



# CAN ENGLISH MEDIUM EDUCATION WORK IN PAKISTAN? Lessons from Punjab

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2009 the Government of Punjab introduced English as the medium of instruction in mathematics and science in all Punjab's public schools from Grades 1 to 12. Implementing a policy of English medium at a primary school level supports the education system as Higher Education and the majority of worldwide research and academic knowledge is in English. This in turn increases Pakistan's ability to carry out research, business and political negotiations in English and since English is the lingua Franca in our globalising world it is not only an asset but a necessity.

This policy change was supported by the Punjab's Schools Reform Roadmap, launched in April 2011, which triggered major improvements in both access to school and the quality of instruction. Over a million additional children have enrolled in the province's schools; facilities have improved; thousands of new teachers have been hired; new and improved teaching materials have been provided and teacher attendance has climbed sharply. However, as our research shows, there is still much work to be done to support the education system as a whole and effectively implement this shift in the medium of instruction.

We tested the English language skills of 2008 primary and middle school teachers in public and private schools in 18 districts of Punjab using the British Council's state of the art computer-based Aptis language testing system. The results give cause for serious concern.

Among the main findings are that:

- 62% of private school teachers and 56% of government school teachers registered scores in the lowest possible band in the Aptis test, meaning they lack even basic knowledge of English, including the ability to understand and use familiar everyday expressions and simple phrases.
- Most of the remaining teachers received scores that placed them at beginners' level in English.
- Even in English medium schools, 44% of teachers scored in the bottom Aptis band. In all, 94% of teachers in English medium schools have only pre-intermediate level English or lower.
- Younger teachers had a much higher level of English than their older colleagues. 24% of teachers aged 21-35 scored in the pre-intermediate and intermediate categories, compared with just 7% of those aged 51 and over.

These findings are obviously most relevant to English instruction, and suggest that Punjab's teachers are ill-equipped to deliver the new English medium policy, but they may also point to deficiencies in overall teaching quality. If teachers are incapable of instructing their pupils in English, moreover, this is likely to have a dual effect – first by preventing children from becoming proficient in English, and second by impeding their learning of content in other subjects.

We also conducted two further pieces of research. The first was a questionnaire survey of the 2008 teachers asking about their attitudes towards English medium teaching, their professional motivations and needs, and their ideas for change. The second comprised focus group discussions to elicit more detailed responses on the themes in the questionnaire.

In investigating why levels of English among teachers are so low, we found that while most of those in government schools had received some training in English language teaching methodology, over one-quarter had received no such training in the previous two years. In private schools, almost half of teachers had received no training in this subject. Teachers are fully aware of the importance of English to their students, with a large majority telling us that it is crucial for academic, career and social advancement, and there is strong demand for more training in English teaching methodology. In the focus groups too, a number of teachers admitted they needed much more training in order to be able to deliver effective lessons in English.

Consistent with their abilities in the language, we found that very few teachers use English all the time in class. In all subjects, including English, less than 15% of teachers in both government and private schools teach only in English. Only in maths, science, computer studies and English do the majority of teachers use English at least most of the time. This reflects both a dissatisfaction with curriculum and textbooks, which many feel are not relevant to students' needs, and a lack of agreement over both the value and content of English medium teaching. Half of teachers in public schools

believe Urdu should be the main medium of instruction in schools, with only around one-fifth believing that English should be the main medium of instruction; less than one-fifth of teachers in public and private schools even believe that English medium education should be delivered solely in English.

This reluctance to embrace English medium teaching does not mean that Punjab's teachers are resistant to change. Most are motivated by a strong desire to see their students flourish and they gain great satisfaction from their jobs. Most say that they would like more training, including in new techniques, with the younger generation of teachers particularly enthusiastic about improving their skills. Just as younger teachers have higher levels of English, so too do they use English much more often in class and feel more positively about the English medium policy. While only 13% of teachers in our survey aged over 50 years believed English should be the main medium of instruction, this rose to 30% among 21-35 year olds. Young teachers are especially keen to receive more training in English teaching methodology – 82% of those in the younger age group defined English training as a high priority for them, compared with 69% of the older teachers.

For English medium instruction in the Punjab to match the ambitions of policy makers, improvements are needed in four key areas:

1. Achieving buy-in: Punjab's teachers have not yet bought in to the English medium policy, and policy makers will need to make systematic efforts to garner their support, including by consulting teachers on curriculum design, textbooks and training. Making compliance with the policy easier by

providing lesson plans will also help to bring teachers on board.

2. Expanding and improving training: Dramatic improvements are needed in training for both English language and English language teaching methodology. Many teachers have received no training in these areas, and the results of this can be seen in the Aptis scores. Improved training programmes should first be targeted at the most accessible audiences – that is, younger, more urban teachers – and clustering methods and technological solutions such as mobile phone, DVD and online courses should be used to reach larger numbers.
3. Targets and rewards: Accreditation of schools that deliver English medium education to a basic standard would encourage schools to strive for quality improvements, increase demand for teacher training and provide clarity to parents. Schools and teachers should be rewarded as their students' scores in Aptis tests improve.
4. Long-term monitoring: For improvements in English medium teaching to be sustained, schools that receive accreditation should be monitored periodically over the long term. With appropriate training and lesson observation materials, it might be possible for District Teacher Educators (DTEs), who already have responsibility for monitoring teacher quality in general and for testing students, to take on the role of overseeing English medium instruction.

Based on our research and on the ideas discussed above, we make the following recommendations for strengthening the ability of Punjab's teachers to deliver

English medium instruction:

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POLICY MAKERS

1. Education policy makers should hold consultation exercises with head teachers and teachers to make the case for English medium education and listen to and respond to their concerns.
2. A rigorous assessment of the effectiveness of existing training programmes for English should be conducted by an independent organisation.
3. Minimum quality standards should be developed for schools that provide English medium instruction. There is a strong case, too, for including English testing in the recruitment process for teachers.
4. Schools should be monitored over the long-term to ensure that improvements are maintained and built upon.
5. Those working in Punjab's education system should endeavour to enlist help from external partners who have expertise and manpower that can be of invaluable help in carrying out the overhaul that is needed to transform English medium instruction in Punjab.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE DIRECTORATE OF STAFF DEVELOPMENT (DSD) AND DISTRICT TEACHER EDUCATORS (DTEs)

1. To facilitate teachers' task, the lesson plans they receive should include English-Urdu translations of key words and phrases.

2. Lesson plans and training programmes should initially be aimed at the most receptive audiences.
3. Pre-service teachers are a key audience for training programmes. English medium instruction should be incorporated into pre-service training for English, mathematics and science teachers, and should also become part of the testing procedure for trainee teachers.
4. Younger teachers are the other key audience for early efforts to expand English medium education. The next generation of Punjab's teachers are the most receptive to the new policy, and the best-equipped in terms of language ability to deliver it.
5. Once the more receptive teachers have been trained and have shown improved skills in instructing in English, training programmes should be introduced in other teachers.
6. Cluster methods should be used to train large numbers of teachers, with a school or a resource centre used as a hub to deliver courses to educators from a number of nearby schools.
7. Technological solutions should be explored as a means of reaching large numbers of teachers with training and support.
8. Training should not be seen as a one-off event - refresher courses should be developed to keep teachers abreast of developments in English medium education.
9. If District Teacher Educators are to be trained to monitor and coach teachers in the area of English medium instruction, they should be supported by lesson observation materials that

define clearly what they should be looking for in good English medium teaching.

10. Data on teachers could be used to ensure that schools contain a mix of older and younger faculty. Those schools with predominantly older teachers are likely to have a culture that is more resistant to change, so an influx of younger teachers into such schools will give students better prospects of being taught with the latest methods and in English medium, to which younger teachers are more receptive.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR HEAD TEACHERS AND TEACHERS**

1. Teachers should be incentivised to improve their skills in English language and English medium teaching, including certificates for those who complete training courses and monetary or non-monetary awards for progressing up the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) scale and improving students' results.
2. Teachers should be monitored over the long-term, with those who have received rewards reviewed periodically to ensure that they have maintained standards.
3. Head teachers should encourage teachers to take on board modern teaching methods, including giving students more opportunity to contribute in lessons and making greater use of technology as a teaching aid.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CURRICULUM AND TEXTBOOK DEVELOPERS

1. Curricula and textbooks should be evaluated with a view to updating them and rendering them more relevant to student needs and thematic interests. Shifting the focus towards practical speaking and listening activities will leave students better-equipped to use English in their daily lives.
2. The updating of curricula and textbooks should be discussed with teachers, who should be encouraged to provide input into their development.



# INTRODUCTION

## LAYING THE FOUNDATIONS

Punjab's education system has made great strides in recent years. Pakistan's largest province, home to over half of the country's 180 million people, has almost 11 million primary and middle school students taught by over 300,000 teachers in about 50,000 schools<sup>1</sup>. Since the Chief Minister of Punjab Mian Shahbaz Sharif initiated the Punjab Schools Reform Roadmap in December 2010, well over a million additional children aged 5 to 16 have enrolled in school, and student attendance in school increased from 83% to 92% between August 2011 and December 2012<sup>2</sup>.

As well as expanding access to schooling, Punjab has also seen improvements in educational quality, thanks in large part to the Directorate of Staff Development of the Schools Education Department, Government of Punjab (DSD). Through the setting up of a Continuous Professional Development system and large scale training programmes conducted across the province for over 300,000 teachers, DSD has reached very large numbers in a relatively short period of time. 81,000 new teachers have been trained since 2010, and the number of them present at school every day has increased by 35,000.

Nielsen surveys commissioned by the UK Department for International Development (DfID) have found that the proportion of schools with basic facilities in place –

that is, electricity, drinking water, toilets and boundary walls - has risen from 69% to over 91% in two years<sup>3</sup>. A 2013 survey for the Next Generation Pakistan project found that 75% of 18-29 year olds in the province believe schools have improved – a higher proportion than in any other province.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, one of the province's flagship programmes, the Punjab Education Foundation, has become a model for how developing countries can use public-private partnerships to provide education to the poor.

There is, however, a long way to go, particularly with regard to improving quality. A survey in 2011 found that 47% of Grade Three children in Punjab were unable to read a sentence in Urdu, while one in three could not perform a single digit subtraction.<sup>5</sup> Nielsen found that in October 2012, despite improvements in the preceding year, 44% of teachers in the province were not using lesson plans, while 20% did not even ask students questions to check they had understood what they were being taught. As DfID's Special Representative on Education in Pakistan Sir Michael Barber has warned, notwithstanding the successes in increasing enrolment and bolstering the number and attendance of teachers, 'We will need convincing evidence soon of improvement in student outcomes.'<sup>6</sup>

1 Michael Barber (2013): The good news from Pakistan: How a revolutionary new approach to education reform in Punjab shows the way forward for Pakistan and development aid everywhere. Reform. London. March.  
2 Ibid.

3 Ibid  
4 Ibid.

5 LEAPS (2011): Learning and Educational Achievement in Punjab Schools Report 2011. Learning and Educational Achievement in Pakistan Schools Project. Pakistan.

6 Barber (2013): op. cit.



## THE POLICY PUSH

Education reform in Punjab has been driven by the provincial government under the leadership of the Chief Minister and with the support of donors including DfID and the World Bank.

Beginning in 2003, the Punjab Education Sector Reform Programme (PESRP) delivered improvements in teacher recruitment and textbook provision and support. Teacher recruitment goals have been met and a new set of textbooks and teacher guides has been supplied to all schools from this academic year. In January 2013, the Punjab Strategy for Teacher Education (PSTE) 2012-2022 was launched by Directorate of Staff Development (DSD), providing a clear set of steps to take in order to develop a coherent, consistent, coordinated teacher education programme for the future.

PESRP also led to large increases in primary school enrolment.<sup>7</sup> A major part of this effort was the Punjab Education Foundation (PEF), a ground breaking project which has used public sector funding to support poor students to attend independent, low-cost private schools. The foundation has three main programmes. Its voucher scheme has helped 140,000 previously out-of-school children to attend school. Its Foundation Assisted Schools, wherein the PEF buys up all the places at schools that pass its Quality Assessment Test and pays the schools to provide free education to students, were educating 1.2 million students by October 2012. And its New Schools Programme, which guarantees funding for building new schools in areas

where public provision is lacking, is educating over 40,000 children.<sup>8</sup>

Further impetus was provided in December 2010 by the Punjab Schools Reform Roadmap. Drawing on worldwide evidence describing the components of successful education system reform, the reform programme has three goals – that every child enrolls in school, that every child is retained in school, and that every child learns and makes progress. The Roadmap sets provincial and district targets on key indicators such as student attendance, teacher presence, teacher guide availability and school facilities. Progress is measured by a Programme Monitoring and Implementation Unit (PMIU) and the Executive District Officers responsible for education in each district are held to account for meeting targets. Districts are ranked on their performance, with high achievers receiving financial rewards and low achievers demotion.<sup>9</sup>

Included in the Roadmap is a focus on English as a medium of education. The Chief Minister has emphasised the importance of schooling in the English language and in 2009 announced that English would become the official medium of instruction in mathematics and science in all Punjab's public schools from Grades 1 to 12. Many low-cost private schools, which account for over 40% of enrolment in primary and middle schools, have also begun to promote themselves on the basis of providing English medium education, in many cases responding to parents' demand for such teaching.

7 World Bank website, available at: <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/EXTABOUTUS/IDA/0,,contentMDK:21396362~menuPK:3266877~pagePK:51236175~piPK:437394~theSitePK:73154,00.html>. Last accessed 12 June 2013.

8 Shahid Kardar (2011): *Unleashing Pakistan's Potential: What Happens to Education when you Dare to Innovate*. Pakistan Education Task Force; Barber (2013): op cit.

9 Punjab Education Sector Reform Programme website. Available at: [http://pesrp.edu.pk/cm\\_school\\_reforms\\_roadmap.php](http://pesrp.edu.pk/cm_school_reforms_roadmap.php). Last accessed 12 June 2013.

Putting English at the heart of Punjab's education system is of great importance in a globalising world. For young Pakistanis, a strong command of English is part of a set of skills that will be enormously valuable to their futures. Along with literacy, numeracy, the ability to think critically and adapt to new challenges, mastery of English is an essential tool for thriving in a fast-changing world economy. English is the lingua franca for multinational businesses, international donors and non-governmental organisations and for cross-border political, trade and environmental negotiations. India's success in the technology sector owes much to its cadre of English-speaking young people. Hourly wages there among men who speak English fluently are on average 34% higher than among those who do not speak English,<sup>10</sup> while attending an English medium school in India has been found to increase men's and women's income by a quarter.<sup>11</sup> In Pakistan, in a study of thirty companies commissioned by the British Council, over half said that their staff needed to speak English to intermediate level or above in order to conduct domestic and international business communications. Staff with high levels of English were reported to reach senior positions more rapidly and earn up to 30% more than their non-English-speaking colleagues.<sup>12</sup> At an economy-wide level, meanwhile, a workforce that is proficient in English is likely to help Punjab and

Pakistan attract foreign direct investment and facilitate trade.

However, although the will is there for an expansion of English medium schooling, implementation of the policy poses significant challenges. Pakistan suffers from a lack of teachers who are proficient in English. English is not widely-spoken outside the classroom – except by the graduates of elite schools – and there have hitherto been few training opportunities for teachers to learn how to use the language in their work. This deficit is not limited to the public sector – many private schools which market themselves as providing English medium instruction also lack the capacity to live up to their promises. A 2011 study by Hywel Coleman noted that English language levels in Pakistan are below par compared with international standards. He attributed this to the pressure on teachers to help students pass English exams, which encourages them to resort to rote learning methodologies instead of encouraging critical thinking, problem solving and discussion. Although sometimes effective in the short term for the immediate goal of passing an exam, rote learning is of limited use to students in the long term as it places the emphasis on memorising rather than truly learning the skills needed to become proficient in the language.

## THIS REPORT

It is with these concerns in mind that the British Council carried out the research presented in this report in partnership with the Directorate of Staff Development (DSD), Punjab, Idara-e-Taleem-o-Aagahi (ITA: Centre for education and consciousness), and the cooperation of the Punjab Education Foundation, we

10 M Azam, A Chin, N Prakash (2013): The Returns to English-Language Skills in India. *Economic Development and Cultural Change*, 61 (2): 335-367

11 K Munshi and M Rosenzweig (2006): Traditional Institutions Meet the Modern World: Caste, Gender, and Schooling Choice in a Globalising Economy. *American Economic Review*, American Economic Association, vol. 96(4), pages 1225-1252, September.

12 R. Pinon & J. Haydon (2010): The Benefits of the English Language for Individuals and Societies: Quantitative Indicators from Cameroon, Nigeria, Rwanda, Bangladesh and Pakistan (2010) Euromonitor International Report (A custom report compiled by Euromonitor International for the British Council).

commissioned two surveys. The first used the British Council's computer-based Aptis testing software to assess the proficiency in speaking, listening and writing in English of 2008 primary and middle school teachers from the public and private sectors in Punjab. The second deployed a written questionnaire and focus group discussions to ask those teachers about their professional motivations, perceived training requirements, and attitudes to English and its use as a medium of instruction.

The Aptis test results provide a picture of the current capacity of Punjab's teachers to fulfil their English medium commitments, while the questionnaire and focus group discussions show what teachers think about the training they receive, their work environment, their capacity to teach in English and their ideas for change. Although the focus of our report is on English medium instruction, it is likely that some of the lessons gleaned will be of interest to those working to improve quality of teaching in all subjects. Satisfaction with training and career development applies not just to English but to the broader environment within which teachers work, while deficits in English are likely to be mirrored by deficits in other areas, and since the quality of English medium education suffers when teachers' English language ability is weak, English medium instruction from teachers with low English ability is likely to disadvantage children twice – first by preventing them from improving functional language ability and second by impeding their learning of content.

This report of the research therefore aims to describe the transformation that is needed in the skills of Punjab's teachers, a transformation that will not only help

realise the Chief Minister's ambition of universal and high-quality English medium instruction but will also help realise the broader goal of giving Punjab a world-class education system.

The report is structured as follows. Part 1 describes the results of the Aptis test of 2008 teachers in 18 districts of Punjab. It aims to show teachers' competence for providing English medium instruction. Part 2 lays out the results of the survey of teachers' attitudes towards English medium teaching and their professional motivations and needs. This section attempts to identify the current barriers to the development of English medium schooling and to present teachers' ideas for overcoming these barriers. Part 3 draws on the results of the two surveys and on reports on education system reform from around the world to make recommendations for how the Government of Punjab can strengthen English medium instruction as part of its drive to give the province a top quality education system. Our recommendations have no pretensions to being definitive, but are intended to act as a basis for debate and discussion as policy makers develop plans for implementing the Roadmap.

# TEACHERS' LANGUAGE NEEDS

## - The English Language Abilities of Punjab's Teachers

### THE RESEARCH SAMPLE

Both the Aptis testing and the questionnaire and focus group surveys were conducted among the same sample of 2008 teachers from 18 districts of Punjab. The nine divisional headquarter districts along with a second district from the same division are listed below:

DIVISIONAL HEAD-QUARTER DISTRICT	SECOND DISTRICT OF THE DIVISION
Faisalabad	T. T. Singh
Gujranwala	Sialkot
Lahore	Sheikhupura
Sahiwal	Okara
Sargodha	Gujrat
Rawalpindi	Jhelum
Dera Ghazi Khan	Muzaffargarh
Bahawalpur	Rahim yar Khan

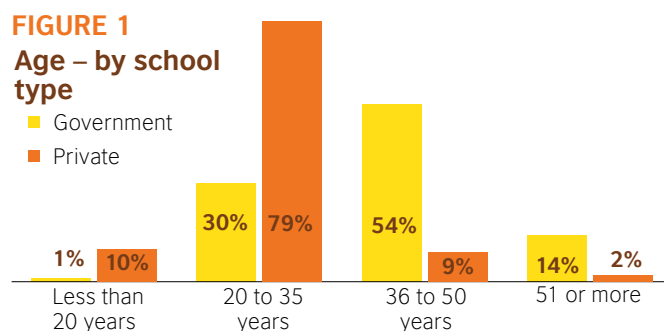
The research was conducted among teachers from both primary and middle schools, with approximately three-quarters taken from primary school and one-quarter from middle schools, in line with the proportion of each type of school in Punjab. Of the government teachers surveyed, 80% were primary level teachers and 20% middle level teachers, whereas of the private teachers surveyed 54% were primary level teachers and 46% middle level teachers. 70% of the sample were women and 30% men.

Of the initial target of 2200 teachers, we were able to reach 2008. The surveys were carried out between 27 March and 23 April 2013.

	PRIMARY	MIDDLE	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
Public	1253	311	526	1038	1564
Private	239	205	75	369	444
Total	1492	516	601	1407	2008

### TEACHER PROFILES

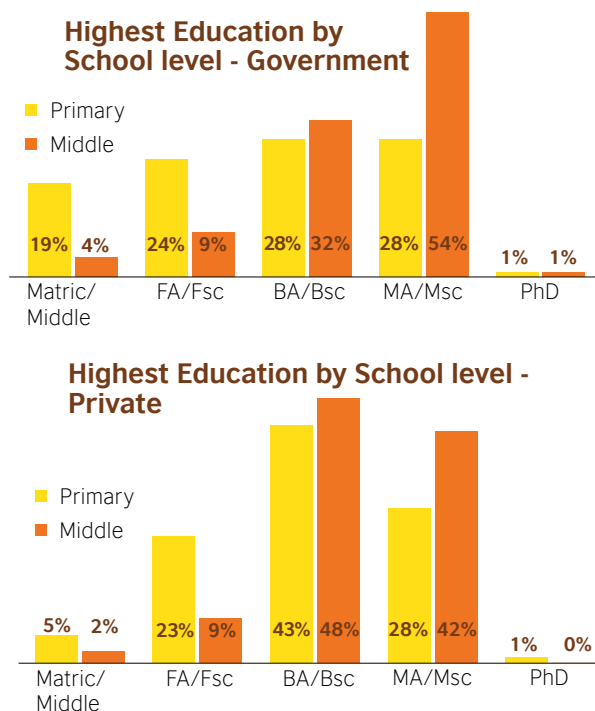
There was some variation in the profile of the teachers surveyed depending on whether they worked in public or private schools. Private schools tended to have more women teachers and younger teachers than public schools (figure 1). In private schools 83% were female, compared with 66% in government schools. And while 68% of teachers in government schools were aged 36 or older, the proportion of that age in private schools was just 11%.



In line with being older, teachers in public schools have also spent longer in their profession. Over 60% in both primary and middle schools have been teaching for over ten years, compared with less than 15% in private schools. Not surprisingly, too, government teachers have worked in more schools during their career, although 47% in primary schools and 31% in middle schools have been in their current school for over ten years (the proportions in the private sector are 5% and 6% respectively).

In terms of educational qualifications, the difference between public and private schools was starker for primary than middle school teachers. Whereas in the public sector 56% of primary teachers had either a Bachelor's or Master's qualification, in the private sector this rose to 71% (figure 2). In middle schools, there was less of a difference, with 86% of public sector teachers having achieved a Bachelor's or Master's degrees, compared with 90% in the private sector.

**FIGURE 2**



## THE APTIS TEST

We tested the English language abilities of the sampled teachers through the computer-based Aptis testing tool. Aptis, which was designed by the British Council, is globally applicable and is designed to assess ability in speaking, listening, reading and writing. Testing of Punjab teachers contained two components – a grammar and vocabulary module and a speaking module. Each module took 25 minutes to complete.

Before discussing the results of the test, some caveats should be noted. Of 2008 respondents, 288 did not complete the test. The test was computer-based, and teachers were prepared for the test by a series of exercises designed to minimise the effect of computer illiteracy. These 288 teachers did not take part due to computer illiteracy. Related to this, a possible criticism of the testing methodology is that lack of computer literacy may also have hindered the 1720 teachers who completed the test and may have had some impact on results. However, based on our analysis of the recordings gathered for the speaking test, we re-tested 100 test takers achieving A1 or A0 scores and found that the variance in scores was only 5%. A second caveat is that not all the teachers we intended to survey appeared on the day of the test. There may have been some self-selection by schools and teachers, which affects the randomness of the sample and may also have affected results.

With regard to scoring the tests, the maximum possible score for the vocabulary and grammar test was 50, with the speaking levels scored separately. CEFR levels were assigned based on a combination of these results. CEFR was

developed by the Council of Europe to standardise levels of language ability in different regions, across different languages and is widely used worldwide. There are six levels of ability, from A1 and A2, which equate to beginners and pre-intermediate level respectively, through the lower and upper intermediate levels of

B1 and B2 and up to the advanced levels of C1 and C2, where someone of C2 level is a highly proficient user of the language.

We add an A0 level, which is below all the above levels and signifies no measurable standard of functional language ability.

**TABLE: COMMON EUROPEAN FRAMEWORK OF REFERENCE FOR LANGUAGES (CEFR): GLOBAL SCALE<sup>13</sup>**

Proficient User	C2	Can understand with ease virtually everything heard or read. Can summarise information from different spoken and written sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation. Can express him/herself spontaneously, very fluently and precisely, differentiating finer shades of meaning even in more complex situations.
	C1	Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognise implicit meaning. Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. Can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes. Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organisational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.
Independent User	B2	Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialisation. Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party. Can produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.
	B1	Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. Can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. Can produce simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest. Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes and ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.
Basic User	A2	Can understand sentences and frequently-used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment). Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters. Can describe in simple terms aspects of his/her background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need.
	A1	Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type. Can introduce him/herself and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where he/she lives, people he/she knows and things he/she has. Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.

<sup>13</sup> Council of Europe (2001) Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. (p. 24)

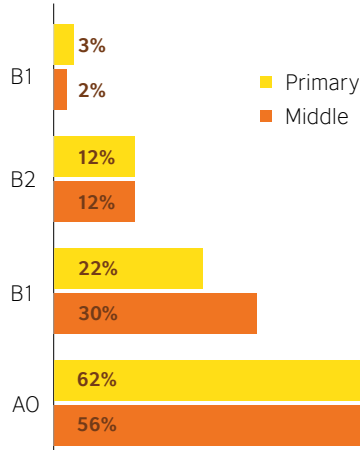
## THE RESULTS

Notwithstanding the caveats around teachers' ability to use computers and the number who did not complete the Aptis test, the large sample size of 1720 teachers nevertheless provides useful, if not definitive, indicators of English ability among Punjab's teaching cadre.

The principal finding is that the level of English of those teachers who completed the test is very low, both in public and private schools. 62% of private school teachers and 56% of government school teachers registered scores in the Aptis test that place them in the CEFR level of A0. This means they lack even basic knowledge of English, including the ability to understand and use familiar everyday expressions and simple phrases.

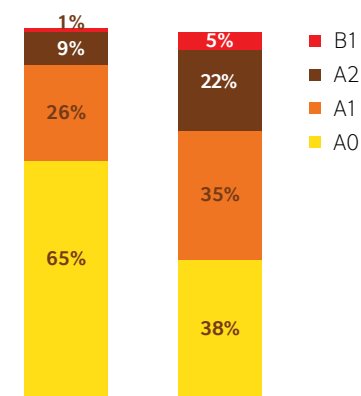
Most of the remaining teachers received scores that placed them in the A1 level, which signifies beginners' level English. 22% of private school teachers and 30% of government teachers scored in this range. A further 12% in both types of school scored in the A2 range (pre-intermediate). Just 3% of private teachers and 2% of public sector teachers scored B1 or above, putting them in the intermediate bracket.

**Public v/s Private**  
**FIGURE 3**



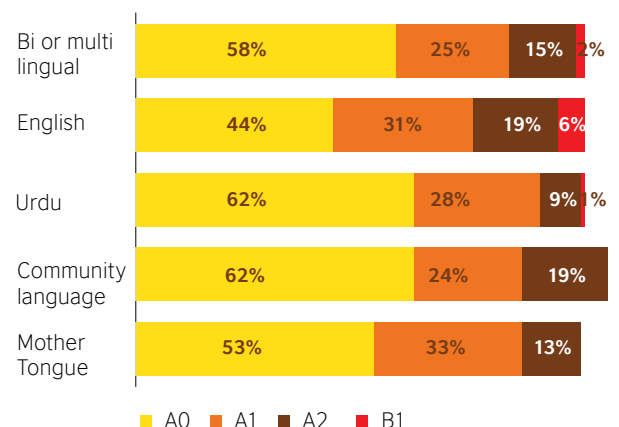
We also assessed the scores by school level (figure 4). Teachers in middle schools scored more highly than those in primary schools. While 65% of primary teachers scored in the lowest, A0 band, this figure fell to 38% among middle school teachers. Even in middle schools, however, only 5% scored in the intermediate B1 level.

**FIGURE 4**  
**Primary v/s Middle**



When looked at by the medium of instruction in each school, English medium school teachers perform best on the Aptis tests, but even here 44% of teachers scored in the bottom A0 level, with only 6% scoring in the intermediate level (figure 5). 94% of teachers in English medium schools have only pre-intermediate level English or lower.

**FIGURE 5**  
**Main medium of instruction in school - %Teachers**



Analysing the Aptis results by age group and years of service provides findings that are likely to be of interest to policy-makers. Younger teachers and those who were relatively new to their jobs have a much higher level of English than older, more experienced teachers. With just 21 respondents, the sample for teachers aged less than twenty years was too small for reliable conclusions to be made, but among the other age groups, which had large sample sizes, the differences between older and younger teachers are stark. While 80% of teachers aged 51 or over scored in the A0 band, this fell to 40% among 21-35 year old teachers (figure 6). 24% of teachers aged 21-35 scored in the pre-intermediate and intermediate A2 and B1 categories, compared with just 7% of those in the oldest age bracket.

may therefore be an easier target for efforts to strengthen and broaden English medium instruction.

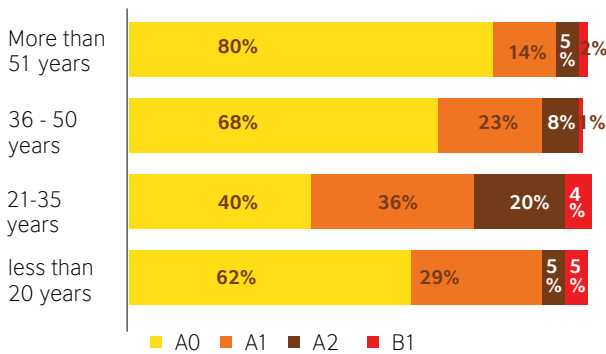
**SUMMARY**

The results of the Aptis tests of English language ability suggest that Punjab’s teachers currently have very low levels of English. While government teachers are slightly stronger than those in private schools, most teachers in both sectors have little functional ability in English. Even in English medium schools, very few teachers are above beginners’ level.

A ray of light for policy makers may lie in the higher Aptis scores of younger, less experienced teachers. This suggests not only that English teaching has improved in recent years, but also that there is a group of teachers that will be less difficult to train to deliver English medium instruction of higher quality.

**FIGURE 6**

**Age group v/s Aptis Score**



A similar pattern applies when the results are analysed according to length of service. 70% of those who have been teachers for over ten years scored in the A0 band on the Aptis test, compared with 35% of first year teachers and 33% of those who have been teaching for 1-2 years. Younger and newer teachers are better placed to teach using English than their more experienced colleagues, and



# TEACHER'S VIEW

## THE SURVEY

In 2009 the Government of Punjab took a province-wide decision to introduce English as the medium of instruction in all public sector schools, so that English competency will be assured not only for English as a subject but also for mathematics, science, IT and social studies. To support schools in the implementation of this change both pre-service institutions and the Directorate of Staff Development (DSD) were engaged. The focus of DSD, Punjab's in-service teacher training body, is to train and support teachers and head teachers in primary and middle schools across Punjab's 36 districts. It has embedded the task of promoting English medium instruction in its continuous professional development (CPD) framework, which works through Cluster Training and Support Centres (CTSCs) with District Teacher Educators (DTEs) responsible for monitoring progress and ensuring teacher quality.

To complement the Aptis findings presented in part 1, we conducted a questionnaire-based survey and focus groups with teachers in Punjab. Our research elicited information on the challenges facing teachers as they prepare to roll out English medium instruction as part of Punjab's drive for educational improvements. We aimed to acquire first hand information from teachers about their motivations for teaching, their attitudes to English and English medium instruction and the

perceived barriers to reform. Combining these findings with the results of the Aptis tests, we aimed to develop recommendations that contribute to the formulation and adoption of policies, processes and practices which reinforce teacher's motivation and enhance their capabilities to use English language in schools. These recommendations are presented in part 3 of this report.

As with the Aptis test, we reached 2008 teachers out of a target of 2200, although unlike the Aptis test, all teachers completed the questionnaire. The questionnaire was divided into four sections:

Section I: Profiling Teachers

Section II: Teaching and Training

Section III: English

Section IV: Career Satisfaction and Motivation

The questionnaire was supplemented by focus group discussions which were intended to draw out more detail on the above topics. Focus groups were conducted at all of the venues where the Aptis tests and questionnaire surveys were carried out, and included all the teachers who responded to the questionnaires. Each group contained 25 participants and lasted 30-40 minutes. The three broad categories on which the discussion centred were English proficiency and its use in class, teaching methodology and the curriculum. Discussion was monitored and conducted by two evaluators, one to ask questions and the other to record the

conversation and his or her observations of group behaviour.

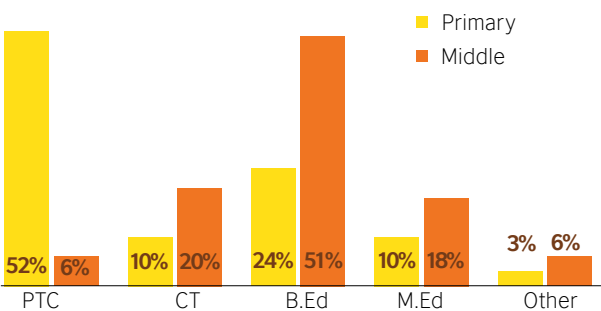
In this section of the report, we outline the results from the questionnaire survey, with comments and observations from the focus group discussions included where relevant. We focus on findings among public school teachers, adding observations from the private sector where of particular interest.

## TRAINING

Professional qualifications among Punjab’s teachers are widespread in public schools but less common in private schools. 96% of government primary school teachers possess a requisite qualification, compared with 62% of private primary teachers (the “other” category in the tables includes short courses and diplomas, which by themselves are not sufficient to comply with government recruitment standards). In middle schools, 89% of public teachers have requisite qualifications (CT and above), compared with 68% of private middle school teachers (figure 7).

**FIGURE 7**

**Professional Education by school level - Government**

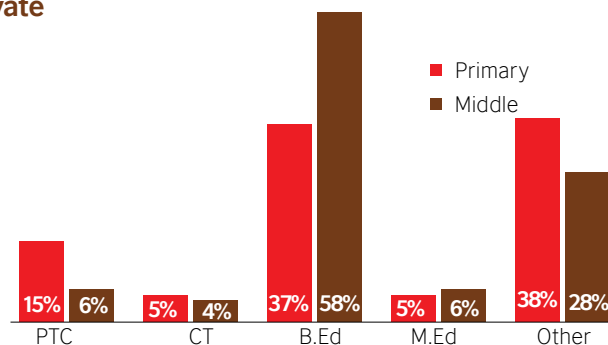


Respondents were asked whether they had received training in particular subjects in the past two years. Most teachers in government schools had received some training in English language teaching methodology (figure 8). In primary and middle schools, 39% and 53% of teachers respectively had received at least eight days of training in this subject. 30% and 25% respectively, on the other hand, had received no English teaching training.

Teachers in private schools had received less training in English language teaching methodology than their public sector counterparts. Almost half of primary and middle school teachers in private schools had received no training in the previous two years, and most of the remainder had received seven days of training or fewer.

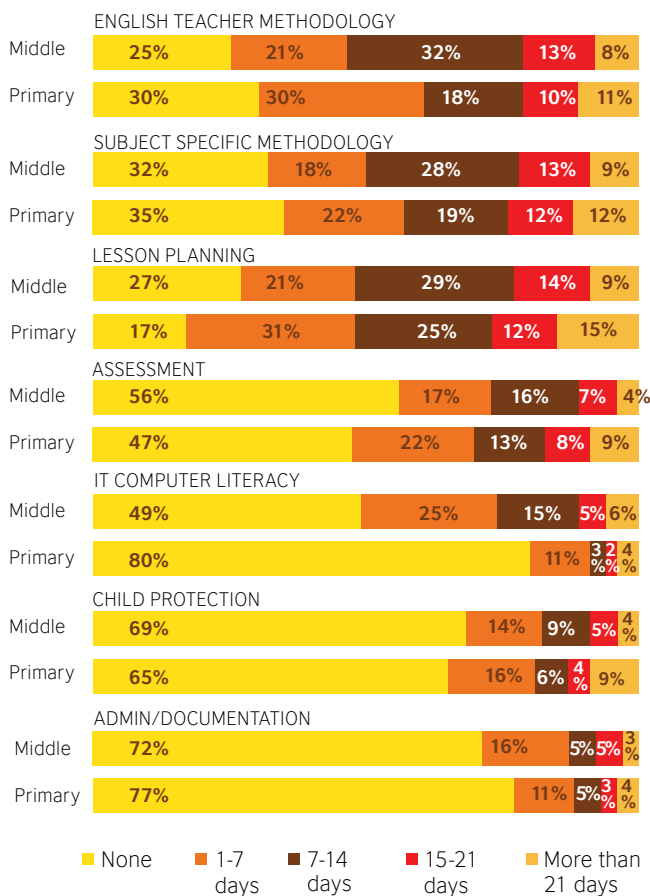
The picture for lesson planning training and for subject-specific methodology training was broadly similar, with public school teachers receiving more training than those in private schools, although in both sectors the proportion who had received subject-specific methodology training was slightly higher than for English language teaching training.

**Professional Education by school level - Private**



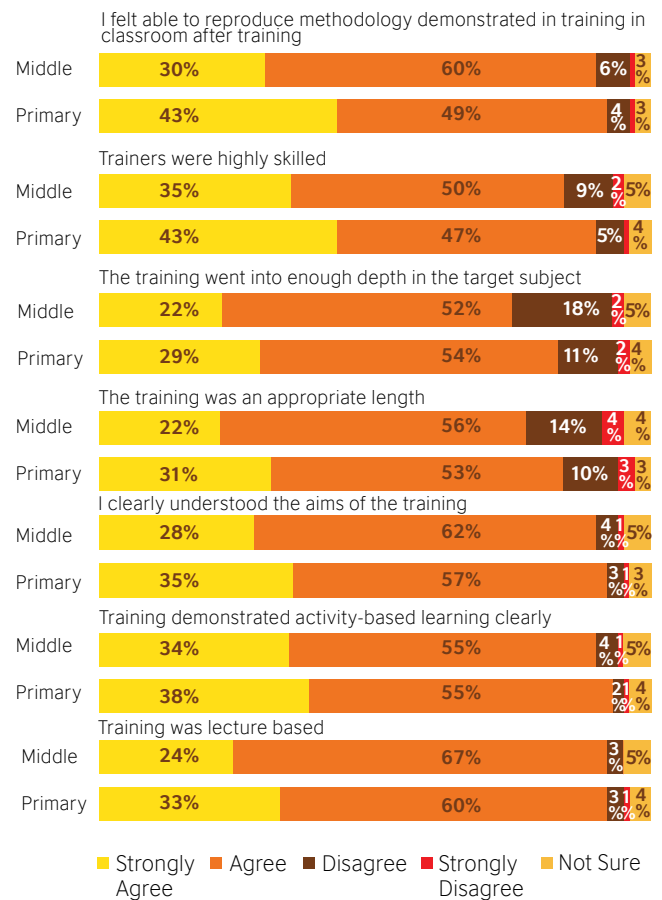
Training in assessment was less widespread than in either of the above subjects, with most teachers having received none in the past two years, while in subjects with less direct relevance to teaching methods – IT and computer literacy, child protection, and administration and documentation – only a minority of teachers in public and private schools had received training. The only exception to this is in public middle schools, where over half of teachers had received some IT and computer literacy training (in public primary schools only one-fifth had had such training).

**FIGURE 8**  
**Days of training teachers have received in each of these areas in the last two years - Government (by school level)**



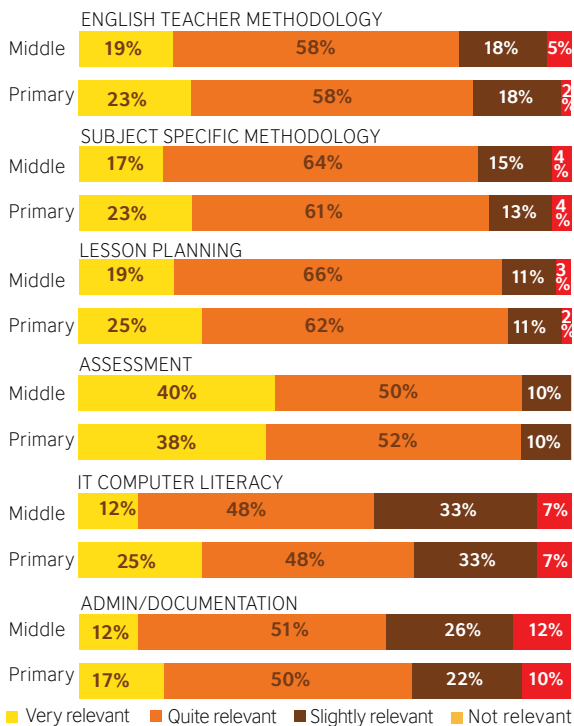
Although the quantity of training could be improved, teachers are broadly satisfied with its quality. In the public sector, a large majority of primary and middle school teachers agreed that their trainers had been highly skilled, that the aims of the training were clear and that they had been able to reproduce the lessons learned in the classroom after training (figure 9). The only disagreement is found among middle school teachers, one-fifth of whom felt the training had not gone into enough depth in the target subject. Satisfaction with training was similarly high among private sector teachers.

**FIGURE 9**  
**How much do you agree with these statements about the training you have received - Government (by school level)**



Teachers found that the training they received was fairly relevant to their requirements. Although only around one-fifth of public sector teachers found that training in the various subjects was “very relevant” to their current development needs, very few stated that the training was not relevant, with most saying it was “quite relevant” (figure 10). Private sector teachers were in general more effusive, with 34% of primary and middle school teachers responding that English teaching methodology training, for example, was very relevant, compared with 19% and 23% respectively in the public sector.

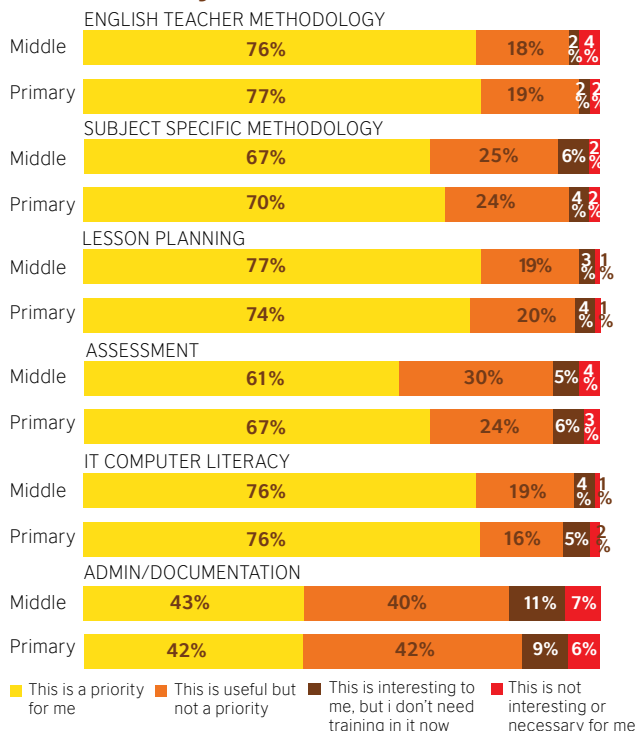
**FIGURE 10**  
**How relevant was the training to your current development needs? - Government (by school level)**



Finally, teachers were asked about the subjects in which they would like more training. In both government and private schools, training in English teaching methodology was the highest priority,

with three-quarters very keen to receive more training in this area (figure 11). Younger teachers were especially keen to have more training in English teaching methodology – whereas there was little difference between those aged 21-35 years and those aged 51 or over in terms of the proportion that wanted more training in subject specific methodologies or lesson planning, 82% of those in the younger age group defined English training as a high priority for them, compared with 69% of the older teachers. In the focus groups, a number of teachers argued that they required much more training in order to be able to deliver effective lessons in English, and that such training should be sustained over time. ‘Teachers are motivated to teach in English,’ as a participant in southern Punjab observed, ‘provided they have proper resources and adequate training.’ Lesson planning training and IT training were also high priorities, for both primary and middle school teachers.

**FIGURE 11**  
**What kind of training would you like more of? - Government (by school level)**



## SUMMARY

Most of Punjab's teachers have had some form of training, with the focus on subject-specific methodologies, English teaching methodology, and lesson planning. Middle school teachers tend to have had more training than primary teachers.

With regard to English teaching training, the picture in public schools is quite polarised, with a large minority of teachers having had a lot of training and an almost equally large number having received none. In private schools, almost half of teachers had received no training in this subject.

Satisfaction with the training received is high, and it is seen as somewhat relevant to teachers' needs. Perhaps as a result, there is great enthusiasm for more training, with the key topics of English teaching methodology, IT and computer literacy, and lesson planning most in demand. Younger teachers are especially keen to receive more training in English teaching methods.

## THE TEACHING ENVIRONMENT

As well as asking about English medium instruction, we also elicited teachers' views on the broader school environment, taking in issues such as the curriculum, in-service support, and teaching methods.

Teachers have mixed views over whether the current curriculum is fit for purpose. In government schools, while a majority of those who gave an answer to the question (excluding those were not sure) believe the curricula for Islamiyat, maths, Urdu, science and the social sciences are suitable for student needs, for other subjects – including English, computer

studies, geography and history – the majority felt the curricula are either in need of rationalisation or, in a small number of cases, completely inappropriate to student needs (figure 12). In the focus group discussions, those who were unhappy with the curriculum were largely concerned that it is not up-to-date and that it is too long, forcing them to teach it too quickly, with negative effects on students' assimilation of content. Some of the most common focus group comments on the curriculum follow below:

'There are different curricula being followed in different districts, which creates considerable confusion.'

'The curriculum needs to be more need-based and made practical.'

'The curriculum is too lengthy, because of which the teachers have to rush through the course, making it difficult for the kids to understand.'

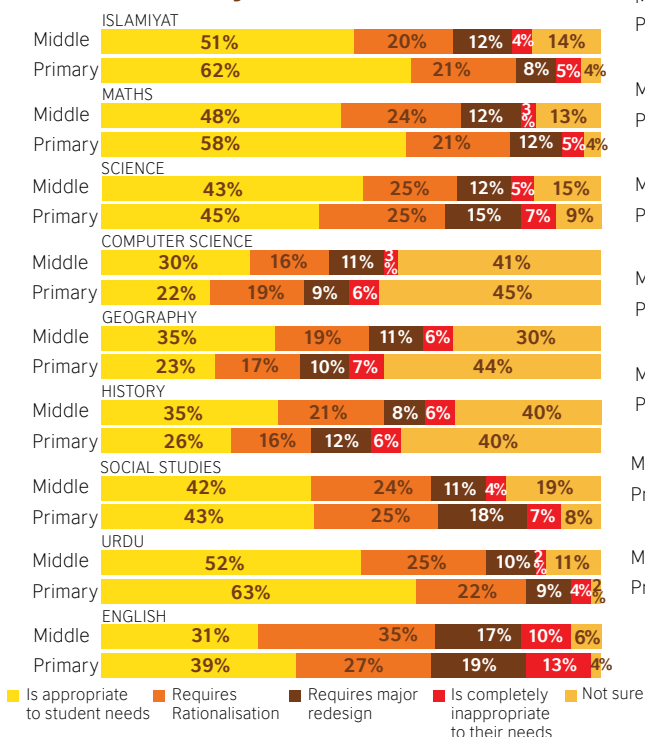
'Textbooks are generally theory-based; there is a need for them to be more practical with real-life applications.'

The focus of this report is on English and examination of respondents' views of the English curriculum reveals some frustration. More teachers in the public sector – at both primary and middle school levels - believe the curriculum requires rationalisation or complete redesign than believe it meets student needs. 10% of public middle school teachers and 13% of primary teachers believe the English curriculum is completely inappropriate to student needs. This pattern is repeated in the private sector. Several focus group participants complained that teachers are never consulted on the curriculum and suggested that input from teaching staff

might help better to tailor it to students' abilities and needs.

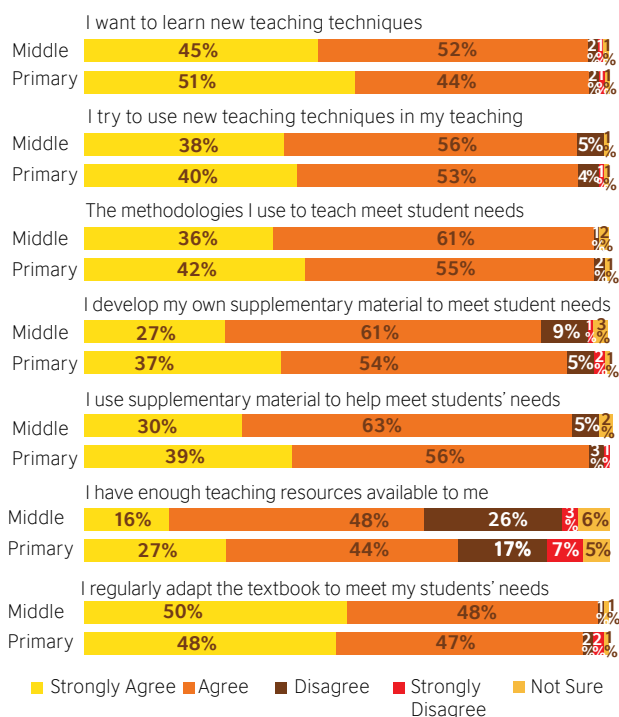
There is some dissatisfaction, too, with the textbooks used for English teaching in schools. Only 36% of government middle school teachers and 44% of primary teachers feel the current English textbooks are appropriate to student needs. 39% and 30% respectively believe the textbooks require rationalisation, with 18% and 24% arguing that the books require major redesign or are completely inappropriate to student needs. Private sector teachers are slightly more positive, although even here only around one-half of teachers believe English textbooks are suitable. Focus group participants in southern Punjab summarised the main issues with textbooks, with one saying their content is 'lengthy and irrelevant' and another that 'textbooks are generally theory-based; there is a need for them to be more practical with real-life applications.'

**FIGURE 12**  
The content of the current curriculum: - Government (by school level)



When asked about their teaching methods, respondents reported that they often use new techniques and develop and use supplementary materials in class. Over 90% of public sector teachers, for example, try to use new techniques, and nearly all believe their methods meet students' learning needs (figure 13). As noted earlier, there is strong enthusiasm for more training, with almost half of government primary and middle school teachers strongly agreeing that they would like to learn new teaching techniques, and nearly all of the remainder agreeing (private school teachers were even more eager for increased training, with two-thirds strongly in favour). There is also some demand for more resources, with 29% of government middle school teachers and 24% of primary teachers disagreeing that they have enough teaching resources.

**FIGURE 13**  
Teaching and Learning- Government (by school level)

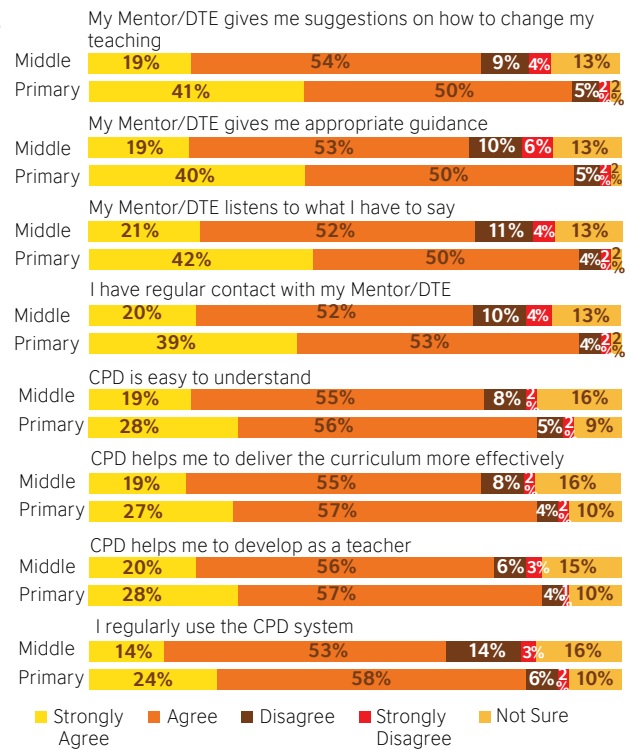


As with the demand for more training in English teaching, it is younger teachers who are most willing to use new techniques. Whereas only 43% of teachers aged over 50 years strongly agreed that they want to learn new teaching techniques and only 34% strongly agree that they try to use new methods in class, among the 21-35 age group 63% are very keen to learn new techniques and 46% already use them in class.

Respondents were also asked about their levels of satisfaction with Continuous Professional Development (CPD) efforts and with their District Teacher Educators (DTEs). Unlike on most of the other questions, the answers revealed quite a large difference between primary and middle school teachers (figure 14). While all teachers are generally satisfied both with CPD and their DTEs, primary teachers responded more positively than their middle school counterparts. 40% of government primary teachers strongly agree that their DTE gives them appropriate guidance, but this falls to 19% among middle school teachers. Responses to the question of whether teachers have regular contact with their DTE are similar. And while 24% of primary teachers strongly agree with the statement that they regularly use the CPD system, this falls to 14% among middle school teachers. This suggests that in-service teacher support in the public sector is stronger for primary than middle school teachers (the gap between primary and middle school responses is much less stark in the private sector).

**FIGURE 14**

**In-Service Teacher Support - Government (by school level)**



**SUMMARY**

Many teachers believe curricula and textbooks require rationalisation, with English courses among those in need of particularly urgent attention. Teachers are keen and willing to use new techniques, and, if they can be given more and better resources, they are confident that they apply them for students' benefit. Younger teachers – those in the 21-35 age group – are particularly eager to learn and try out new methods.

In terms of support from Punjab's education system, it appears government middle school teachers are less well catered for than their primary school counterparts. This may be an obvious area for policy-makers' attention going forward.

## ENGLISH IN THE CLASSROOM

To establish the extent to which schools in Punjab currently comply with the government’s English medium policy, we asked teachers how often they and their students use English in class.

The results suggest room for improvement. Very few teachers use English only in class. In all subjects in both government and private schools, less than 15% of teachers teach only in English (figure 15). In most subjects the community language is used most or all of the time. The exceptions to this are maths, science, computer studies and English, where the majority of teachers use English at least most of the time. This is in compliance with Punjab’s English medium policy, which allows for instructions to be given in Urdu where students have difficulty understanding in English. Even in English lessons, however, less than 12% of public and private school teachers use English all the time, with similar proportions using the community language all the time, “with occasional key vocabulary in English.”

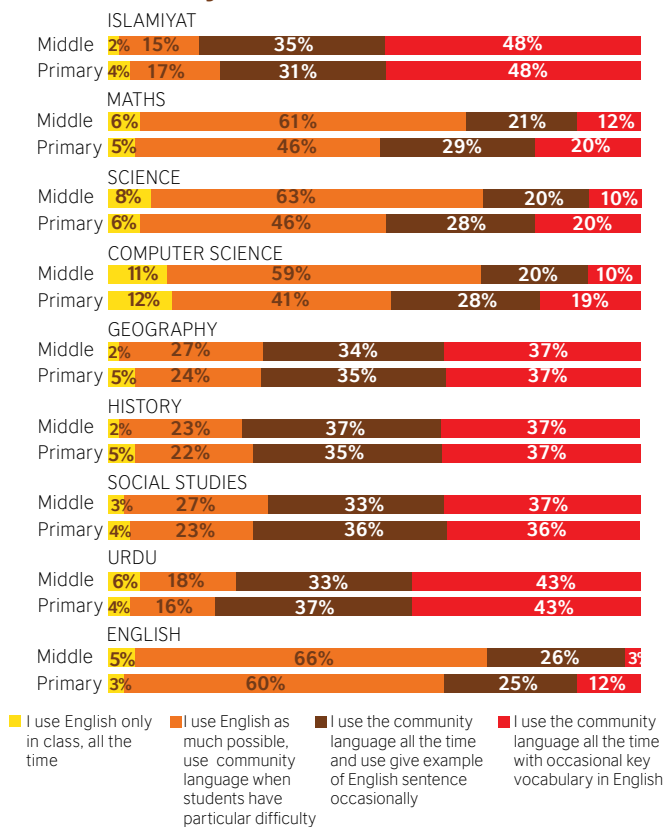
As in other areas, there are differences between older and younger teachers in terms of their use of English. While only 38% of teachers aged over 50 years use English as much as possible in maths and science classes, among 21-35 year old teachers this proportion rises to almost 60%.

Differences between public and private schools in this area are not large, but on the whole teachers in private schools use English slightly more often than those in public schools. In the southern Punjab region, however, focus group discussions revealed significant differences between public and private sector teachers – the latter were in general much more confident

in their ability to use and teach in English and keener to do so than their public school counterparts. There were also differences between respondents based in divisional headquarters districts and those based in second districts from the same division, which are likely to have been rural. In headquarters districts, focus group evaluators reported that levels of English were higher and that teachers were more motivated to use English in class. A small number of teachers also reported reduced enthusiasm for English among parents in rural areas. This perhaps suggests that larger, more urban districts have greater potential for conversion to English medium instruction than more rural areas.

**FIGURE 15**

### How do you use English in your classroom?- Government (by school level)

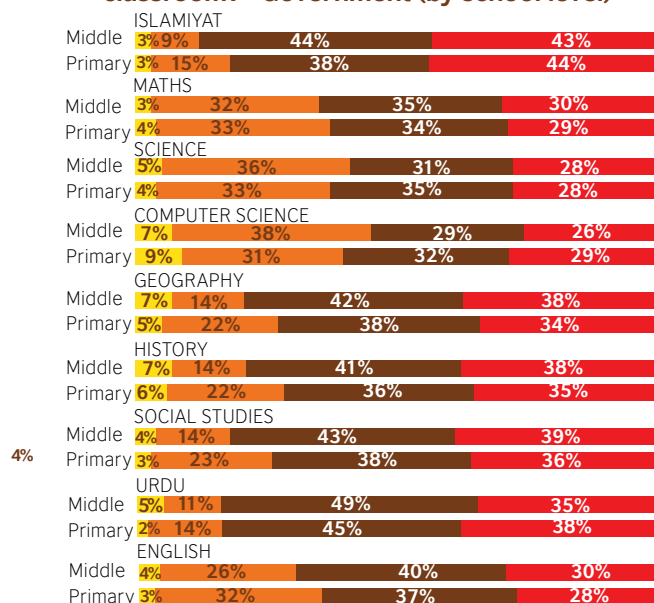




Use of English by students was even more limited than its use by teachers. This perhaps suggests that teachers do most of the talking during lessons or that students are less confident in using English than are teachers. Indeed, when we asked teachers about the balance of teacher-student interaction in class, very few reported that students spoke more than teachers, with the vast majority in both private and public schools reporting either a 50:50 ratio of teacher-student talking or a 70:30 ratio in favour of the teacher.

Less than 10% of students in public schools use English all the time in class (figure 16). Less than half use English “as much as possible,” with approximately one-third using it very infrequently. Even when studying the English language, less than one-third use English most of the time. Surprisingly, there is little difference between primary and middle schools in this area – advancing to middle school does not make you much more likely to use English in class.

**FIGURE 16**  
**How often do your students use English in your classroom? - Government (by school level)**



The lack of English use in class is not a reflection of teachers’ feelings about its importance. When asked about this, over three-quarters of public school teachers replied that English is very important to academic success and to students’ careers. Over half believe it is also very important for social advancement. Very few believe English is not of importance to their students. Private school teachers were even more convinced of English’s importance, with 90% believing it is very important for academic success and for students’ careers.

Teachers, then, spend little time teaching in English despite their belief that English is very important to students. The explanation for this discrepancy appears to lie in a lack of agreement over the value of English medium teaching. Half of teachers in public schools believe Urdu should be the main medium of instruction in Punjab schools, with a further one-quarter preferring a bilingual or multilingual approach (figure 17, next page). Only 16% of government primary school teachers and 23% of government middle school teachers believe English should be the main medium of instruction. Some quotes from the focus groups are indicative of how public sector teachers feel:

‘English is being imposed as a language on the students who could perform better when taught in community language.’ (Public school teacher, central Punjab)

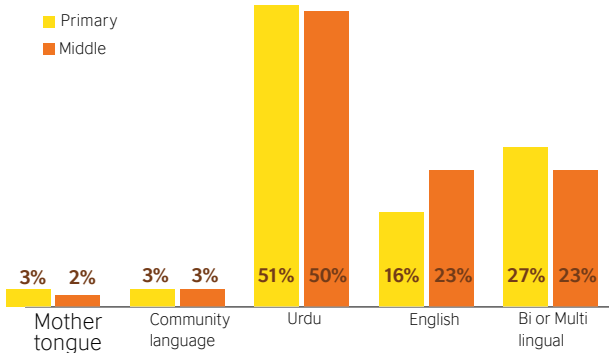
‘A newly admitted child cannot handle three different languages simultaneously i.e. Urdu, local language and English language’ (Public school teacher, southern Punjab)

‘Suddenly, students who have never studied English before cannot be expected to study entire subjects in

■ They use English only in class only, all the time ■ They use English as much as possible, use community language when they have particular difficulty ■ They use the community language most of the time and speak English only when asked to ■ They use occasional key vocabulary in English

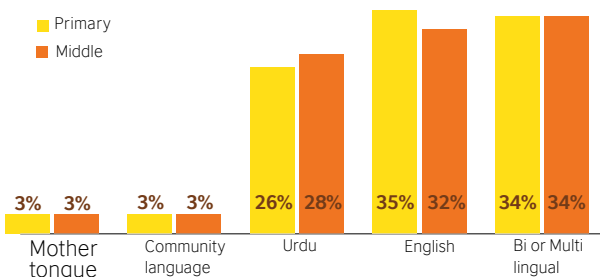
English' (Public school teacher, southern Punjab)

**FIGURE 17**  
Which language do you think should be the main medium of instruction in schools in Punjab? - Government (by school level)



Attempts to introduce English medium teaching are likely to have a more willing audience in private schools. Here, approximately one-third of teachers believe English should be the main medium of instruction, with another one-third favouring a bilingual or multilingual approach (figure 18). Just over one-quarter favour Urdu as the main language to be used. Younger teachers, too, are more strongly in favour of English medium instruction, with 30% of 21-35 year olds believing English should be the main medium of instruction, compared with 13% of teachers aged over 50 years.

**FIGURE 18**  
Which language do you think should be the main medium of instruction in schools in Punjab? - Private (by school level)

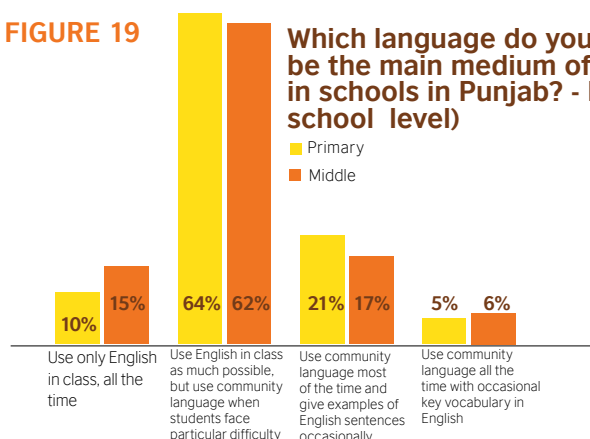


Nor is there clarity over what English medium teaching should do. There is little

consensus over this matter among the teachers we surveyed, with many schools apparently describing themselves as English medium while giving instruction in Urdu or community languages. Less than one-fifth of teachers in public and private schools believe that English medium education should be delivered solely in English (figure 19). Approximately one-quarter of government school teachers believe that the community language should be used most or all of the time. In both public and private schools, two-thirds of primary and middle school teachers believe English medium should mean using English as much as possible, with the community language used to resolve particular difficulties. Similar answers were given with regard to students' use of English, although here one-third of government teachers and one-quarter of private teachers believe the community language should predominate in English medium lessons.

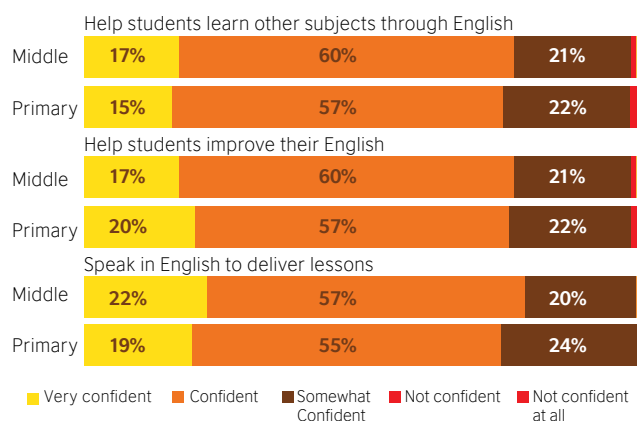
Teachers do not believe, moreover, that English medium textbooks should contain only English. Over half of public and private school teachers believe textbooks should be bilingual in English and Urdu, with a further one-quarter believing they should include community language support for complex content areas. Less than 15% believe they should be written solely in English.

**FIGURE 19**  
Which language do you think should be the main medium of instruction in schools in Punjab? - Private (by school level)



Another possible explanation for teachers' infrequent use of English in class may be their weak ability in the language. Although the results of the Aptis test indicate serious deficiencies in their standard of English, teachers do not lack confidence in their capacity to use English to help students to learn. In both public and private schools, a large majority were confident or very confident in their ability to deliver their lessons in English, to help students improve their English, and to help them learn other subjects through English (figure 20).

**FIGURE 20**  
**Teachers' confidence level of their abilities - Government (by school level)**



## SUMMARY

There is a long way to go before the Punjab government's ambition for English to be the medium of instruction in all schools is realised. Very few teachers in our survey use English all the time in class, and while most use some English while teaching maths, computer science, English and science, in other subjects its use is infrequent. Nor does English usage increase as students grow older, with little difference between primary and middle schools. Private school teachers are slightly more likely to use English in

class, but use of community languages is widespread here too. As in other areas, younger teachers are more enthusiastic than older teachers about English medium instruction, and use English more in class.

The lack of use of English does not mean teachers do not see it as important – most believe it is crucial to students' academic and career prospects – but only a minority believe English should be the main medium of education and many teachers believe that even English medium schools should teach mainly in community languages.

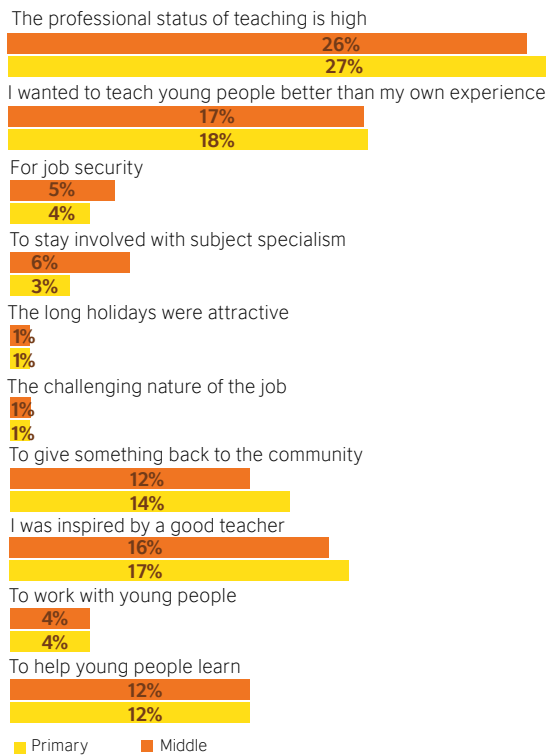
## TEACHERS' MOTIVATION

It is often believed that teachers in unsuccessful school systems – be they in developing or developed countries – are not interested in teaching, and that they go through the motions in order to improve their social status or benefit from job security and long holidays. This is thought to make reform difficult, since such teachers are likely to be entrenched in their ways and resistant to changes that require them to learn new techniques and improve their performance.

In Punjab, however, this does not appear to be the case. We have seen that many teachers are keen to embrace new methodologies, and this enthusiasm tallies with their professional motivations. Only one-quarter of public and private school teachers cited social status as the main reason why they had gone into teaching, and fewer than one in twenty were attracted by job security or long holidays (figure 21). In public and private schools, two-thirds of both primary and middle school teachers had loftier motivations, including wanting to teach young people better than they themselves had been

taught, being inspired by a good teacher, wanting to give something back to the community, and helping young people to learn.

**FIGURE 21**  
**Why did you decide to become a teacher? - Government (by school level)**

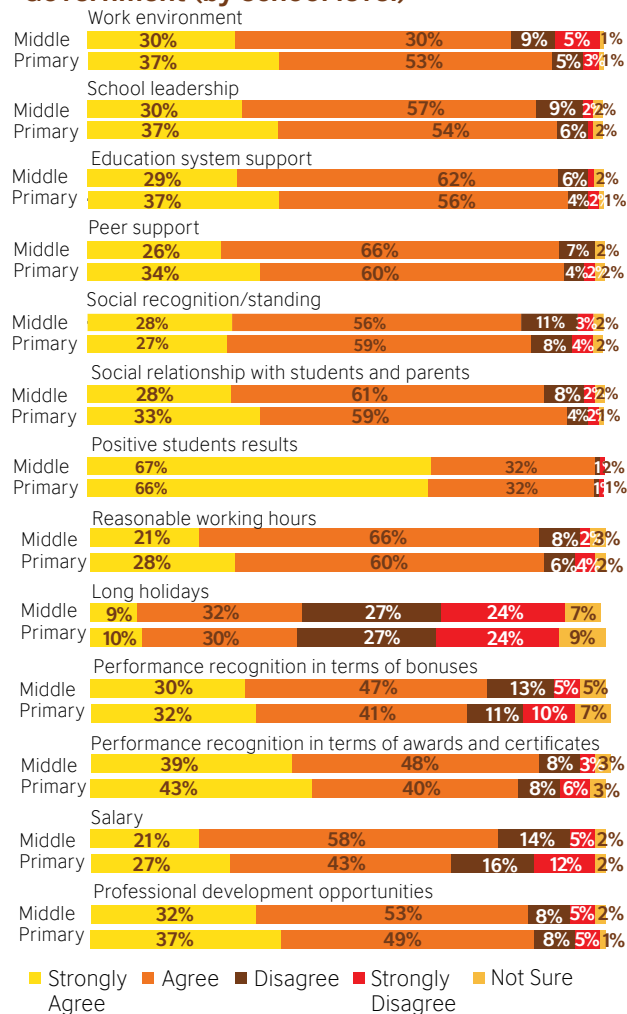


These motivations continue to drive teachers once they are in post. Over 80% of teachers say they remain motivated in their career, with less than 3% demotivated. The vast majority, moreover, are satisfied with their career choice. Over 40% of both public and private sector teachers in both primary and middle schools report being very satisfied that they had become teachers, while almost half report being satisfied. Only 2% are dissatisfied with their choice of career.

Asked what gives them most satisfaction, teachers' responses are similar to those that made them become teachers in the first place. Of a list of possible factors that

motivate them as teachers, moreover, "positive student results" was by far the strongest (figure 22). Whereas only around one-third of teachers strongly agreed that they are motivated by factors such as the work environment, social recognition, education system support and salary, two-thirds of public sector teachers (and over three-quarters of private school teachers) strongly agreed that positive student results motivate them. Again, the finding offers hope that teachers will be receptive to new methods that improve results.

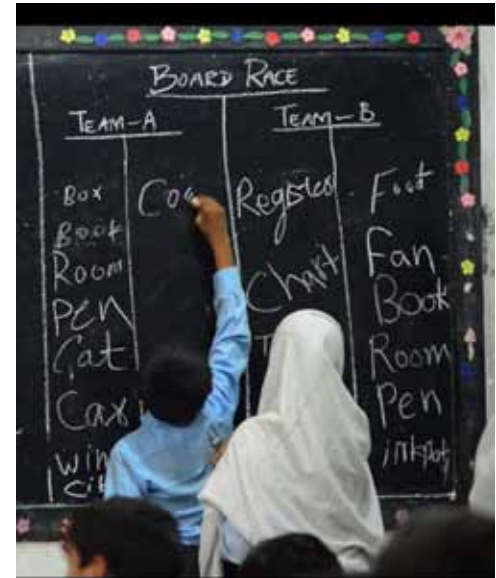
**FIGURE 22**  
**What motivates you as a teacher? - Government (by school level)**



An indicator that things may be improving in Punjab's education system is provided by responses to the question of whether teachers are more or less satisfied in their jobs than they were five years ago. 45% of public sector teachers and just over 40% of private school teachers report being more satisfied today. Most of the remainder report being equally satisfied. On the other hand, almost one in five teachers in both sectors report being less satisfied, although unfortunately the questionnaire did not delve into the reasons for this. Over 80% of teachers say they intend to continue working as teachers for the foreseeable future, with most of the remainder uncertain.

## SUMMARY

Questions on teachers' motivation confirm the promising findings on their attitudes towards training. Many of Punjab's teachers are motivated by a strong desire to see students succeed, and gain great and increasing satisfaction from their jobs. Punjab appears to have a largely content cadre of teachers, in both public and private schools, that is willing to learn and to work hard to improve students' education. In the final section of the paper, we suggest ways of helping them to realise this ambition.



# NEXT STEPS

## SUMMARY

The progress made by Punjab in increasing student enrolment in schools does not yet appear to have been matched by improvements in quality. In a highly competitive global economy, an emphasis on quality as well as quantity of education is essential, and with English the lingua franca of much of the world's business, quality of English instruction is particularly important.

In Punjab, where English is to become the medium in which instruction in other crucial subjects is delivered, deficiencies in this area are likely to have large repercussions for quality in all subjects. Teachers are the key to improving quality, but Punjab's teachers are currently ill equipped to deliver effective English medium lessons to their pupils. According to the Aptis tests we conducted, most of the province's primary and middle school teachers – in both public and private sectors - have no measurable standard of functional English language ability, and are unable to understand and use familiar everyday expressions and simple phrases. Of those teachers who do possess some knowledge of English, very few scored above beginners level.

Perhaps as a consequence of this weakness, English is used infrequently in class, even in English language lessons. Teachers admit that they need much more training if they are to deliver English medium instruction, and in an indication that quality deficits in English may be mirrored in the teaching of other subjects, also call for more training in topics such

as lesson planning, computer and IT skills, and subject-specific methodology.

Punjab's teachers are working in a difficult environment with large class sizes and a need for more contemporary textbooks and curricula as well as more support from the education system. Those who responded to our survey, however, are not resistant to change. There is a strong belief that English is vital to students' futures and teachers – and particularly younger teachers - are keen to learn and try out new techniques to strengthen their performance. The training they have received so far, although sporadic, has been well received, and motivation to improve students' results remains very strong.

## MOVING FORWARD

It is within this context, then – a teaching cadre with low standards of English but plentiful enthusiasm to improve – that Punjab's education reformers must work.

A 2010 report for McKinsey identified four paths along which school systems improve, based on observations of successful systems around the world. The first is from poor to fair, the second from fair to good, the third good to great, and the fourth great to excellent.<sup>14</sup> The results from the Aptis tests suggest that, at least in terms of English-medium instruction but probably also more broadly, Punjab's education system is in the "poor to fair" stage of improvement.

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14 M Mourshed, C Chijioke, M Barber (2010): How the World's Most Improved School Systems Keep Getting Better. McKinsey, November.

The McKinsey report summarises what is required if schools are to complete the first phase of the improvement journey: ‘Systems on the journey from poor to fair,’ it argues, ‘in general characterised by less skilled educators, tightly control teaching and learning processes from the centre because minimising variation across classrooms and schools is the core driver of performance improvement at this level...The interventions in this stage focus on supporting students in achieving the literacy and math basics: this requires providing scaffolding for low-skill teachers, fulfilling all basic student needs, and bringing all the schools in the system up to a minimum quality threshold.’ The report sets out three “intervention clusters” that are needed to complete the journey to fair, and lists the steps required to accomplish each goal:

- Providing motivation and scaffolding for low-skill teachers
  - Scripted teaching materials
  - Coaching on curriculum
  - Instructional time on task
  - School visits by centre
  - Incentives for high performance
- Getting all schools to a minimum quality level
  - Outcome targets
  - Additional support for low performing schools
  - School infrastructure improvement
  - Provision of textbooks
- Getting students in seats
  - Expand school seats
  - Fulfil students’ basic needs to raise attendance

From the Neilsen surveys discussed in part 1 of our report, it can be seen that Punjab is well on the way to accomplishing the “Getting students in seats” intervention cluster, but combining those surveys with our research shows that – apart from in the areas of school infrastructure improvements and school visits by the centre (97% of schools are visited each month<sup>15</sup>) – it lags behind on the other two clusters. In turning now to our recommendations for how Punjab can improve English medium instruction, we bear in mind these intervention clusters and their component steps.

## ACHIEVING BUY-IN

The first obvious area for reform relates to providing motivation for low-skill teachers. Although Punjab’s primary and middle school teachers are motivated by students’ results and convinced of the importance of English, they have not yet bought in to the policy to expand and improve English medium education. Education policy makers need to present a stronger case for English medium, and are likely to have to adopt a more consultative approach in doing so. Teachers are keen to be involved in curriculum and textbook design, and are likely to adhere more closely to what they are supposed to teach if they have been consulted on its development. The same applies to English medium education – the teachers in our survey are open to new methods and are not resistant to change, and it should therefore be possible to negotiate with them to use more English in class. The government of Punjab has already shown flexibility in agreeing that community languages can be used when

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<sup>15</sup> Barber (2013) op. cit.

students have difficulty understanding a topic in English, but in order to achieve buy-in from teachers it will need to make systematic efforts to listen to their concerns and agree with them a strategy for rolling out the policy.

Making teachers' lives easier is a further promising means of achieving buy-in. Under the Punjab Schools Reform Roadmap, lesson plans in the form of Teachers' Guides were developed by DSD for maths, English and science for Grades 1-5. Every primary teacher in Punjab received the Teachers' Guides, with 180,000 teachers trained to use them. Such a measure tallies with the McKinsey finding that schools that have made the journey from poor to fair have controlled teaching and learning processes tightly from the centre, and the number of teachers using the lesson plans has risen sharply, from 17% to 56% between September and October 2012.<sup>16</sup> Most of Punjab's teachers do not yet have the language skills to understand lesson plans designed for English medium instruction, but the latter are likely to be a key tool for persuading those with the highest levels of English that switching to English medium need not be an insurmountable task.

## **EXPANDING AND IMPROVING TRAINING**

The second key area for reform lies in the need to expand and improve training, both in English language and in English teaching methodology. However motivated teachers are, they will be unable to deliver high quality instruction without major improvements in their skills. Over one-quarter of the public sector teachers we surveyed had received no training in

English language teaching methodology over the previous two years, while one-third had not been trained in subject-specific methodology. Most of those who had received training, moreover, believed they needed more of it, and the results of the Aptis tests suggest that the training given has not sufficiently improved the English language skills to the levels required for English medium instruction. Bridging this training gap by providing more - and more effective - training to more teachers is an important but daunting task. An ambitious project such as Punjab's English medium strategy needs to gain momentum by achieving some early successes. Training should therefore be targeted first at the most accessible and motivated teachers. Pre-service teachers most obviously fit into this category, and our research also found that teachers in Divisional Headquarters Districts were both better at English and more motivated to use English in class than their peers in second districts, with parents in rural areas also reported by some focus group participants to be less enthusiastic about English medium schooling. Younger teachers, too, have higher levels of English ability, feel more positively about English medium instruction, and are keen to learn new methodologies. An early focus on pre-service teachers, on teachers in urban areas and on the next generation of teachers on which Punjab and Pakistan's future will depend appears a promising course of action for ratcheting up training in English language and English teaching methodologies. Once coverage among these groups is satisfactory and momentum created, efforts can then be pushed out into rural areas and among older teachers.

<sup>16</sup> Barber (2013) op. cit.



Clustering is a proven means of reaching large numbers of teachers with training courses. The “Learn to Read” literacy programme developed by the Indian state of Madhya Pradesh relied on a well trained central group of 75 trainers who disseminated teaching materials and techniques through all the districts and schools in the state by bringing together clusters of teachers to be trained. This helped both to promote uniform classroom practice across the education system and to reach large numbers of teachers and students. Literacy rate increases in Madhya Pradesh during the programme far exceeded the national Indian average.<sup>17</sup> The Punjab Education Foundation’s Continuous Professional Development Programme, which brings specialists from NGOs and private teacher-training organisations into PEF schools for six-day intensive courses, also uses the cluster method. PEF’s impressive results in improving teacher quality among large numbers of educators offer a useful lesson for Punjab’s public schooling system.

Madhya Pradesh’s Learn to Read scheme also made use of technology to disseminate training. Teachers targeted by the project received monthly refresher training sessions, which were delivered by satellite broadcast. Technological solutions not only help speed up the dissemination of training and reduce its costs; they also help standardise it. A survey commissioned by the British Council in Punjab recommended using digital methods to deliver training in English language and English teaching methodology.<sup>18</sup> These might include

demonstration videos posted on the internet, online training courses, or the use of mobile phones to deliver training materials and provide support. DfID’s Education Innovation Fund, meanwhile, is currently supporting projects in Pakistan that include satellite enabled mobile vans that take tablet computers with internet access into remote villages, DVD training courses for students and teachers, and the use of two-way speaker radio systems to deliver interactive training.<sup>19</sup> Where internet is not widely available in schools or in teachers’ homes – internet penetration in Pakistan was only 9% in 2011, compared with a mobile phone subscription rate of 62%<sup>20</sup> - cluster resource centres might act as a hub for teachers from a wide area to access online materials.

## TARGETS AND REWARDS

For education systems to complete the journey from poor to fair, it is important that there be minimum quality thresholds for schools and teachers. PEF’s Continuous Professional Development Programme, for example, certifies teachers who have completed intensive training courses, and schools that are accredited with the PEF seal of approval provide a guarantee of a certain level of quality to parents.

For English medium teaching, accreditation of schools that deliver such education to a basic standard would encourage schools to strive for quality improvements and increase demand for teacher training. For both the public

17 Mourshed et al (2010) op. cit.

18 Dr P Powell and S Khalid (2012): British Council Pakistan: Scoping Study, Transforming the Teaching of English in Punjab: Final Report.

19 DAI website. Available at: <http://dai.com/news-publications/news/second-round-innovation-research-and-advocacy-grants-education-pakistan>. Accessed 22 June 2013.

20 World Bank (2013): World Development Indicators: Pakistan. Available at: <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/IT.NET.USER.P2>

and private sector, the development of standards for English medium instruction would, like the PEF accreditation, provide clarity to parents and encourage competition between schools to improve quality. It would also help embed English medium teaching across the education system.

The Aptis testing system is an existing tool that could be used to accredit schools. Our research shows that although many teachers have qualifications that help them attain teaching jobs, these qualifications do not necessarily leave them well placed to deliver quality lessons. There is a case, therefore, for adding testing in English to the recruitment process for teachers, and the Aptis system is well suited for this. It is suggested that schools that meet the Directorate of Staff Development's minimum standards of English for teachers at each grade level would receive the badge of "Aptis Certified School". To encourage further development of English medium teaching beyond this basic threshold, higher award levels might be created – schools that achieve higher than average Aptis results among students, for example, might receive "Excellence in English Language Teaching" awards, while those that score higher than average in assessments of subjects taught through the medium of English might receive an "Excellence in English Medium" award. These awards could be developed as steps towards the already existing International School Award, which recognises schools that integrate a global dimension in their teaching, with the ultimate aim of developing engaged global citizens.

Awards might be developed, too, for teachers. Financial incentives are the most obvious recompense for teachers whose

students score highly in English exams or in subjects taught using English medium instruction, but in a cash-strapped system it may be possible to give non-monetary recognition instead. The teachers in our survey told us that they were more motivated by awards and certificates that recognised their strong performance than by cash bonuses, and such awards can act as a strong incentive for improvement by individual teachers. Teachers who complete training courses, as in the PEF example above, should also receive certificates for doing so.

## LONG-TERM MONITORING

Converting Punjab's education system to one where English medium teaching is widespread is not a short-term project. To move up a CEFR band level in English language can take years of study, and the commitment to expand English instruction must be sustained over the long-term, with short-term gains consolidated before being built on, and momentum for change expanded from the easier targets of young, urban teachers to harder to reach rural schools.

Award schemes such as those discussed above should not be seen as one-off prizes, therefore. Schools that have received accreditation should be monitored periodically to ensure that standards have been maintained. In Madhya Pradesh, the Learn to Read programme regularly tracked student learning data from each school – gathered in monthly standardised tests of student comprehension - to ensure that progress was sustained. Teachers received monthly refresher sessions delivered by satellite broadcast, and were rewarded with cash bonuses if literacy targets were met for a period of six months or more.

Long-term monitoring of English medium teaching in Punjab does not require reinventing the wheel. District Teacher Educators (DTE) already have responsibility for monitoring teachers in general and for testing students, and with appropriate training their role could be expanded to include overseeing English medium instruction. DTEs' role has already been adjusted under the Schools Reform Roadmap, with coaching of teachers added to their monitoring duties, and the lesson observation materials that have been developed to help them fulfil that role could be amended to incorporate observation of English medium teaching.

## KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Improving teacher quality is an essential component of education system reform, and it is unlikely that the Government of Punjab will realise its ambitious goals of a world class education system without a well-trained, highly motivated cadre of teachers. Based on our research and on the ideas discussed above, we make the following recommendations for strengthening the ability of Punjab's teachers to deliver English medium instruction. As noted in the introduction to this paper, the suggestions are meant not to be definitive but to spark debate and discussion.

### RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POLICY MAKERS

1. To garner buy-in to the English medium policy, education policy makers should hold consultation exercises with head teachers and teachers to make the case for English medium education and to listen to and respond to their concerns.
2. An assessment of the effectiveness of existing training programmes for English should be conducted by an independent organisation. A rigorous evaluation of such programmes' content will assist the development of better training courses that make a real difference to teachers' level of English and to their ability to teach using English medium.
3. Minimum quality standards should be developed for schools that provide English medium instruction. Accreditation schemes based on Aptis testing, with schools rewarded for reaching progressively higher levels, will promote competition, heighten demand for training and quality improvements, and serve as a guarantee of quality to parents. As English medium instruction expands, moreover, there is a strong case for including English testing in the recruitment process for teachers.
4. Schools should be monitored over the long-term, with awards updated periodically and those that have received awards in the past reviewed to ensure that standards have been maintained. Nor should training be seen as a one-off event - refresher courses should be developed to keep teachers abreast of developments in English medium education.
5. Those working in Punjab's education system should endeavour to enlist help from external partners. The British Council, for example, is involved in programmes elsewhere to develop the capacities of English teachers. DfID too has been instrumental in helping to roll out the Schools Reform Roadmap, and it and other overseas partners have

expertise and manpower that can be of invaluable help in carrying out the overhaul that is needed to transform English medium instruction in Punjab.

**RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE  
DIRECTORATE OF STAFF DEVELOPMENT  
(DSD) AND DISTRICT TEACHER EDUCATORS  
(DTEs)**

1. To facilitate teachers' task, the lesson plans they receive should include English-Urdu translations of key words and phrases.
2. Lesson plans and training programmes should initially be aimed at the most receptive audiences.
3. Pre-service teachers are a key audience for training programmes. English medium instruction should be incorporated into pre-service training for English, mathematics and sciences teachers, and should also become part of the testing procedure for trainee teachers.
4. Younger teachers are the other key audience for early efforts to expand English medium education. The next generation of Punjab's teachers are the most receptive to the new policy, and the best equipped in terms of language ability to deliver it. They are also the keenest to learn new teaching techniques, and would therefore be a good target for efforts to improve teaching quality more broadly.
5. Once the more receptive teachers have been trained and have shown improved skills in instructing in English, training programmes should be rolled out to other teachers.
6. Cluster methods should be used to train large numbers of teachers, with a school or a resource centre used as a hub to deliver courses to educators from a number of nearby schools.
7. Technological solutions should be explored as a means of reaching large numbers of teachers with training and support. Computer-based or online courses offer some promise but rely on a steady supply of electricity and a solid internet connection – it may be that mobile phones or satellite-based technologies offer a cheaper and more effective alternative for delivering materials and training seminars, conducting tests and providing support.
8. Training should not be seen as a one-off event - refresher courses should be developed to keep teachers abreast of developments in English medium education.
9. If District Teacher Educators are to be trained to monitor and coach teachers in the area of English medium instruction, they should be supported by lesson observation materials that define clearly what they should be looking for in good English medium teaching.
10. Data on teachers could be used to ensure that schools contain a mix of older and younger faculty. Those schools with predominantly older teachers are likely to have a culture that is more resistant to change, and an influx of younger teachers into such schools will give students better prospects of being taught with the latest methods and in English medium, to which younger teachers are more receptive.

### RECOMMENDATIONS FOR HEAD TEACHERS AND TEACHERS

1. Teachers should be incentivised to improve their skills in English language and English medium teaching, including certificates for those who complete training courses and monetary or non-monetary awards for progressing up the CEFR scale and for improving students' results.
2. Teachers should be monitored over the long-term, with those who have received rewards reviewed periodically to ensure that they have maintained standards.
3. Head teachers should encourage teachers to take on board modern teaching methods, including giving students more opportunity to contribute in lessons and making greater use of technology as a teaching aid.



### RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CURRICULUM AND TEXTBOOK DEVELOPERS

1. Curricula and textbooks should be evaluated with a view to updating them and rendering them more relevant to student needs and thematic interests. Shifting the focus towards practical speaking and listening activities will leave students better equipped to use English in their daily lives.
2. The updating of curricula and textbooks should be discussed with teachers, who should be encouraged to provide input into their development.



## **Punjab Education and English Language Initiative (PEELI) Project Background**

As the Government of Punjab moved towards a policy of English Medium of Instruction in schools, so the British Council's Punjab Education and English Language Initiative (PEELI) puts English at the heart of the education system in Punjab, Pakistan.

PEELI aims to ensure that by 2018, all children (~15,000,000) enrolled in schools across Punjab will be receiving high quality English language teaching and reach internationally comparable attainment levels for the learning of English.

To achieve the project goals, PEELI is working in close partnership with the School Education Department of the Government of Punjab to empower and enable the +300,000 Primary and Middle school teachers to deploy English language skills in the classroom using the latest teaching techniques.