



ADVANCE SOCIAL SCIENCE ARCHIVE JOURNAL

Available Online: <https://assajournal.com>
Vol. 05 No. 02. April-June 2026. Page# 877-890
Print ISSN: [3006-2497](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.20185928) Online ISSN: [3006-2500](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.20185928)
Platform & Workflow by: [Open Journal Systems](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.20185928)
<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.20185928>



From Legal Writing to Oral Advocacy: An ESP Needs Analysis of Professional Communication Competence among Final-Year Law Students in Pakistan

Menahil Aslam

BS (Hons) English Linguistics & Literature, Department of Applied Linguistics, Government College University Faisalabad, Pakistan.

minhalaslam22@gmail.com

Zobia Nazir

BS (Hons) English Linguistics & Literature, Department of Applied Linguistics, Government College University Faisalabad, Pakistan.

zobianazir850@gmail.com

Aiman Riaz

BS (Hons) English Literature and Linguistics, Department of Applied Linguistics, Government College University Faisalabad, Pakistan.

aimanriazv7@gmail.com

Ifra Sattar

BS (Hons) English Literature and Linguistics, Department of Applied Linguistics, Government College University Faisalabad, Pakistan.

ifrasattar892@gmail.com

Muhammad Asim Khan (Corresponding Author)

Visiting Lecturer, Department of Applied Linguistics, Government College University Faisalabad, Pakistan.

asim1412@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The present quantitative needs analysis examined the needs of final-year LLB students (9th Semester; N = 56) in oral and written communication at the College of Law, Government College University Faisalabad (GCUF) in Pakistan. The study used descriptive statistics, Pearson bivariate correlations, paired-sample t-test to map the needs profile of students on the verge of joining the legal profession. A 20-item five-point Likert-scale instrument utilized for data collection in four areas, which are Legal Writing Needs (Section I), Legal Genre and Accuracy Awareness (Section II), Curriculum Adequacy and Training Gap. Findings show consistent high average scores in each of the four sections (overall M = 4.09, SD = 0.54), with the largest ones on items of career-anchoring: strong speaking skills are essential to becoming a lawyer (Q20: M = 4.55), writing skills are essential to the career of a lawyer (Q6: M = 4.50), and a course in specialised legal communication Section IV (Legal Speaking: M = 4.173) is marginally higher than Section I (Legal Writing: M = 4.149) but a paired-samples t-test shows that there is no significant difference between the two areas ($t(55) = -0.448, p = .656$), meaning that final-year students equally are in need in both domains at the same time Pearson correlations demonstrate that there are significant correlations between inter-domain, especially between Legal Writing and Legal Speaking ($r = .810, p < .001$) and Legal Writing and Legal Genre ($r = .809, p < .001$), which proves that oral and written legal communication competences are co-constituted and demand a curriculum response in a form of integrated form. The mean correlation of inter-items between all 20 items ($r_2 = .443$) shows there is sufficient instrument consistency. Results suggest that a

special Legal English Communication course must be introduced at the College of Law at GCUF based on the Pakistani legal genres, oral advocacy practice based on task, and scaffolding of legal writing.

Keywords: *Legal English, Speaking Needs, Writing Needs, ESP Needs Analysis, Final-Year Law Students, Pakistani Legal Education, Oral Advocacy, Legal Writing, Curriculum Gap*

Introduction

In Pakistan, law practice is only in English. All written and oral communication in the legal field is written and spoken in English, and the most important of the professional legal speaking and writing competences are not developed systematically in Pakistani legal undergraduate education (Ahmad, 2011; Jamshad et al., 2021; Reayat et al., 2020). This paradox between, on the one hand, the requirements of professional legal practice in English and, on the other hand, the competence of teaching legal communication is the main issue of the current research. Although the scholarship on the topic of ESP in Pakistan has grown in the recent past, a notable discrepancy between language teaching and professional communicative requirements remains evident in Pakistani higher education in recent studies of allied health in GCUF (Riaz et al., 2026; Sadia et al., 2026), where much of the study indicates a high gap between instructional delivery and the needs of students, the strong demand. Although these results have been starting to shape programme-specific reforms in the health sciences, such empirical studies in legal education are still scarce, even though accurate oral and written communication lies at the heart of the legal practice. Fatima et al. (2026) reported that all Pakistani law students had high scores of readiness, positive belief and aspirational demand for Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL), suggesting that digital learning is not just an alternative support but can be an effective solution to the gaps in traditional Legal English learning. The study critically recommends that students' positive response to mobile enhanced learning could be attributed to a stronger dissatisfaction with the traditional legal language pedagogy and highlights the importance of developing task-based Legal English curricula with culturally contextualized approaches in Pakistan courtroom and legal discourse.

Even though in legal practice oral advocacy, legal drafting and professional communication is of paramount importance yet legal education in Pakistan continues to be dominated by the general English teaching to a large extent, which fails to equip the students with the communicative requirements of courtroom and institutional communication. The ESP-based research in Pakistan over the past few years has revealed significant deficiencies in the oral proficiency, legal reasoning and relevance of the curriculum of undergraduate law students and a high need for a learning environment that is contextualized and mobile friendly (Fatima et al., 2026). In this developing stream of research, the current study is designed to assess the communicative competence of final year law students of Pakistan through a quantitative needs analysis approach to examine the level at which communicative competence is provided in legal education among law faculty students in the country. Final-year students of the LLB course are in a rather curious position where to explore this paradox. Since 9th Semester students have finished their substantive legal education, they are at the very border of academic legal education and professional practice, so their self-evaluation of their communication needs should be both the most knowledgeable and the most pressing. They possess adequate legal expertise to assess their own competence in relation to target professional requirements; they are also best placed in facing the most urgent remedies time limit. But this population has not been the focus of a special quantitative one of speaking and writing needs analysis in the Pakistani literature.

This gap is filled in the present study. It describes a 20-item, four-domain quantitative needs assessment of 56 final-year LLB students at the College of Law, Government College University Faisalabad (GCUF), involving a concomitant four-construct analysis of: legal writing needs, legal genre and accuracy awareness, curriculum adequacy and training gap, and legal speaking needs. Through comparing oral and written communication requirements of the same instrument and sample, the research is able to provide a direct comparison between the two formulations- and the high levels of inter-domain correlations the research finds is compelling in support of integrated, two-skill approach to legal English curriculum reform at GCUF and similar institutions.

Research Questions

1. What is the profile of legal writing needs, legal genre awareness, curriculum adequacy perceptions, and legal speaking needs among final-year LLB students at GCUF?
2. Do final-year students report significantly different levels of need in legal writing compared to legal speaking?
3. How strongly are the four communication need domains inter-correlated, and what do these associations imply for integrated curriculum design?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Legal Communication as a Professional Competence

Law communication, including the actual writing of legal texts and the speech in the court and the client, is generally considered to be the most basic of professional competencies of the practising lawyer (Rasool & Dayan, 2023; Sinsheimer and Herring, 2016; Cernovschi, 2025). Rasool and Dayan (2023) maintain that the technical and rhetorical aspects of legal speech go hand in hand: a lawyer who is a good lawyer but is orally awkward and produces written materials unworthy of the respect of judges, is unable to represent clients, negotiate results, and command respect of judges. In three-year ethnographic research of junior lawyers in law firm contexts, Sinsheimer and Herring (2016) found out that reading-to-write and oral argumentation competencies were deficient consistently, which are the very competencies that are not developed in the legal school. Malik et al. (2021) showed that the quality and satisfaction of lawyer-client relationships in Pakistani civil cases are mainly determined by communication competence, with gender-based variations in the communication style having a significant impact on the results of the cases.

This professional significance is further enhanced in Pakistani environment with the structural difference between the provision of legal education and the professional communication requirements. Ahmad (2011) surveyed Pakistani academic legal institution law teachers and graduates regarding the weaknesses in oral academic tasks in their institutions (classroom presentations, group work, and mock oral arguments) and reported the same weaknesses in legal academic listening comprehension (Ahmad, 2012). Jamshad et al. (2021) validated the senior lawyers supervisor perspective of the two most critical areas of competence deficiency of new law graduates English communication skills and legal research skills. According to Naveed and Shah (2023), the lawyers of the District Bar Association of Sargodha were never provided with formal training in information literacy, which is further applicable to legal writing and the preparation of legal communication, in general.

Legal Writing Needs

Professional legal writing instruction in law students has been observed to be needed in various national and institutional settings. Singh (2015) used the Communication Needs Processor developed by Munby to the written communication needs of legal practitioners and discovered that fresh law graduates failed always to apply the learnt knowledge to the legislative communicative events of writing pleadings, contracts, and legal notices - exactly the items that

Section I of the current instrument covers. The comparison of lexico-grammatical peculiarities of legal letters of demand written by lawyers and law students revealed that the letters of students were different in their genre-specific formulaic expressions, correct usage of legal terms, polite forms, and direct expressions compared with those of the professionals - differences with the direct implication on the writing pedagogy.

Arias Rodriguez and Florez (2020) showed that ESP classes based on using authentic legal cases resulted in a substantial increase in the written argumentation and critical thinking skills of law students, indicating that case-based writing tasks are an effective means of addressing the issue of law writing deficit. According to Gajić (2024), legal writing is part of the four areas in which it is most necessary to focus on teaching Legal English to Serbian jurists, the others being the ability to speak publicly, vocabulary, and communicating via telephone, which means that the instrument design of the current study is justified. In a needs analysis study of Czech law students and graduates documented by Chovancova (2013) it was found that, although the most common practical legal writing tasks (more specifically: contract and pleading drafting) were most often indicated as being underprepared according to the current curricula.

Legal Speaking and Oral Advocacy Needs

Examples of professionally important activities in oral communication in legal practice include: courtroom advocacy, interviewing clients, negotiation, presentation in the chambers, and legal argumentation. Ahmad (2011) determined that the Pakistani law students demonstrate large gaps in spoken English in academic simulations of these workplaces. Rasool and Dayan (2023) say that the concept of oral eloquence and persuasive speech has been a neglected part of contemporary legal education because of an excessive focus on technological competence and legal expertise on paper, which has resulted in a disconnect between the perceived theoretical significance and preparation. Bartnikaitė and Bijeikienė (2017) have discovered that communicative competence in legal English acquired in the course of formal legal education falls short of practice requirements, and legal speaking skills are always underdeveloped as compared to the general fluency in English.

Gajić (2024) identified the area of most acutely experienced by Serbian law professionals to be public speaking, followed by the vocabulary development, legal writing, and telephone communication. Khaleel and Haladin (2021) showed that bilingualism in the Pakistani courtroom discourse presents a problem of interpretation that can be explained by the lack of formal training in the register of interpretation and legal terminology during the undergraduate level - the very lack of oral competence identified by the questions Q15-Q19 of the study. Abrar et al. (2020) affirmed that the effectiveness of communication is an important predictor of relationship commitment between lawyers and clients at the District Bar Faisalabad an entity in the same city as the location of the present study.

Curriculum Inadequacy in Pakistani Legal Education

The literature on the structural deficiency in Pakistani legal education in acquiring professional communication competences is consistent. Reayat et al. (2020) found outdated curricula, conventional assessment, and insufficient instructional techniques to be the three major issues in Pakistani law training, which impede the role of the lawyers in the legal profession and justice. Jamshad et al. (2021) affirmed that a systematic skill gap is a result of legal education system graduates whose skills are not based on individual ability but the design of the curriculum. Baig (2025) has drawn a comparison of the Pakistani legal education to the leading UK and United States law schools and found that, Pakistan has not yet developed the quality assurance measures, clinical education elements and professional integration processes which the respondents of this study consider as their most pressing requirements.

The integration of flipped classes offered by Ali (2024) as the feasible solution to the pedagogical deficits of legal education argues that the relocation of the content delivery out of the classroom enables the use of face-to-face time to a practical speaking and writing activity, the lack of which is validated by the item Q13 (M = 4.00) in the current study. Khan et al. (2024) also reported that English courses offered were considered inadequate by Pakistani undergraduate students (M = 3.543.75) directly supporting the adequacy of curriculum results of the current study (Section III: M = 4.018).

Integrated Legal Communication Pedagogy

There has been an increasing ESP literature that advocates a combined approach to speaking and writing and not to use these two concepts as differentiated skills. Cernovschi (2025) shows that the course in Communication and Academic Writing, which law students' study in Moldova, is based on the synergetic development of written and oral competences, where the accuracy and clarity of argumentation is the same cornerstone of courtroom advocacy as of legal writing. Masood and Hina (2024) established that integrated communication skills training can lead to general professional communication benefits, with female teachers showing a higher level of integrated competence, which has consequences to gendered approaches to instruction in law colleges in Pakistan. Analysis of legal cases, as demonstrated by Arias Rodriguez and Florez (2020), enhances both written production and oral discourse in English, and both cognitive and communicative competences of the students in a Colombian law school. The downstream professional implications of the needs that the current study records are recorded by Afzal et al. (n.d.), who report the impact of poor writing skills in professional practice as inconsistent drafting standards and time wastage in the preparation of cases.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The research design utilized in this study is quantitative cross-sectional survey design as part of English for specific purposes (ESP) needs analysis tradition. The tool measures current situation needs, such as self-reported weaknesses in legal writing and speaking, and perceptions of course necessity, which are in line with the needs analysis paradigm implemented in the legal ESP setting by Ahmad (2011), Gajic (2024), and Chovancova (2013).

Participants

All 56 final-year students of the LLB program (9th Semester; N = 56) in the College of Law, GCUF, Faisalabad filled out the survey in December 2025. The 9th Semester population comprises the students who have finished the substantive core of their five-year LLB programme and who are on the cusp of entering the profession of legal practice, so their own evaluation of their communication needs is of special interest as a curriculum reform purpose.

Instrument

The questionnaire was composed of 20 questions with a five-point Likert-scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree), and it was administered through Google Forms. They were distributed in four theory-based sections: Section I- Legal Writing Needs (Q1 -Q6; 6 items); Section II - Legal Genre and Accuracy Awareness (Q7-Q10; 4 items); Section III - Curriculum Adequacy and Training Gap (Q11-Q14; 4 items); and Section IV - Legal Speaking Needs (Q15-Q20). The wording of the items was based on the validated needs domains developed by Ahmad (2011), Gajic (2024), Khan et al. (2024), and Bartnikaitė and Bijeikiene (2017) modified to the GCUF institutional setting. All 20 items had a mean inter-item correlation of $r = .443$, which is significant. Inter-item correlations were ranged between $r = .411$ (Section I) and $r = .587$ (Section III).

Data Analysis

All 20 items and four section composites were computed using descriptive statistics (M, SD, Agree + frequency percentages). A paired samples t-test was used to directly compare Section I (Legal Writing) and Section IV (Legal Speaking) composite means to evaluate whether the students perceived a significantly different level of need with regard to two primary modalities of skills. Pearson bivariate correlation was used to investigate inter-domain correlations among all the four section composites. All the analyses were performed in SPSS (v. 23); $\alpha = .05$.

RESULTS

Item-Level Descriptive Statistics

Table 1 shows mean, SDs and frequencies of Agree and strongly agree on all 20 items. On the whole, the range of item means was between 3.70 (Q9: grammatical and structural errors) and 4.55 (Q20: strong speaking skills required to succeed in legal practice). Figure 1 shows section composite means including error bars of ± 1 SD; Figure 2 shows item-level means of all 20 items by section.

Table 1

Item-Level Descriptive Statistics (N = 56)

Survey Item	M	SD	Agree+ %	Interpretation
Section I: Legal Writing Needs				
Q1. I need to improve my ability to write professional legal documents in English	4.39	0.68	92.9%	<i>Very High Need</i>
Q2. I find it difficult to draft pleadings, contracts, or legal notices	3.96	0.91	71.4%	<i>High Need</i>
Q3. I struggle to organise legal arguments clearly in writing	4.02	0.96	75.0%	<i>High Need</i>
Q4. I face difficulty using accurate legal vocabulary in written work	4.00	0.85	75.0%	<i>High Need</i>
Q5. I need to improve clarity and precision in legal writing	4.02	0.90	75.0%	<i>High Need</i>
Q6. Writing skills are essential for my future career as a lawyer	4.50	0.66	94.6%	<i>Very High — Career Essential</i>
Section II: Legal Genre and Accuracy Awareness				
Q7. I need better understanding of common legal documents and genres (judgments, contracts)	4.21	0.89	85.7%	<i>High Need</i>
Q8. I find it difficult to follow standard formats used in legal writing	3.79	1.04	60.7%	<i>Moderate-High Need</i>
Q9. I often make grammatical or structural errors in legal communication	3.70	1.17	57.1%	<i>Moderate-High Need</i>
Q10. Accuracy in language is important for effective legal practice	4.39	0.78	91.1%	<i>Very High — Professional Value</i>

Section III: Curriculum Adequacy and Training Gap				
Q11. My current English courses do not adequately prepare me for legal speaking tasks	3.77	1.08	62.5%	<i>Moderate-High Gap</i>
Q12. My current English courses do not sufficiently focus on legal writing skills	3.88	1.03	67.9%	<i>High Gap</i>
Q13. There is a lack of practical speaking and writing activities related to law	4.00	1.04	73.2%	<i>High Gap</i>
Q14. A specialised course focusing on legal speaking and writing is needed	4.43	0.74	89.3%	<i>Very High — Course Demand</i>
Section IV: Legal Speaking Needs				
Q15. I need to improve my ability to speak confidently in legal settings (court, meetings)	4.20	0.88	76.8%	<i>High Need</i>
Q16. I find it difficult to explain legal issues clearly to clients in English	4.02	0.90	71.4%	<i>High Need</i>
Q17. I need more training in oral advocacy and legal argumentation	4.18	0.77	85.7%	<i>High Need</i>
Q18. I struggle to use appropriate legal terminology while speaking	4.21	0.82	82.1%	<i>High Need</i>
Q19. I find it difficult to respond quickly to legal questions in English	3.88	1.05	71.4%	<i>High Need</i>
Q20. Strong speaking skills are essential for success in legal practice	4.55	0.66	91.1%	<i>Very High — Career Essential</i>

Note. M = mean; SD = standard deviation on a 5-point Likert scale. Agree+ % = percentage selecting Agree or Strongly Agree.

Figure 1. Section Composite Means (N = 56)

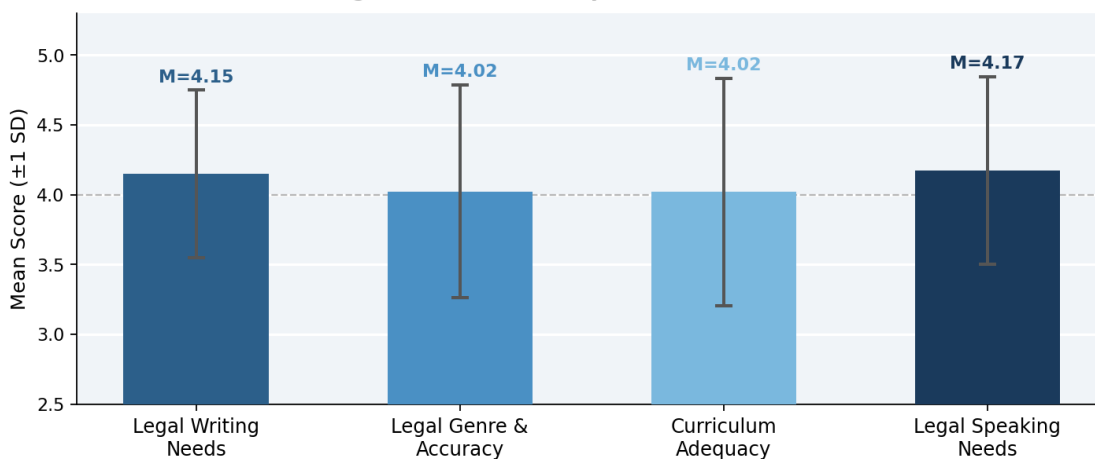


Figure 1. Section composite means with ± 1 SD error bars (N = 56). Dashed line at M = 4.0 for reference.

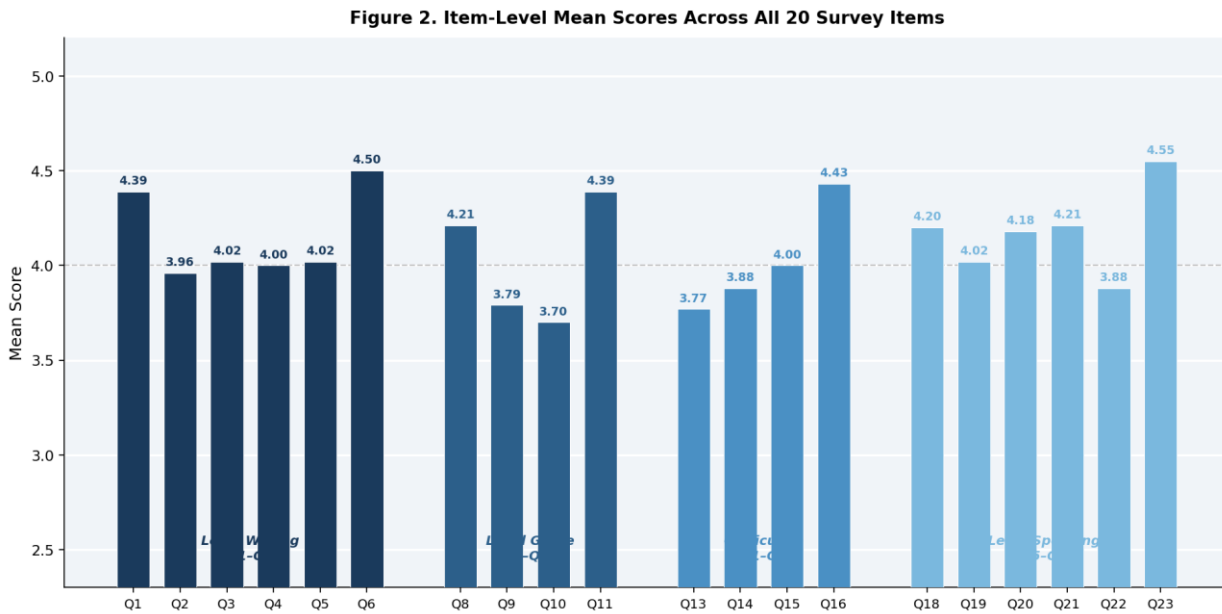


Figure 2. Item-level mean scores across all 20 survey items, colour-coded by section.

Three of these items scored above 4.40, all of which are career-anchoring attitudinal items, not deficit-reporting items: Q20 (strong speaking skills are essential to have a successful career in the legal profession: M = 4.55, SD = 0.66; 91.1% Agree+), Q6 (writing skills are essential to a successful career in the legal profession There is a consistent high score on the endorsement of these items which implies that the final-year students are highly supportive of the professional centrality of both communication modalities and are evidently motivated to remedial instruction.

The accuracy and the error item means were noted as the lowest, referred to as Q9 (grammatical and structural errors in legal communication: M = 3.70, SD = 1.17; 57.1% Agree+) and Q8 (difficulty following standard formats: M = 3.79, SD = 1.04; 60.7% Agree+). Although these are the lowest of the means in the dataset, they are still well above the scale midpoint of 3.0 which confirms that even these items of accuracy deficit indicate a true moderate-to-high level of reported need.

Section Composite Means

Section composite means, standard-deviations, and mean-inter-item correlations are given in Table 2. The total mean of all the 20 items was M = 4.09, SD = 0.54. All four section composites had a composite mean above M = 4.00: Section IV (Legal Speaking Needs) came up with the highest composite mean (M = 4.173, SD = 0.671), closely followed by Section I (Legal Writing Needs: M = 4.149, SD = 0.599), Section II (Legal Genre and Accuracy: M = 4.022, SD = 0.762)

Table 2

Section Composite Means, Standard Deviations, and Inter-Item Correlations

Section	Items	M	SD	Inter-item \bar{r}
I: Legal Writing Needs	6	4.149	0.599	.411
II: Legal Genre and Accuracy	4	4.022	0.762	.479
III: Curriculum Adequacy and Training Gap	4	4.018	0.814	.587

IV: Legal Speaking Needs	6	4.173	0.671	.539
All Sections (Overall)	20	4.091	0.541	.443

Note. Inter-item \bar{r} = mean Pearson bivariate correlation among items within section. Overall computed across all 20 items.

The almost equal mean across Sections I, II, III and IV - a difference in scale of only 0.16 points between minimum (Section III: 4.018) and maximum (Section IV: 4.173) - is in itself a substantively significant result: it shows that writing needs, gaps in genre awareness, dissatisfaction with the curriculum, and speaking needs are all at equally high and undifferentiated levels in No sphere of relief exists, all four are seen as understaffed and insufficient in relation to professional requirements at the same time.

Paired-Samples t-Test: Legal Writing vs. Legal Speaking

Table 3 directly compares the comparison of the Section I (Legal Writing) and Section IV (Legal Speaking) composite means by comparing paired samples t-test.

Table 3

Paired-Samples t-Test: Legal Writing Needs vs. Legal Speaking Needs

Comparison	M ₁	M ₂	MD	t	p
Legal Writing vs. Legal Speaking	4.149	4.173	-0.024	-0.448	.656

Note. MD = mean difference (Writing – Speaking). df = 55. Two-tailed significance.

The paired-samples t-test did not indicate any statistically significant difference between Legal Writing (M = 4.149) and Legal Speaking (M = 4.173) section composites (t (55) = -0.448, p = .656). The difference in means was not significant (MD = 0.024), and the lack of significance proves that, at this point of their legal education, final-year GCUF students have writing and speaking needs in the same measure. Another significant curricular implication of this finding is as follows: since the two modalities cannot be prioritised in a remedial legal communication programme, the integrated dual-skills approach of Section 5 should be adopted.

Pearson Bivariate Correlations

Table 4 and Figure 3 present the inter-domain correlation matrix.

Table 4

Pearson Bivariate Correlations Among Section Composites (N = 56)

Section	I: LW	II: LG	III: CA	IV: LS
I: Legal Writing (LW)	—			
II: Legal Genre (LG)	.809**	—		
III: Curriculum Adequacy (CA)	.642**	.564**	—	
IV: Legal Speaking (LS)	.810**	.732**	.599**	—

Note. **p < .001 (two-tailed). Coefficients \geq .80 bolded.

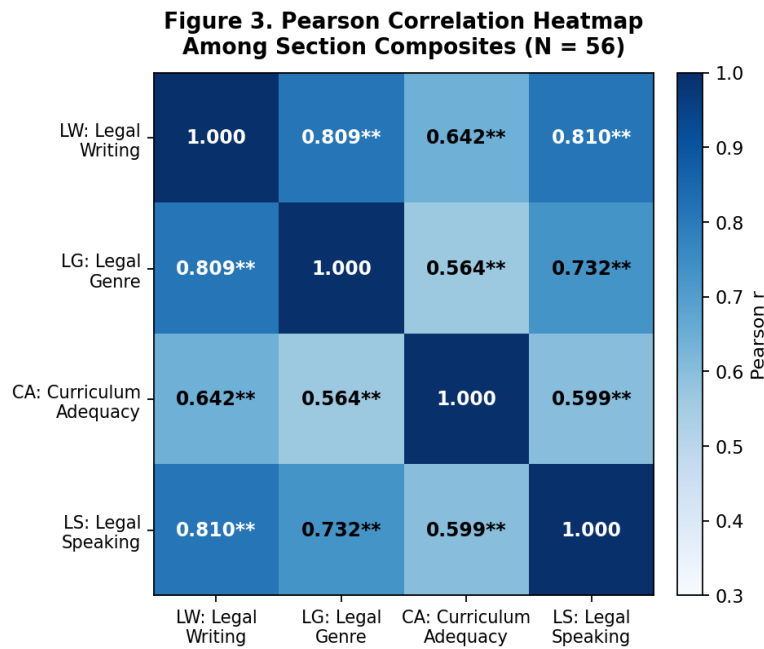


Figure 3. Pearson correlation heatmap among section composites (N = 56). Darker shading = stronger association. ** p < .001.

The six inter-domain correlations were positive and significant at the .001 level. Legal Writing × Legal Speaking (r = .810) and Legal Writing × Legal Genre (r = .809) were the two most significant associations, which exceeded r = .80 - a significance level indicating very strong empirical co-occurrence. The least strong inter-domain correlation was between Legal Genre and Curriculum Adequacy (r = .564), but this is a high correlation by traditional standards. These coefficients prove that oral and written communication needs are not separately distributed among these students: those who show more significant deficits in legal writing also show more significant deficits in speaking, less developed genre awareness, and less satisfied with the provision of the curriculum, and the opposite. The four constructs are an aspect of one integrated gap in legal communication competency.

DISCUSSION

The Urgency and Uniformity of Needs at the Threshold of Practice

The most impressive aspect of the findings is that, all section composite means (four) fall within the range of 4.018 to 4.173 on a five-point scale with an average score of 4.09. These are not simply high means; they point to the fact that close to the whole sample of final-year students, professional legal communication, whether written or oral, is perceived as a field of acute, practice threatening incompetence. The three largest item means (Q20: M = 4.55; Q6: M = 4.50; Q14: M = 4.43) are not deficit items but necessity items -students confirming the professional centrality, as well as the instructional need the very competences they are certain to be deficient in. This is the same trend that Hutchinson and Waters (1987) differentiate as necessities co-occurring with lacks: students are aware of what the target situation requires and at the same time are aware of what is not provided today.

Jamshad et al. (2021) reported this as seen by senior lawyers: The most frequently reported shortcoming of fresh graduates joining practice is English communication. A comparative analysis of law school models in the UK and the US confirmed to Baig (2025) that clinical education, advocacy training and development of professional communication, which are all absent or peripheral in Pakistani LLB programmes are the very elements that yield practice-ready graduates. The current work presents the student-end quantitative complement to these

supervisor and comparative views: 9th Semester students at GCUF are acutely aware and cognizant of what they do not possess. The average of 4.43 on item Q14 (a specialised legal communication course is required; 89.3% Agree+) is a direct, straightforward and statistically sound demand on the part of the learner population to reform the curriculum.

Equal Needs in Writing and Speaking: Implications for Integrated Curriculum Design

The statistically insignificant ($p = .656$) paired t-test result that Legal Writing ($M = 4.149$) and Legal Speaking ($M = 4.173$) have the same need may have been a question of curricular priority. With writing requirements outweighing speaking requirements by a considerable amount, or vice versa, a single-skills remediation plan could have been warranted by curriculum designers. This is not permitted by the data. These two modalities are equally urgent and the extremely high correlation of them ($r = .810$) validates the fact that these two modalities are experientially and empirically one aspect; that students who have difficulties in legal writing have the same problems with legal speaking, at the highest level of competence in the sample.

This observation echoes the argument by Cernovschi (2025) that Communication and Academic Writing builds two types of competence (oral and written) in synergy, where argumentation is the common cognitive base. This synergy was confirmed empirically by Arias Rodríguez and Flórez (2020): the tasks of the analysis of legal cases positively affected written production and oral communication in the same students. Based on ethnographic observation of legal practice, Sinsheimer and Herring (2016) determined the everyday reading-to-write and oral argument tasks of the legal practice to be inseparable in lawyer practice and contended that this practice should be taught in legal schools, and the two should be taught concurrently. In the current research, the Pakistani quantitative data offers the integrated pedagogical stance just like this.

The legal genre and accuracy (Section II: $M = 4.022$) offers the cognitive connection between writing and speaking requirements: genre knowledge - of judgments, contracts, pleadings, notices - is also the subject matter of writing legal competence, and the content matter of the oral legal argument. Kothalawala (2022) established that genre-specific formulaic expressions, legal terminology, and structural patterns are the very competences that make a difference between lawyer writing and student writing; Khaleel and Haladin (2021) established that in Pakistani courtrooms, the lack of competence in the form of proper interpretation of the language due to the lack of adequate genre and terminology command leads to the appearance of hind. The legal genre knowledge curriculum, then, will contribute to writing and speaking competence both at once - in line with the high levels of cross domain correlations and the undifferentiated composite means that were observed in this research.

The Curriculum Gap as a Structural Problem

Section III (Curriculum Adequacy: $M = 4.018$) presents the structural diagnosis behind Sections I, II and IV. Q13 (lack of practical speaking and writing activities in relation to law: $M = 4.00$, 73.2% Agree+) and Q14 (a specialised course is needed: $M = 4.43$, 89.3% Agree+) indicate the gap in the curriculum not as a resource deficiency but as a design - the current general English curriculum, however well taught, is not focused on Reayat et al. (2020) found outdated curricula and ineffective teaching practices as the fundamental issues of Pakistani legal education; Khan et al. (2024) established that the current English courses are deemed to be insufficient by law undergraduates in the country. Ali (2024) suggested flipped classes as a tangible means of reorganizing face-to-face time with specifically the practical speaking and writing exercises that the current study (Section III) shows to be lacking. In the parallel case of university teachers, Masood and Hina (2024) established that development in integrated communication skills should be an active and task based pedagogical format as opposed to the traditional lecture format.

This curriculum gap is not only a question of the quality of education, but it is also a question of the performance of the justice system because the professional environment of Faisalabad alone, in which Abrar et al. (2020) reported that the effectiveness of communication is a predictor of lawyer-client relationship commitment, is the source of the specified gap. Afzal et al. (n.d.) demonstrated that Pakistani legal practice has poor writing, which leads to uneven drafting standards, case preparation delays, and workload burdens. The digital legal tools (like drafting tools with AI assistance and research tools) can be used to complement, but not to replace the underlying legal writing and speaking competence that the respondents of the current study report was not well-developed on the five-year LLB programme.

CONCLUSION

The current research is a quantitative, dual-skilled needs analysis of the final-year LLB student's professional oral and written communication competence at the College of Law, GCUF. Its results are coherent and evident. The needs of final-year students in legal writing and legal speaking - the two main modalities of professional communication of the practising lawyer - are statistically equal, and the perception of the gap in the curriculum and the high demand of a specialist course on legal communication are high. The four domains are highly inter-correlated, which validates the co-constitution of oral and written legal communication competences and the need to teach them in an integrated and holistic way.

To curriculum designers and administrators in the College of Law at GCUF, these findings have three action recommendations. First, an independent module of Legal English Communication needs to be established in the 8th or 9th Semester which combines legal writing and legal speaking in a genre-based task approach. Second, course materials must be based on real Pakistani legal genres - High Court judgments, Pakistani law contracts, legal notices issued under Pakistani legal regimes - as opposed to course materials based on the English or American legal systems. Third, practice production should be the focus of pedagogical techniques: moot court problems, client role-plays, and contract drafting activities, and reflexive pleading writing assignments that build between and reflect on the two modalities.

The small sample size (N = 56) of a single cohort and the locality in the study to only one institute limits the ability to generalise the results to other Pakistani law colleges. The dataset did not have any demographic breakdown variables (gender, CGPA, scholarship track) and thus subgroup analysis was not possible. This design should be replicated in future studies in more semester groups and law colleges on Punjab to accumulate a province-wide evidence base on reform of the legal communication curriculum.

REFERENCES

- Abrar, M., Shabbir, R., Bashir, M., Saqib, S., & Raza, A. (2020). Role of professional service quality and communication effectiveness in predicting relationship commitment among professional-client in lawyer services. *International Review of Management and Marketing*, 10(4), 89.
- Afzal, M., Ali, S., & Ghawaas, H. G. (n.d.). The future of legal practice in Pakistan: Analyzing lawyer challenges and Legal World's role in digitalizing drafting, research, billing, and case management.
- Ahmad, N. (2011). Analyzing the spoken English needs in Pakistani academic legal settings. *Pakistan Journal of Social Sciences*, 31(2), 449–469.
- Ahmad, N. (2012). Legal discourse comprehension analysis in Pakistani academic listening situations. *Pakistan Journal of Social Sciences*, 32(1), 263–282.
- Ali, M. I. (2024). Bridging the gap: Integrating flipped classrooms into legal education in Pakistan. *Journal of Legal Studies "Vasile Goldiș"*, 33(47), 79–98.

- Arias Rodríguez, G. L., & Flórez, R. E. E. (2020). The use of legal cases as a way to enhance law students' cognitive and communicative competences in the English classes. *Argentinian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 8(1).
- Baig, K. (2025). Comparative analysis of legal education models in leading UK and US law schools: Lessons and policy directions for reforming legal education in Pakistan. *Social Science Review Archives*, 3(4), 1412–1422.
- Bartnikaitė, E., & Bijeikienė, V. (2017). Perspectives in Legal English in-service education: Needs analysis in Lithuanian context. *Studies in Logic, Grammar and Rhetoric*, 49(1), 21–35.
- Cernovschi, I. (2025). The role of the discipline 'Communication and Academic Writing' in a lawyer's career.
- Chovancová, B. (2013). Legal minds think alike: Legal English syllabus design and the perceived language needs of present and former students of law. *ACC Journal*, 19(3), 54–60.
- Fatima, T., Ishfaq, H., Saeed, H., & Khan, M. A. (2026). Mobile-assisted legal language learning readiness, beliefs, and aspirations among law students at Government College University Faisalabad, Pakistan. *Journal of Applied Linguistics and TESOL (JALT)*, 9(2), 267–282.
- Fatima, T., Saeed, H., Ishfaq, H., & Khan, M. A. (2026). BRIDGING THE GAP IN LEGAL ENGLISH: AN ESP NEEDS ANALYSIS OF UNDERGRADUATE LAW STUDENTS IN PAKISTAN. *Journal of Applied Linguistics and TESOL (JALT)*, 9(2), 113-127.
- Gajić, T. (2024). Needs analysis in an English for Legal Purposes context: A case study of Serbian law professionals. *Зборник radova Филозофског факултета у Приштини*, 54(3), 117–135.
- Jamshad, J., Javed, M. W., Asghar, M. S., Rasheed, A., & Kareem, N. (2021). Evaluation of fresh law graduates: An empirical study about the legal education system of Pakistan. *Journal of the Research Society of Pakistan*, 58(1).
- Khaleel, B., & Haladin, N. B. B. (2021). The interface between language, crime and law: Discourse analysis of legal drafting in Punjab. In *Virtual Language and Communication Postgraduate International Seminar 2021* (p. 49).
- Khan, M. A., Shah, S. K., & Yasmeen, R. (2024). A Needs Analysis for Developing and Evaluating a Culturally Relevant Mobile-Assisted English Language Teaching (MAELT) Module to Enhance Legal English Proficiency and Critical Thinking Skills in Pakistani Law Undergraduates. *Migration Letters*, 21(S3), 1915-1940.
- Kothalawala, C. (2022). Differences in the lexico-grammatical features of legal letters of demand written by lawyers and students. *Sri Lanka Journal of Education*.
- Malik, D. A. S., Sohail, M. M., Javed, M. N., & Mahmood, M. A. (2021). The importance and implication of communication competence and level of satisfaction for lawyer-client interaction in court cases.
- Masood, N., & Hina, Q. A. (2024). Communication skills among prospective teachers: A need analysis for 21st Century university teachers in Islamabad, Pakistan. *Journal of Humanities, Social and Management Sciences (JHSMS)*, 5(1), 109–121.
- Naveed, M. A., & Shah, N. A. (2023). Information literacy in the legal workplace: Current state of lawyers' skills in Pakistan. *Journal of Librarianship and Information Science*, 55(2), 334–347.
- Rasool, A., & Dayan, F. (2023). Submit, defend, and persuade: The renaissance of eloquence and communication skills for lawyers. *Global Legal Studies Review*, 8(3), 9–19.
- Reayat, N., Shah, A., & Ali, S. S. (2020). The problems of legal education in Pakistan: Teaching and learning, curriculum, and assessment methods. *International Review*, 9(4), 357–368.
- Riaz, E., Zahra, R., Nawaz, S., & Khan, M. A. (2026). THE CURRICULUM GAP IN ALLIED HEALTH ENGLISH EDUCATION: A PROGRAMME-DIFFERENTIATED ANALYSIS OF ESP NECESSITY,

INSTRUCTIONAL LACK, AND LEARNING DEMAND AMONG PAKISTANI HEALTH SCIENCES STUDENTS. *Journal of Applied Linguistics and TESOL (JALT)*, 9(2), 68-86.

Sadia, T., Hassan, I., Nawaz, S., & Khan, M. A. (2026). Necessities, Lacks, and Wants in Allied Health Education: An ESP Needs Analysis of English Language Learning Priorities among Pakistani Health Sciences Students. *ASSAJ*, 5(2), 223-240.

Singh, M. K. (2015). A needs analysis of the written communication — What say the lawyers? *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*.

Sinsheimer, A., & Herring, D. J. (2016). Lawyers at work: A study of the reading, writing, and communication practices of legal professionals. *Legal Writing: Journal of the Legal Writing Institute*, 21, 63.