

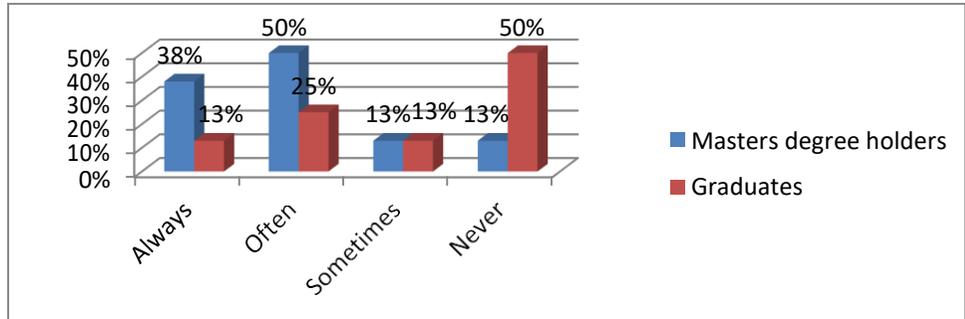
Teachers holding masters degree show positive attitude towards speaking in English language during job interview. They told the researcher that they felt proud and privileged when they could easily converse in English language and answered the questions asked. On the contrary, the teachers who were graduates only were of the view that though it was quite hard trying to comprehend the questions in English and then replying accordingly, yet they felt quite good whenever they could converse in English without making any mistake.



In total, there are almost 44% of the teachers who can talk about their job interview experience confidently. The majority among them is obviously the ones with Masters Degrees. There are 25% of teachers who think their job interview was not so good that they could share that experience with others. There are a number of respondents who really do not want to share that experience. When asked why they did not want to share their experience of job interview, one of these teachers said, “oh . . .

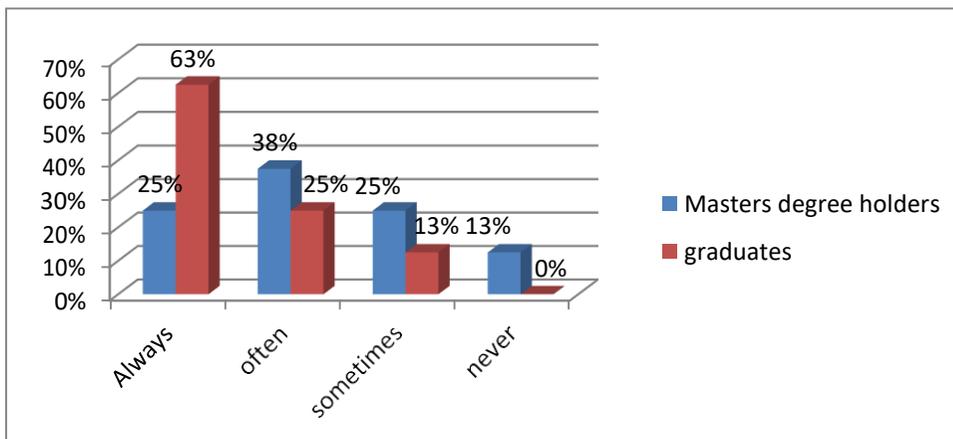
I felt so scared that day . . . yes . . . I could answer the recruiter’s questions, but you know . . . speaking in English was my basic problem. May be I was not very confident. I was afraid I made some mistakes in English and I really wanted to get the job.” This evinces that English language gives an edge to those who are proficient in it in getting through the job interview successfully.

**Apprehension:** Do you use the English language when talking with your colleagues in school?



38% of the teachers holding masters degree use English as a means of communication within the school throughout the day, and 50% of them often communicate in English. However, almost 26% of them do not prefer to use English language for their everyday communication at work place. We see a different picture in the responses given by the teachers with graduation only. Here, majority does not prefer to use the English language for their everyday communication at the work place. This shows that higher the education level, more realization of the importance of English language, or more confidence and ease in English language communication. Overall, 32% of all the teachers in sample never use English while talking to their colleagues. When asked for the reason of not using English language with the colleagues, most answered that they felt relaxed and at ease in talking to their colleagues and friends in their first language.

**Negative Evaluation: Are you afraid of making mistakes in front of any one?**



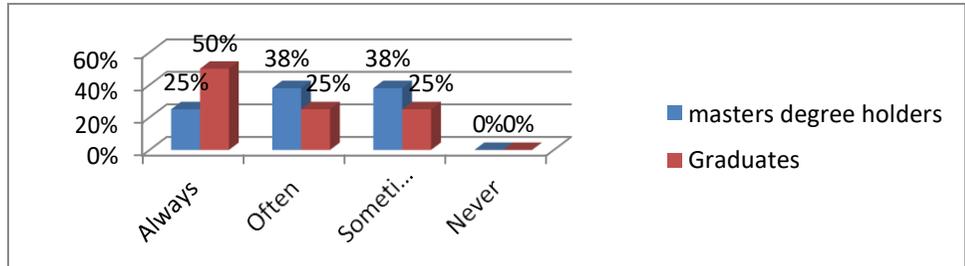
Frequency	Masters degree holder	Graduates	Total
Always	25%	62.5%	87.5%
Often	37.5%	25%	62.5%
Sometimes	25%	12.5%	37.5%
No	12.5%	0%	12.5%

The above graph shows that 25% of the teachers holding masters degree said that they were afraid of making mistakes. While around 38% of them said that often they were afraid of making mistakes. The percentage of those not bothered about making mistakes in the English communication is very low. Among graduates, the anxiety caused by the fear of making mistakes in the English language is quite high since 62.5% of respondents always feel afraid of making mistakes. This shows that lack of English competence on job makes one more anxious. This anxiety may further harm their performance in the teaching skills and on their further achievements in their teaching careers.

To err is human. All of us make mistakes and especially in a foreign language making errors is more frequent and one has to watch one's speech more carefully. One of the respondents shared his views, ". . . I think I am more conscious and watchful when I am talking in English language. While speaking Urdu, I don't bother much . . . may be it's because here . . . people are more critical if you make mistake while speaking English." When asked why people in general were more critical towards the mistakes committed in English language than in Urdu or the other languages, the answers given by the respondents varied. However, everyone agreed to the proposition that the English language had become

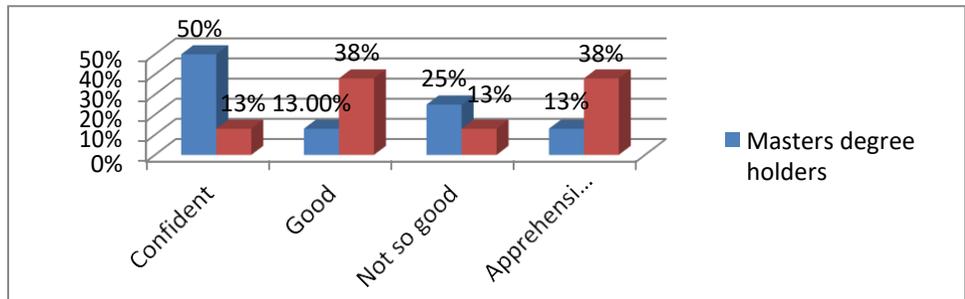
an important standard for measuring one’s capabilities on job. They also expressed their desire to be further trained on improving their English language proficiency. They suggested having in-service and pre-service training in this regard. One of them commented, “. . . it is sad all other professions have pre-service training but the teachers who train students to enter those professions are not trained”.

**Do you get upset if any recruiter corrects your mistake during the interview? Why?**



The above graph shows that majority of the teachers often feel upset if they make a mistake while conversing with the recruiter. This shows that they know their performance in the English language plays a very important role in their recruitment, and if they are unable to do well in the English language, their job career may have a setback. When asked about the reason of getting upset, most of them told that interview is the determinant to their job, and any mistake in the use of English language may be taken as a sign of their incompetency.

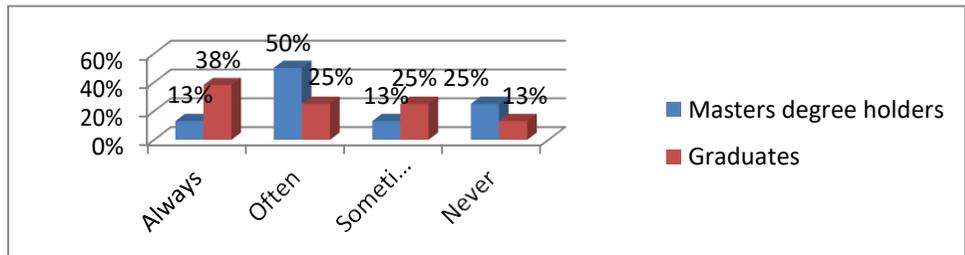
**Test Anxiety: How do you feel while taking the English language test?**



The above graph shows that most of the teachers holding masters degree feel confident during English language exam. However, it is the least number of teachers in the other group who feel confident while taking the English language test. Overall, almost half of the respondents feel apprehensive in this regard.

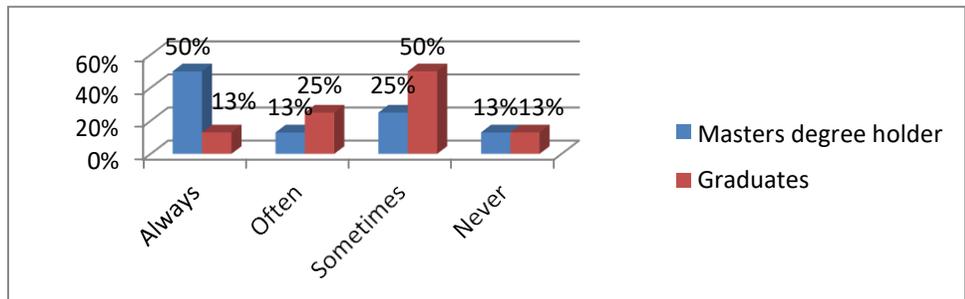
The majority of the respondents find it difficult to get rid of the fear or tension while taking English language test. They think they have to be more careful especially in the written tests. One respondent said, “when it is writing exam in the English language, I really feel stressed . . . in oral exams or interviews, there are other things apart from English . . . and you can make over if you make any mistake . . . but in writing if you have made an error, it leaves a very bad impression.”

**Failure Apprehension: While taking English language exam, are you worried much about failing in this? How do you prepare for your English language exam?**



The graph shows that 13% of the teachers holding masters degree always feel worried about the failure during English language exam. Around 50% of them are often worried about failure. However, 38% of graduate teachers say that they are always worried about failure, and 25% are often worried about failure. The results show that most of the teachers feel worried often when they take English language test. When asked about the preparation of English language test, most of them said they consulted grammar books and tried to practice interviews. Some said they watched English movies and read English newspaper to improve their English language skills.

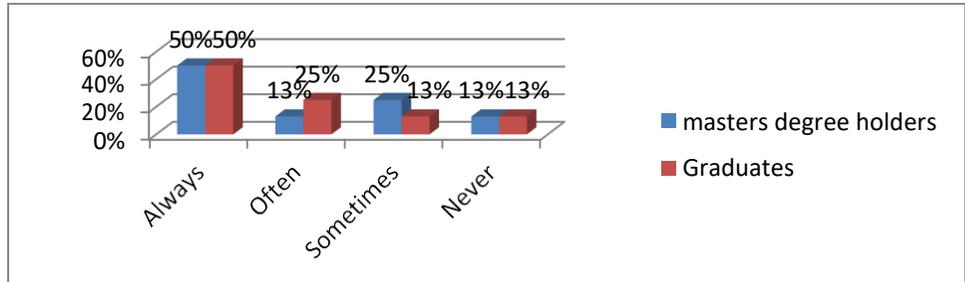
**Level of Comfort: Do you volunteer to speak in the English language during interview?**



In the above table, 50% of the teachers holding masters degree always volunteer to speak in the English language during interview. On the contrary, 50% of the teachers who are graduates sometimes volunteer to

speak in English language during interview. Hence, most of the teachers volunteer to speak in the English language during interview. This shows that majority know the importance of using English language in the interviews in Pakistan. There is a strong realization that if one speaks English language during the interview, it leaves a better impression on the recruiters. In other words, it seems to give strong job guarantee.

**Failure in Comprehension: Does it bother you if you do not understand any word the recruiter says?**



A vast majority of 50% of the teachers in both groups always feel bothered if they do not understand any word the recruiter/interviewer says during interview. They understand the need to comprehend the recruiter to give him/her the impression that the candidate is competent in English. Not being able to comprehend the recruiter means low English competency and no job achievement at the end. When asked what they felt and why in such a scenario, almost all the teachers shared the same opinion. They all feared that this would lead the recruiter to have a low opinion of their capabilities and might lead to the rejection at the end. This shows that English comprehension is also as important a part as English speaking ability is in the interview.

**Discussion**

This study aimed at providing insights into the effect of English language skills on achieving good jobs with moderating role of test anxiety. Data was collected from the teachers working in different private schools who undertook English proficiency tests in order to get the job. Direct impact of English language skills on job achievements was studied. Moreover, test anxiety played moderating role in showing good English language skills that have impact on achieving good jobs. In general, all hypothesized relationships were supported by the gathered data and were found statistically significant as well. Now we will discuss the outcomes of the study in detail.

H1: English foreign language test has positive impact on job achievement.

H2: English language skills and test anxiety have positive relationship

H3: Test anxiety plays an important role in job achievements

H4: Test anxiety has a moderating role between EFL test and Job achievement.

English foreign language test was hypothesized to have positive impact on job achievement. As per the results obtained from the analysis of the data, this study strongly supports this assumption. The results indicate that English foreign language test has a direct and positive impact on job achievements. The results are in line with the findings of some of the previous studies (Andrade, 1989; Bamford & Mizokawa, 1991; Cummins, 2000; Dumas, 1999). Learning any foreign language helps to develop students' sense of achievement. Second language learning enhances particularly the areas which the learners are not used to excel in during their academic career. The remarkable results shown in different subject areas due to foreign language acquisition creates a sense of achievement, enhances self-confidence, and self-esteem, and self-image and brings forth satisfaction.

Test anxiety was proposed to play an important role in job achievements. On the basis of correlation and regression tests, positive and significant relationship is found between them. This is in line with the earlier findings (Anane, 2013; Ayden et al., 2006; Hancock, 2001; Putwain, Woods & Symes, 2010). The conclusion drawn in that study is that the language anxiety is the psychological tension that the learner goes through in performing a learning task and this anxiety is situation specific.

Test anxiety was proposed to have a moderating role between EFL test and Job achievement. The findings of this research strongly support this hypothesis. Moreover, the data also leads to the conclusion that anxiety is the consequence of inadequate skills required to use the target language. In addition, failure apprehension, negative evaluation and level of comfort also play a very important role in this regard. Many academic researchers (Aydin, 2001; Horwitz, 2001; Richard, 1996) associate foreign language to diverse cultural, social and traditional factors such as being apprehensive of committing mistakes in their social circle due to status quo problem. Other researchers conclude that there is high level of anxiety observed where there are more evaluative circumstances (Daly, 2009; Wuegbuzie et al., 2011). Young (2012) claim that if the tests are quite ambiguous anxiety level increases as it creates nervousness and apprehension.

Findings of this research have many practical implications for academicians as well as for HR managers who deal in the core functions of recruitment. This study has undertaken those relational constructs which have previously been studied and proven in the literature. Moreover, this

study has also taken into account those gaps which have been identified by that literature as well. Since English proficiency tests (oral and written) have become important part of recruitment process for the teachers of private schools, it is very important to know how to improve performance by handling stress. Furthermore, in this global era, it is very pertinent to learn any foreign language specifically English that has become a determinant factor for getting jobs in many fields.

By analyzing the results of this study, foreign language training should be given from the early age. Further, English as the second language must be given high importance in order to achieve good jobs. Test anxiety can be controlled by giving more exposure to the culture of the place where that language is spoken. Moreover, preparing English grammatical concepts more for the recruitment tests can also help in overcoming test anxiety. By having grip on English language, and by controlling test anxiety, there are more chances of getting good jobs.

The data for this study were gathered from those respondents who were working in the private schools of Pakistan and had taken English proficiency tests. Therefore, the findings of this research are very helpful for them as they are directly related to their particular field. Academics and candidates willing to get jobs both may consult this study which can help them to make better decisions.

The data were gathered from the private schools Islamabad regarding the impact of English as a foreign language on achieving good jobs in Pakistan. The proposed model should be applied in different cultural settings as well to get the comprehensive and robust view of this model. In order to expand the literature regarding job achievements, more predictors of job achievements can be incorporated in the proposed research design. For example, educational background, communication skills, or negotiation skills etc., can be incorporated in the model to get a diversified application of this model. Future work should highlight other dimensions through which good jobs can be attracted and achieved. This study was based on only English language as predictor of good jobs; other researches can also take into account the impact of CV making, use of language in CV, operating recruitment sites, and using LinkedIn, etc.

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## Appendix I Questionnaire

### Candidate's Demographic Background Information

1. Gender:                       Male                                       Female

### Foreign Language Test Anxiety Scale

(Adapted from Horwitz et al., 1986)

1	SA= Strongly Agree	2	A= Agree	3	N= Neither Agree nor Disagree	4	D= Disagree	5	SD= Strongly Disagree
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- 1) I never feel quite sure of myself when I am taking English test.  
1. SA                      2. A                      3. N                      4. D                      5. SD
- 2) I don't worry about making mistakes in English test.  
1. SA                      2. A                      3. N                      4. D                      5. SD
- 3) I tremble when I know that I'm going to be called on in English test.  
1. SA                      2. A                      3. N                      4. D                      5. SD
- 4) It frightens me when I don't understand what the question is in the English test.  
1. SA                      2. A                      3. N                      4. D                      5. SD
- 5) It won't bother me at all to take more English tests.  
1. SA                      2. A                      3. N                      4. D                      5. SD
- 6) During English test, I find myself thinking about things that have nothing to do with the course.  
1. SA                      2. A                      3. N                      4. D                      5. SD
- 7) I keep thinking that the other candidates are better at English than me.  
1. SA                      2. A                      3. N                      4. D                      5. SD
- 8) I am usually at ease during English tests.  
1. SA                      2. A                      3. N                      4. D                      5. SD
- 9) I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in English.  
1. SA                      2. A                      3. N                      4. D                      5. SD
- 10) I worry about the consequences of failing my English test.  
1. SA                      2. A                      3. N                      4. D                      5. SD
- 11) I don't understand why some people get so upset over English tests.  
1. SA                      2. A                      3. N                      4. D                      5. SD
- 12) In English test, I can get so nervous that I forget things I know.  
1. SA                      2. A                      3. N                      4. D                      5. SD
- 13) It embarrasses me to volunteer speaking in English during interview.  
1. SA                      2. A                      3. N                      4. D                      5. SD
- 14) I would not be nervous speaking English with native speakers.  
1. SA                      2. A                      3. N                      4. D                      5. SD
- 15) I get upset when I don't understand what the recruiter is asking about.  
1. SA                      2. A                      3. N                      4. D                      5. SD
- 16) Even if I am well prepared for English test, I feel anxious about it.  
1. SA                      2. A                      3. N                      4. D                      5. SD
- 17) I often feel like not going to take English test.  
1. SA                      2. A                      3. N                      4. D                      5. SD

- 18) I feel confident when I speak in English.  
 1. SA                    2. A                    3.N                    4.D                    5. SD
- 19) I am afraid that the recruiter is ready to correct every mistake I make.  
 1. SA                    2. A                    3.N                    4.D                    5. SD
- 20) I can feel my heart pounding when I'm going to be called on for English test.  
 1. SA                    2. A                    3.N                    4.D                    5. SD
- 21) The more I study for an English test, the more confuse I get.  
 1. SA                    2. A                    3.N                    4.D                    5. SD
- 22) I don't feel pressure to prepare very well for English test.  
 1. SA                    2. A                    3.N                    4.D                    5. SD
- 23) I always feel that the other candidates speak English better than I do.  
 1. SA                    2. A                    3.N                    4.D                    5. SD
- 24) I feel very self-conscious about speaking English in front of others.  
 1. SA                    2. A                    3.N                    4.D                    5. SD
- 25) English test results makes me feel left behind.  
 1. SA                    2. A                    3.N                    4.D                    5. SD
- 26) I feel more tense and nervous in English test than any other test.  
 1. SA                    2. A                    3.N                    4.D                    5. SD
- 27) I get nervous and confused when I am speaking English during recruitment interview.  
 1. SA                    2. A                    3.N                    4.D                    5. SD
- 28) When I'm on my way to take English test, I feel very sure and relaxed.  
 1. SA                    2. A                    3.N                    4.D                    5. SD
- 29) I get nervous when I don't understand every word the recruiter asks during interview.  
 1. SA                    2. A                    3.N                    4.D                    5. SD
- 30) I feel overwhelmed by the number of rules I have to learn to speak English.  
 1. SA                    2. A                    3.N                    4.D                    5. SD
- 31) I am afraid that the recruiter will laugh at me when I speak English.  
 1. SA                    2. A                    3.N                    4.D                    5. SD
- 32) I get nervous when the recruiter asks questions in English which I haven't prepared in advance.  
 1. SA                    2. A                    3.N                    4.D                    5. SD

## Appendix II

### Interview Questions

**Introductory Question:** How do you feel when you speak English?

**General Question:** Can you talk about your experience of having the job interview in the English language?

**Apprehension:** Do you use the English language when talking with your colleagues in school?

**Negative Evaluation:** Are you afraid of making mistakes in front of any one?

**Test Anxiety:** How do you feel while taking the English language test?

**Failure Apprehension:** While taking English language exam, are you worried much about failing in this?  
How do you prepare for your English language exam?

**Negative Evaluation:** Do you get upset if any recruiter corrects your mistake during the interview?  
Why?

**Level of Comfort:** Do you volunteer to speak in the English language during interview?

**Failure in Comprehension:** Does it bother you if you do not understand any word the recruiter says?