

AN INQUIRE INTO THE FACTORS THAT AFFECT SAUDI FEMALE STUDENTS' MOTIVATION ON LEARNING ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

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ABSTRACT

Motivation has been widely accepted by both teachers and researchers as one of the key factors that influence the rate and success of second/foreign language (L2) learning (Dörnyei (1998)). This article investigates the internal and the external factors that affect Saudi female students' motivation on learning English as a foreign Language. The participants of this study were 56 female preparatory year students who study English as a foreign language during the second semester of the academic year 2015/2016 at Tabuk University. The instrument of the study was a questionnaire comprised of 14 items. The questionnaire is divided into 2 investigated areas. The first area of the questionnaire investigates the internal factors that affect Saudi female students' motivation on learning English as a foreign Language while the second one investigated the external ones. The data of the students' answers were collected via emails. The descriptive statistics of percentages were used to analyze these quantitative data which were basically derived from the questionnaire. The study revealed the following external factors as effective factors on students' motivation : arousal of curiosity, optimal degree of challenge, personal relevance, anticipated value of outcomes, intrinsic value attributed to the activity, ability to set appropriate goals ,feelings of competence ,personal definitions and judgments of success and failure ,attitudes to language learning in general, anxiety and fear. The study also reveals the following external factors: the significant of parents, teachers and peers, the nature of interaction with significant others, the learning environment, and the broader learning context.

Keywords: Factors Affecting Students' Motivation, Saudi Students' Motivation, Second Language Learning.

INTRODUCTION

Building up learners' motivation towards learning is thought to be a standout amongst the essential issues that ought to be considered when examining variables influencing the educating learning process. Winne and Marx (1989) note that motivation and attitudes are both conditions for, and consequences of, compelling direction; along these lines, studies were led in different instructive fields to inspect systems and strategies that could add to building up learners' states of mind towards learning. Gardner and Lambert (1972) accentuate that, in spite of the fact that language aptitude represents an impressive extent of individual variability in language learning accomplishment; motivational variables can abrogate the bent impact. In certain environments situations, as Gardner and Lambert call attention to, where the social setting requests it (e.g. at the point when the LI is a nearby vernacular and the L2 is the national language), numerous individuals appear to give a L2, respect less of their bent contrasts. "Motivation represents one of the most appealing, yet complex variables used to explain individual differences in language learning" (MacIntyre et al. 2001, p. 462). Motivation plays assumes a huge part in the process of learning a language. Language teachers cannot viably educate a language on the off chance that they don't comprehend the relationship amongst motivation and its impact on language learning. The center of

motivation is what might be called passion, which identifies with a man's natural objectives and goals. Johnstone (1999, p. 146), considers motivation as a stimulant for accomplishing a particular target. Similarly, according to Ryan & Deci (2000), to be motivated means to progress or to be in motion to do something. Successful learners know their inclinations, their qualities and shortcomings, and successfully use qualities and adjust for shortcomings. Successful language learning connected to the learner's enthusiasm. Teachers ought to discover approaches to interface with this passion. There are numerous courses in which educators can help their learners keep up an abnormal state of motivation. For instance, Murcia et al. (2008) trust that imaginative situations - where learners are permitted to settle on their own choices - ought to build their motivation. Educators are consequently prescribed to present errands that require basic speculation and inventive use of the educated material. So also, Chen and Brown (2012), and Nicholls (1983) notice that assignment based learning ought to increment levels of motivation. Assignment based language instructing (TBLT) makes learning significant and students pick up a feeling of capability. Chen and Brown also accept that the rise of the web can be deciphered into more risks for language learners to compose for a genuine gathering of people. Pae (2008) adds different proposals that make the classroom spurring, including giving important criticism a steady classroom environment and intuitive undertakings.

What is Motivation?

Cheery (2015) defines motivation as “the process that initiates, guides, and maintains goal-oriented behaviors. Motivation is what causes us to act, whether it is getting a glass of water to reduce thirst or reading a book to gain knowledge.” The development of communicative skills can only take place if learners have the motivation and opportunity to express their own identity and relate with the people around them (Littlewood, 1981). Wlodowski explains motivation as “the processes that can (a) arouse and instigate behavior, (b) give direction or purpose to behavior, (c) continue to allow behavior to persist, and (d) lead to choosing or preferring a particular behavior .” (1985, p. 2). Wikipedia says : "motivation is the inner power or energy that pushes one toward performing a certain action. Motivation strengthens the ambition, increases initiative and gives direction, courage, energy and the persistence to follow one's goals."

Kinds of Motivation

Positive Motivation versus Negative Motivation

Positive Motivation

Positive motivation makes students willing to do their performance in the best way they can and improve their performance. Positive motivations offer some reward to students to act in the desired manner. It is, indeed, a tool of creating an interest in the mind of the students for better performance so as to reach the attainment of organization goals. Positive motivations are, thus, the process of attempting to influence the behaviors of students through the means of reward. It is concerned with the incentives provided to the students. Such incentive may include in rewards and marks.

Negative Motivation

Negative motivation means the act of forcing students to perform by means of threats and punishment. Sometimes must initiates some against students with a view to discouraging them understand behavior and encouraging positive behavior. It is the negative treatment

exercise on the students who are not performing their work as expected. Provisions relating to house points deduction, group transfer, etc. are few examples of negative motivations.

Internal Motivation versus External Motivation

Intrinsic Motivation

According to Wikipedia: internal motivation is the students' self-desire to seek out new things and new challenges, to analyze one's capacity, to observe and to gain knowledge. It is driven by an interest or enjoyment in the task itself, and exists within the students rather than relying on external pressures or a desire for reward. Students who are Internally motivated are more likely to engage in the task willingly as well as work to improve their skills, which will increase their capabilities. Students are likely to be Internally motivated if they:

- Attribute their educational results to factors under their own control, also known as autonomy or locus of control.
- Believe they have the skills to be effective agents in reaching their desired goals, also known as self-efficacy beliefs.
- Are interested in mastering a topic, not just in achieving good grades.

External Motivation

According to Wikipedia: external motivation refers to the students' performance of an activity in order to attain the desired outcome and it is the opposite of internal motivation. External motivation comes from influences outside of the individual. In external motivation, the harder questions to answer common external motivations are reward (for example money or grades) for showing the desired behavior and the threat of punishment following misbehavior. Competition is an extrinsic motivator because it encourages the students to win and to beat others, not simply to enjoy the intrinsic rewards of the activity.

What Are The Factors That Affect Motivation?

As cited in Howey (2016) the following factors affect students' motivation:
Internal factors:

- Intrinsic Goal Orientation is having a goal orientation toward an academic task that indicates the students' participation in the task is an end all to itself rather than participation being a means to an end.
- Extrinsic Goal Orientation concerns the degree to which students perceive themselves to be participating in a task for reasons such as grades, rewards, performance evaluation of others and competition (Garcia, McKeachie, Pintrich, & Smith, 1991).
- Task Value refers to students' evaluation of how interesting, how important, and how useful the task is. High task should lead to more involvement in learning. Task value refers to the students' perceptions of the course material in terms of interest, importance, and utility (Garcia et al., 1991).
- Self-Efficacy for Learning and Performance comprises two aspects of expectancy: expectancy for success and self-efficacy. Expectancy for success refers to performance expectations, and relates specifically to task performance. Self-efficacy is a self appraisal of one's ability to accomplish a task and one's confidence in possessing the skills needed to perform that task (Garcia et al. 1991).

- Test Anxiety has been found to be negatively related to expectancies as well as to academic performance. Test anxiety is thought to have two components: a worry, or cognitive component, and an emotional component. The worry component refers to students' negative thoughts that disrupt performance, whereas the emotionality component refers to affective and physiological arousal aspects of anxiety. Cognitive component and preoccupation with performance have been found to be the greatest sources of performance decrement. Training in the use of effective learning strategies and test-taking skills should help reduce the degree of anxiety (Garcia et al., 1991).

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Learning a foreign language takes time and dedication. Norton (2000) indicates that when people learn a language, they are investing in an identity as speakers of that language. Learners invest in a second language in the hopes of gaining access to resources such as education, friendship, and money. The degree of L2 learning is a reflection of the degree of investment (Norton, 2000). The English language has achieved a global status. Many countries give English a special role in their communities. Factors affecting learning English as a second language were the subject of many educational papers. Oxford (1994) mentions that motivated individuals show favorable attitudes toward learning a language. In fact, logic dictates that unless students are willing to carry on learning the new language, chances of success will be very limited. Falk (1978: 4) on the other hand, states that "It is thought that students who are most successful in learning a target language (TL) are those who like the people that speak the language, admire their culture, or have a desire to become familiar with or even integrate into the society in which the language is used." Ahmadi (2011) investigates the impact of integrative and instrumental motivation on Iranian EFL learners' language learning. The research examined both male and female learners using Gardner and Lambert's (1959) "integrative and instrumental motivation" model in order to achieve the desired results. Sixteen items were selected from Gardner and Lambert's model. They were distributed among students for testing. Results indicated that female students have stronger integrative motivation than instrumental motivation and male students have stronger instrumental motivation than integrative motivation.

Findings will provide a better understanding of the theoretical and practical facets for teachers. Al samadani, Ibnian (2015) conduct a study aimed to explore the motivation of Umm Al-Qura University students (Al-Qunfudah branch) towards learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL), as well as to study factors affecting their motivation towards learning EFL. The study also investigated the relationship between the students' motivation and their grade point average (GPA). The researchers designed a questionnaire to measure the students' motivation towards learning EFL. The researchers also interviewed a number of English major students to explore the factors that affect their motivation towards learning EFL. The sample of their study consisted of 112 English major students from Umm Al-Qura University / Al-Qunfudah branch. The students were randomly chosen from different levels (second, third and fourth year students), and the results of the study showed that the students are highly motivated towards learning EFL. The results also indicated that students with high GPAs have the highest motivation towards learning English, followed by the medium GPA students and finally the low GPA students. Alkaff (2013) conducted a study to explore the attitudes and perceptions of Foundation Year (FY) students towards learning English, at the English Language Institute (ELI) of King Abdulaziz University (KAU) in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. After the selection of a random sample of 47 female students of levels 3 and 4 (pre-intermediate and intermediate levels), representing the majority of the students during the

time of the study, a questionnaire was developed and the students' responses were tabulated and analyzed. The study showed that most students have a positive attitude towards learning English and that they try to improve their English knowledge and use, even though there are many demands on their time and few opportunities to practice their English. Qashoa (2006) conducted a study to examine Dubai's secondary school students' instrumental and integrative motivation for learning English. The study also aimed at recognizing the factors affecting learners' motivation. A questionnaire and interviews were employed. The sample for the questionnaire consisted of 100 students. For the interviews, on the other hand, the sample included 20 students: 10 Arab English teachers and 3 supervisors. The findings showed that students have a higher degree of instrumentality than integrativeness. Additionally, the results indicated that difficulties with the subject (English) aspects, such as vocabulary, structures and spelling, were found to be the most de-motivating factors for the students.

METHODOLOGY

Aim of the study

This study aims to investigate the internal and the external factors that affect Saudi female students' motivation on learning English as a foreign Language.

Question of the study

- 1- What are the external factors that affect Saudi female students' motivation on learning English as a foreign Language ?
- 2- What are the internal factors that affect Saudi female students' motivation on learning English as a foreign Language ?

Sample of the Study

The participants of this study were 56 female preparatory year students who study English as a foreign language during the second semester of the academic year 2015/2016 at Tabuk University.

Instrument of the Study

To achieve the purpose of the study, a comprised of 14 items questionnaire was used to collect the needed data. The questionnaire is divided into 2 investigated areas. The first area of the questionnaire investigates external factors that affect Saudi female students' motivation on learning English as a foreign Language while the second one investigated the internal factors that affect Saudi female students' motivation on learning English as a foreign Language. (See appendix A).

Research Procedure

After developing the questionnaires, the researcher asked some colleges for their comments on the questionnaire to validate it. Then the questionnaire was revised depending on their comments. During May and June 2016 fifty-six sheets of the questionnaire were delivered to 56 preparatory year English students at Tabuk via Email. The Emails also provided the students with the needed explanations about both the purpose of the study and instructions of how to answer it to avoid any misunderstandings.

Data Collection

The researcher herself spread the questionnaires among the sample subjects and recollects them via emails. The data was arranged in the diagram form and percentage of each frequency was calculated.

Data Analysis Procedure

This study produced a quantitative type of data. The descriptive statistics of percentages were used to analyze these quantitative data which were basically derived from the questionnaire.

Results, Discussion and Application

This part of the study is devoted to analyzing the data related to the two research questions:

- 1- What are the internal factors that affect Saudi female students' motivation on learning English as a foreign Language?
- 2- What are the external factors that affect Saudi female students' motivation on learning English as a foreign Language?

The First Question

In order to investigate the internal factors that affect Saudi female students' motivation on learning English as a foreign Language, the researcher scores for the percentage of the student' answers per each item of the first area of the questionnaire.

The First Area of the Questionnaire

The first area investigated the internal factors that affect Saudi female students' motivation on learning English as a foreign. See table 1 for details.

Internal Factors	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
arousal of curiosity	3.5%	19.64%	8.92%	30.35%	35.71%
optimal degree of challenge	1.7%	8.92%	10,71%	48.21%	28.57%
personal relevance	8.92%	14.28%	12.5%	41.07%	19.64%
anticipated value of outcomes	5.35%	19.64%	16.07%	37.5%	21.42%
intrinsic value attributed to the activity	10.71%	19.64%	14.28 %	25%	30.35%
ability to set	17.85%	19.64%	14.28%	26.78%	19.64%

appropriate goals					
feelings of competence	8.92%	23%	10.7%	42%	14.28%
personal definitions and judgments of success and failure	10.7,%	3.5%	21.42%	21.42%	41.07%
Attitudes to language learning in general	14.28%	25%	12.5 %	17.85%	30.35%
Anxiety and fear	3.5%	8.92%	21.42%	30.35%	35.71%

Table 1: factors that affect Saudi female students' motivation on learning English as a foreign

As Table 1 shows that 35.71% of the students strongly agree that the "arousal of curiosity" affect their motivation while only 3,5 % of them see the opposite . 48.21% of the students confirm the importance of the "optimal degree of challenge" as a motivating factor in learning English as a foreign language while 1.7 % of them strongly disagree with the same item. 41.07% of students consider the "personal relevance" whereas 8.92% of them strongly disagree with the same factor. 37.5% of the students agree that the factor "anticipated value of outcomes" affect their motivation toward learning English as a second language still 5.35% of them see the opposite. When it comes to the "intrinsic value attributed to the activity", 30.35% of the students chose the criteria strongly agree to express their believe in this factor while 10.71% of them strongly disagree with the same factor. The factor "ability to set appropriate goals" is considered by 26.78% of the students though 17.85% of them set this factor aside. "Feelings of competence" seems to be an affected factor since it is considered by 42% of the students comparing with 8.92% of them who refused it. 41.07% of the students confirm the "personal definitions and judgments of success and failure" as an inflectional factor, though 10.7% of them had a different point of view. When asked students about the importance of their "attitudes to language learning in general" 30.35% of them agree upon the importance of this factor while 14.28% did not consider this factor at all. "Anxiety and fear" as an effective factor in learning English as a foreign language are considered by 35.71% of the students whereas 3.5% of them sat this factor aside. See table 1 for more details .

The Second Question

The second question of the study investigates the external factors that affect Saudi female students' motivation on learning English as a foreign Language .See table 2 for details.

External Factors	Strongly disagree	disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Significant of parents, teachers and peers.	3.5%	19.64%	8.92%	30.35%	35.71%

The nature of interaction with significant others: mediated learning experiences ,the nature and amount of feedback ,rewards the nature and amount of appropriate praise punishment and sanctions.	1.7%	8.92%	10,71%	48.21%	28.57%
The learning environment: Comfort, resources time of day, week, year size of class and school.	8.92%	14.28%	12.5%	41.07%	19.64%
The broader context: wider family networks, the local education system, conflicting interest, cultural norms and societal expectations and attitudes.	5.35%	19.64%	16.07%	37.5%	21.42%

Table 2: external factors that affect Saudi female students' motivation on learning English as a foreign Language

35.71% of the students agree upon the "significant of parents, teachers and peers" as an important factor that affects their learning of English as a foreign language while 3.5% set this factor aside. 48.21% of the students agree that "The nature of interaction with significant others: mediated learning experiences ,the nature and amount of feedback ,rewards the nature and amount of appropriate praise punishment and sanctions " is an important factor while 10.71% of them strongly disagree with the same criteria. 41.07% of the students assure the "the learning environment: comfort, resources time of day, week, year size of the class and school" as an important factor that affects their motivation toward learning English as a foreign language while 8.92% of them set this factor aside. See table 2 for more details.

CONCLUSION

This study aims to investigate the internal and the external factors that affect Saudi female students' motivation on learning English as a foreign Language. To achieve this aim, the researcher spread a 14- item questionnaire among 56 female preparatory year English students. The descriptive statistics of percentages were used to analyze the quantitative data which was basically derived from the questionnaire. The results of the study revealed that the following internal and the external factors affect Saudi female students' motivation on learning English as a foreign Language:

1- Internal Factors

1. Arousal of curiosity
2. Optimal degree of challenge
3. Personal relevance
4. Anticipated value of outcomes
5. Intrinsic value attributed to the activity
6. Ability to set appropriate goals
7. Feelings of competence
8. Personal definitions and judgments of success and failure
9. Attitudes to language learning in general
10. Anxiety, fear

2- External Factors

1. Significant of parents, teachers and peers.
2. The nature of interaction with significant others: mediated learning experiences, the nature and amount of feedback, rewards the nature and amount of appropriate praise punishment and sanctions. The learning environment: Comfort, resources time of day, week, year size of class and school
3. The learning environment: Comfort, resources time of day, week, year size of the class and school.
4. The broader context: wider family networks, the local education system, conflicting interest, cultural norms and societal expectations and attitudes.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1- Teaching programs must be dependable and enhance students' integrative motivation so as to help them improve their enthusiasm for investing energy and applying exertion on learning outside the customary limits of the classroom.
- 2- Teachers of English have to employ interactive tasks to help students ease their anxiety. This could also result in students building a positive motivation toward learning English as a foreign language.
- 3- The learning environment plays a core role in helping students building a positive motivation toward learning English.
- 4- Students' beliefs about learning in the context of a foreign language could highly affect their motivation toward learning it.
- 5- The whole educational environment should present the proper teaching materials and contents that suit the students' motivational orientations.

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