

## L2 Motivational Selves of Saudi Preparatory Year EFL Learners: A Quantitative Study

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### Abstract

The study examined the English language learning motivation of Saudi preparatory year EFL learners in higher education institutions in the western coastal city of Yanbu Al-Sinaiya in Saudi Arabia. The current study is significant as so far only one study, investigating the language learning motivational selves of Saudi students, exists. The current study used Dornyei's L2 Motivational Self System as a theoretical frame work. Data was collected through a questionnaire and subjected to principal component analysis (PCA) and regression analysis. PCA revealed seven salient components of motivation of the preparatory year students. Language learning environment and experience emerged as the strongest predictor of inducing English language learning effort.

*Keywords:* Attitudes, EFL, L2 Motivational Self, language learning, motivation,

## Introduction

For more than five decades Gardner's theory of integrative motivation has been the dominant approach to understanding second language learning motivation. However, due to changing global scenario and evolving multicultural identities, the theory was found lacking in explanation for English language learning motivation in a globalized world with English as its lingua franca. Dornyei (2009) tried to bridge the gap by presenting his L2 Motivational Self System (L2MSS). The system was validated through studies in several EFL contexts. However, more research is advocated to "clearly define what is appropriately conceptualized as a possible L2 self" and to discover "the different cross cultural meaning of the self" (MacIntyre, Mackinon and Clement, 2009, p. 50, 54). The current paper aims at presenting an attempt exploring L2 motivational self in Saudi context. The aim of the study, reported in this paper, is to investigate the L2 motivational self profile of the Saudi preparatory year students in L2MSS perspective. An additional aim was to discover strong predictors of L2 motivation for this population. Data was collected through an adapted questionnaire and was subjected to the statistical procedures of principal component analysis and stepwise multiple regression analysis. Factor analysis revealed seven salient components of motivation; namely, attitude towards learning English, attitude towards L2 people and culture, instrumentality-promotion, value of studying English, instrumentality-prevention, parental encouragement and English anxiety. Attitude towards learning English was discovered to be the strongest predictor of motivation among this group of research participants.

## Literature Review

L2 Motivation is "the extent to which an individual works or strives to learn the language because of a desire to do so and the satisfaction experienced in this activity" (Gardner, 1985, p.10). The affective factor of motivation is "often seen as the key learner variable because without it nothing happens" (Cohen & Dornyei, 2002, p.172). Corder (cited in Dornyei, 2009, p.1) goes to the extent of saying, "given motivation, it is inevitable that a human being will learn a second language if he is exposed to the language data". The implication is that motivation is the controlling power and impetus behind second or foreign language learning behaviour (Dornyei, 1998), and probably also that motivation can be the determining factor in successful or unsuccessful language learning. Oxford and Shearin (1994) suggest that actions required by the learners for success in L2 acquisition are directly influenced by motivation. The crucial role of motivation in L2 acquisition can also be highlighted by the fact that motivation has been termed as an indicator of learners' future success in the language they learn. Probably, motivation can influence all aspects of the learning engagement and action. Dornyei (2005) sums up the significant role of motivation in the following way:

It [Motivation] provides the primary impetus to initiate L2 learning and later the driving force to sustain the long and often tedious learning process; indeed, all the other factors involved in SLA presuppose motivation to some extent. Without sufficient motivation, even individuals with the most remarkable abilities cannot accomplish long-term goals, and neither are appropriate curricula and good teaching enough on their own to ensure student achievement. On the other hand, high motivation can make up for considerable deficiencies both in one's language aptitude and learning conditions. (p.65)

Thus, motivation can rightly be termed as a central factor influencing second language learning and one of the most important individual differences (Dornyei, 2010). Understanding this significant individual difference can lead to the teacher's ability to enhance learners' motivation and resultantly learners' achievement in their language acquisition.

Owing to the abovementioned essential role of motivation in language acquisition, substantial research has been dedicated to investigating and developing the concept of L2 motivation (Dornyei, 2010), rather motivation has been a dominant research area in second language acquisition since 1960s (Ushioda & Dornyei, 2012). The research in the area, during these decades, can be divided in three phases (Dornyei & Ushioda, 2011), and the researchers and theorists adapted different approaches to understand and explain the concept. The most influential of these approaches was the social-psychological approach of Gardner and Lambert. The approach placed motivation at the heart of second language acquisition. The main tenet of the approach is that one learns a second language to "come closer to the other language community" (Gardner, 2001, p5). The tenet has been termed as integrativeness. Gardner (2001) defined integrativeness as:

Integrativeness reflects a genuine interest in learning the second language in order to come closer to the other language community. At one level, this implies an openness, and respect for other culture groups and way of life. In the extreme, this might involve complete identification with the community (and possibly even withdrawal from one's original group but more commonly it might well involve integration within both communities. (p.5)

The definition suggests that learning a second language is directed by the learner's need of a 'psychological and emotional identification' (Dornyei & Csizer, 2002, p.453) with the target language community. The process of identification may involve relinquishing previous identity by the learner that the learner possessed by virtue of being the members of his/her L1 community. The concept of integrativeness attributes attitude towards the target language community as an important factor in successful acquisition and learning of a foreign or second language (Ushioda & Dornyei, 2012). The learner is interested both in the target language group and their culture, and also their speech behaviour (Dornyei 2010). The willingness to learn the language springs from this interest and also from the desire to assimilate in the target language community. The attitude towards the target language community and their culture can influence the attitude towards learning the language of the target group. "The learner's ethnocentric tendencies and his attitudes toward the members of the other group are believed to determine how successful he will be, relatively, in learning the new language." (Gardner & Lambert, 1972, p.3)

Despite its pioneering nature, Gardner's social-psychological approach to motivation has not been without criticism. The studies, which were foundational to informing Gardner's approach, had mainly been conducted in the Canadian socio-educational environment. The society has the existence of an L2 or target language community and any learner has ample opportunities to communicate with the members of the L2 community; the need for integrating in this community is quite distinct. However, these features of a society, where L2 community and wider opportunities of communicating and interacting with the members of the L2 community are present, do not exist in EFL situations. The situations are characterized by teaching a target

language to the learners ‘without any direct contact’ with the members of the L2 community (Dornyei, 2009, p.24), and if a need to integrate exists, it exists more for the teachers coming from the L2 community rather than the foreign language learners. For example, native teachers of English, living abroad and teaching their L1 as a foreign language to the learners in that country, are probably more in need to integrate with their learners and the society of the learners as the dominant community is the community of the learners. Then, in most of the EFL situations, the contact of the learners with the target language is limited to the boundaries of the classroom only, and they predominantly use their L1 outside the classroom. Hence, in such foreign language learning situations, the concept of integrativeness as a desire to “learn more about the language group” and “a willingness to be like valued members of the language community” (Gardner & Lambert, 1959 in Dornyei & Ushioda, 2009 ) does not hold any ground in the changing modern day global world.

Additionally, in the changing linguistic scenario of a global society, the idea of English language belonging to a particular group or people is changing (Dornyei & Ushioda, 2009). English language has evolved as a global and international language, and associating or affiliating the language with a particular cultural group has probably lost its validity (Dornyei, 2005). Smith (cited in Coetzee-Van Rooy, 2006) opines that the ownership of English can lie with anyone in a global world, and to make this claim of ownership to the language one needs not to adopt the identity of the members of the Anglophone societies, and also that knowledge or understanding of the native speaker culture is no more an imperative for being a proficient user of English. The reason, for Smith’s claim, lies in the fact that due to the development of the international ownership of English, the distinction between L1 and L2 communities of English speakers is becoming extinct (Lamb, 2013). English can now be identified with ‘an amorphous imagined community of the international English language users’ (ibid, p.1000) and not with a geographically or culturally distinct group. The perspective of globalization, in which English does not belong to any clear geographically or culturally restricted group, invalidates the concept of integrativeness as a desire to identify with the target language community. Coetzee-Van Rooy (2006) criticizes this concept of integrativeness as a simplistic view of identity and is of the opinion that such a view is based on “incorrect assumptions made about the sociolinguistic contexts of many learners of English as a second language across the world” (p.441). The phrase ‘incorrect assumptions’ is referring to the idea embedded in the concept of integrativeness that learners learn English because of their interest in the target language community or owing to their desire to be like the members of that community. The situation may be contrary. In a globalized world, with English as its lingua franca, the learners may learn English “to communicate to the rest of the world their identity, culture, politics, religion and way of life” without any intention “to be like a native speaker of English” (Smith cited in Coetzee-Van Rooy, 2006, p.441, 442). The interest and learning of English may be a result of the desire of the learners ‘to be identified with either more educated and cosmopolitan members of one’s own group’ (Lamb, 2013, p.1000) or because of the learner’s “interest in foreign or international affairs, willingness to go overseas to stay or work, readiness to interact with intercultural partners, and... openness to non-ethnocentric attitude towards different cultures” (Yashima, 2002, p.57).

The perspective presented above necessitates reconceptualization of language learning motivation in a way as to account for the complexities existing in English language learning

contexts in a global world. Integrativeness cannot, probably, be presented as a valid reason or motive for learning English language because there is an absence of interest in the target language community and also a lack of the desire to identify or assimilate in the target language community. Rather, the learner may be learning English language as a result of “an internal process of identification within the individual’s self-concept” (Ushioda, 2006, p.150). Dornyei (2009) tried to bridge this gap by presenting his model of L2 motivational Self System (L2MSS). The system also tries to account for the internal processes of identification of the learners. The underlying idea of the system is that “the motivationally important identifications are not with others but with future versions of the self” (Lamb, 2013, p.1000). Dornyei’s model is based on Higgins’ (1987) theory of self-discrepancy and Markus and Nurius (1986) concept of possible selves. Markus and Nurius (1986) described possible selves as a “type of self-knowledge” which “pertains to how individuals think about their future. Possible selves are the ideal selves that we would very much like to become. They are also the selves we could become, and the selves we are afraid of becoming. The possible selves that are hoped for might include the successful self, the creative self, the rich self, or the loved and admired self, whereas the dreaded possible selves could be alone self, the depressed self, the incompetent self, the alcoholic self, the unemployed self, or the bag lady self” (Markus & Nutius, 1986, p.954). Higgins (1987) presents two aspects of possible self: ideal self and ought to self. Ideal self is what people hope or wish to become, and ought-to self is what a person wish to become as a result of the influences of the “significant others” (Higgins, 1987, p.320) like parents, teacher, or friends and peers. These possible selves provide a reason for motivated behaviours, that is, a person may act either to achieve the hoped for self or to avoid becoming the dreaded self. Motivation results when a person tries to bridge the gap between one’s current self and the self the person wants to be or would avoid to become.

Dornyei (2009) based his model of L2MSS on these two frameworks of possible selves. L2 Motivational Self System has three aspects: the ideal L2 self, ought-to L2 self and L2 learning experience. The ideal L2 self, in the case of foreign language learning motivation, is “the L2-specific aspect of one’s ideal self” (ibid, p.106). Ideal L2 self represents an internal image of the target language user which a learner aspires to be in future. Thus, if the image represents an L2 speaker, who is benefitting from the technological advances of the modern world because of the target language skills, the learner would aspire to learn the target language to be akin to the ideal or this internal image of a target language speaker, and this may result in motivation to learn the language. The second aspect of L2MSS, the ought-to self represents those duties, responsibilities and obligations which the learner has to fulfil in order to meet the expectations of the people around him/her. The learner, while aspiring to fulfil these duties and responsibilities, aims at preventing the negative outcomes like not meeting the expectations of parents or teachers. Simply put, this aspect represents the “attributes that one believes one ought to possess” (Dornyei, 2005, p.105). The third aspect of L2MSS is the L2 learning experience. The construct represents the attitude of the learner towards the target language, and the attitude is subject to influence by the learning environment or experience. Thus, the third aspect can also be termed as situation-specific motives rooted in the learning environment and experience (ibid).

Dornyei’s L2MSS has been praised for being a more education-relevant framework, having foundation in the already existing approaches to motivation, having the potential to explain the complex concept of language learning motivation, and at the same time

reconceptualising the concept of integrativeness for a multicultural and multilingual globalized world (MacIntyre, Mackinnon and Clement, 2009). The model has also been subjected to empirical tests to validate it and also to find a correlation between the socio-psychological model of Gardner and L2MSS. Studies were conducted in diverse EFL environment. Taguchi conducted a study in Japanese context. Magid conducted an investigation in Chinese context, and Papi investigated the L2MSS of Iranian context. The findings of all three studies were reported in a joint paper (Taguchi, et al., 2009). Ryan (2009) conducted a research based on L2MSS in Japanese context. All these studies discovered evidence of validity for the model in their contexts. Csizer and Kormos (2009) validated the model in Hungarian context. They compared the motivational and attitudinal behaviour of secondary school and university students. They found ideal L2 self and language learning experience as the best predictor of motivated behaviour. Kromos, Kiddle & Kizer (2011) conducted a study in Chile on a diverse population of EFL learners including school students, university students and young adult learners. The study confirmed that self-related beliefs play a role in language learning motivation. The most important finding of the study was the students' desire for integration in international culture and they looked at English language as a mean to this integration. The other important factors contributing to the motivated learning behaviour were immediate learning environment and family support. Kim (2012) investigated L2MSS of Korean EFL students and discovered that the model was more suitable for explaining the L2 motivation of Korean students as compared to Gardner's model due to changing educational context resulting from globalization. Kim discovered that L2 motivation was significantly correlated to promotion and prevention based instrumentalities, thus, partially validating L2MSS model. Lamb (2013) investigated L2 motivation in Indonesian settings. Lamb discovered that positive learning experience was the strongest predictor of motivated language behaviour among rural group of participants, whereas among the urban group L2 self was the strongest predictor.

Most of the above mentioned studies discovered that Ideal L2 self can be taken as an:

equivalent to integrativeness, strengthening the argument that integrativeness is simply a local manifestation of a much more complex, powerful construct, [.....]. What has been identified as integrativeness in numerous studies is simply one of a much greater whole. [.....] Integrativeness may indeed exist in many contexts but it does so as part of a broader L2 self concept. (Ryan, 2009, p.137)

MacIntyre et al. (2009) is of the opinion that whereas L2MSS contributed to broadening the idea of L2 learning motivation and also has the potential to effectively predict motivated behaviour, there has not been enough research based on the model. The scenario is true of Saudi Arabia and especially of the research on the motivation of Saudi preparatory year students. Only one published research, by Al-Sheri (2009), could be discovered using L2MSS framework in the Saudi context. However, the participants of his study were not exclusively Saudi students. The participants were a mix of Saudi and non-Saudi UK-based Arab students. Further, Al-Sheri did not report the findings population wise; therefore, the study is not very helpful in deriving conclusions about the motivational orientations of the Saudi students (Weger, 2013). Thus, there is a need to investigate L2 motivational orientations of an exclusive group of Saudi students within the framework of L2MSS to explore how the Saudi preparatory year students conceptualize their L2 selves. Further, as MacIntyre et al., (2009) expressed the need for more research to help shaping a clearer approach to the meanings of possible L2 selves and how

culture affect these meanings, there is a need to understand how Saudi students conceptualize their L2 motivational selves in their particular educational, social and cultural context. The study is conducted with the aim of achieving these ends. The research questions for this study are:

- 1: What are the significant factors of L2 motivation self of Saudi preparatory year students?
- 2: Which of these factors are the best predictors of L2 motivation?

## Method

### *Participants*

The participants of the research were Saudi preparatory year students of three Saudi higher education institutions in a western coastal city of Saudi Arabia. Preparatory year students are higher secondary school graduates with an age range of eighteen to twenty, and they have to complete a foundational year study before embarking on their undergraduate study. The aim of the preparatory year study is to equip the students with academic and linguistic skills to enable them to cope with the demands of the university study. The main thrust of the preparatory year study is to enhance students' English language proficiency as the medium of instruction in the undergraduate study is English (Yushau & Omar, 2006). Thus, the students have to undergo an intensive English language instruction generally for two semesters (in some cases for three semesters if the students' proficiency level is too low). These semesters are labelled as English 000, English 001, and English 002. Students with beginners or low beginners level join English 000, and are expected to achieve elementary level of language proficiency at the end of the semester. Students with elementary level are placed in English 001, and are allowed to proceed to English 002 if they achieve pre-intermediate level at the end of the semester. Students in English 002 level are expected to achieve intermediate level of English language proficiency at the end of the semester, and are admitted to undergraduate study. The placement, in different levels and semesters of the preparatory year English language program, is dependent on an English language placement test in some universities. Hence, the general aim of the intensive program is to raise the general English language proficiency of the students to intermediate level. The students receive English language instruction for four hours a day and twenty hours a week. Each semester spreads over a period of sixteen weeks. It may be worth mentioning that education in Saudi Arabia is segregated by sex.

A total number of 500 preparatory year students were approached for participation in the research. As mentioned earlier they were from three higher educational institutes, and from different levels of preparatory year studies. However, only 434 participants' data was selected for analysis as the remaining 66 questionnaires had substantial number of missing or patterned responses. Table 1 and Table 2 provide the demographic information of this final number of participants.

**Table 1: Gender-wise Demographics**

Gender	Number	Percentage
Male	203	46.8 %
Female	231	53.2%

**Table 2: Level-wise Demographics**

Level	Number	Percentage
English 000	105	24.2 %
English 001	111	25.6 %
English 002	218	50.2 %

***Instrument***

Data was collected through a questionnaire. The questionnaire was adapted from Taguchi, Magid, & Papi, (2009). The questionnaire was originally used in Japanese context. As the Saudi context is similar to Japanese context in terms of English language instruction being a foreign language instruction in Saudi Arabia as well, thus the questionnaire was deemed suitable for adaption and use in the Saudi context. Then, a pre-existing instrument was also adapted because such instruments are more valid and reliable (Dornyei, 2010). The questionnaire had two main parts. Part 2 required the students to provide demographic information like name of institution, age, level of study, English language instruction in a native country and by a native teacher, and their self-perceived level of English. Part 1 of the questionnaire had 67 statement type and question type items. Forty-nine items were measured by six-point Likert scales ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (6) and eleven items were measured on six-point rating scales ranging from not at all (1) to very much (6). The 67 items ranged across 16 motivational factors. The factors included criterion measure, ideal L2 self, ought to L2 self, parental encouragement, instrumentality-promotion, instrumentality-prevention, linguistic self-confidence, attitude towards learning English, travel orientation, fear of assimilation, ethnocentrism, English anxiety, integrativeness, cultural interest and attitude towards L2 community.

***Instrument Adaption Procedure***

Appropriate permission procedure was followed to obtain approval for adapting the instrument. The instrument was translated in Arabic. Translation was necessitated by the limited English language skills of the participants. A questionnaire, in the participants' first language, facilitates comprehension of the questionnaire items and facilitates acquiring accurate responses (Dornyei, 2010). Translation and back translation (ibid) technique was used to acquire an original-like Arabic version of the questionnaire. Additionally, the final version was again shown to three bilingual translation experts to ascertain the accuracy of the Arabic version. They gave a positive opinion about the accuracy of the Arabic translation.

**Data Collection Procedure**

The copies of the questionnaires were sent to the groups of the students through their teachers. The students were informed about the purpose and aim of data collection through the teachers and also through a prefatory note in the questionnaire. They were also informed of the

voluntary nature of their participation, and were also assured of the confidentiality and anonymity of the data.

### Data Analysis

Data was subjected to post-hoc analysis through statistical package SPSS (version 20). The decision of the post hoc analysis was led by the consideration that:

Questionnaires used as research instruments are developed following a theoretical frame-work and the item response pattern typically corresponds to some extent to this initial theoretical structure, particularly if the questionnaire has been properly piloted. However, this correspondence tends not to be perfect and therefore we need to conduct post-hoc item analysis and pattern verification before we can start working with the reduced set of variables. (Dornyei & Csizer, 2006, p.32)

As the original questionnaire had questions related to 16 constructs, and was designed for another context, thus it was decided to conduct factor analysis to reduce the number of variables and to cluster inter-correlated variables together. Therefore, the data was, initially, submitted to an exploratory factor analysis using principal component analysis (PCA) to discover the main constructs of the participants L2 motivation. Promax, a non-orthogonal method of rotation was performed. Factor loadings of .4 or higher were considered significant. Factor extraction criteria were based on Cattell's scree test. Factors not loading more than two items, or items cross loading on more than one factor were discarded.

**Table 3: Principal Component Analysis Summary**

	F 1	F 2	F 3	F 4	F 5	F 6	F 7
<b>% Variance</b>	19.94	6.60	4.46	3.67	3.37	3.10	2.83
<b>Eigenvalue</b>	13.36	4.42	2.98	2.46	2.26	2.08	1.90
I really enjoy learning English.	.861						
I find learning English really interesting.	.763						
I always look forward to English classes.	.632						
How much do you like English?	.547						
I like the atmosphere of my English classes.	.487						
I am working hard at learning English.	.438						

Do you like English magazines, newspapers, or books?		.736				
Would you like to know more about people from English-speaking countries?		.733				
Do you like TV programmes made in English-speaking countries?		.730				
Do you like meeting people from English-speaking countries?		.650				
Do you like people who live in English speaking countries?		.608				
The things I want to do in the future require me to use English.			.791			
Studying English is important to me because, if I don't have knowledge of English, I'll be considered a weak student.			.706			
Studying English is important to me because with English I can work globally.			.651			
Studying English can be important for me because I think I'll need it for further studies on my major.			.620			
I have to study English; otherwise, I think I cannot be successful in my future career.			.564			
Whenever I think of my future career, I imagine myself using English.			.526			
Studying English can be important to me because I think it will someday be useful in getting a good job.				.863		
Studying English is important to me because English proficiency is necessary for promotion in the future.				.766		
If I make more effort, I am sure I will be able to master English.				.626		

I believe that I will be capable of reading and understanding most texts in English if I keep studying it.				.526		
I have to study English because I don't want to get bad marks in it at university.					.802	
Studying English is necessary for me because I don't want to get a poor score or a fail mark in English proficiency tests.					.712	
I study English because close friends of mine think it is important.					.635	
Learning English is necessary because people surrounding me expect me to do so.					.607	
I have to learn English because without passing the English course I cannot graduate.					.582	
I have to study English, because, if I do not study it, I think my parents will be disappointed with me.					.576	
My parents encourage me to study English.						.820
My parents encourage me to take every opportunity to use my English (e.g., speaking and reading).						.805
My parents encourage me to study English in my free time.						.796
My parents encourage me to attend extra English classes after class (e.g., at English conversation schools)						.690
If I met an English native speaker, I would feel nervous.						.837
I would feel uneasy speaking English with a native speaker.						.789
I would get tense if a foreigner asked me for directions in English.						.769

I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in my English class.								.638
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Based on the criteria, seven factors loaded 35 items explaining 44% of the total variance. The KMO measure of sampling displayed a strong value of .89 which indicates the suitability of the sample for running a factor analysis. Table 3 reports variance, eigenvalue and item loading for each factor.

The *first factor* loaded six items. In the questionnaire, four of the items were related to attitude towards learning; one was related to integrativeness, and one was part of the criterion measure. As the items loaded on this factor are related to positive and enjoyable learning experience and interest in learning English, thus the factor can be named as *attitude towards learning English*.

The *second factor* loaded five items. Three of the items probed students' attitude to the target language community and one investigated their likeness or otherwise of the print media and one asked them about the TV programmes of the English speaking countries. The factor can be named as *attitude towards L2 people and culture*.

The *third factor* loaded six items. Three of the items were related to instrumentality-promotion, two to ideal L2 self, and one to instrumentality-prevention in the adapted questionnaire. The items were related to their future academic and career use of English- the academic and career instrumentality of English. Based on the shared theme of the future image of the students' English using self for academic and career related objectives, the factor can be named as *instrumentality-promotion* as instrumentality-promotion is related to "goals and hopes of becoming professionally and personally successful in the L2" (Dornyei, 2009, p.29).

The *fourth factor* loaded four items. Two of the items were related to instrumentality-promotion and the other two were related to the construct of linguistic self confidence in the adapted questionnaire. Thus, the factor combines two themes: first, the theme of linguistic self-confidence of the learners in becoming proficient in English language; second, how this proficiency can help them in future. The apparently different looking themes can, by connotation, be taken as referring to the future results of studying English by the students: studying English may lead to proficiency in English language skills and subsequently also to future success in professional life. Studying English is the current self of the student and the linguistic and professional success resulting from the current self may be termed as linguistically and professionally successful future self of the student. The future is based on the value attached to the current studying of English language. Thus, the factor can be named as the *value of studying English*.

The *fifth factor* loaded six items. Two of the items were related to instrumentality-prevention and four of the items were related to ought-to self in the adapted questionnaire. The questions shared a common theme of learning English in order to avoid failure in future academic pursuits and displeasure and disappointment of parents and people around resulting from the failure. The factor can be given the name of *instrumentality-prevention* as the shared theme of the items loading on this factor was related to preventing the negative effect of failing in English.

The *sixth factor* loaded four items. As all items were related to the construct of parental encouragement in the adapted instrument the name of the construct from the original questionnaire, *parental encouragement*, was retained for the factor.

The *seventh factor* loaded three items. The items measured students' anxiety in using English inside and outside the classroom in the adapted questionnaire, and therefore the factor was termed as *English anxiety*.

### Reliability Measures/Mean Analysis

For further statistical analysis the 35 items loading on the seven factors were averaged in seven composite scales and reliability measures and mean analysis were conducted of the items and the scales. The 35 items loading on seven factors were subjected to reliability analysis which resulted in a Cronbach's alpha of .85.

Reliability analysis was carried out for each composite scale. The Cronbach's alpha of all the seven composite scales, resulting from the loading on factors, was within the acceptable limits ( $>.7$ ) (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). Criterion measure showed a Cronbach's alpha of 0.6; however, the lower alpha value can be a result of lesser number (3 only) of items in the scale. Table 4 reports the reliability measures and mean analysis of the seven composite scales.

**Table 4: Reliability/Mean Analysis**

Scale/Composite Scale	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha Value	Mean	SD
<b>Reliability of all items</b>	39	.87		
Attitude towards learning English	6	.81	4.85	.86
Attitude towards L2 people and culture	5	.75	4.33	1.04
Instrumentality-promotion	6	.75	5.27	.74
Value of studying English	4	.75	5.66	.56
Instrumentality-prevention	6	.73	4.07	1.06
Parental encouragement	4	.78	4.59	1.11

English anxiety	4	.76	3.67	1.19
Criterion Measure	3	.60	4.73	.93

Mean analysis of the seven factors indicate the highest mean of 5 for both value of studying English and instrumentality-promotion. The highest mean score of these two factors is indicative of the prominence of the two factors for this set of research participants.

### Multiple Regression Analysis

Mutiple regression analysis was run to determine the best predictors of L2 motivation of the Saudi preparatory year students. The criterion measure was used as the dependent variable. Prior to running the analysis, multicollinearity, linerarity, and normality assumptions were tested and no violations were discovered. Concurrently, any strong correlations ( $r=.07$ ) were non-existent among the variables. The prediction model (Table 5 ) contained six of the seven independent variables. The prediction model is statistically significant,  $F(6, 427) = 61.791$ ,  $p < .001$ , and accounted for 45% variance of the criterion measure. The strongest weight went to attitude towards learning English, followed by instrumentality-promotion, parental encouragement, value for studying English, instrumentality-prevention and attitude towards L2 people and culture. The unique variance explained by each of the predictors is approximately: 9% by attitude towards learning English, 0.3% by instrumentality promotion, 1.3% by parental encouragement, 1.82% by value of studying English and less than 1% by both instrumentality prevention and attitude towards L2 people and culture.

**Table 5: Multiple Regression Analysis**

Model	b	SE b	Beta	Pearson r
<b>Constant</b>	-.631	.349		
Attitude towards learning English	.411	.050	.382	.612
Instrumentality-promotion	.103	.057	.082	.445
Parental encouragement	.108	.033	.129	.388
Value of studying English	.281	.074	.171	.488
Instrumentality-	.089	.033	.102	.239

prevention				
Attitude towards L2 people and culture	.086	.036	.096	.379

Dependent variable: CM ,  $R^2=.46$ , Adjusted  $R^2=.45$ ,  $P<.05$ ,  $sr^2$  is the squared semi partial correlation

## Discussion

The study investigated the language learning motivation selves of the Saudi preparatory year students, and explored as to which motivational selves construct are applicable to this set of research participants. Factor analysis revealed that only seven motivational factors are salient for the group, whereas the adapted questionnaire had a total number of 15 motivational factors. The salient factors for the group are: attitude towards learning English, attitude towards L2 people and culture, instrumentality-promotion, value of studying English, Instrumentality-prevention, parental encouragement and English anxiety.

Factor analysis revealed that the first factor, attitude towards learning English, loaded all (n=4) items from the same scale in the adapted questionnaire whereas one item each loaded from integrativeness and criterion measure. One item loaded was loaded from the scale interest in English language in the adapted questionnaire but was discarded as it loaded on two factors. The factor also emerged as the strongest predictor of motivation in the regression analysis. The items in the factor mainly aimed at investigating the students' attitude towards contextual, situational and environmental elements that play a role in English language learning. The emergence of the factor indicates that attitude towards learning English plays a vital role in motivating Saudi preparatory year students. The findings are in line with the studies conducted by Cizer and Kormos (2009), Kromos, Kiddle & Kizer (2011) and Lamb (2013). The findings confirm that in Saudi context students' making effort does not necessarily depend on "inter or externally generated self images but rather from successful engagement with the actual language learning process" (Dornyei, 2009, p.29). The students' effort towards learning English language will result from their feeling "positive about the learning process" (Lamb, 2013, p.1014). The findings, related to the emergence of the attitude towards learning English, also "suggest the role of the teacher is potentially important in converting generally positive attitude towards English into actual learning effort" (ibid). The importance of the role of learning environment is also proven by my personal observation resulting from teaching to Saudi preparatory year students for last five years. Students, with a lot of enthusiasm and drive, would lose interest in investing further effort as the semester proceeds. Informal chats with them reveal that they do not find the lessons very interesting. Invariably, the main reason explained is monotonous teaching routines. The students have to attend the English language classes for four hours of every weekday. Sustaining the learners' interest during these hours for nearly sixteen weeks depends predominantly on teachers. Students in intensive preparatory year are already under a lot of pressure as they have to attend at least 7 hours of lessons daily. If the classes are not interesting, the students will not feel motivated to attend the classes or participate in the learning activities.

Thus, the responsibility lies with the teachers to make the learning environment pleasant and enjoyable in their lessons to help students sustain their motivation.

The second factor, attitude towards L2 people and culture, loaded three of the four items from the scale of attitude towards L2 community and two of the four items from the scale of cultural interest. The loading of the items indicates that students consider people and media as a representation of the L2 community. The reason can be that many students in Saudi EFL context do not come in direct contact with the members of L2 community. The minimal contact is either through the teachers or other professionals from the L2 community teaching or working in Saudi Arabia, or through the electronic media. The media in such case becomes representative of the L2 community. Attitude towards L2 community or culture is the main focus of Gardner's model of integrativeness and "reflects a positive non-ethnocentric approach to other community" (Gardner, 1985, p.133). The factor indicates a positive outlook of the Saudi students towards the target language community. However, the regression analysis shows that the factor plays minimum role in inducing effort in learning English language by the students.

The third factor, named as instrumentality-promotion, is a blend of items from three different scales in the adapted questionnaire. The factor loaded items from the independent scales of ideal L2 self, instrumentality-promotion, and instrumentality-prevention. Majority of the items (three of six) were contributed by the scale of instrumentality-promotion in the adapted questionnaire. The main theme of these items is related to the instrumental use of English in future for two main purposes: academic and career/professional success. Students consider academic and professional success in future tied to the use of English. The factor is the second highest predictor of motivation in the regression analysis, and is linked to the utilitarian benefits of English language proficiency. Though only two of the items from the construct of ideal L2 self blended in this factor, the factor may be interpreted as the ideal L2 self of the participants, as ideal L2 self includes "internalised instrumental motives" (Dornyei, 2009, p.29). The factor has not loaded items related to integrative orientation and attitude towards L2 speaker, but certainly the aspect of instrumentality of the ideal L2 self blended in the factor. Thus, we can interpret that the ideal L2 self of the participants is more of a person speaking English and using English for instrumental reasons than for integrative reasons.

The next factor, value of studying English, blended items from the scales of instrumentality-promotion and linguistics self confidence. As mentioned earlier, the items loaded on the factor, make a current state of studying English and investing effort in learning English as a basis for some future gains, that is, the future gain of proficiency in English and professional gain in terms of a good job and better career prospects in future. Hence, the name value of studying English was given to the factor. The factor is not among the highest predictors of motivation in regression analysis. The factor is related to the internalized self of an effort making student with a future image of the efforts resulting in English language proficiency and career success.

The fifth factor, named instrumentality-prevention, blended items in equal number from the scales of ought to self and instrumentality-prevention. The theme of the majority of the items is studying English to avoid failure or under-achievement in English language tests. One item each is related to studying English for the reason of not disappointing parents, and one item to fulfil the expectation of the people around them. The factor can, probably, be taken as a

representation of the students ought-to self as “motives with a prevention focus - for example, to study in order not to fail an exam or not to disappoint one’s parents- are part of the ought self” (Dornyei, 2009, p.28). Apart from preventive stance, the ought to self also includes duties and obligation to ‘significant others’ (Csizer & Kormos, 2009, p.103). The factor loaded one item related to the duty of the students towards their parents. My personal observation, in Saudi preparatory year context, is that most of the educated mothers take a lot of interest in the academic pursuits of their children. The students often express their concern regarding disappointing their mothers by attaining low grades. Instrumentality-prevention is not among the best predictors of intended effort in the regression analysis, though preventing failure in English tests and exams is highly important for the students of preparatory year. The rule of the most of the higher education institutions is that any student scoring a low GPA on English is eliminated from the preparatory year program even if the student has scored well in other subjects. Thus success in English language course becomes mandatory for the student to stay in the university and continue his/her study.

The sixth factor, parental encouragement, loaded all items from the same scale in the adapted questionnaire. Parental encouragement is the next strong predictor of motivation in regression analysis, preceded only by the factors of attitude to learning English and instrumentality-promotion. The role of the parents can be taken as akin to extrinsic motive of learning English language for the students: “Parental encouragement also contributes to the students’ non-internalised L2 self-concept” (Csizer & Kormos, 2009, p.107).

Factor seven, English anxiety, loaded items related to the scale of English anxiety in the adapted questionnaire. The construct is the only one which did not appear as a predictor of intended learning effort in the regression analysis. However, English anxiety and attitude to learning effort are possibly related to each other. Anxiety may lead to a negative attitude and reduced anxiety may result in positive learning attitude. Thus, the teachers while trying to provide a conducive, pleasant and enjoyable learning environment should strive to reduce the level of anxiety resulting from linguistic tasks or performance for the learners.

The overall picture L2 motivational selves of the Saudi preparatory year students, emerging from principal component analysis and regression analysis can be summed up now. The motivational selves of these students are shaped by their immediate learning and societal environment. The ideal self appears to be of a learner investing efforts in learning English in order to gain proficiency in the language and the proficient English language user affording utilitarian benefits in future academic and professional career. The factors which can help in sustaining this effort are a conducive and learners’-friendly learning environment, the image of an academically and professionally successful proficient English language user, and parental encouragement.

## Conclusion

The aim of the current study was to explore the L2 motivational self of the Saudi preparatory year students. The study revealed seven factors important to L2 motivation self of the group of students under research. The strongest predictors of motivation among these factors were attitude towards learning English and instrumentality-promotion. The findings of the study may be used to understand the motivational selves or the internalized and external factors related to L2 motivational selves of the students. However, generalizability claims would remain weak

as the sampling approached was based on convenience sampling technique and the participants belonged to one city only. It is also felt that a mixed method approach can be utilized to explore the L2 motivational selves profile of these students and the issues attached with it further and deeper. Concurrently, there is also a need of involving a larger and more representative sample of the population for generalizing conclusions of the future research.

### About the Author

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