

## LEARNER'S MOTIVATIONAL ORIENTATIONS AND GENDER EFFECTS ON MOTIVATION AND THE OUTCOMES OF LEARNING ENGLISH: A REVIEW OF INDIAN, PAKISTAN, AND SRI LANKAN LITERATURE

E.M.H.J. Edirisinghe<sup>1\*</sup>, Norhisham Binti Mohamad<sup>2</sup>, Ali Khatibi<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1\*</sup>Department of English Language Teaching, Faculty of Business Studies and Finance,  
Wayamba University of Sri Lanka, Sri Lanka

<sup>2</sup>Professor. Graduate School of Management (GSM), Management and Science University,  
Malaysia

<sup>3</sup>Professor. Graduate School of Management (GSM), Management and Science University,  
Malaysia

**\*Corresponding Author:** E.M.H.J. Edirisinghe

\*Department of English Language Teaching, Faculty of Business Studies and Finance,  
Wayamba University of Sri Lanka, Sri Lanka

### Abstract

This article reviews the findings of several empirical studies, conducted in some of the South Asian contexts to investigate learners' motivational orientations and the gender effect on motivation on the successful English language-learning outcome where contrasting findings are observed. Some investigations have proven that the learners are instrumentally motivated to learn English while some other studies have identified integrative motivational orientations among the learners to learn English. In addition, a number of studies have recognized both instrumental and integrative types of motivational orientations among learners. Similar findings are observed with regard to intrinsic and extrinsic motivational types. Furthermore, connected to the effect of gender on English language learning motivation, a number of studies have proven that male students are better motivated than female students. In contrast, some studies have evidenced the opposite of it while a considerable number of studies have not identified any significant gender influence on the second language learning motivation. Consequently, further investigations are obligatory either to confirm or reject these conclusions in these contexts since the number of empirical studies found in these countries is not satisfactory to generalize those findings. Further, this review will assist educational policymakers, curriculum and material designers, and teachers in understanding learners' motivational orientations and the effect of gender on motivation to design operative education policies and teaching learning materials, employ novel teaching methodologies in a way that stimulate learner motivation to achieve expected learning outcomes.

**Keywords:** second language, motivational orientations, gender, instrumental motivation, integrative motivation, intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation

### Introduction

With the influence of globalization and the subsequent intensification in the demand for English language proficiency in diverse fields such as education, science and technology, internet, employability, social mobility, global business, and communication, all Asian countries attempt

to improve the English language skills of their citizens. English has been the major link language in international and intra-national communication in diverse linguistic environments being the language of employability, education, global business, and social mobility in Asia (Martin & Syeda, 2022) and in all South Asian countries (Liddicoat *et al.*, 2020). However, the empirical pieces of evidence prove that achieving the targeted objectives of English language teaching (ELT) in all South Asian countries has been abortive. Achieving the projected learning outcomes of ELT has been a failure in Afghanistan (Aisha Nuristani, 2020), Bangladesh (Hosain, 2018), Bhutan (Wangdi, 2019), India (Mehdi *et.al.* 2022; Rajendran *et.al.* 2020), Maldives (Zahra Mohamed, 2020), Pakistan (Muhammad *et.al.* 2018; Kakar & Pathan, 2017; Khan, & Khan, 2016) and Sri Lanka (Department of Examinations, 2021, 2020, 2019).

The scholars emphasize the necessity of learners' motivation in successful learning and numerous studies have investigated different aspects of the issue of second language (L2) learning motivation, among other influencing factors. The learners' motivation is one of the key determining factors of the individual variances in the failure or success of L2 learning (Mehdi *et al.*, 2022; Al-Saggaf *et al.*, 2021; Astuti, 2020; Todor & Degiz, 2016; Saranraj *et al.*, 2016; Hamad, 2014; Hosseni & Pourmandnia, 2013; Dörnyei, 1994; Gardner, 1985; Gardner & Lambert, 1972). Further, several theories of motivation have been advocated to explicate the kind of motivation in the field of second language learning (SLL). In addition, the studies that investigated the effect of gender on L2 motivation, have observed contrasting findings. However, not many studies have been piloted in the related field in the South Asian context, leading to a gap in the literature in those countries. The empirical studies, conducted to investigate the learners' L2 motivation are rare in Bangladesh (Islam & Akter, 2022), Bhutan (Thinley Wangmo, 2022; Wangdi, 2019), India (Suganya & Soundararajan, 2017), Nepal (Krishna, 2015), and in Pakistan (Muhammad, Munaza & Zia, 2019).

This article reviews the findings of several empirical studies, conducted in Indian, Pakistani, and Sri Lankan contexts to investigate learners' motivational orientations and the gender effect on motivation on the successful English language-learning outcome where contrasting findings are observed. Further, the articles reviewed are recent studies, conducted in India and Pakistan and they were selected based on the publication year. Since research studies, conducted in this field are very limited in Sri Lanka, a few studies, conducted formerly were selected from the available literature. The following section gives an account of motivation and the effects of gender on L2 learning motivation.

### **Motivation in L2 learning**

Due to its complex nature, defining motivation in L2 learning has been a challenging task and a single definition for L2 motivation has not been agreed upon. The reasons for this are: L2 motivation is conjectured differently in behaviorist, mentalist, and constructivist language learning theories. L2 motivation changes due to the global status of the language being learned and globalization (Islam, 2013); it is an abstract and dynamic paradigm (Dörnyei *et al.*, 2014). L2 motivation is identified as a complex and multifaceted concept (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009).

Gardner (1985) introduced the Socio-Educational Model (SEM), which is considered one of the leading and dominant models in the field of L2 learning motivation. Gardner fundamentally divided this model into main variables namely: the learner's individual difference variables (motivation, attitudes, and aptitudes), formal and informal language contexts, antecedent factors (biological and experiential), and the learning outcomes (performance and mastery). One imperative tenet of the SEM, as specified by Gardner, is that the L2 learner's attitudes and motivation play a very effective role in both formal and informal learning contexts as well as in the learning outcomes. Gardner classifies L2 motivation into two basic types namely: instrumental (the necessity to learn L2 such as passing an examination or winning financial rewards etc.) and integrative (learning L2 for personal development, cultural enhancement, and the learner's prerequisite to enter into that language society). Gardner further explains that the L2 learner's integrative and instrumental motives play an important role in the successful learning outcome (SLO) since they mirror dynamic involvements in language learning. He further claims that motivated L2 learners will not only aspire to learn but also make additional efforts to learn that language. In addition, the empirical studies also evidence that the successful accomplishments of L2 learning heavily depend on the learner's motivation and other factors such as age, gender, learning styles, and learning environments as well. Among other various factors, the learners' motivation influences effective learning and it can be identified as one of the most important factors in successful language learning (Yue *et al.*, 2022; Nurhidayah, 2020; Mehmet, 2020; Muñoz *et al.*, 2020; Liu & Huang, 2011; Dörnyei 1998; Gardner, 1985). Motivation is a key factor to be targeted to expand learning and the students should be motivated on a consistent basis to achieve better learning outcomes (Azam *et al.*, 2019).

Dörnyei (1994) describes L2 motivation as the learner's desire and attempt to learn a language and the positive attitudes towards learning that language. Further, he defines the term differently as extrinsic motivation (the actions performed by an L2 learner in order to succeed in instrumental aims such as winning a kind of reward for the actions or preventing a punishment) and intrinsic motivation (the motivation to involve in an action due to its enjoyable nature). Further explained, extrinsic motivation is the learner's inspiration to perform an activity in order to succeed in a target due to the view that engaging in that particular task will result finally in getting a reward or an admiration for the successful completion of the task or a punishment for the unsuccessful completion. It is a kind of incentive, stimulated by external factors. Moreover, intrinsic motivation is the inspiration to perform a task because the learner feels that the activities he/she engages in are enjoyable (a kind of mental satisfaction). Dörnyei (2001) emphasizes that L2 motivation depends on the reasons for the learner to learn that language, how hard they are going to work on it, and for how long the L2 learner becomes passionate to sustain the activity. In addition, Dörnyei (2005) proposed the L2 motivational self-system, which conceptualizes L2 learning motivation as the learners' identification with their future selves. Three major paradigms are included in the L2 self-system namely; 'the Ideal L2 self' (L2-specific aspect of an individual's ideal self), 'the Ought-to L2 self' (L2-specific aspect of one's ought-to self) and the L2 learning experience

(situation-specific motives that are connected to the immediate L2 learning setting and experience) (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009).

Furthermore, Brown (2000), explaining the relationship between Gardner's (1985) and Dörnyei's (1998) identifications of L2 motivation, expands that the extrinsic motivation turns into instrumental motivation, attributable to an influence to the L2 learner by an external encouragement to learn the target language (TL). Similarly, extrinsic motivation will turn into integrative motivation when an outsider needs the L2 learner to know the integrative purposes of learning the TL.

### **Effects of Gender on L2 Motivation**

The exploration of possible effects of the learner's gender on motivation and the L2 learning outcome has presently been an area of critical interdisciplinary investigation. Research studies on the effect of gender and language learning have flourished over the last decades (Rowlett & King, 2017) and contrasting findings are observed in those studies. Some empirical pieces of evidence have proven that male students are better motivated to learn L2 than their female counterparts with the opposite of it in some studies. Interestingly, a number of studies have not identified any gender effect on L2 learning motivation. Consequently, more studies should be conducted to find out more about this relationship. 'The interrelatedness of gender differences to attitudes and motivation needs to be explored and investigated more' (Agus *et al.*, 2021 p. 01).

The following section describes the findings of several empirical studies, conducted to explore the L2 learners' motivational orientations and the effects of gender on L2 learning motivation in Indian, Pakistani, and Sri Lankan contexts.

### **India**

English has been included as a main subject from the school curriculum to the higher levels of education in India however; the empirical pieces of evidence prove that the learners' lack of motivation has created poor conditions in the field of ELT. L2 learning in India is highly obstructed by the learners' poor motivation (Mehdi *et al.*, 2022; Monther *et al.*, 2019). Discussed in the next section are the findings of some studies.

Mehdi *et al.*, (2022) conducted a questionnaire survey with the second-year students of the Post Graduate Diploma in Management in a reputed B-School in the National Capital Region of India to find out the students' basic motivational aspects for learning English and their prevalent types. The results have indicated higher instrumental motivation to learn English among the learners, compared to integrative motivation. The main reason for this, as per the researchers, is that these students learn English mainly for career prospects with higher salaries. In India, recruitment for highly paid management jobs is done based on higher English proficiency levels (Mehdi *et al.*, 2022). In addition, the study has exposed that these respondents do not mind either socializing with people in other countries or knowing about their cultures, which indicates their lack of integrative motivation to learn English. Similarly, the study, conducted some time ago by Al-Amr

(1998, as cited in Mehdi *et al.*, 2022) found the same result, which proves that the situation has not transformed for years.

Suganya & Soundararajan (2017) investigated the effects of learners' individual and interpersonal factors on L2 motivation among 105 learners in both public schools and universities in India. In line with the above findings, instrumental motivation has received relatively higher values than integrative motivation values. Further, the researchers also suggest that these favorable conditions in motivation can be deployed for better achievements. As they additionally explain, most of the Indian EFL classes are teacher-centered and rarely involve activities that promote autonomous learning. Furthermore, the scholars emphasize that the level of student motivation can significantly be improved with provided opportunities to engage in more independent, interesting, and challenging learning activities in L2 classes. Other findings of the study are summarized below.

- These learners feel more comfortable with group and pair work activities, which provide them with a sense of competence and motivation to learn English.
- The gender affects the motivation levels but the variance is not much statistically significant. Female learners are more motivated slightly to learn English than their male counterparts.

A similar finding has been observed in a different learning context in India. Ram Kumar *et al.*, (2020) explored the gender-based motivational differences in learning English Language using a mobile application. The participants were 1161 school students of the 'Hello English' program in Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Haryana. The results have revealed that female learners are highly motivated and preferred more to intermingle with the app very often, spending more time on the app and completing a higher number of learning activities than male students do.

Doley (2022) piloted a study to examine the L2 learners' motivational and attitudinal behaviors at the secondary, undergraduate, and postgraduate levels (Humanities, Management, Commerce, Sciences, and Engineering academic disciplines) from 24 institutions, located in rural, semi-urban, and urban areas in the East, West, North, and South regions of India. The study has identified some significant insights into the relationship between the learner's linguistic self-confidence and their language anxiety in relation to L2 motivation and attitudes. They are:

- The ESL motivation in all academic levels indicates a utilitarian dimension.
- The learners exhibit higher instrumental and integrative motivation levels.
- Less experienced younger groups of learners show higher L2 motivational scores in all dimensions.
- The integrative motivational dimensions and cultural interest significantly contribute to the higher L2 confidence and ease in the use of English among ESL learners in secondary schools.
- Anxiety-related motivational dimensions for using English in daily communications and self-confidence are recognized as distinct L2 motivation factors in all three educational levels. Due to this difference, relatively less anxious or more self-confident learners in the use of L2 in the classroom exhibited more anxiety in using L2 in ordinary communication outside their classroom (Doley, 2022).

However, the study has not investigated the effect of gender on L2 motivation.

Research studies conducted to inspect the L2 motivation of very young school learners are very rare in literature. Murthy & Keejari (2018) conducted a study with 144 Year 05 students of four national-type Tamil schools at Kluang, Johor. It investigated the motivation, attitudes, and anxiety of young English language learners, based on their socio-economic status and English learning achievements. The results have also confirmed that both rural and urban learners are instrumentally motivated to learn English, exhibiting higher motivation levels among urban learners. The study has found that these students learn English for educational purposes, future careers, and for developing their self-respect. The causes for the lower levels of motivation of rural students have been identified in other investigations. The parents of the students in rural schools do not usually pay much attention to the level of proficiency in English and the academic achievement of their children, and this has resulted in lower levels of motivation for these students (Rahimah *et al.*, 2004 as cited in Murthy & Keejari, 2018). In summary, Indian English language learners are motivated to learn English either at an average or at a moderate level, exhibiting a more instrumental type of motivation than the integrative type.

## **Pakistan**

Teaching English to all levels of students has been prioritized and evolved in Pakistan. The field of ELT in Pakistan has evolved in recent years and it remains a priority (Martin & Syeda, 2022). However, empirical studies ascertain serious gaps between the expected and actual learning outcomes. Empirical pieces of evidence on the learners' motivational orientations are summarized below.

Muhammad *et al.*, (2019) investigated L2 motivation in terms of gender, class and school type, and locality of 620 students at the government and private secondary schools in Rahim Yar Khan and Bahawalpur districts of Southern Punjab. The study has found a moderate level of motivation among the learners with a statistically notable difference in the level of motivation between genders, urban/rural, and government / private schools. The researchers have also observed:

- A positive motivational impact on the achievement scores in English.
- Demotivation factors such as lack of knowledge in grammar, learner confidence, and problems in speaking English.
- Least concerns about integrative motivation.

Similar demotivation factors have been identified in the study of Dilshad *et al.*, (2019) with students of the government and private secondary schools in Southern Punjab.

This result of the motivation level contradicts the outcome of the study conducted by Rehman *et al.*, (2014). Pakistani intermediate students are extremely motivated towards learning English (Rehman *et al.*, 2014 as cited in Muhammad *et al.*, 2019). Further, the researchers have found a similar result with regard to the gender effect on L2 motivation. Similarly, Tawsif *et al.*, (2022) also found higher female academic motivational levels than males in a recent study, conducted with 160 learners in the Malakand Khyber Pakhtunkhwa district. However, this contradicts the

findings of the study, conducted by Saira *et al.*, (2018), with 103 undergraduates at the Institute of English Language and Literature (IELL), University of Sindh, Jamshoro. The study has not proved any significant gender difference in the level of L2 learners' motivation. Further, Tawsif *et al.*, (2022) have also found a comparatively higher level of motivation among urban students compared with rural students. Similarly, Dilshad *et al.*, (2019) have identified that student motivation changes according to the learning context, and compared with the motivation level of rural students, urban students have been found more motivated to learn English. As Muhammad *et al.*, (2019) explain, the reason for the difference is that the usage of English in urban areas is higher, giving the urban students opportunities to interact with people willing to speak English. Additionally, the study has found higher levels of motivation among the students in private schools compared to the government school students.

Ali & Ahmed (2019) have identified a very interesting finding connected to this. In their attempt to investigate the 320 ESL students' motivational orientations of the public and private schools in Lahore, they have identified that the students in public schools are instrumentally motivated mostly while the students in private schools exhibit integrative motivations. English culture and students' willingness to connect with these people, methodologies applied in ELT, medium of instruction, English curriculum, learning environment, and varied family backgrounds are the root causes for the difference in motivational orientations (Ali & Ahmed, 2019). Kakar & Pathan (2017) explicate that a majority of the Pakistan L2 learners do not have direct communicative relationships with native English speakers and consequently, these learners are naturally driven by instrumental motivation. Securing good results at their examinations has been the foremost short-term goal that motivates them instrumentally (Kakar & Pathan, 2017). A comparable finding has been observed by Muhammad *et al.*, (2020) in their study to investigate the gender effects on student motivation in English learning with 308 learners at different campuses of the Islamia University of Bahawalpur. The results have indicated that female students exhibit better achievements and higher integrative motivation levels in comparison with males. The study has further found that male students are less anxious, more instrumental-minded, and more confident in pursuing their language learning goals.

Ifra *et al.*, (2019) found higher levels of both instrumental and integrative motivational orientations to learning English among 300 undergraduates at the University of Sargodha. In addition, the results have indicated relatively higher instrumental motivation among male students. Similarly, the study, conducted by Khan *et al.*, (2016) with 40 male pre-university students also found higher integrative and instrumental motivational orientations among these informants with slightly stronger instrumental motivation levels than integrative motivation. One minus point of this study is that it has been conducted only with a small number of male students. Khan *et al.*, (2021) conducted a study with tertiary-level ESL learners during the post-COVID shift in order to investigate the motivation toward the online mode of learning. The results have evidenced a low motivation level at the beginning but the students have progressively adapted to the new digitized mode and the students, motivational levels have gradually increased. A higher degree of interest, positive attitudes toward learning English, and good levels of both instrumental and integrative

motivation in both genders have been identified. Student motivation changes over time and both extrinsic and intrinsic motivational orientations drive Pakistani learners toward the acquisition of the English language (Shah & Naveed, 2020). Motivation is not static; it is dynamic and can alter from one type to another (Azar & Tanggaraju, 2020).

Fouzia *et al.*, (2022) inspected the divergent categories of L2 motivation among 96 undergraduates (1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> year) of the Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) course at the Sindh Madrassah tul-Islam University in Karachi. The study has not identified any consequential gender variation in motivation among first and second-year students. A majority of the students have agreed upon the importance of the English language due to its academic, professional as well as financial benefits. Further, the study has observed significant differences among the socio-economic groups (upper class, upper middle class, lower middle class, and working class) with regard to intrinsic and instrumental motivation to learn English with no differences in extrinsic as well as integrative motivation levels. In addition, the extrinsic and integrative motivations have moderately been found to be higher in comparison with their intrinsic and instrumental motivations respectively.

### **Sri Lanka**

English has been included as a core subject from grades 01 to 13 in the government school curriculum in Sri Lanka. However, the empirical studies and results analysis reports of the Department of Examinations provide pieces of evidence for the lower level of proficiency in English in Sri Lanka. In addition, it is hard to find out published research studies, conducted to investigate the effect of learner motivation on the achievement levels of proficiency and the gender effect on learner motivation in the Sri Lankan context. Rather, some Sri Lankan researchers have attempted to investigate the type of motivational orientations and the common learner demotivating factors towards learning English. The outcomes of some of these studies are described in the next section.

Prasangani (2015) investigated the factors that affect motivation for learning English among 361 undergraduates in the disciplines of applied sciences, science and technology, agriculture, and geomatics. The researcher employed Dornyei's L2 Motivational Self System in the study and examined the affiliations between the variables of 'ought to L2 self', 'ideal L2 self', 'motivated self', mastery, performance, and social goals. The study has identified a close relationship between the social necessities of learning English and the learners' learning self-concept. In addition, the study has validated the L2 motivational self-system in Sri Lanka and a strong rapport between the 'ideal L2 self' of these learners and the mastery goals of the English language has been identified. Sri Lankan undergraduates are ambitious to be proficient in English for their personal development because Sri Lanka graduates face a huge unemployment problem owing to their insufficient English competency (Gunawardena, 2011 as cited in Prasangani, 2015). Further, the results have indicated that the 'ideal L2 self' has the strongest correlation to motivated learning. "This implies the strength of the undergraduate's future image as an L2 speaker for their English learning motivation" (Prasangani, 2015 p.03). The researcher also states that as young adult



learners, they do not feel 'ought to L2 self' or inevitable obligations as strong factors for their motivation towards learning English.

Gamage (2011) conducted a participatory observation research with 60 students in an English language program at the Tissamaharama electorate in the Hambantota district. The observations highlight that the impacts of some major motivational factors like the changes in classroom settings, learning environments, ad-hoc planning for required activities, humor, and use of voice skills, can increase language acquisition largely. It is specifically recommended to apply these motivational strategies to achieve better results in language learning (Gamage, 2011). Prasangani & Shanthi (2015) conducted another study, employing Dornyei's L2 Motivational Self System with 918 English medium science undergraduates in Sri Lanka to ascertain the causes that affect English learning motivation, based on the country's regional variations. The multi-group analysis of the data has indicated a difference in the learner's L2 motivation between the urban and rural undergraduates. Similarly, the results of the study have also proved the validity of the L2 Motivational Self System by emphasizing the 'ideal L2 self' to be the strongest causative component of motivation among the participants to learn English. Adding to that, it has been identified that the 'ideal L2 self' and their social goals motivate urban undergraduates to learn English. Further, the learners in rural areas have exhibited a very strong 'ideal L2-self' in comparison with the urban learners and for them, the strongest causative factor to learn English is the 'ideal L2 self'. The researchers further explain that the reasons for this may be their educational, social, political, and economic sufferings due to the lack of English proficiency from the British colonial rule onwards. They further state that the war situation in the country could have affected the minds of many Tamil undergraduates who were very young during the crisis. They were the young people who were planning to re-establish the affected communities in Sri Lanka and because of the prevailing importance of proficiency in English in the country; the rural communities might grasp it as the only way out (Prasangani & Shanthi, 2015). The scholars are of the view that the Tamil asylum seekers at that time tried to migrate to Western countries and that might be a contributing motive to learn English within the self. Further, the study has observed that the attitudes toward English learning are equally important for both urban and rural groups to determine their motivation. However, their attitudes towards L2-speaking communities are not a very important factor to determine their L2 learning motivation (Prasangani & Shanthi, 2015). Another finding is that the social goals have contributed to forming the ideal 'L2 self' of both learner groups equally. This may be because of the importance of the nation-building aims of these undergraduates, as mature adults of the country.

The study has further investigated the motivating factors of the undergraduates from the war-affected and non-war-affected areas in the country. The analysis has revealed that even though, the 'ideal L2 self' has become the strongest contributory factor of their L2 motivation for both groups, notably the learners in war-affected areas are having stronger 'ideal L2 self', compared with the learners in non-war-affected areas. As the researchers explain, this might be due to the difficulties they had to undergo throughout the civil war, the loss of educational and socio-economic opportunities, and the status of English as the link language in the country as the neutral

medium to touch the pluralized society and their necessity to contribute to the needs of the country. As further identified, the social goals seem to be a stronger predictor of motivation than their attitudes towards English language learning for the undergraduates from the non-war affected areas.

Mif Kareema (2016) investigated the type of motivation that influences the ESL students of the Faculty of Arts and Culture at the South Eastern University of Sri Lanka. The study further examined the affiliation between the high/low ability of the students and the sort of motivation for learning English. The results have indicated that both high and low-ability undergraduates are instrumentally as well as integratively motivated to learn English. In addition, the study has not identified any significant difference between the types of student motivation.

Perera, (2021) inspected the learner perceptions about the school-related conditions that affect student motivation and learning engagement in seven Tamil and five Sinhala medium type 02 state schools in the Nuwara Eliya and Monaragala districts. The study has identified two main school-related conditions that affect student motivation and engagement in learning. They are:

- The quality of classroom relationships
- The quality of curriculum and resources.

Further analysis of classroom relationships, has revealed that the negative teacher-student relationship and the influence of the peers mainly affect student motivation and learning engagement. In addition, the results have identified four categories under the negative teacher-student relationships such as insufficient encouragement, unengaging teaching, harsh punishments, and unfriendly teaching-learning situations. The quality of the curriculum and resources, difficult subject matters, insufficient quality learning activities, regular tests, difficult and excessive homework, inadequate classroom learning and quality teaching-learning resources have been identified as sub-themes.

Most of the Sri Lankan undergraduates in state universities have strong intended English language learning efforts due to their huge extrinsic motivation to find well-paid jobs. This was identified in a study, conducted to investigate the effectiveness of the L2 motivational self-system for describing the ESL undergraduate learners' motivation and to study the relationship between the students' English learning motivation and their ethnic background. Wijerathne, (2015), conducted this study with the undergraduates of the state universities namely: Peradeniya (Central province), Kelaniya (Western Province), Ruhuna (Southern province), Jayawardanapura (Western province) and the Eastern University (Eastern province). The study has identified a strong correlation between the intended learning efforts and the learners' attitudes toward learning English, which indicates that their overall aspiration to learn English is associated with positive attitudes toward the English language learning process. The findings of the study confirm that Sri Lankan undergraduates regulate their personal objectives and goals to accomplish their 'ought to L2 self'. The opinion that proficiency in English is required to continue higher studies and secure better job opportunities, may have increased their desire to achieve successful learning of English (Wijerathne, 2015). Fernando (2005, as cited in Wijerathne, 2015) also found out that securing better employment is the main purpose of the learners to learn English. In addition, the study has

identified a strong correlation between their L2 identity and the promotional instrumentality as well. This implies that these learners' image of themselves as fluent English speakers in the future relates to extrinsic goals (Wijerathne, 2015). Similarly, the research has found that the attitudes of these learners towards English language learning correlate with their 'ideal L2 self'. Dörnyei (2009 as cited in Wijerathne, 2015) proposes that the harmony between the 'ought to L2 self' and the 'ideal L2 self' is an essential element to improve L2 motivation which persuades the learners to make the desirable effort for achieving the ideal outcome. The higher correlation between the learners' 'ought to L2 self' and the 'ideal L2 self' increases their motivation level to learn the L2 (Wijerathne, 2015). The particular study has identified an average level of motivation among its participants.

With regard to the relationship between the students' English learning motivation and their ethnic background, the result outcomes have illustrated that the Tamil learners exhibited a marginally upper level of promotional instrumentality than the Sinhalese students. It could be related to better opportunities in the highly competitive world of employment. This may be because of the necessity of the minority group to communicate using English in the country and to compete with the other majority L1 group to achieve higher examination results and performances in job interviews (Wijerathne, 2015).

### **Discussion and Implications**

This literature review compared and contrasted the key findings of several studies, piloted in the Indian, Pakistani, and Sri Lankan contexts to investigate the learners' motivational orientations and the effect of learner's gender on motivation for learning English to highlight the key discoveries and viewpoints in a single document.

First, the review identified the lack of learners' motivation as an obstacle to the successful accomplishment of ELT in all three countries. The second finding is that students have different motivational orientations (instrumental, integrative, extrinsic, and intrinsic) for learning English as an L2. The investigations into the type of students' L2 motivation is essential because, without sufficient motivation, even the learners with other most outstanding learning abilities are unable to accomplish the long-term goals of language learning. The third finding is related to the effect of gender on L2 motivation. Conflicting findings have been perceived where some studies have proven that male students are better motivated to learn English than female students. In contrast, some studies have evidenced the opposite of it while few studies have identified neutral effects.

Recognizing the interplay among learner motivation, gender, and English language learning will be very important to the learners, instructors, curriculum and materials designers, education policymakers, and parents as well. The learners will be able to set their own realistic goals for learning English without depending on others. Similarly, the review will contribute to the advances in the field of ELT, giving the educational policymakers, curriculum, material designers, and teachers, a knowledge of the learners' motivational orientations and the gender effects on motivation in the successful learning outcome. Policymakers will be inspired to design effective education policies and facilitate the L2 learning process, increasing learners' motivation by

lowering their anxiety. The curriculum and material designers will design teaching materials in a way that increases learner motivation. Authorities can organize teacher-training programs to introduce teaching methodologies that support increasing learners' motivation (Deldeniya *et al.*, 2018). Teachers should know about the types and levels of motivation of the L2 learners (Al-Saggaf *et.al.* 2021), stimulate motivation of all types in the classroom, and guide learners to achieve goals (Azar & Tanggaraju, 2020). Teachers' attention is essential to the learners' motivational dimensions because they have a positive correlation with learners' performances (Azam *et al.*, 2019). The involvement of the parents affects the learners' motivation to learn (De Silva *et al.*, 2018). Thus, the review will also help the parents and well-wishers in understanding the students' motivational orientations and the issues confronted by them in order to help their children towards more successful learning.

### **Common limitations and suggestions for future research**

Almost all the reviewed studies in this article have been conducted in academic contexts, such as government or private schools and universities or other higher educational institutes. In most of these contexts, the learners are usually motivated instrumentally to learn English for pragmatic gains like passing or getting good grades at examinations and securing better job opportunities for financial gains. Similar studies in diverse settings may expose different findings regarding the motivation types of learners.

In addition, conducting studies with larger sample sizes, selected with a broader stratum than the small sample sizes used in many of these revived studies, would assist in more accurate, comprehensive, and broader discoveries of L2 motivation. Similarly, these studies are mostly quantitative-based questionnaire surveys, conducted within a short time. Using a variety of research methods for collecting data in a single study (such as questionnaires, observations, qualitative interviews, and surveys) and evaluating the learner motivation styles over longer intervals of time would disclose more accurate and undiscovered findings and validate the generalizability of the findings. In addition, further research in this field bears significance since the number of empirical studies found in these countries is not satisfactory to generalize those findings.

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