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Exploration of EFL Male and Female University Students’ Stand Points on Demotivation: A Case Study of Albaha University, KSA

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Abstract

The present study explores Saudi EFL male and female university students’ standpoints on language learning demotivation which can reduce their motivation to foreign language learning. It also attempts to identify the most and least demotivating dimensions/factors of EFL Saudi male and female university students and to find out if there are statistically significant differences between male and female students in EFL demotivation dimensions/factors or not. To that end, a modified version of Sakai and Kikuchi (2008) Questionnaire of Demotivation of English Language Learners (DQELL) was administered to randomly selected 30 male EFL students and 30 females from third year Foreign Languages Department at Faculty of Arts and Humanities of Albaha University, KSA in the academic year 2021/2022. Results indicate that male students consider Learning contents and materials and Inadequate college facilities as their most EFL demotivating factors and the least ones were Teachers’ competence and teaching styles, Lack of intrinsic motivation and Test scores. On the other hand, female students consider Inadequate college facilities the most demotivating factor, while Learning contents and materials, Teachers’ competence and teaching styles and Test scores were their least demotivating ones. In addition, T-test results showed that there are statistically significant differences between male and female students on EFL demotivation factors Learning contents and materials and Teachers’ competence and teaching styles in favor of females. There are not significant differences between males and females on Inadequate college facilities, while there are significant differences between them on Lack of intrinsic motivation and Test scores in favor of female university students. Finally, statistical results were discussed and implications for ELT were suggested.

Keywords: Motivation, Demotivation, EFL, Teaching and Learning of English as a Foreign Language

Introduction

Almost all research findings on motivation assert that motivation plays a pivotal role in L2 learner achievement and language learning outcomes. That’s to say motivation enables learners to start language learning and become the initiators of ESL/EFL learning endeavors. Language learners’ abilities and suitable curricula alone cannot guarantee learners high levels of performance and achievement of learning objectives without the necessary motivation to learn and use the target language (Dörnyei, 1998). That’s because, in a number of research findings success and failure in language learning has been accredited to insufficient amount of motivation (Shearin, 1994; Belmont, 1993; Poonam, 1997; Ema, 2011).

But, demotivation as a psychological construct is rather a new topic in SLA and L2 learning and teaching. Research attempts in the area studied the reasons behind language learners’ decrease in motivation to learning the target language in the 1990s (Gorham & Christophel, 1992). However, only few studies during that period focused on demotivation itself, but only as a section in their studies on language learning motivation.

Dörnyei's study (2001) was the first to independently tackle the subject of demotivation to L2 learning due its importance to investigate the causes of why some language learners lose their motivation to learn the language so as to suggest suitable solutions to overcome the problem.

Some Previous research findings have clarified that sometimes L2 learners become less interested and motivated to learn and practice the target language (Covington, 2000; Julkunen, 2002; Kozminsky and Kozminsky, 2002; Davidson, 2003;; Kikuchi and Sakai, 2009; Dornyei and Murphey, 2003). Dornyei (2001)states that demotivation means a set of factors that discourage or decrease motivational practices of a subject in his/her attempt to learn and acquire new information. Although research endeavors which tried to deal withthe theme of demotivation can be beneficial to both ESL/EFL teachers and learners, but a number of teacherswho noticed that their learners have become less concerned with L2 learning ignored looking for the reasons behind their less interest in language learning in different classroom settings. Therefore, language learning scholars may have the aptitude to study this phenomenon as investigating the causes of demotivation can be helpful in comprehending motivation theories. Also, some language teachers might need to know the potential reasons of the students' demotivation so as not to be considered the driving force behind their demotivation in an L2 classroom. Some L2 researchers have begun to investigate demotivation only lately. Moreover, those scholars who are interested in finding out the explanations of learner's demotivation started researching internal factors including self-esteem, negative attitudes and external factors which might have negative effects on language learning. (Dornyei, 2001; Kim, 2014; Kim and Seo, 2012; Ma and Cho, 2014; Yeo and Lee, 2015).

Dornyei (2001) clarified that motivation is responsible for stimulating L2 learner to learn and use the target language. As he mentioned that motivation is the readiness, aptitude and the driving force accountable for effective language learning outcomes. SLA studies assert that motivation is the most effective variable that influences success or failure in language learning. Dornyei (2001)

confirmed that motivation can enable most of L2 learners to impressively acquire the intended language. Literature in the area of ESL/EFL refers to the fact there are positive correlations between motivation and achievement in language learning. Thus, there is consensus among language learning scholars on the positive impacts of motivation on successful L2 learning (Dörnyei and Schmidt, 2001; Rababah, 2003;Shin, 2013; Hasegawa, 2004; Javid, Asmari, Farooq, 2012).When Gardner (1982) developed his socio-educational model he reshaped motivation as a combination that has three units: effort, desire and affect. Effort necessitates the method through which the learner selects the expected time for studying s language, desire refers to learner positive attitudes in learning the material while affect denotes to the interest of the learner in acquiring an L2.Motivation includes two variables: instrumental motivation and integrative motivation. Richardson(2003) introduces the two variables as: instrumental motivation is when language learner has pragmatic objectives to learn the target language while integrative motivation is when language learner has the desire to learn the language to better know about culture of the people speaking the language and to enhance communication with them.

Dörnyei (2001a) in his study introduced new themes in motivation to language learning which encouraged other researchers to investigate them in their research articles. Notably, he focused on teacher motivation, motivation and language learning strategy use, aptitude to interact, best ways to motivate L2 learners and also demotivation as a possible topic for upcoming research endeavors. In particular, Dörnyei explained that these kinds of motivations can have positives effects on students' language learning so as to increase researchers' interest in these topics. On the other hand, few studies were found to examine demotivation to language learning as an opposite theme to motivational practices in language learning classrooms. Prior studies done in related areas by Zhang, 2007; Dörnyei,1998; Trang and Baldauf,2007; Ushioda,1998; and Jomairi, 2011stated that demotivation is a frequent problem in language classroom settings and teachers can be one of the reasons behind students' demotivation to learn and use the target language. It is presumed

that more efforts are needed to discover more about demotivation factors and how best to motivate language learners (Dörnyei, 2001a).

Dörnyei & Ushioda (2013) report that there is a tendency in language learning motivation research efforts to explore L2 learners disinterest and lack of motivation toward learning the target language. They also add that in order to investigate demotivation, a researcher could trace its effects on language classrooms or within larger learner's social contexts. Accordingly, this is in line with the idea that investigating language learning demotivation is a relevant sophisticated process that is worthy of study by TESOL and applied linguistics researchers.

In the present paper, the researcher begins with defining the term of demotivation and giving an introduction to its relevant concepts as regarded by a number of well-known scholars in the area of second language motivation. Later on, the researcher presents previous studies on ESL/EFL demotivation which indicated crucial elements related to L2 learning demotivation, focusing on variables concerned with teachers and those concerned with learners and their influences on SL demotivation. Thus, the current study tries to examine the standpoints on demotivation of EFL Saudi male and female undergraduate students at Foreign Languages Department at Faculty of Arts and Humanities of Albaha University in the first semester of the academic year 2021/2022. Also, being a faculty member at the Department who is responsible for teaching many courses in applied linguistics and language skills, the researcher noticed that many male and female students in different study years were demotivated to learn and use English as a foreign language whether in classroom sittings or outside the classroom such as at the English Club at the Faculty and others. Consequently, the current study attempts to answer the following questions;

1. Which dimensions are the most and least demotivating for Saudi EFL male and female university students?
2. Are there statistically significant differences at (0.05) level in EFL demotivation dimensions/factors between Saudi male and female students at Albaha University?

Literature Review

Defining L2 Demotivation

Motivation empowers language learners with the desire and interest in learning an L2 and the determination to continue developing their language learning in the future. Dörnyei (1998) stated that competent skillful learners are incapable of attaining the required learning objectives without having the necessary amount of motivation to continue their learning successfully.

Among other factors in L2 learning, motivation is a crucial component for success in second language learning due to that it encourages learners to do their best to enhance their learning. But, a number of scholars have changed their direction toward L2 demotivation which is the lack of enthusiasm and motivation (e.g. Cheng, 2012; Kikuchi, 2015; Koelsch, 2006) toward language learning. Dörnyei (2001) gives a perfect definition of demotivation as a disinterest and losing of one's motivation due to the influence of external factors which lead to a change in behavior and activity (Falout and Maruyama, 2004).

Language learning motivation definition is agreed upon by TESOL and L2 scholars. On the other hand, Dörnyei (2001a) defines demotivation as "specific external forces that reduce or diminish the motivational basis of a behavioral intention or an ongoing action". Thus, demotivation could be regarded as the counterpart or the opposite of motivation. This is similar to emotives which could be considered as the negative meaning of motives. In addition, an L2 learner who is found demotivated is the one who has become uninterested in language learning for sometimes unclear causes. This negative attitude toward L2 learning can be caused by many demotivation sources among which an unsuccessful learning experience which may become disappointing and less encouraging to ESL/EFL learners.

Demotivation factors can be divided into internal and external factors which eventually lead to L2 learner's loss of motivation. Dörnyei (2001b) states that internal factors include variables like reduced self-confidence and negative attitudes towards foreign language learning as sources of demotivation and external factors like text book/reference, book-related issues, teachers' personalities, etc. That's to

say the internal factors relate to the learners which result in discouraging feelings and attitudes toward language learning, while external factors are the outside sources of L2 demotivation including their teachers, curricula and language learning classroom settings (Jomairi, 2011). In this respect, having great importance for learning goals, the motivation is to be sustained and reinforced by preventing demotivating factors from daily classrooms (Quadir, 2017).

In addition, demotivation does not mean that language learners completely lose their motivation to learn the target language. That's to say, the constituents that build up L2 learners' positive orientation and motivation to language learning can still be there and positive motives may be noticeable in learners attempts to learn the language (Jomairi, 2011). Under other conditions, demotivation may lead to a total loss of motivation as for example, frequent unsuccessful learning experiences and situations like teachers' unfriendly comments and remarks that may help develop demotivational practices on the part of the language learners. Hereof, Dörnyei and Ushioda (2013) denote that negative discouraging language learning involvement and participation may be the direct reason for language learners' demotivation and lack of interest in language learning process. The topic of demotivation is a relatively new one in the domain of ESL/EFL and its impact on L2 learning has been infrequently investigated in academic research. Therefore, pertinent previous studies are not so many. And so, the researcher introduces the findings of some relevant experimental studies on the exploration of L2 demotivation factors/dimensions as far as multiple ESL/EFL classroom settings are concerned.

Previous Studies on L2 Demotivation

Study findings on L2 motivation explored its effect on numerous language related variables, but most of them studied the relationship between motivation and success or failure in the language learning process (Zareian & Jodaei, 2015; Dörnyei, 2001b; Rehman & Bilal, 2014.). Contrarily, demotivation and its relationship with closely related language learning topics has not been extensively studied in different L2 classroom settings (Kikuchi & Sakai, 2009a; Dörnyei, 2001; Meshkat & Hassani,

2012; Mohammadi, 2014; Kim & Seo, 2012). Also a number of studies have made attempts to decide factors of ESL/EFL demotivation and found out some them which can influence language learner's motivation just as age, gender, culture, (Mori & Gobel, 2006; Kormos & Csizér, 2008). A review of pertinent significant study findings will be elaborated on below.

Trang Tran and Richard Baldauf (2007) investigated demotivation of tertiary EFL learners in Vietnam and focused on the reasons, the demotivators, degree of influence of different demotivators and students' experiences and efforts to conquer their demotivation. They used retrospective essays submitted by 100 tertiary students about their EFL learning experiences. The study results showed that demotivation was an important topic in EFL learning, and they proposed a plan for examining the various sources of demotivation. They also reported that a number of demotives to foreign language learning appeared more often than the others, but none of them seemed be more or less problematic to overthrow. Instead, EFL learner's consciousness of the importance of English language for their future and their persistence to succeed were crucial factors to put an end to demotivation.

AL-Khairi (2013) in his study attempted to find out EFL learners demotivation factors. The result indicated that text books, faculty member attitudes, roles and behaviors, relationship with classmates, methods of teaching English, unsatisfactory application of technology in teaching, difficult English vocabulary and grammar were regarded as the demotivating factors by the Saudi University under graduates in EFL learning. In addition, in order to explore EFL Arab high school students' demotivation to learn the target language Keblawi's study (2006) consisted of 294 EFL Arab learners randomly chosen from 6 public high schools. The findings clarified that if EFL learners negatively consider factors such as EFL teachers, classroom environment, and text books, they can be less interested in learning the language.

In line with this, Kikuchi and Sakai (2001) in their study examined potential factors of demotivation of EFL Japanese students in high school English classes. The randomly chosen 112 participants were

required to give their responses to a web-enabled questionnaire. The researchers utilized a principal axis factor analysis to identify five language learning demotivation factors. They included course books, inappropriate school facilities, language test scores, uncommunicative methods, and teaching styles. The study results denoted that there was a statistically significant difference among the five factors. They came up with that their respondents regarded the factor of insufficient school facilities to be less demotivating than the other four factors. Currently, in the domain of TESOL and applied linguistics 'remotivation' has been presented, which means the procedures and steps that can help language learners regain their motivation to L2 learning (Falout et al., 2009).

Moreover, in a study by Bednarova (2011) he examined the consequences of demotivation on ESL learners' interest in learning English. The significance of this study is in that it attempted to identify demotivation sources as conceived by the learners through presenting their language learning experiences and their role in losing motivation and the steps to get rid of demotivation. The researcher adopted the qualitative approach in the data collection phase. Thus, the analysis of 54 ESL learners' essays indicated that demotivation was problematic to those learners as it badly influenced learners' motivation and interest in L2 learning. In addition, it was shown that external factors were regarded as more demotivating than internal ones and ESL teachers were thought of to be the primary cause of demotivation as reported by the language learners.

Prior to the aforementioned pertinent studies, Dörnyei (1998) examined foreign language demotivation sources and classified the factors into 9 groups. They included teachers' characters, competence, teaching styles, inappropriate school facilities, insufficient self-confidence, detrimental attitudes toward foreign language learning, mandatory foreign language study, conflict with an other foreign language being studied and pressure from peer groups.

Maryam Meshkat and Masoumeh Hassani (2011) studied EFL learners demotivation factors for language learning. They distributed a demotivation

questionnaire among 421 high school students in Iran. The study came up with the findings that students perceived the factors of shortage in school facilities, giving priority to grammar, long reading comprehension passages and the insistence on producing correct English sentences in class as significant demotivating sources. They also considered the factors of learning contents and materials and teachers' competence and teaching styles as bearable sources of language learning demotivation. Finally, there were statistically significant differences between male and female EFL students in their perceptions of EFL demotivating factors in general and with regard to the factors of learning contents and materials and teachers' competence and teaching styles in particular.

Nevertheless, Esra ERDOĞAN and Mehmet TUNAZ (2012) explored internal and external factors of Turkish EFL learners at Pozanti Regional Primary Boarding School (YİBO). In order to investigate the causes of language learners' demotivation, they administered a questionnaire consisting of 5-point Likert Scale, open-ended questions, observations and interviews. They also prepared a lesson plan for 8 hours English lesson that was different from the school English book. This study is not a detailed one to offer recommendations and suggested solutions to EFL learners demotivation problem because that the period of implementation was limited. Yet, it might indicate that ESL/EFL teachers can help learners replace their negative attitudes with positive ones toward language learning without doing too much in class but not in a simple magical way.

In this regard, Ikeno (2002) studied language learners internal and external demotivating factors that can make L2 learners lose interest in learning and using the target language. The study results stated that the primary demotivating factors were internal ones such as students' inability to control what they were learning, lack of self-confidence in their ability English language ability and external factors included incompetent language teachers and language classes that only prepared them for the final exams.

Reyhaneh Ghadirzadeh et al., (2012) studied the influential demotivation factors of EFL Iranian tertiary students. The study participants were 260 EFL

randomly selected university students (150 males and 110 females) who gave their responses to the Demotivation Questionnaire for English Language Learning (DQELL) that was written in Persian. The researchers utilized the principal component analysis to decide DQELL's factorial validity and the multivariate analysis of variance was performed in order to make a comparison between highly motivated EFL students and less motivated ones depending on demotivation factors. The researchers used the principal axis factor analysis and took out five demotivation factors: (a) perceiving oneself as incompetent, (b) insufficient intrinsic motivation, (c) inadequate teaching methods and course contents, (d) in appropriate campus facilities and (e) insisting on incomprehensible grammar. The study findings indicated that there were statistically significant differences between male and female groups in two factors (perceiving oneself as incompetent and lack of insufficient intrinsic motivation). But, no statistically significant differences were found in the other three factors of EFL demotivation (inadequate teaching methods and course contents, inappropriate campus facilities and insisting on incomprehensible grammar). These findings came up with that not only external factors, but also internal ones should be given careful examination as factors of demotivation that can make EFL Iranian students lose interest in learning the target language.

Tsuchiya (2006) in his study examined the factors of demotivation of a number of EFL low-level learners. In this regard, he identified nine factors/demotivators which included English teachers, classroom environment, English curricula, a negative attitude toward the English community, lack of positive attitude toward English language, insufficient self-confidence, negative group attitude, the lack of positive English-speaking models and ways of learning.

In a study by Sundqvist and Olin (2013), they attempted to identify EFL teachers' reactions to demotivated learners in their language classrooms in Sweden. They also tried to identify the difficulties EFL teachers encounter in their endeavor to connect between English as a foreign language and that used outside school context. Although Swedish EFL learners' performance was satisfactory as

far as international evaluations were considered, but reports clarified that in some cases students never used English in classrooms and a number of EFL teachers reacted negatively to that and never changed their methods of teaching or classroom activities to satisfy the needs and requirements of their students. Moreover, they did not consider the learners' abilities and use of English outside classrooms which eventually made those learners less motivated to language learning because of the mismatch between English language taught at school and in their daily life situations. In response to this, Sundqvist and Olin recommended that EFL teachers should be given training on how to enhance and improve their teaching methods in order to react positively to demotivated EFL learners to increase their motivation toward learning the target language. The researchers distributed a questionnaire among the teachers after they were given training to investigate its effect on their teaching performance and standards. Many teachers gave examples of the approaches they used to enhance their EFL teaching standards and strategies. These methods and teaching methods could be useful for increasing students' involvements and overcoming their demotivation to foreign language learning (Ushioda, 2013, as cited in Sundqvist & Olin, 2013). Thus, it could be concluded that when EFL/ESL teachers are given guidance and training on how to modify their teaching methods, experiences and standards, they will be more motivated which can later on help their students overcome the factors that negatively influence their ESL/EFL learning motivation.

Furthermore, dimensions/factors related to L2 learners themselves could also be considered as primary causes for language learning demotivation. In this context, a study by Trang and Balduaf (2007) indicated that dimensions just as insufficient self-regard, failure experiences and negative conceptions about ELL as potential causes for learner-based demotivation. Specifically, L2 learners' experiences of failure were told to be the most influential internal factor. They had the feeling that their unsuccessful attempts to progress in their past classes made them incapable of keeping up with their classmates because of the big difference in L2 knowledge. Therefore, they were unable to match up with the current lessons and

became less motivated/demotivated. On the other hand, some other students who had negative stances about English showed that English was difficult to learn due to difficulties in pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar. These students could not keep their interest in language learning and so they eventually became demotivated.

Indifferent to the aforementioned findings which stressed the impact of teacher-based factors on increasing ESL/EFL learners' demotivation Sakai and Kikuchi (2009) in their study introduced new results. Most of the studies in language learning demotivation investigated the difference in demotivational dimensions/factors between high and low achievers in L2 learning and practice. However, Sakai and Kikuchi (2009) in their study tried to find out demotivational factors of both motivated and less motivated EFL learners. It was found that the two groups of learners considered factors such as insufficient practice of English language, unfamiliar uninteresting topics in course books and their failure or low scores on tests as the most significant factors/dimensions which remarkably took part in their lack of motivation to EFL learning and practice. Students' low scores on tests factor was assumed by the scholars as relating to L2 learner experiences of failures. Moreover, those students who were less motivated in the present study reported that insufficient intrinsic motivation and low-test scores as sources of their language learning demotivation. These findings reinforced the hypothesis that not only external factors such as teacher-related sources, but also internal ones including intrinsic motivation and EFL/ESL learners' experiences with failure can have notable influences on language learning demotivation.

Before Sakai and Kikuchi (2009) there were some other previous studies that had also found out that teacher-related factors might not be considered the most important factors that can result in L2 learners' demotivation. In a study by Rudnai (1996) she administered interviews with ESL secondary students to investigate the reasons behind their lack of interest in learning the target language. She came up with that learners' demotivation was primarily attributed to problems reported by the learners such as insufficient self-confidence due to unsuccessful

past learning experiences and classroom environment issues. In another study by Falout & Maruyama (2004) they distributed an L2 demotivation questionnaire to tertiary students and they found out that both the less proficient and the more proficient students and in appropriate self-confidence were the most remarkable sources of language learning demotivation. In connection with this, Kojima (2004) examined sources of demotivation among high school students and found out that intrinsic motivations such as L2 learner levels of proficiency affected demotivation to a big degree.

In addition, Xaypanya et al. (2017) examined demotivation dimensions/factors in EFL undergraduate students in Laos and the findings were surprising evident in terms of learner-related influences. Five dimensions of demotivation in the survey questionnaire were introduced and investigated, i.e., foreign language anxiety, inability to perform linguistic accuracy, curriculum-related issues, insufficient resources and negative attitudes towards the learning circumstances. Particularly, the researchers came up with that the most noticeable dimension/factor of demotivation was that of anxiety towards foreign language learning. Xaypanya et al. (2017) affirm their findings through making clear that other scholars such as Horwitz (2016) and Gardner (2009) proposed that FL anxiety was a frequent negative psychosocial midst EFL learners. Therefore, the more FL learners' self-awareness increases, the more foreign language anxious they can be as a consequence. As a result, anxiety issues can be regarded as an additional cause of demotivation factors related to language learners themselves.

Song and Kim (2017) in their study investigated EFL learners' sources of demotivation and found out that out of the many categories that were discovered and studied in their paper, the researchers used the attribution category as FL learners' self-confidence, EFL learning experiences and the ability to put plans into action. Specifically, it was mentioned that learners' conceptions of their learning experiences represented a remarkable factor in their language learning demotivation. That's to say, respondents reported that when they got low test scores or when they made mistakes in language examinations, they had the feeling of inferiority to their classmates

and it consequently resulted in an increase in FL demotivation. Also, when they couldn't get admitted to an English high school, which learners believed to be more superior, demotivation also occurred. Consequently, a number of learner-related factors including language learning experiences and their self-worth were highly connected to their test scores and performance. Therefore, some EFL/ESL learners might experience an endless instances L2 demotivation due to the prolonged effect of past unsuccessful language learning experiences (e.g. Lamb, 2011, as cited in Lamb, 2017). Differently, some research findings reported that there were also learners who were obviously un influenced by their unsatisfactory language classroom experiences (e.g. Campbell & Storch, 2011, as cited in Lamb 2017).

Basically, the researcher thinks that it would be practical to consider every identified reason for demotivation as a case-dependent setting and not over-generalize the results to various classroom contexts because of the changeable and complicated nature of demotivation. With regard to, the study findings which confirmed the role of teacher-related effects on L2 learning demotivation, the researcher recommends that extended sustainable professional development of the teachers is excessively important. The researcher acknowledges Sundqvist and Olin (2013) in that proactive measures and constructive approaches could be influential in overcoming the problem of demotivation amidst EFL learners. When EFL/ESL teachers are able to exploit their learners' learning potentials (zones of proximal development), (e.g. Lantolf & Thorne, 2006, 2008), they can help them learn better in an attempt to reduce the gap between ideal language performance and an acceptable one (as cited in Sundqvist & Olin, 2013). In addition, they could satisfy the learners' needs who do not have many opportunities to practice the target language outside through guiding them to use extracurricular online language activities. Language teachers should be able to realize how social media constitute L2 learners' attitudes in order to be aware of the recent technologies that can make their teaching more effective. Besides, continuous teachers' professional development makes them feel more relaxed and competent to successfully deal with language learners' demotivation in daily classroom

settings. While changing teaching methods can be a tedious and long process, it could have potentially positive and lasting effects on learner demotivation.

Additionally, in a study by Renandya (2015) he introduced a number of suggestions about the ways teachers could put stress on the 5 Ts of motivation i.e., T1 = Teacher, T2 = Teaching Methodology, T3 = Text, T4 = Task and T5 = Test, to increase students' focus on their learning. He proposed that ESL/EFL teachers should be able to reflect on classroom-related dimensions/factors that they can control and be accountable for motivating students in a variety of ways. The teacher (T1) should be an influential role model and be considerate and caring for the needs and requirements of language learners. Teachers should be acquainted with various methods of teaching (T2) and be experienced in lesson planning and motivating students by adopting different language teaching methods, offering them opportunities and choices, and enriching class lessons with inquiry and innovation. The process of text choice (T3) or teaching materials should be adequately launched at the appropriate levels for language learners so as to increase their involvement in the contents introduced in classroom contexts. Language learning tasks (T4) should be prepared with measurable language learning outcomes and be ideally demanding and attractive to the learners. finally, instead of traditional high-pressure testing (T5), the teacher should merge learning with learner-friendly assessments such as project work and portfolios in order to help students overcome their anxiety and develop their intrinsic motivation. With the successful management of the 5 Ts, the teacher can encourage a more contributive and promoting learning environment for ESL/EFL learners and help cut down learner demotivation.

Later, concerning controlling demotivation sources that are learner centered, language learners could be given help by ESL/EFL teachers in devising ways to improve their own learning. In a study by Song and Kim (2017), they proposed that students' adoption of more influential study habits could enable them to control the anxiety of exams which in turn might decrease their L2 learning demotivation. Moreover, language learners could also be directed to set their own objectives and develop positive attitudes toward second or foreign language learning.

In line with this, Sakai and Kikuchi (2009) also suggested that learners have meaningful language learning experiences by inspiring them by their ESL/EFL teachers to set practical targets for their tests so as to lessen the effect of unsatisfactory test results on demotivation. Similarly, according to Kim et al. (2018), effective goal setting for EFL learners is correlated with developing resilience and tenacity. The researchers found that explicit goal-setting increased resilience, while clear and specific goals increased motivation in L2. That's to say, EFL learners have trouble staying motivated their learning objectives are unclear and their relevance or value is not well understood by them which may result in low resilience and increased demotivation. Moreover, language learners' determination which is their persistence when they experience demotivational situations, is also necessary for reducing demotivation sooner or later. Thus, it would be rational to propose that language teachers could do their best to help learners have control over their own learning endeavors by using effective learning strategies so as to successfully overcome or lessen their demotivation to learn and use the target language.

Method

Quantitative-qualitative approach (mixed method) has been adopted as the approach of the current study which aims to investigate Saudi EFL male and female university students' standpoints on demotivation and to find if there are statistical significant differences between the two genders in that nonlinguistic variable which hinders their successful EFL learning and decreases learning outcomes.

Participants

For gathering data, a modified version of Sakai and Kikuchi (2008) Questionnaire of Demotivation of English Language Learners (DQELL) was administered by the researcher to randomly selected 30 Saudi male EFL students and 30 females from third year Foreign Languages Department at Faculty of Arts and Humanities of Albaha University in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in 2022. The reason behind choosing participants of the study from third

year students is that they have been studying at the Department for two years now and they are expected to have high levels of motivation and low levels of demotivation due to their exposure and study of content area courses in English language and literature major (Rahman, 2005; Wachob, 2006).

Procedures

Pilot Study

The original version of DQELL contains 35 items and is designed to survey foreign language learners' demotivation in five factors: Learning contents and materials, Teachers' competence and teaching styles, Inadequate college facilities, Lack of intrinsic motivation and Test scores. The modified version of DQELL included 23 items as some items have been reworded and others deleted as the researcher thought that they were not suitable for the nature of the environment of the study and to develop better communication with the students. It was administered to a randomly selected group of 60 EFL male and female students chosen from third year Foreign Languages Department students for the pilot study of the demotivation questionnaire to statistically determine its validity and reliability.

Table 1 Validity of DQELL Inventory Matrix of Correlation Between Demotivation Dimensions

Dim.	Pearson Correlation
A: Learning contents and materials	.713*
B: Teachers' competence and teaching styles	.682*
C: Inadequate college facilities	.732*
E: Lack of intrinsic motivation	.721*
F: Test scores	.677*
* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).	

The above table (Table 1) shows that all DQELL dimensions totaling five positively correlate with each other at 0.01 levels which clarifies that the demotivation questionnaire is statistically valid for administration to the subject of the study totaling 60 students who were randomly selected from third year English department students. Accurate analysis of a

questionnaire would require administering the scale to a pilot sample and running correlations between response scores obtained by each person on each item and the scores obtained by each person across the whole scale. As the correlation between an item score and the total score rises, it indicates a stronger relationship between what the item is measuring and what the total scale is measuring (Brunner, Schraw, Ronning; 2004). The internal validity coefficient was computed by Pearson Formula (Freedman, et. Al, 2007) to show the correlation between the score of every single statement to the total scores of the questionnaire using SPSS (version 18).

Table 2 Reliability of DQELL Inventory

Cronbach's Alpha	No. of Items
.883	23

In the above table (Table 2) the total reliability of DQELL was calculated using Alpha Cronbach coefficient and its value was .883 which means the DQELL demotivation questionnaire which is the instrument of the current study is of high reliability. Thus, DQELL is statistically valid and reliable for administration to investigate the subjects' standpoints on demotivation to learn English as a Foreign Language (EFL).

Results

Table 3 The Most and Least Demotivating Dimensions for Saudi EFL Male and Female University Students

Gender	Dimension	Mean	Std	F	Sig
Male	A: Learning contents and materials b	2.88	0.58	15.62	0.000**
	B: Teachers' competence and teaching styles a	2.51	0.71		
	C: Inadequate college facilities c	3.54	0.92		
	D: Lack of intrinsic motivation a	2.25	0.58		
	E: Test scores a	2.48	0.65		
Female	A: Learning contents and materials	3.15	0.40	1.24	0.297
	B: Teachers' competence and teaching styles	2.98	0.55		
	C: Inadequate college facilities	3.27	0.76		
	D: Lack of intrinsic motivation	2.94	0.47		
	E: Test scores	3.02	0.95		

The above table(3) shows that there are statistically significant differences at (0.000) level among EFL Saudi male students' standpoints or views on language learning demotivation in DQELLA: Learning contents and materials, B: Teachers' competence and teaching styles, C: Inadequate college facilities, D: Lack of intrinsic motivation and E: Test scores. The statistical procedure used is Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) test to find out if there is a statistically significant difference within a group or between two or more categorical groups by testing for differences of means using variance (Simkus, 2022). In addition, the results indicate that the most dimensions EFL male students at Albaha University, KSA attribute their demotivation to EFL learning are A: Learning contents and materials (M 2.88) and C: Inadequate college facilities (M 3.45).

It has also been found out that the least dimensions they relate their language learning demotivation to are B: Teachers' competence and teaching styles (M 2.51),D: Lack of intrinsic motivation (M 2.25) and E: Test scores (M 2.48). With regard to EFL female students, there are not statistically significant differences (0.297) among their standpoints or views on demotivation to learn English as a foreign language in DQELL five dimensions: A, B, C, D and E. The most DQELL dimension they relate their EFL learning demotivation to is C: Inadequate college facilities (M 3.267) and the least dimensions reported by them are A: Learning contents and materials (M 3.15), B: Teachers' competence and teaching styles (M 2.298), D: Lack of intrinsic motivation (M 2.94) and E: Test scores (N 3.02). So, these descriptive and inferential statistical results and explanations

give an answer to the first question of the current study ‘ Which dimensions/factors are the most and least demotivating for Saudi EFL male and female university students?’. Both EFL male and female students at Albaha University, KSA consider college facilities as a demotivating factor which decreases their interest in foreign language learning and male learners only regard learning contents and materials as one of the most dimensions/factors, they relate their disinterest in the target language to. Therefore, more attention should be given to these weaknesses through choosing the college facilities suitable for learners at the Department of Foreign Languages at Faculty of Arts and Humanities of Albaha University. Also, there should be a curriculum development unit at the Department so as to update the learning contents and materials to satisfy the learners’ needs and expectations and to increase their motivation to learn and major in English language. On the other hand, EFL Saudi male students regard teacher competence and teaching styles, lack of intrinsic motivation and test scores dimensions/factors as the least demotivating factors while females consider learning contents and materials, teacher’s competence and teaching styles, lack of intrinsic motivation and test scores as the least demotivating factors. The researcher thinks that these dimensions/factors are still demotivating to EFL learning but less than the most demotivating ones considered by male and female EFL students at Albaha University. Therefore, these dimensions/factors also need revision, monitoring and development in an endeavor to enhance male and female students’ motivation to language learning and to decrease their disinterest and demotivation in order to increase their language learning outcomes. That’s because insufficient motivation, even EFL/ESL learners who have remarkable language learning skills are unable to achieve long-term objectives, never results in satisfactory students’ language performance and accomplishment. Moreover, the suitable curricula and the outstanding teaching style cannot alone enhance the performance of language learners without improving learners’ motivation and decreasing their demotivating factors. High motivation can compensate for notable ineffectiveness both in the target language competence and learning

circumstances (Delos Reyes & Torio, 2020). Since Learning Contents and Materials, and College Facilities were the most demotivating factors in this study, more research should be done to enhance the quality of the contents and materials and the college facilities to such an extent that increases EFL male and female students’ motivation at the Department of Foreign Languages at Faculty of Arts and Humanities of Albaha University, KSA to learn English as a foreign language.

On this subject, Chili Li (2021) explained the findings of a qualitative inquiry on language learning demotivation among 14 Chinese EFL learners based on the principles of Activity Theory. Semi-structured interviews were administered to the sample of the study in the data collection process. The researcher used the qualitative content analysis approach and found out that demotivation to foreign language learning was an apparent phenomenon among the participants of the study. They reported a group the most and least demotivating dimensions including subject-mediated, rule-mediated, community-mediated, tool-mediated, and labor-of-division-mediated factors. The study findings assure that L2 demotivation results from the conflicting relationship among the aforementioned factors in the activity system and is a construct which is socially mediational, which means that Chinese tertiary EFL students need support and reinforcement to decrease and control their demotivation to language learning. The results clarified the formulating mechanism of L2 demotivation and offer practical procedures for overcoming the negative influence of demotivation in the context of Chinese EFL learning.

Similarly, Vaklifard et al., (2020) and others confirm that language learners’ motivation is greatly considered as one of the primary factors affecting the speed, success and failure language learning. Contrarily, demotivation is thought of as the opposite face of motivation, which can have detrimental negative effects on language learning. The purpose of their study was to find out what factors could weaken Persian language learners’ performance in the classroom. In addition, the frequency and order of importance of demotivating factors were investigated to discover which factors had the greatest impact, as well as their relationship

with the gender and educational level of the students. To achieve the goals of the study, approximately one hundred students were required to fill out a questionnaire that consisted of background questions about the gender, age, research level and nationality of the participants based on which five motivational factors were determined. The results showed that although there were no significant differences between male and female participants on some motivational factors, significant differences were found between students of different educational levels on some other motivational factors. The results of this study seem to be helpful to teachers of Persian language teaching centers for non-Iranian students, and Persian language departments at different universities by introducing them to factors of demotivation to language learning. Clarifying the factors of demotivation and exploring the primary reasons will improve students' performance in learning Persian.

In this regard, Noveen Javed and Mamuna Ghani (2019) in their study attempted to identify ESL learners' attitudes toward factors of demotivation to learn English vocabulary. So as to discover the factors which influence ESL learners' vocabulary learning and to find out the difference between male and female learners' stances on the factors of demotivation in their attempts to master vocabulary of the target language. The subjects of the study were 300 male and female ESL learners. The study data was gathered from a questionnaire and written remarks of participants. Quantitative and qualitative approaches were adopted to analyze the data obtained. Based on the study results, various factors were found out as demotivating in vocabulary learning by ESL male and female learners. The demotivation factors reported by male and female learners notably vary in both genders. The difference between male and female respondents' attitudes toward different demotivating factors related to classroom was highly significant. In the light of these findings, the researcher suggests several recommendations for ESL learners and teachers. In their study male and female ESL learners indicated different most and least important demotivating factors which negatively affect their L2 learning and increase their disinterest in the target language which resulted in a decrease in their language learning outcomes.

In connection with this, regarding second language acquisition, researchers have found some evidence of gender differences in motivation and demotivation. For example, Zareian and Jodaei suggest that female language learners' performance is significantly enhanced in direct contact with second language learners, integration skills, and cultural interests (Zareian & Jodaei, 2015). In Japan, Mori and Gobel wanted to examine gender differences in motivation. The sample included 453 sophomores from Japan who took part in the study. The researchers investigated female learners were more interested to know about the culture and the people of the target language and were keener to have foreign friends and more motivated to travel and study abroad than the L2 male students who participated in the study. These results propose that gender might affect motivation and demotivation to learn use and communicate with people from the target community (Mori & Gobel, 2006).

Moreover, the Croatian researchers Koludrović and Ercegovac (2013) studied L2 learners' goal orientation with regard to differences in age and gender in addition to the potential relationship between language learning motivation and demotivation and academic performance. The study sample consisted of 650 male and female ESL students from primary and secondary schools. The study findings revealed significant gender differences. ESL Female students significantly outperformed male students in task commitment, dedication, caring for others, and belonging. On the other side, ESL male significantly surpassed their female counterparts in competition, control and rewards. Accordingly, it was summed up that female had more intrinsic motivation than male students. Also, it was reported that both ESL male and female students' negative attitudes to learn the target language were considerably different. Both genders connected their demotivation to learn English as a second language to different factors and reasons based on their stances on ESL learning which is a finding that needs further research efforts and investigation.

In contrast, Yousef BABA KHOUYA (2018) in his study examined EFL learners' demotivation to language learning in the Moroccan context. To that end, he used two adopted instruments which

included a questionnaire and a writing test. The sample of the study were 201 baccalaureate students (second year) from six secondary schools, 84 were males and 117 were females. He made a qualitative analysis of the gathered data through frequency distribution and percentages, Cross-tabulation, Chi-Square Tests, Independent Samples t-Test, in addition to the statistical significance which was set at the level of 0.05 (95%) for all statistical procedures and interpretations. Six basic findings were found out: (1) students had positive perceptions of themselves as EFL learners; (2) students did not regard English language as a demotivating factor while learning it; (3) students were remarkably positive towards their EFL teachers; (4) crowded language classrooms were the primary demotivators in learning environment, English textbook, and the atmosphere of English classroom; (5) mainly, learning environment was the basic demotivating factor in English language learning; (6) concerning gender, there was no significant difference between EFL males and females as regards the number of demotivating factors that they experienced. The study found out a number of demotivators which made language learning process more difficult and less fruitful and productive. Therefore, demotivation

in ELL is a big problem in the Moroccan context. It requires extensive investigation and a serious attention. Another important implication of his study findings is that EFL male and female learners showed great interest in English language and preferred English to French, Spanish, and German. The implication of this finding is that the attention given to English language in the Moroccan context is not satisfactory. Thus, it has to be equal in importance to French language.

To the present, notwithstanding, there has been relatively few studies on demotivation; most of the studies are about ESL/EFL motivation dimensions/factors in the process of learning and teaching. Though some studies (Aydin, 2012; Mendez Lopez, 2017; Meshkat & Hassani, 2012) have been done on ESL/EFL demotivation factors, the number of studies which have been conducted to investigate the relationship between demotivation factors and gender in EFL learning in KSA is few. Thus, the current study aims to identify both Saudi EFL male female university students' least and most dimensions/factors they relate their demotivation to and to find out whether the differences between male and female students' demotivational dimensions/factors are statistically significant or not.

Table 4 Difference between EFL Male and Female Students' Standpoints on Language Learning Demotivation

DQELL Dimensions	Group	N	Mean	S.D	t-value	Sig. level
A: Learning contents and materials	Male	30	2.88	0.58	2.10*	0.042*
	Female	30	3.15	0.40		
B: Teachers' competence and teaching styles	Male	30	2.51	0.71	2.90*	0.005**
	Female	30	2.98	0.55		
C: Inadequate college facilities	Male	30	3.54	0.92	1.26	0.212
	Female	30	3.27	0.76		
D: Lack of intrinsic motivation	Male	30	2.25	0.58	5.05*	0.000**
	Female	30	2.94	0.47		
E: Test scores	Male	30	2.48	0.65	2.54*	0.014*
	Female	30	3.02	0.95		
(*)significant at the 0.05 level		(**) significant at the 0.01 level				

The above table (Table 4) indicates that there are statistically significant differences at (0.05) level between EFL Saudi male and female students' standpoints on demotivation to EFL learning in DQELL dimension A: Learning contents and

materials. in favor of female students (Sig = 0.042*). There are also statistically significant differences at (0.01) level between EFL male and female Albaha University students' standpoints or views on demotivation to foreign language learning in DQELL

dimension B: Teachers' competence and teaching styles in favor of female ones. (Sig = 0.005**). Contrarily, there are not statistically significant differences between EFL male and female students' standpoints on demotivation to foreign language learning in DQELL dimension C: Inadequate college facilities (Sig = 0.212), while are statistically significant differences at (0.01) level between the standpoints of EFL male and female university students on demotivation to language learning in DQELL dimension D: Lack of intrinsic motivation in favor of female ones (Sig = 0.000**). With regard to DQELL dimension E: Test scores, there are statistically significant differences at (0.05) level between Saudi EFL male and female students in favor of female ones (Sig = 0.014*). Thus, these descriptive and inferential statistical results give an answer to the second question of the current study ' Are there statistically significant differences at (0.05) level in EFL demotivation dimensions/factors between Saudi male and female students at Albaha University?'. EFL female students at Foreign Languages Department at Faculty of Arts and Humanities of Albaha University in KSA consider dimension A: Learning contents and materials as a demotivating factor to foreign language learning more than male ones and also the same with dimension B: Teacher competence and teaching styles. These findings shed light on the need to revise and update the course contents taught to EFL male and female students at the Department. These findings also recommend that there should be a teaching and learning development center to train the faculty members to innovations in EFL/ESL classroom teaching. In addition, both males and females equally regard dimension C: Inadequate college facilities as a demotivating factor to EFL learning, which decreases their successful language learning outcomes. This finding in turn draws the attention to necessity to equip Faculty of Arts and Humanities with the necessary facilities that might help enhance EFL male and female students' motivation to learn and master the target language. Moreover, female students' standpoints on DQELL dimension D: Lack of intrinsic motivation as a demotivating factor to language learning outperform those of male EFL learners which requires instructors at the Department to use teaching and learning

strategies and activities which make learning English enjoyable and promising. Instructors should encourage male and female EFL students to use positive self-talk and guided self-evaluation, together with assuring mastery of certain objectives. They should also set higher but achievable objectives for EFL learners to improve language performance. Knowing and comprehending the target language culture and civilization incrementally takes part in language learning development. Furthermore, an ESL/EFL classroom should be an enjoying, attracting place where communicative language learning activities are prominent and language anxiety is minimum, and language learners have access to a variety of practice opportunities. EFL Instructors at the Department of Foreign Languages at Faculty of Arts and Humanities of Albaha University should offer their male and female students interesting and cooperative learning environment that increases self-esteem, motivation and interest in the target language. For example, repeated readings in small groups and role-play activities improve verbal skills. Moreover, it arouses curiosity, which is necessary for increasing motivation and making EFL learning fun (Yustina, Halim & Mahadi, , 2020). Finally, female students' standpoints on DQELL dimension E: Test scores as a demotivating factor to language learning surpass those of male EFL learners. They can overcome their demotivation caused by low EFL test scores by clarifying that getting low scores in an English exam does not mean that they fail in learning English, but this can be corrected later on. In addition, increasing male and female EFL students' confidence and encouraging them to realize the privilege of majoring in English language in KSA and abroad might help them from being disinterested and demotivated by the low EFL test scores. Generally, it can be concluded that offering learners a relaxing supportive learning environment where learners are not afraid of getting low scores and be aware of the value of language learning can reduce the learners' demotivation (Arada, 2018; Evans & Tragant, 2020). It is supposed that the results of the current study might be helpful for both ESL/EFL learners and teachers in having insights into possible approaches to decrease demotivation and increase and enhance motivation to language learning.

In line with this, Petra Krčelić (2017) in her study examined EFL motivation and demotivation of English language learners at the University of Applied Sciences in Croatia. She clarified, through the previous pertinent studies, that the requirements of the job market made learners learn the target language mainly for practical reasons. (They consider English language as necessary for their future)), i.e., they see English as an international language. With regard to demotivation, two sets of factors should be extensively studied and investigated: extrinsic (teacher, course materials) and intrinsic (attitudes, self-esteem). University of Applied Sciences Baltazar Zaprešić. The objective of her study is to find out whether there are gender differences in EFL motivation and demotivation among the aforementioned subjects of the study or not and to explain them in detail. This survey study examined potential gender differences in language learning motivation and demotivation of EFL students at a Croatian university. The results indicated that EFL male and female learners learn the target language as it is the language, they can speak anywhere they go in the world. Moreover, Item-level statistical analysis clarified that female learners had a greater desire to travel abroad than male ones. To the contrary, both EFL male and female students at the University showed that the teacher's competence and teaching styles were the main source of their demotivation to learn the target language. Regarding the other demotivating factors, more male learners considered the content of the course to be too easy and more female learners thought that they were shy to speak English in front of other students in the class.

In accordance with this, Turgay Han (2019) and others in their study investigated the primary demotivating factors influencing Turkish EFL tertiary students' language learning process and revealed the methods students use to overcome these negative feelings from their own points of view. The study sample was 469 first and second year Turkish EFL university students. The scholars used quantitative and qualitative approaches in the data collection process. They started with administering a demotivation questionnaire (Sakai & Kikuchi, 2009) to the participants and conducted face-to-face interviews with some of the students. They

performed descriptive and inferential statistics on the quantitative data, and at the same time they used coding and classifying approach in order to analyze the qualitative data gathered from the interviews. Interpretation of the quantitative results indicated that there are significant differences between female and male students in terms of the factors of characteristics of classes and experiences of failure. Qualitative findings indicated that major factors that demotivate students are negative attitudes of the classmates, teacher-related factors, personal issues, class characteristics, test anxiety, failure experiences, and education system in favor of the female students. Furthermore, EFL male and female Turkish university students reported that the strategies they adopted to avoid demotivating experiences were self-studying, asking for assistance, changing perspective, thinking positively, ignoring what others think, and being goal oriented. The study ended up with that the results might be helpful for both EFL learners and teachers in selecting successful managing strategies to avoid demotivating experiences in foreign language learning.

Contrarily, Muhonen (2004) in his study tried to find out the factors of demotivation and their potential relationships with gender and level of performance in EFL learning. He analyzed the content of the writing samples of 91 ninth graders and clarified the following factors: (1) the teacher, (2) learning material, (3) learner characteristics, (4) school environment and (5) student's attitude towards English. The study results made clear that while nearly half of the students the EFL teacher was reported as the most important factor of demotivation, the difference, based on χ^2 analysis, was not significant between EFL male and female students. The study results of the relationship between demotivating factors and students' grade proposed that the teacher was the primary demotivating factor for all grades, especially for language students with excellent grades. In addition, EFL learner's attitude towards the English language was exclusively remarkable among students with acceptable grades. Another notable remark in Muhonen's (2004) study was his adoption of mixed methods of analysis (both qualitative and quantitative), which resulted in more precise and clear findings (Dörnyei, 2003). On the

other hand, because of the absence of a statistical verification of the dissimilarities and differences in the factors of demotivation between EFL male and female students, the results cannot be generalized.

Unsuccessful foreign language learning is usually attributed to demotivation. Jaleh Hassaskhah (2015) and others examined the phenomenon of demotivation and defined its sources within four years of an undergraduate degree programme. In order to do this, relying on the complex dynamic systems perspective of the dynamic systems theories (DSTs), they developed the demotivation test battery and administered it to 308 English major male and female students. The participants were three hundred and eight Iranian English major undergraduate students (82 males and 226 females). They were Iranians and studied English as an EFL at the university level. In an attempt to study the students' motivational change over time, the researchers combined the students of the first and second year of the programme in one group instead of considering four groups for four years of study, and the students of the third and fourth year into another, and examined all at the same time. The results identified three noticeable demotivating constructs: (1) Institution related, (2) Significant others related and (3) Self-related. The institutional construct was the most influential and progressive over time. MANOVA results assured the same pattern, but it was found that the impact was stronger for 3rd- and 4th-year students. In addition, the results did not show statistically significant differences between EFL tertiary male and female Persian students in language learning demotivation. Generally, the current study findings give support for the DSTs and clarify that the broader social context and common discourses of the society are in continuous interaction with the functions and attitudes of the others occurring among that context.

In a recent study, Imam Santos a and Yasir Riady (2021) investigated if gender differences affect the demotivational factors of EFL students of Indonesian college students during the covid-19 pandemic. The survey design was used to test the hypothesis in this study. Based on Kikuchi's qualitative study (in print), this study used a 34-item questionnaire consisting of five categories: (a) textbooks, (b) inadequate

school facilities, (c) test scores, (d) methods non-communicative, and (e) teacher competence and teaching styles) to collect quantitative data. Using random cluster sampling as a sampling technique, the participants were 368 EFL students of Indonesian undergraduate students from private universities in Jakarta. The study results found that gender did not affect demotivating factors on online learning during a pandemic situation. However, the finding indicated that the absence of face-to-face teachers in online learning has a significant impact on demotivating factors in learning English, as the non-communicative approach and teacher performance are the most frequently cited factors. Furthermore, the research result may form the basis for further research on demotivating factors in learning English.

Notwithstanding, in a study aimed to explore the demotivating factors that influence Turkish EFL secondary school and university students Aliakbari and Hemmatizad (2015) found out that there were statistically significant differences between male and female students at (0.05) levels in favor of female ones in the context of four demotivational factors: inadequate school and university facilities, test scores, lack of intrinsic motivation and learning contents and material. Consequently, the study ended up with that female learners were more motivated, as far as the four demotivation factors are concerned, than male students to learn EFL.

Furthermore, Pınar Çankaya (2018) introduces demotivation in the area of SLA and additionally identifies the primary factors responsible for demotivation in EFL learning among male and female tertiary students of a vocational college in Turkey. Demotivation, a neglected area of study in ESL/EFL, is considered a new issue for researchers in language learning and teaching. In this regard, the study aims to explore the essential reasons behind learners' demotivation to learn the target language. in EFL context at a vocational college. To this end a 35-item questionnaire, which was prepared by Sakai and Kikuchi (2009a), was administered to 60 EFL male and female university students. Descriptive statistical results are interpreted so as to reveal the most and the least demotivating factors grouped into 6 main categories such as (a) Class Characteristics (b) Class Environment (c) Experiences of Failure

(d) Lack of Intrinsic Motivation (e) Class Materials and (f) Teacher. The study findings clarified that Teacher Competence was not a very significant reason for demotivation in comparison to Class Characteristics and Class Environment. This study also indicated that learners did not regard Inadequate Class Materials as demotivating. In addition, the results also showed gender differences in the factors they attributed their demotivation to learn English as a foreign language. Eventually, this paper presents the students' own factors responsible for demotivation with an open-ended question in the questionnaire administered to the respondents.

Thus, the results of the present study showed differences between Saudi EFL university male and students and female students in favor of the female ones in demotivation to learn English as a foreign language in the five dimensions of DQELL except for that of 'Inadequate college facilities. It also identified both genders standpoints on demotivation to learn English as a foreign language at the Department of Foreign Languages at Faculty of Arts and Humanities of Albaha University in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Discussion

In the present study, primary factors/dimensions that demotivate Albaha University Saudi EFL male and female students during the process of language learning were examined. This was done utilizing quantitative and qualitative analysis of the data obtained from the administrations of DQELL scale as the instrument of the study. The mixed-method approach was used by the researcher due to the nature of EFL demotivation that requires having a profound examination of its main sources which negatively affect the participants language learning process. Sixty EFL male and female students at Department of Foreign Languages at Faculty of Arts and Humanities of Albaha University in KSA in 2022 represented the sample of the study. For data collection, a modified version of Sakai and Kikuchi (2008) Questionnaire of Demotivation of English Language Learners (DQELL) was conducted by the researcher to randomly selected 30 Saudi male EFL students and 30 females from third year Foreign Languages Department at Faculty of Arts

and Humanities of Albaha University in KSA in 2022. The reason behind choosing participants of the study from third year students is that they have been studying at the Department for two years now and they are expected to have high levels of motivation and low levels of demotivation due to their exposure and study of content area courses in English language and literature (Rahman, 2005; Wachob, 2006). Moreover, data obtained from DQELL showed that the most dimensions EFL male students at Albaha University, KSA relate their demotivation to EFL learning are Learning contents and materials and Inadequate college facilities. It has also been discovered that the least dimensions they connect their language learning demotivation with are Teachers' competence and teaching styles, Lack of intrinsic motivation and Test scores. With regard to female students the most DQELL dimension they consider demotivating to language learning to is Inadequate college facilities and the least dimensions indicated by them are Learning contents and materials, Teachers' competence and teaching styles, Lack of intrinsic motivation and Test scores. Therefore, male and female EFL learners at Albaha University regard College facilities as a demotivating factor/dimension which negatively affects their motivation to foreign language learning, but males consider Learning contents and materials as their most demotivating dimension/factor. So, more efforts should be done to update the facilities at Faculty of arts and Humanities to be convenient for EFL male and female students at Foreign Language Department at at the Department of Foreign Languages at Faculty of Arts and Humanities. In addition, the Department should have a research center responsible for updating the learning contents and materials to meet the needs and requirements of the students. On the contrary, male students consider Teacher competence and teaching styles, Lack of intrinsic motivation and Test scores dimensions/factors as the least demotivating factors and females regard Learning contents and materials, Teacher's competence and teaching styles, Lack of intrinsic motivation and Test scores as the least demotivating factors. The researcher believes that these dimensions/factors are also demotivating to foreign language learning but less than the most demotivating ones reported by males and females.

These factors/dimensions also require correction, examination and enhancement to increase male and female students' motivation to EFL learning. Satisfactory language learning skills alone without the required motivation cannot guarantee successful language learning outcomes. Also, the appropriate curricula and the remarkable teaching style cannot alone develop the language performance without increasing learners' motivation and decreasing their demotivation. Sufficient EFL motivation can make up for dissatisfactory language competence and learning environments (Delos Reyes & Torio, 2020). With regard to the differences between EFL male and female students' views on demotivation the current study results show that there are statistically significant differences between EFL Saudi male and female students' standpoints on demotivation to EFL learning in DQELL dimension A: Learning contents and materials. in favor of female students. There are also statistically significant differences level between EFL male and female Albaha University students' standpoints or views on demotivation to foreign language learning in DELL dimension B: Teachers' competence and teaching styles in favor of female ones. However, there are not statistically significant differences between EFL male and female students' standpoints on demotivation to foreign language learning in DELL dimension C: Inadequate college facilities, while are statistically significant differences between the standpoints of EFL male and female university students on demotivation to language learning in DQELL dimension D: Lack of intrinsic motivation in favor of female ones. With regard to DQELL dimension E: Test scores, there are statistically significant differences between Saudi EFL male and female students in favor of female ones. EFL Saudi female students regard dimension A: Learning contents and materials as demotivating to EFL learning more than male ones and also the same with dimension B: Teacher competence and teaching styles. So, there course contents at the Department need revision and updating and the establishment of teaching and learning development center might also be helpful in training the instructors to innovations in EFL teaching. Also, males and females consider dimension C: Inadequate college facilities as demotivating to EFL

learning, and so Faculty of Arts and Humanities should be provided with all the facilities that might help improve students' motivation to EFL learning and usage. Female students' standpoints on DQELL dimension D: Lack of intrinsic motivation as a demotivating factor to language learning surpass those of male ones and therefore the EFL instructors at the Department are required to use activities which make language learning process an enjoyable experience. They should motivate their students to use strategies such as positive self-talk, guided self-evaluation and anxiety control procedures (Yustina, Halim & Mahadi, 2020). Also, EFL female students' standpoints on DQELL dimension E: Test scores as a demotivating factor to language learning outperform those of male ones. Therefore, those students need to have more self-confidence and realizing how they are lucky to major in English language and literature in their country and abroad. That's to say, having rapport with students at the Department and giving them support might help them to relax when they get low scores in an EFL test to replace disinterest and demotivation with positive attitudes and awareness of the value of language learning (Arada, 2018; Evans & Tragant, 2020). It's worthy to say that EFL/ESL research findings on exploring differences between male and female learners in demotivational dimensions/factors present broad results. That's the reason there is a need for more studies on this topic in multiple language learning and teaching contexts in an endeavor to find out more disseminatable results.

Conclusion

This study has some limitations that need to be addressed. First of all, the participants in the study were chosen from third-year EFL male and female students at the Department of Foreign Languages at Faculty of Arts and Humanities of Albaha University in KSA in the academic year 2021/2022. The total sample of the study included 30 male and 30 female Saudi students who gave their responses to DQELL (Sakai & Kikuchi, 2008) which represents the instrument of the study used for data collection purposes. Second, the study aimed to investigate the most and the least demotivating dimensions/factors reported by male and female students. It also aimed to find out whether there

are statistically significant differences at 0.05 level between EFL male and female standpoints or views on demotivation to foreign language learning. The current study population do not represent the whole population of Saudi university EFL male and female learners. Thus, the present results describe a set of students that are homogeneous and might only be generalized to other EFL university learners in similar contexts. Therefore, further research should include participants from higher or lower graders, especially that the sample of the study only included third-year Albaha University male and female EFL students and different contexts. Based on the above limitations, this study reached the following two results based on the aim of this present research. First result dealt with the most and the least demotivation dimensions/factors reported by EFL male and female students which they considered detrimental to their EFL learning and negatively affect their successful foreign language learning outcomes. Males considered dimension A: Learning contents and materials and C- Inadequate college facilities as the most demotivating factors that hinder their EFL learning endeavors, while females regard dimension C: Inadequate college facilities as the most demotivating one. Second result show significant differences between Saudi EFL male and female Albaha University students in their standpoints on the five dimensions of DQELL foreign language learning demotivation scale. In dimensions A: Learning contents and materials, B: Teachers' competence and teaching styles, D: Lack of intrinsic motivation and E: Test scores females outperform males in their views regarding demotivation to EFL learning, but not in C: College facilities. So, the study indicates statistically significant differences between male and female students' views on language learning demotivation in favor female ones. It is also notable that, courses taught to EFL male and female students clearly require instructors at the Department of Foreign Languages to use the materials in a way that is suitable for the learners. The content has to be not only rigorous in knowledge, but also capable of gaining language learners' approval and appreciation, thinking capability, and the ability to think and practice knowledge innovatively. In addition, the materials taught to students have to be practical

and a reflection of the reality and the learners' surroundings. Successful ESL/EFL instructors should do their best to make the course content clear and understandable in classroom teaching. Actually, they should use every means in an endeavor to make the English classes more interesting and attractive. It is necessary to balance between skill and content area courses. Another implication of the current study results is that teaching in a foreign or second language classroom has to be more learner oriented. More time of the language classroom teaching should be given to involving students in multiple activities to practice the language using different language skills. ESL/EFL instructors should have the ability to choose and customize practical materials and learning situations for their students. It is also crucial to be selective when we use modern technologies in language teaching and learning including computer-assisted learning. Direct students to have access to various web-enabled learning sources for more up-to-date and interesting and attractive materials. This in turn can offer them new authentic materials to satisfy their different needs. A totally new phase of curriculum reform is about to start. Experts and professionals from all related fields should work collaboratively to make curriculum reform a reality, as the future courses will be more practical, more attractive, more motivating and less demotivating in general and in terms of ESL/EFL classroom sittings. Thus, it is implied that language instructors in tertiary education might play an important role in discovering primary sources of learner demotivation and in guiding them to search out and develop effective strategies for overcoming these negative situations and be trained to fixing-up, anxiety-reduction and self-confidence raising strategies. In addition, identifying sources of disinterest and demotivation to EFL/ESL learning might confirm that language teachers are not the primary cause of it. Motivation is necessary for university male and female students' success in foreign and second language learning and excellent language learning outcomes. As language teachers and instructors, to keep ourselves and our students highly motivated is crucial and important for language acquisition and outstanding language use. The present study of demotivation can help the researcher better understand his Saudi EFL male

and female students at the Department of Foreign Languages at Faculty of arts and Humanities of Albaha University and identify the reasons behind demotivation to EFL learning. It can enable him to give a more helpful hand to his students through showing them how to overcome EFL demotivation as possible as he can and also raising awareness among faculty members to do the same with their students. As mentioned above, the study can have practical implementations in English as a foreign language classroom setting that aim to increase EFL learners' and instructors' consciousness of the sources of demotivation to language learning in an attempt to suggest potential solutions that might increase their motivation and decrease demotivation in the university and pre-university settings.

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