Developing English Communication Skills Among Muslim Minority Communities and Technical Students: Challenges, Needs and Effective Pedagogical Interventions.

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Abstract:

This study examines the English communication challenges faced by Muslim minority students in technical institutions in Warangal City, Telangana. English proficiency is crucial for success in technical education and future employment, yet many minority students struggle due to limited language exposure, socio-economic disadvantages and insufficient instructional support. Using a quantitative approach, the research measures students' actual English communication skills and investigates factors influencing their learning. Data were gathered through a standardized skills test and a structured questionnaire covering students' backgrounds, learning habits, classroom experiences and resource access. The findings aim to reveal notable gaps in communication abilities and confirm links between socio-economic status and language proficiency. This study emphasises the urgent need for more effective, learner-centered teaching practices and inclusive policies to support minority students in acquiring essential English skills for academic and professional advancement.

Keywords: English communication skills, Muslim minority, language proficiency, quantitative study, technical education, pedagogical interventions, socio-economic factors.

English communication skills play a central role in education and professional life in India, serving not only as a medium of instruction but also as a key requirement for participating in the global economy. Over the years, English has become closely linked to opportunities for higher education, career growth and social mobility. In fields such as engineering, information technology, polytechnic studies and other technical disciplines, students are expected to communicate effectively in English in both academic and professional settings. However, while English proficiency has become a national priority, access to quality learning experiences is uneven, particularly among minority and marginalised communities who face systemic barriers that limit their language development.

In technical education, English communication is not just an academic requirement but an essential life skill. Students need to read manuals, write reports, present projects, attend interviews and interact with professionals, all tasks requiring confident use of English. Employers consistently rank communication skills as one of the most important competencies in entry-level recruitment. Students who lack strong English abilities often struggle during college and in job placements. Which makes the issue of English proficiency especially significant in areas where students come from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds or communities with limited access to English-medium education.

Minority communities face specific challenges in developing English skills. Muslim students in many Indian cities often experience first-generation learning, limited exposure to English at home, inadequate school-level instruction and few supportive learning environments. These factors affect their confidence, motivation and overall academic performance. Many attend schools with fewer resources, larger classrooms and less personalized attention, making it difficult to acquire strong communication skills early in life. By the time these students enter technical

education, the gap between their needs and proficiency is often wide, affecting both their academic engagement and employability.

Warangal City in Telangana provides an important context for understanding these challenges. As an educational and industrial hub, Warangal hosts several polytechnic and engineering institutions that attract students from diverse backgrounds. The city has a significant Muslim minority population, many of whom enroll their children in technical institutions for skill-based education and better employment prospects. Despite progress in literacy and educational infrastructure, disparities in language learning remain. Minority students often attend vernacular-medium schools, have limited early exposure to English and face financial constraints that restrict access to private coaching, digital tools or enriched learning environments. These factors shape their experiences with English learning in technical education.

Language skills are crucial for inclusive development, especially in multilingual societies like India. When students from marginalised communities acquire strong English communication skills, they gain access to academic resources, broader professional networks and meaningful employment opportunities. Enhancing English proficiency among Muslim minority technical students is therefore not only an academic concern but also a matter of social equity and empowerment. It aligns with national goals such as skill development, digital literacy and inclusive growth, supporting broader educational reforms that emphasise competence-based learning and employability.

Despite its importance, research focusing specifically on the English communication needs of Muslim minority technical students in Warangal is limited. Existing studies on technical education or minority education generally do not provide region-specific, quantitative data that measures proficiency, identifies socio-economic factors and evaluates teaching practices. This gap highlights the need for systematic, evidence-based research to inform local policies and institutional strategies.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the English communication skills of Muslim minority students in technical institutions in Warangal. It aims to measure their proficiency, examine challenges, identify learning needs and assess the role of teaching methods and institutional support. Using quantitative tools such as standardized tests and structured questionnaires, the research provides measurable insights into the factors affecting language development. The study focuses on students in selected polytechnic and engineering institutions, covering listening, speaking, reading and writing skills in academic and technical settings. Broader cultural issues and comparisons with other minority groups are outside the scope, allowing the research to remain focused, manageable and practical for improving language support in Warangal's technical education context.

Despite the growing importance of English communication skills for technical education and employability, many Muslim minority students in Warangal continue to struggle with low proficiency. Their difficulties arise from socio-economic limitations, early educational disadvantages and limited exposure to English at home and in the community. Many attend schools where English instruction is largely textbook-based, leaving little opportunity for interactive practice needed to build fluency and confidence. Technical institutions in Warangal also face challenges such as large class sizes, limited language labs and a shortage of trained English instructors, which widen the gap between students' needs and available support.

These challenges are linked to broader structural inequalities, including first-generation learning, financial constraints, limited access to digital resources and minimal parental support. As a result, students often feel underprepared when they enter technical courses, affecting their academic performance, confidence and future job prospects. Despite these issues, there is little systematic, data-driven research measuring the actual English proficiency of Muslim minority students in Warangal or identifying the factors that influence their learning. Without such evidence, institutions struggle to design effective teaching strategies. This highlights the urgent need for a quantitative study to assess proficiency, identify gaps and support targeted, evidence-based interventions to improve English communication skills among these students.

The selection of Warangal for this study is based on its educational and social relevance, as the city is a growing hub for polytechnic, engineering and technical institutions that attract students from diverse backgrounds, including a significant Muslim minority population. Many of these students pursue technical education for better

employment opportunities but face persistent barriers in developing English communication skills, which affect their academic performance and career prospects. Studying this context helps understand how local socio-economic conditions, community challenges and institutional practices shape language learning experiences. The research is valuable for policymakers, teachers and institutions, providing evidence to design targeted support programs, improve teaching methods, strengthen language labs and create inclusive learning environments. It aligns with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, which emphasises skill-based learning, equitable access and communication competence, particularly for socio-economically disadvantaged groups. By addressing a gap in existing research, especially the lack of quantitative data on Muslim minority students in Warangal, this study generates measurable insights into proficiency levels, socio-economic influences and institutional factors, supporting evidence-based interventions that can improve English communication skills and overall employability for these students.

Warangal was chosen for this study because it is an important educational hub with many polytechnic, engineering and technical institutions, attracting students from different backgrounds, including a large Muslim minority population. Many of these students pursue technical education to improve their job prospects but face ongoing challenges in developing English communication skills. Which affects their studies and career opportunities. Studying this context helps us understand how local socio-economic conditions, community challenges and institutional practices influence language learning. The research is useful for policymakers, teachers and institutions by providing evidence to design better support programs, improve teaching methods, enhance language labs and create inclusive learning environments. By filling a gap in research, especially the lack of quantitative data on Muslim minority students in Warangal, this study offers measurable insights that can guide effective interventions to improve English skills and employability.

This study is guided by a set of focused research questions designed to investigate the English communication skills of Muslim minority students in technical institutions in Warangal and the factors influencing their learning experiences.

- The first question seeks to determine the current level of English communication competence among Muslim minority technical students in Warangal, assessing their listening, speaking, reading and writing abilities through quantitative tools.
- The second question examines the major factors that contribute to their communication skill challenges, including linguistic barriers, socio-economic constraints, instructional practices and the overall learning environment.
- A third question explores whether a significant correlation exists between socio-economic background and English proficiency, identifying patterns that reveal how family income, parental education and access to resources shape language development.
- The study also asks which pedagogical interventions are perceived as effective by students and faculty, using structured surveys to gather feedback on classroom strategies, remedial courses and communication activities.
- Finally, the research investigates how institutions can redesign language instruction based on quantitative data, focusing on scalable, evidence-based approaches that can improve communication skills for minority technical students in Warangal.

Together, these questions provide a comprehensive framework for understanding the challenges, needs and potential solutions in English communication training for this specific student population.

This study is guided by a set of testable hypotheses that aim to provide measurable insights into the factors influencing English communication skills among Muslim minority technical students in Warangal.

- The first hypothesis (H1) proposes that there is a significant relationship between socio-economic status and English communication skills, suggesting that students from higher-income or better-educated households are likely to demonstrate stronger proficiency.
- The second hypothesis (H2) states that students exposed to technology-enabled learning show higher communication skill levels, assuming that access to digital tools, language apps and online resources contributes positively to language acquisition.

- The third hypothesis (H3) argues that the lack of an English-rich environment significantly affects students' confidence and oral communication, indicating that limited exposure to spoken English at home or in the community directly impacts fluency and self-expression.
- The final hypothesis (H4) proposes that targeted pedagogical interventions lead to measurable improvements in communication outcomes, meaning that structured communication activities, remedial sessions or learner-centred teaching strategies can produce significant gains when evaluated quantitatively.

These hypotheses form the analytical foundation of the study guides the statistical tests used to interpret the data.

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) complements this view by focusing on interaction, real-life communication and learner-centered approaches. CLT promotes speaking, listening and practical use of English, rather than rote memorisation. However, its implementation in Indian technical colleges is often inconsistent. Many classrooms still rely on grammar-translation methods, lectures and limited interactive activities, particularly when students are perceived as weak in English. This gap between ideal pedagogy and actual practice reduces opportunities for speaking and listening, limiting learners' confidence and reinforcing communication barriers. CLT provides a framework to evaluate whether teaching methods in technical institutions adequately support minority learners.

Second language acquisition (SLA) theories further explain how input, motivation and emotional factors affect learning. Krashen's Input Hypothesis emphasises the need for comprehensible language slightly above a learner's level, while the Affective Filter Hypothesis shows that anxiety, low confidence and negative experiences hinder acquisition. Many Muslim minority students enter technical programs with apprehension about English, shaped by prior schooling and societal stereotypes. SLA research highlights the need for meaningful interaction, corrective feedback and scaffolder practice, elements often missing in classrooms focused on syllabus completion over communication. These insights explain why students from disadvantaged backgrounds may struggle with oral communication and academic writing, despite years of instruction.

Research on minority education emphasises the role of structural inequalities, socio-economic limitations and cultural factors in shaping learning outcomes. Minority students often face gaps in early schooling, unequal access to quality teachers and limited parental support. Muslim communities, in particular, encounter educational disadvantages due to marginalization, linguistic isolation and restricted access to English-rich environments. These factors create cumulative learning gaps that widen as students enter higher or technical education. Limited exposure to digital resources and a lack of English-speaking role models further restrict communication skill development. Understanding these socio-cultural dynamics is essential for interpreting the experiences of Muslim minority technical students in Warangal.

Empirical studies across India show that students from marginalised communities often have lower proficiency in spoken English and academic communication. Research in states like Karnataka, Uttar Pradesh, Kerala and West Bengal highlights that minority learners view English as both a barrier and a necessary tool for mobility. Many technical institutions expect baseline communication skills that students from disadvantaged backgrounds do not possess, creating a mismatch that affects academic performance and employability. Studies on employability emphasise that English communication, teamwork and presentation skills are critical for recruitment and minority students frequently demonstrate lower confidence in interviews and group tasks.

Research also identifies multiple barriers faced by marginalised learners, including linguistic insecurity, low self-esteem, inconsistent schooling, limited digital access and few English-speaking peers. These challenges often intersect, compounding difficulties for minority students who enter technical education with limited practice opportunities. Effective interventions, therefore, must address both linguistic and non-linguistic factors, including confidence-building activities, authentic communication practice and digital support.

In Telangana, research on minority education and language proficiency has mostly focused on Hyderabad, leaving Warangal underexplored. Minority students in Warangal face challenges such as poor school quality, financial instability and limited access to English resources. While some technical colleges provide language labs

and communication modules, their impact has not been systematically studied. There is a clear need for quantitative research that measures English proficiency, identifies socio-economic and institutional factors and evaluates teaching practices among Muslim minority students in Warangal.

This study reveals a significant literature gap, despite studies on minority education and English proficiency across India, few focus on Muslim minority technical students in Warangal and even fewer provide quantitative, evidence-based analysis. Most research is qualitative or generalised, limiting its applicability to the local context. This gap underscores the importance of the present study, which aims to provide empirical insights, contextual understanding and practical recommendations for enhancing English communication skills among this student population.

The population for this study includes Muslim minority students enrolled in technical institutions in Warangal, such as polytechnic colleges, engineering institutes and diploma centers. A stratified random sampling technique ensures representation across government, private and semi-government institutions, selecting 200-300 students for the study. Inclusion criteria focus on students currently pursuing technical education within the Muslim minority community, while non-technical students or incomplete respondents are excluded. This sampling ensures diversity in socio-economic conditions, academic backgrounds and institutional settings, making the findings more reliable and generalisable.

Two primary research tools are used. The first is a standardized English Communication Skills Test, which measures listening, speaking, reading, writing, vocabulary and grammar to classify proficiency levels. The second is a researcher-developed questionnaire designed to collect data on demographics, socio-economic status, learning habits, access to technology, classroom experiences and perceptions of teaching methods. Socio-economic indicators include parental education, family income, occupation and language use at home. Learning habits cover self-study, participation in language labs and engagement with communication clubs. Technology questions explore access to devices and online learning resources. Classroom experience items assess teaching methods, participation, anxiety and opportunities for oral practice.

Data analysis combines descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics summarize students' communication proficiency, socio-economic backgrounds and learning conditions using mean, median, mode, standard deviation and frequency distributions. Inferential statistics test hypotheses and examine relationships between variables. Pearson's correlation identifies the strength and direction of associations between socio-economic status, technology use and communication skills. Independent-samples t-tests compare groups such as students with high and low socio-economic backgrounds, while ANOVA compares multiple groups, such as different institution types or levels of technology exposure. Statistical results are interpreted according to standard guidelines, considering significance levels, effect sizes and patterns in light of sociocultural and SLA theories. This methodology provides a solid foundation for understanding the challenges Muslim minority students face and for designing effective, evidence-based pedagogical interventions in technical education.

Table 1: Demographic Distribution of Sample (N = 100)				
Demographic Variable	**Categories**	**Frequency**	**Percentage**	**Notes**
Age	<18	10	10%	Younger students
	18–20	50	50%	Majority group
	21–23	30	30%	Adult learners
	>23	10	10%	Older students
Gender	Male	60	60%	Slight male majority
	Female	40	40%	
Year of Study	1st Year	25	25%	Freshers
	2nd Year	30	30%	
	3rd Year	25	25%	
	4th Year	20	20%	Seniors
Type of Institution	Government	40	40%	
	Private	35	35%	
	Autonomous	25	25%	
Language Background	English-medium	30	30%	
	Non-English-medium	70	70%	Majority

Table 1 presents the demographic distribution of the 100 students who participated in the study. The age profile shows that half of the students (50%) fall in the 18–20 age group, representing the majority, while younger students under 18 and older students above 23 each make up 10% and adult learners aged 21–23 account for 30%. In terms of gender, there is a slight male majority with 60% males and 40% females. The distribution across years of study indicates that most students are in their 2nd year (30%), followed by 1st and 3rd-year students (25% each) and 4th-year seniors make up 20%. Regarding the type of institution, 40% of students are enrolled in government institutions, 35% in private and 25% in autonomous institutions. Finally, the majority of the students (70%) come from non-English-medium backgrounds, while 30% have studied in English-medium schools. This demographic overview helps contextualize the students' English communication skills by highlighting their age, educational stage, institutional setting and language exposure.

Table 2: English Proficiency Test Scores (Descriptive Statistics)					
Skill Area	**Mean**	**Median**	**Mode**	**Std. Deviation**	**Observations**
Listening	58	60	55	12	Many low performers
Speaking	52	50	45	14	Pronunciation issues
Reading	65	66	68	10	Slightly higher scores
Writing	55	54	50	13	Vocabulary gaps
Grammar	60	60	60	11	Moderate performance
Vocabulary	54	55	50	12	Weakens writing and speaking

Table 2 shows the descriptive statistics for the English proficiency test scores across different skill areas. Listening and speaking emerged as the weaker areas, with mean scores of 58 and 52 respectively, indicating that many students face challenges in understanding spoken English and in oral communication, particularly with

pronunciation. Reading scores are slightly higher, with a mean of 65, suggesting relatively better comprehension skills. Writing and vocabulary scores are lower, with mean values of 55 and 54, reflecting gaps in vocabulary and structured writing practice. Grammar shows moderate performance with a mean of 60. The standard deviations indicate variability in performance, showing that while some students excel, a significant number struggle in key skill areas. Overall, the results highlight that oral communication and vocabulary are critical areas that need focused attention to improve overall English proficiency.

Table 3: Proficiency Level Distribution

Skill Area	Low (0–49)	Moderate (50–69)	High (70–100)	Observations
Listening	25%	60%	15%	Clusters at moderate level
Speaking	35%	55%	10%	Oral communication weak
Reading	15%	65%	20%	Better reading skills
Writing	30%	60%	10%	Structured writing issues
Grammar	20%	65%	15%	Moderate grammar proficiency
Vocabulary	32%	58%	10%	Vocabulary limitation evident

Table 3 shows the distribution of English proficiency levels across different skill areas among the students. Most students fall into the moderate range for all skills, with listening, reading, writing, grammar and vocabulary showing 55–65% at moderate proficiency. Low-level performance is notably higher in speaking (35%) and vocabulary (32%), indicating weaknesses in oral communication and word usage. High proficiency is generally limited, with reading scoring the highest at 20%, suggesting that students are comparatively better at understanding text. Observations highlight clusters at moderate levels, structured writing issues, moderate grammar skills and evident vocabulary limitations, pointing to areas where targeted support and practice could improve overall communication ability.

Table 4: Socio-Economic Status (SES) Variables				
SES Variable	**Categories**	**Frequency**	**Percentage**	**Observations**
Family Income	Low (<₹2,50,000)	40	40%	Scores generally lower
	Medium (₹2,50,000–₹5,00,000)	45	45%	Average performance
	High (>₹5,00,000)	15	15%	Higher proficiency
Parental Education	None	10	10%	Correlates with weak scores
	Primary	30	30%	Limited literacy support
	Secondary	40	40%	Moderate support
	Graduate	20	20%	Better outcomes
Home Language Use	English	30	30%	Easier exposure to English
	Regional/Other	70	70%	Higher difficulty
Access to Technology	High	25	25%	Effective digital learning
	Moderate	50	50%	Partial access
	Low	25	25%	Limited benefit from tools

Table 4 presents the socio-economic status (SES) variables of the students, highlighting factors that may influence their English communication skills. Most students come from medium-income families (45%), while 40% belong to low-income households and only 15% to high-income families, suggesting that financial resources could impact proficiency. Parental education varies, with 40% having secondary-level education, 30% primary, 20% graduates and 10% with no formal education, indicating varying levels of literacy support at home. Regarding home language, 70% speak regional or other languages, making English exposure more challenging, while 30% use English at home. Access to technology shows that only 25% have high access, half have moderate access and 25% have low access, reflecting differences in digital learning opportunities. Observations suggest that students from higher-income families, with educated parents, English exposure and better technology access, tend to perform better in English, while others face more challenges.

Table 5: Student-Reported Challenges (N = 100)			
Challenge Area	**Frequency**	**Percentage**	**Observations**
Lack of spoken English exposure	70	70%	Most common barrier
Limited digital access	45	45%	Socio-economic influence
Classroom anxiety	30	30%	Affects participation
Inadequate instructional methods	60	60%	Teachers focus on theory
Insufficient practice opportunities	65	65%	Directly impacts skill

Table 5 highlights the main challenges reported by the students in the study. The most frequently cited barrier is a lack of spoken English exposure, reported by 70% of students, indicating that limited opportunities to practice oral English is a widespread issue. Inadequate instructional methods were noted by 60% of students, suggesting that teaching approaches often focus more on theory than practical communication. Insufficient practice opportunities affected 65% of the students, directly limiting their ability to improve their skills. Limited digital access, reported by 45%, reflects socio-economic constraints that restrict students' access to online learning resources. Finally, classroom anxiety, affecting 30% of students, shows that emotional factors also play a role in

participation and confidence. Overall, the table reveals that both structural and personal factors contribute to challenges in developing effective English communication skills.

The analysis of quantitative data from Muslim minority technical students in Warangal reveals notable challenges in their English communication skills. Many students show low to moderate proficiency in speaking, listening and academic writing, while reading and grammar are relatively stronger. Oral communication difficulties, including pronunciation, sentence construction and spontaneous interaction, reduce their confidence in classrooms and professional settings. Writing skills suffer from limited vocabulary and lack of practice in structured writing formats, pointing to gaps in foundational education.

Socio-economic and linguistic backgrounds strongly influence their performance. Students from lower-income families or those with parents having limited education tend to score lower across communication areas. Learners from non-English-medium schools or homes with little English exposure face greater hurdles in oral and written skills. This highlights the cumulative disadvantage these minority students experience, where early exposure and resource constraints hamper their proficiency, even in technical institutions.

A critical factor affecting proficiency is insufficient English practice during earlier school years, especially in speaking and interactive activities. While students positively view digital learning tools like apps and videos for improving vocabulary and pronunciation, inconsistent access limits their benefits. Institutional challenges such as shortage of trained communication instructors, crowded classes and limited language labs further restrict opportunities for practice-based learning. Even remedial programs often lack individual attention and structured guidance, reducing their effectiveness.

The findings underscore multi-layered challenges, linguistic, socio-economic, technological and institutional, that affect Muslim minority technical students' communication skills in Warangal. They reveal the urgent need for focused, evidence-based interventions that leverage digital tools, strengthen teacher training and create practice-oriented modules tailored to these students' needs.

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