

The Role of Social Support on EFL Learners' Motivation at Iraqi Kurdistan Universities in Three Provinces

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Abstract—The attitudes of Arabic-speaking countries to English have shifted significantly over the past ten years, with more emphasis on learners and learning than on teachers and teaching. The general conclusion of the literature is that a deeper understanding of language learners' motivation can have a beneficial effect on the Kurdistan language learning process. English Language Learning in Iraqi Kurdistan, which began as Kurdistan opened up rapidly to the outside world and experienced significant economic growth, is regarded as compulsory learning. The current study aimed to identify Kurdish students' motivation level and examine the effect of social support on the motivation of EFL students in three public universities in Iraqi Kurdistan Universities. Three instruments were employed to measure L2 motivation level and social support. The researcher collected the data through an online survey technique from 363 first-year Kurdish university students. Data were analysed using descriptive and simple regressions. The descriptive statistics showed that Kurdish first-year students have a high level of integrative and instrumental motivation. The study revealed that Kurdish students experienced a moderate level of social support from family, peers, and teachers. Theoretically, the findings may shed light on the role of social support and in predicting undergraduates' motivation to learn English. From a practical perspective, the results may raise awareness of parents, teachers, and peers to enhance undergraduate students' motivation to learn English.

Keywords— EFL, Iraq, Kurdistan, Motivation, Online learning, Social support.

INTRODUCTION

English as a medium of instruction refers to applying the English language in teaching academic subjects in countries where most of the population's first language is not English (Macaro et al., 2018). Many governments assume that EMI programs can strengthen students' English skills and contribute to a more fluent workforce in English. As English usage grows fast, Asian and Middle East countries pursue ways to develop

peoples' communicative capacity in English as a foreign language (Amin, 2020). English Language learning is regarded as a critical skill in Iraqi Kurdistan (an autonomous region in northern Iraq) which began when Kurdistan started its rapid opening to the outside world and experiencing remarkable economic growth (Amin, 2020; Salih et al., 2017). Most centres, universities, and private institutions have declared English as their primary language; therefore, all courses are delivered in English. Since a few years ago the regional government began to rebuild and reform English Language teaching in the Kurdistan Region (Celik & Yıldız, 2019). This initiative offered a new English Language coursebook which is named Sunrise (M. Amin, 2017; Omer & Jukil, 2019).

With the new textbook and system, thus have studied English for 12 years, while the medium of instruction was the Kurdish language. Despite learning English for 12 years, most first-year students often are not motivated to learn (Hussein & Al Bajalani, 2019; M.Amin, 2017). In the current study, the researcher examined factors that may affect students' motivation to learn English. To date, different factors influence the attitudes and motivation of learners for learning a foreign language, such as social environment, peers, age, gender, and achievement (D. Gardner, 2007).

The few existing bodies of research on motivation in learning a second language found that this element is the 'neglected heart of English language teaching' and without learners' motivation, there is not positive learning and there is no life in the classroom, therefore motivation affects students' learning process (Adwani & Shrivastava, 2017; Azar & Tanggaraju, 2020). Some studies suggest a positive correlation between motivation to learn a foreign language and degree of achievement (Achmad & Yusuf, 2016; Alqahtani, 2018; Chu, 2019; Şentürk, 2015). EFL learners need to make more effort and work more independently to acquire a new language (Celik & Yıldız, 2019). At this point, the role of social support provided by teacher, peers and family members play a vital role in providing support to EFL university learners who need to study all subjects in English.

When examining factors related to enhancing motivation, several researchers approve that family background and family socio-economic status influence students' performance (Calarco, 2011; Chamberlin et al., 2018). Despite the fact many studies claim that family support is meaningfully

related to students' L2 motivations, some scholars advocate that motivation to learn L2 is individual-based and not associated with family support (Milner et al., 2015).

Regarding parental support for L2 learning, some studies reported that parents' advice positively affected enhancing a sense of self-efficacy towards learning English and intrinsic motivation in English (Fan & Williams, 2010). Piechurska-kuciel (2017) also confirmed that parental support resulted in being the essential source of social support in a Polish context. Parents' role was moderately correlated with final grades. Comparably, this outcome has also been reported in the Iranian, Indian, and Albanian contexts where parents' support arouses L2 students' integrative and instrumental motivation towards learning English and achieving high grades (Olusiji, 2016; Softa, 2016; Vatankhah & Tanbakooei, 2014a).

In addition to parents, instructors are considered to be the most valuable source of support in foreign language learning. (Farmer et al., 2011; Luckner & Pianta, 2011; Piechurska-kuciel, 2017). A teacher who has empathy, understanding, and consistency in his/her behavior assists learners in dealing with stress and anxiety (Piechurska-Kuciel, 2017). Therefore, if students have positive relationships with teachers, they will be able to acquire English language and better final grades (Wong et al., 2017).

The third component of social support is peer relationship which is considered an essential factor in students' learning. Especially adolescent students' dependence on peers becomes much higher than on parents and teachers (Lin et al., 2014). In addition, learners learn from each other's experiences to enhance peer support and motivation to learn (Kobayashi, 2003). Moreover, learners may provide peer support behaviour through sharing the workload among group members, so learners scaffold their language development (Kranzow, J. & Hyland, 2016; Nguyen, 2012). Then student-student interactions enable the learners together to complete the activity. Piechurska-Kuciel (2016) researched the relationship between peer support and motivation to learn English in a Polish educational context. He found that peer support was positively related to motivation to learn English. Nevertheless, research outcomes on a peer support role in EFL contexts are not similar. For instance, Chen (2008) had found no significant relationship between peer support and student L2 achievement. Peer support will play a key role in foreign language learning if peers are highly motivated and come from different backgrounds (Yang & Chang, 2012).

Motivation is a critical component in language learning. A deeper understanding of language learners' motivation can have a beneficial impact on helping language learners learn English as a foreign language in Kurdistan (Williams-Chase, 2020). Sabry Daif-Allah & Aljumah (2020) pointed out that lack of motivation is probably the greatest challenge that students, teachers, counsellors, school administrators, and parents face. Nduwimana (2019) found that students frequently struggle to achieve their full potential as English language learners due to low motivation. Despite being an important element in language learning, many of the factors that influence the motivation of students apply to the education system in general. Other factors represent a lack of understanding of learners' motivation, mainly institutional and cultural views of language learning (Sabry Daif-Allah & Aljumah, 2020).

Accordingly, Salih, Rahman, & Othman (2017), most schools in Erbil, Kurdistan, use English as their primary language. This initiative offered a new English Language coursebook, namely Sunrise (M.Amin, 2017; Omer & Jukil, 2019). This new program was officially launched on the (Sunrise for Kurdistan) website and released as an entire written English course for primary and secondary school students (Amin, 2020a) as the language of communications for science, information technology, business, entertainment, and diplomacy. Despite these efforts, the KRG's efforts to improve the English language, primarily through the Sunrise program, students' listening and speaking skills have not improved (Omer & Jukil, 2019).

Furthermore, English is taught in all levels of education in Iraq, where the language is rarely used as the first means of communication and is mainly restricted to academic settings. Students suffer from a low level of motivation to master the language (Abdullah & Al-Mofti, 2017). The challenge of a lack of mastery of the language is also popular among university students. This failure may be caused by internal factors, which deal with teaching and academic resources, and non-classroom-based or external factors, such as lack of social support or lack of family and societal support to learn English (Abdullah & Al-Mofti, 2017).

Moreover, Al-Mofti (2017) suggested that to improve the English of Kurdistan university students, researchers should investigate the reasons for low motivation. Therefore, the present research aims to explore the motivation levels of EFL learners at Iraqi Kurdistan Universities. The research on the role of social support in the process of learning English is still scarce. In most cases, learners' parents are sources of affection, instrumental assistance, reliable help, and appraisal to enhance feelings of value. At the same time, teachers are perceived as sources of guidance (informational support), with friends being the source of companionship (emotional support) (Furman & Buhrmester, 1985). Tezci et al. (2015) carried out a study to examine which elements of social support explain a source of motivation. They showed that perceived social support contributes to students' well-being and motivation.

Based on the scenario above, achievement motivation plays a vital role in the learning process at school. Students' motivation is affected by environmental conditions which provide support to students, namely peer support, parents, and teachers' support. Social support seems to be an essential factor that may affect EFL learners' academic achievement in learning English. To date, despite the scarcity of research on the role of social support on language learners' motivation, little is known about the role and effect of social support on motivation (Al-Mofti & Hussein, 2019). It is not clear Kurdistan students receive which type of supports more frequently and what types of social support needs to be provided effectively in the future.

Therefore, the present research aims to identify the level of motivation among Kurdistan university students and to examine the effect of social support on the motivation to learn the English language. Specifically, this research identified what types of motivation (integrative or instrumental) first-year students report in learning English. These findings may help lecturers, peers, and parents, and the Kurdistan higher education sector as a whole to improve students' motivation. These understandings may help to improve the quality of the teaching

and learning of English in higher education in Kurdistan. At a theoretical level, the present research complements the existing literature on L2 motivation as it addressed the gaps in this area. In particular, this research has insight into what motivates first-year students of different majors to learn English.

I. LITERATURE REVIEW

Due to the vital role of motivation in the language learning process, several studies have examined the students' motivation in learning English and its relationship with other variables in different contexts. Achmad and Yusuf (2016) examined the factors that affect motivation for learning English in Indonesia. The participants were 56 year-one and year-three students. They used intrinsic, extrinsic, and integrative questionnaires to collect data. The results revealed that most students have integrative motivation for learning English. The researchers implied that teachers should consider using activities to engage students in interaction with English-speaking people as an international language.

Genc and Aydin (2017) investigated the attitudes and the motivation of 462 students from different majors toward learning English as a foreign language. They examined the relationship between the students' motivation and gender, academic achievement, parental involvement, and their fields of studies. The data has been gathered via an adapted version of Gardner's (1985) "The Attitude/Motivation Test Battery" (AMI) questionnaire. The results revealed that Turkish students show positive attitudes toward learning English. However, female students had better attitudes toward learning English than male students. Furthermore, while the students have a moderate intrinsic and instrumental motivation, their parent involvement was considerably higher.

In another study, Al-Ta'ani (2018) conducted a study at Al-Jazeera University in UAE to find out students' level of integrative and instrumental motivation for English learning. A total of 50 undergraduate students from different majors who studying English Communication Skills responded to an adapted version of (AMTB) questionnaires. The findings revealed that the students had a high level of instrumental and integrative motivation to learn English. However, students' instrumental motivation was slightly more than their integrative one.

Social support refers to a multidimensional concept including perceptions, relationships, and transactions that can assist learners in dealing with emotional distress, sharing tasks, receiving advice, learning skills, and obtaining material assistance (Suckling et al., 2009). Family, peers, and teachers provide social support in the form of care, guidance, and value. (Dollete et al., 2006).

The main social support groups for adolescents are their teachers, family, and peers with whom they often communicate the most (Camara et al., 2017). These three groups play vital roles in reducing stress and enhance psychological well-being through providing social integration and helping to cope with challenges. Family, peers, and teachers also provide opportunities for expression and shaping appropriate social identities. Hence, in the condition of having stress created by

learning English as an obligatory subject, social support resources seem to be an influential factor that might enhance learners' academic achievement (Piechurska-kuciel, 2017).

The process of learning a foreign language may be a cause of serious problems. Students require to study the subjects using the English language, which has not been completely learned. English medium instruction may expose students to the inadequate vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and cultural aspects. As a result, students are more likely to experience a restricted sense of control, resulting in a feeling of helplessness (Atamanova, 2020). The consequences of this complex cognitive and affective situation can be severe such as avoidance, delay, denial, and achieving low attainment. Consequently, social support can be considered an essential factor that exposes the function of the perceived availability of peers, parents, and teachers' help in reaching foreign language success, which may positively influence learners' academic achievement (Piechurska-kuciel, 2017).

Attitudes and motivation are strongly influenced by the social context, including contextual environmental stimuli such as family, teachers, and peers as key social support providers (Stone et al., 2008; Suckling et al., 2009). Support from peers and teachers can significantly affect students' success and well-being (Kiefer & Florida, 2015). Interactions with teachers and peers play a key role in supporting adolescents' motivation, classroom engagement, and sense of belonging to school (Wentzel et al., 2010). It helps to prevent stress, expand problem-solving abilities, cope with adverse challenges, and increase one's well-being (Litalien, & Parker, 2017). A growing body of research in educational and psychosocial literature suggests that perceived social support may affect learning through motivational and affective mechanisms (Wentzel et al., 2010).

Some researchers pointed out the role of social support in increasing the learners' willingness to communicate in the target language, which is a foundation for foreign language success (Kalsoom et al., 2020). Two studies found positive effects of social support on intrinsic and extrinsic motivation among polish and Iranian learners (Piechurska-kuciel, 2017; Vatankhah & Tanbakooei, 2014a). To the best knowledge of the researcher, research on the effect of social support on motivation to learn English as a foreign language has been mostly restricted to few studies. Some studies investigated the role of social support on motivation and academic achievement at school. Vatankhah & Tanbakooei (2014) researched the effect of social support on intrinsic and extrinsic motivation among Iranian EFL learners. They have developed a validated questionnaire and conducted semi-structured interviews. The result revealed that teachers, parents, and siblings' support significantly affect both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. L2 learners who were supported were more motivated to learn English.

Abdullah and Al-Mofti (2017) examined student motivation levels and the factors that might affect motivation. They also investigated the effect of social support on motivation. They gathered data through Likert scale questionnaires to EFL learners of English universities in the Kurdistan region of Iraq. They conducted semi-structured interviews randomly with some students. The results revealed

that the motivation to learn English is not determined by only one factor; intention, goal, and outside social support appeared as the most influential factors. They found a significant correlation between outside social support and motivation. They found out family support, high status of English learning, and getting a good job was the main reason for learning English by Kurdish learners.

A broad study conducted in a Chilean high school found that family, friends, and peers play a key role in setting goals, behaviors, and learners' beliefs about whether they can learn a specific bit of language (self-efficacy beliefs) (Abdullah & Al-Mofti, 2017; Williams-Chase, 2020). Similarly, other studies considered the impact of the environment, including parental motivation and praise, noted the family's influence, and other influencers to significant others—parents, friends, and broader family, play a significant role in motivating second language learners (Abdullah & Al-Mofti, 2017; Chu, 2019; Kadwa & Alshenqeti, 2020).

In another study, Waleed, Al-Mofti, Qadir Hussein (2019) investigated the influence of outside social support such as good income jobs on motivation. They collected data through a scale questionnaire from 60 learners. They conducted semi-structured interviews with ten students selected randomly from English departments in two colleges of education and Arts at Anbar University in Iraq. The findings revealed that the L2 motivation was different among students based on their attitudes, intentions, and goals towards learning. They found a positive correlation between outside social support and extrinsic motivation. Therefore, outside social support seems to be a significant predictor of the motivation of the EFL Iraqi learners.

When examining factors related to enhancing motivation in school contexts, many researchers agree that family background and family socio-economic status influence students' performance (Calarco, 2011; Chamberlin et al., 2018). Research finds that advantaged families can instill higher L2 motivation levels in their children by giving them a lot of social-emotional support and providing extra classes and resources at home compared to their disadvantaged peers (Borghans et al., 2011; J. Eccles, 2009). Despite the fact many studies claim that family support is meaningfully related to students' L2 motivations, some scholars advocate that motivation to learn L2 is individual-based and not associated with family support (Milner et al., 2015).

Regarding parental support for L2 learning, empirical studies have suggested positive and negative aspects of the family in learning a second language. (Hann, 2017; Iversen, 2017). Piechurska-kuciel (2017) also confirmed parental support resulted in being the essential source of social support in a polish context, and the role of parents was moderately correlated with final grades. Comparably, this outcome has also been reported in the Iranian, Indian, and Albanian contexts where parents' support arouses L2 students' integrative and instrumental motivation towards learning English and achieving high grades (Olusiji, 2016; Softa, 2016; Vatankhah & Tanbakoei, 2014a). However, contradictory findings have been reported regarding the role of parental support in affecting students' FL motivation in Chinese studies.

The third component of social support is peer relationship which is considered an essential factor in students' learning.

Especially adolescent students' dependence on peers becomes much higher than on parents and teachers (Lin et al., 2014). In addition, "Peer" has become a vital factor in the socialization process of college students (B. Kim et al., 2018). Furthermore, learners learn from each other's experiences to enhance peer support and motivation to learn (Kobayashi, 2003). Moreover, learners may provide peer support behaviour through sharing the workload among group members, so learners scaffold their language development (Kranzow, J. & Hyland, 2016; Nguyen, 2012). Then student-student interactions enable the learners together to complete the activity. Piechurska-kuciel (2017) researched the link between motivation to learn English and peer support in a polish educational context. He found a positive relationship between motivation to learn English and peer support. However, research results on the role of peer support in EFL contexts are not similar. For instance, Chen (2008) had found no significant relationship between peer support and students' foreign language achievement. Peer support will play a key role in foreign language learning if peers are highly motivated and come from different backgrounds (Fu Keung Wong et al., 2010).

In addition to peer support, teachers are considered the most important source of support in foreign language learning. (Farmer et al., 2011; Luckner & Pianta, 2011; Piechurska-kuciel, 2017). Better support provided by EFL teachers is expected to lower anxiety (Abu-Rabia, 2004; Huang et al., 2010). A teacher who has empathy, understanding, and consistency in his/her behavior assists learners in dealing with stress and anxiety (Piechurska-Kuciel, 2017). Therefore, if students have positive relationships with teachers, they will be able to acquire English language and better final grades (Wong et al., 2017).

Furthermore, the teacher may increase learners' motivation for language learning through effective classroom management, giving clear instructions, and effective student-teacher interaction (Kirova et al., 2012). Some studies have found that learners who maintain positive relationships with their instructors are strongly motivated to learn (Wentzel et al., 2010). Teachers tend to motivate students to learn in the classroom by giving praises to students; those students were highly interested and performed better. In comparison, learners who are humiliated by instructors in class are less likely to engage in classroom activities and have a low level of learning motivation (Brophy, 2013). In this study, self-determination theory (Deci and Ryan, 1985) or augmented model of (Crookes & Schmidt, 1991) and stage-environment fit theory (J. S. Eccles, 1991), are adopted in developing theoretical framework of the current study.

Independent Variable

Dependent Variable

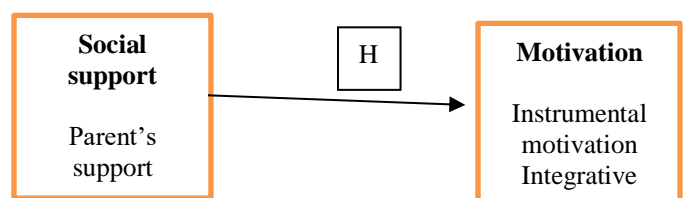


Figure 2.1: Conceptual framework

II. METHODOLOGY

An online survey was used to collect information about students' attitudes and L2 motivation and their opinions about peer, parent and teacher support. The rationale for choosing the online survey design for this study is that it allows the researcher to collect a large amount of data from Kurdish students in a relatively short period. Moreover, online google form surveys can be created quickly and administered efficiently. In the current study, the researcher adopted the questionnaire from Attitude Motivation Test Battery (AMTB). A questionnaire consists of 10 statements to assess students' engagement and motivation in learning a second language (Suryasa et al., 2017). The social support survey for the present research is adopted for use from (Vatankhah & Tanbakoei, 2014b). The student's questionnaire consisted of 18 items in 3 sections: Seven items for parents' social support in English language learning, three items for siblings' social support in English language learning, and six items for EFL teachers' social support in English language learning. As for the data analysis, the researcher has used descriptive statistics and simple linear regression statistics were chosen to lead to prediction and to understand the relationship between social support (peers, parents, and teachers) and motivation to learn L2 among Kurdistan first-year students. Moreover, the target population consists of all Kurdish undergraduate first-year students enrolled in public universities of the Iraqi Kurdistan Region. The samples or participants were selected based on probability sampling. Thus, this study collected data from 363 participants in Kurdistan universities for data analysis. The reason for collecting more sample size is that a large sample size is more representative of the population, limiting the influence of outliers.

III. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the descriptive analysis showed that the respondents have a high level of integrative motivation by the average mean score of 4.07. Statement numbers 5, 1, 2, and 3 show the highest level of integrative motivation with mean scores of 4.36, 4.30, 4.26, and 4.23. Statement number 5 has the lowest mean score, which is 4.20. However, the instrumental motivation mean score (4.29) is higher than the integrative motivation means score (4.7). Based on this analysis of Kurdish first-year students' motivation toward English learning as a foreign language among students, the students are slightly more instrumentally motivated to learn English. Findings also revealed that the respondents received an average mean of social support from family (2.30), peers (2.40), and teachers (2.37). Therefore, most of the respondents in this study experienced a moderate level of social support from family, peers, and teachers. Kurdish first-year students receive the highest degree of social support from peers (2.40).

The findings also revealed that there is no significant relationship between parental social support and integrative motivation to learn English among Kurdish undergraduate first-year students in public universities ($\beta=0.04$, $p=0.56$). This study did not find that social support can predict integrative motivation to learn English. This finding broadly supports the work of Milner (2015), who found no relationship between motivations for learning and social support. It seems that learning L2 is more individual-based, and it does not have any links with family support. However, this outcome is contrary to those of Vatankhah & Tanbakoei (2014), Olusiji (2016), Daniel et al. (2018), and Softa (2016), who found parental support stimulates L2 learners to have integrative motivation towards learning English and achieving high grades.

Gardner (1985) holds that parental encouragement of language attitudes has been classified into two roles, active and passive. The active role involves how parents interact with their children concerning target language learning which can be classified as negative and positive. Parents with positive active roles monitor their children's progress in language learning, show great interest, and encourage learning the target language. However, parents with a negative active role would discourage learning a second language and openly belittle the target language's importance. The passive role is more concerned with parents' attitudes to the second-language community. Therefore, a positive parental attitude toward the English language would support the integrative orientation of their child to learn English, whereas a negative attitude would suppress this. Gardner concludes that parents with a passive role might be generally supportive of their child's efforts, even though their latent negative language attitudes will undermine the effects of positive encouragement.

This result may be explained by the fact that most Kurdish parents might have a passive role in learning English. It worth mentioning that data were collected during the pandemic period, all language learning centres were closed to prevent the outbreak of the virus. Therefore, parents could not provide enough support and encouragement for their children. This lack of parents' social support might also be attributed to the limitations imposed by the outbreak of the covid 19.

According to peer social support and integrative motivation, there is no significant relationship between peer social support and integrative motivation to learn English among Kurdish undergraduate students in a public university ($\beta=0.09$, $p=0.15$). The finding is consistent with those of Chen (2008) and Chang (2010), who had found no significant direct or indirect relationship between peer support and students' integrative motivation. They believe peer support will play a key role in foreign language learning if peers are highly motivated. However, research results on the role of peer support in EFL contexts are not similar. The current study's finding does not support the previous research that found a positive relationship between peer support and integrative motivation to learn English (Lee et al. 2018 Piechurska-Kuciel 2017; Vatankhah & Tanbakoei, 2014; Al-Mofti, 2019).

Additionally, there is no significant relationship between teacher social support and integrative motivation to learn English among Kurdish undergraduate students in public universities ($\beta=-0.08$, $p=0.17$). However, this result has not previously been described in the literature. In contrast to this

finding, Bouras & Keskes (2014), Vatankhah & Tanbakoei, 2014, Javidkar & Soleimani (2016) found a positive relationship between teachers' support and interaction with their L2 learning motivation. A possible explanation for this finding might be that the data were collected from Kurdish students during the pandemic, so all lecturers have to teach them online. Teachers did not have a chance to interact with all students in an online class. Moreover, lecturers might share helpful materials with learners and provide them with further guidance to enhance their motivation to learn L2. However, some students who live in remote areas might not have access to the internet, and they may not receive enough support from English lecturers.

Table 4.1 shows the results of regression analysis with instrumental motivation as the dependent variable. Overall, 15% of the variance in instrumental motivation score was explained, and this model was statistically significant, $F(4,358) = 15.92, p < .001$.

Table 4.1: Regression Analysis of Instrumental Motivation

Variables	β	t	Sig	R Square	Adjusted R Square	F	Sig	Intercept
				0.15	0.14	15.92	0.00	13.95
Parental Social Support	0.00	-0.04	0.97					
Peer Social Support	0.14	2.16	0.03					
Teacher Social Support	0.00	-0.02	0.98					

As shown in the table above, there is no significant relationship between parental social support and instrumental motivation to learn English among Kurdish undergraduate students in public universities ($\beta=0.00, p=0.97$). Therefore, the fifth hypothesis seems to be rejected. Contrary to expectations, this study did not find that parental support can predict instrumental motivation to learn English. This finding broadly supports the work of Milner (2015), who found no relationship between motivations for learning and parental support. It seems that learning L2 is more individual-based and does not have any links with family support. However, this outcome is contrary to those of Vatankhah & Tanbakoei (2014), Olusiji (2016), Daniel et al. (2018), and Softa (2016), who found parental support stimulates L2 learners to have instrumental motivation towards learning English and achieving high grades.

As for peer social support, there is a significant relationship between peer social support and instrumental motivation to learn English among Kurdish undergraduate students ($\beta=0.14, p=0.03$). This finding is consistent with those of Lee et al. (2018), Piechurska-Kuciel (2017), Vatankhah & Tanbakoei (2014), and Al-Mofti (2019), who found that peer support is positively related to instrumental motivation and peer support is likely to predict the instrumental motivation. A possible explanation for this might be that peer support such as clarifying teacher directions, providing information, providing emotional support, and comparing their work promotes

motivation (Wentzel et al., 2010). Peer support provides students with a sense that they can rely on their peers and establish a sense of school belonging.

Peer has become an indispensable figure in the socialization process of college students that influences their learning. Especially after entering college, students' dependence on peers becomes much higher than on parents and teachers. Therefore, the role of peer relationships cannot be ignored for learning development among university students, as they have relationships and interactions for accomplishing projects and group tasks (Smith, 2003). A possible explanation for this might be that Kurdish first-year students can get feedback and support from each other while studying online to get higher grades and improve their job prospects shortly.

The findings also revealed that there is no significant relationship between teacher social support and instrumental motivation to learn English among Kurdish undergraduate students in public universities ($\beta=0.00, p=0.98$). Therefore, the fifth hypothesis seems to be rejected. Contrary to expectations, this study did not find that teacher social support can predict instrumental motivation to learn English. In contrast to this finding, Bouras & Keskes (2014), Vatankhah & Tanbakoei, 2014, Javidkar & Soleimani (2016) found a positive relationship between teachers' support and L2 learning motivation. This result may be explained by the fact that students attended online classes, so they might have less interaction with their lecturers, and they might receive less support from them.

IV. CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATION AND LIMITATIONS

The findings highlight that most of the students are instrumentally motivated; there is a need to motivate the students more integratively, encourage them to have proactive attitudes, and continue learning by not seeing it as an extra burden. It is recommended that the teachers select English literature texts or topics that arouse students' interests and improve their vocabulary and grammar. Based on the current study's findings several theoretical, practical, and policy implications could be drawn. The clearest contribution of this study is to L2 motivation theory 'Self-determination theory,' by Deci and Ryan (1985), who argue that different motivations, i.e., intrinsic and extrinsic motivation depends on the learner's control and internal factors (Jin, 2014). The result revealed that Kurdish first-year students have a high level of instrumental and integrative motivation even though they learn English in online education. However, they received less social support from their family and their teachers. Moreover, the study found that participants' instrumental and integrative motivation tend to be lower in online education as there is a lack of interaction with peers and teachers. These results have some contributions for Kurdish teachers and instructional designers. Initially, teachers should build a positive and comfortable atmosphere in the classroom; this allows learners to engage in the learning activities. Using engaging media or various teaching techniques often stimulates students' interests, promoting students' intrinsic motivation. Furthermore, the teacher should establish a cooperative, interactive, and collaborative atmosphere and

tasks to offer some encouragement to students. Material designers should choose engaging course content and materials to enhance students' motivation and learning as well as teachers should take some measures to students to interact between teachers and students and among students in online learning. Teachers also should guide students to be independent and self-directed learners as online courses largely depend on students' determination to continue. Kurdish teachers should provide students with encouraging teacher feedback. To achieve this, universities should provide in-service and preservice teachers with practical education and professional development activities to raise teachers' awareness regarding the students' needs in a virtual course. Accordingly, in the context of the study, the researcher faced some limitations. The first limitation of this study is related to the literature, the little attention that has been paid to the role of parental, peer, and teacher social support and L2 motivation. So, the researcher had a problem finding an ample number of published related studies. Secondly, the present study was carried out using a Google form questionnaire to understand students' motivation and social support. Furthermore, the samples of this study were limited to only Kurdish first-year students who are studying in three public universities due to time and financial limitations. Accordingly, the findings from this study would only be generalized to this population. Due to the time limitation, the researcher could not conduct a qualitative study to understand Kurdish students' perceptions of parental, peer and teachers' support. In order to complement the current study, future work may conduct a qualitative study to investigate the role of parental, peers, and teacher support in the context of public universities in Kurdistan. The study recommends that future research carry out longitudinal studies to provide a more comprehensive understanding and fuller picture of the role of social support on L2 motivation.

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