

Perceptions About Motivation Towards Teaching English Language Employing Madrasati Platform During the Pandemic

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Abstract

This study investigates motivation towards teaching English language using Madrasati platform. The research methodology was mixed methods research for this study. The review of the most recent studies on the topic were included. The quantitative data were collected through surveys during Spring 2022, and an instrument was administered to obtain data. In this study, 382 (236 male and 146 female) in-services English language teachers were selected at random as participants. The samples were the representation of both genders. They were also representatives of all teachers' qualifications including diploma to PhD degrees. For the qualitative part of the study, ten participants were purposefully selected to obtain data. The source of qualitative data collection were interviews. The results of this mixed methods study displayed that the participants had positive perceptions in general of using Madrasati platform. Some motivational factors were found in this study e.g., flexibility, teaching with technology, using Madrasati. The participants found better attendance in their online courses. However, the participants indicated some challenges such as training to use technology, connectivity, and distraction.

Keywords: digital technology, English learning, Madrasati, motivation, online teaching

1. Introduction

The pandemic COVID-19 forced almost all schools and universities around the globe to close temporarily. Amid this time, many institutions employed different innovative teaching and learning strategies and tools to teach from distance. The educational institutions in Saudi Arabia are one of the examples. During the academic year 2020–2021, the Ministry of Education introduced Madrasati platform for online distance education from grade 1 to grade 12 levels (Aldossry, 2021). Madrasati means “my school” in Arabic language. According to the Government of Saudi Arabia (2021), a comparative study was conducted on the seven best e-learning platforms from one hundred and seventy platforms around the globe and Madrasati outperformed its global counterparts. In the same report, it was stated that Madrasati had 6 million users.

All the teachers from grade 1 to grade 12 in Saudi Arabia were encouraged to use Madrasati. English language teachers were also a part of it. Some research studies were carried out on Madrasati. In terms of digital technologies for e-learning, the available published studies have a focus on the utilization of pedagogical approaches and the application of different digital high-tech tools in teaching field. Some of the research studies also focused on teaching and learning English during COVID-19. However, little is known about English teachers' motivation towards teaching English during the pandemic, specifically, there is not a single study in Saudi Arabia context with the focus on English language teachers' motivation. The primary goal of the study is to examine English teachers' motivation towards teaching English during COVID-19 in Jeddah directorate of education.

English teachers' motivation during pandemic is important for all stakeholders e.g., educators, policy makers, and researchers. The educators use the knowledge gained in this study to improve their own motivation. The policy makers may also use the insights from the studies. Specifically, the researchers, in the education field further build on their research on the adoption of technology particularly the use of Madrasati. This study will provide some fundamental insights into what motivated English teachers to perform their English teaching task during the pandemic, COVID-19 and how Madrasati platform affected their motivation.

1.1 Significance of This Research

The available studies on motivation have more focus on international contexts (Asmus, 2021; Ushioda, 2013; Wigfield et al., 2019). This research has a focus on Saudi Arabian context which is different from the previous research studies on motivation in terms of the context. On the other hand, some studies have investigated Madrasati in Saudi Arabia context, however, they have not covered all the components of Madrasati (Aldosary, 2021; Alkinani & Alzahrani, 2021). In this study, we have included a very important component of Madrasati which is English language teachers' motivation to teach through Madrasati during the Pandemic. The rationale for this research is that it will help us to understand teachers' motivational factors to teach during the challenging times. The study has also shed lights on the types and ways of technological tools used by the teachers. The educators, researchers and policy makers in the field will learn from the study and replicate the study in their own contexts as this is the first study related to the motivation toward English as a foreign language teaching in Saudi Arabia context. The study may be helpful to improve the use of the Madrastai platform in Saudi Arabia and to provide a better insight into how the platform works.

1.2 Objectives

Some studies were conducted on the adoption of instructional technology in Saudi Arabia context. However, there is a dearth of literature on the usage of instructional technology for language teaching during the Pandemic. Primarily, we were interested exploring English language teachers' perceptions about motivation to teach English language by using Madrasati during COVID-19. English language is taught as a foreign language in Saudi Arabia. We were also interested in exploring teachers' perception about EFL teaching through technology.

1.3 Research Questions

In this study, the researchers tried to address the following questions:

- 1) What were the motivational factors of Teaching English language skills during COVID-19 using Madrasati?
- 2) Are there statistical differences among teachers' responses on gender, qualifications, and experience basis?
- 3) What are teachers' perceptions of teaching English as a foreign language through Madrasati?

2. Review of the Literature

2.1 Motivation to English Language Teaching

Motivation is not a new topic in teaching and learning. How motivation influence learning and achievement have been studying for a long time in education (Nolen, 2020). In the past, various research studies were conducted on motivation (Asmus, 2021). Some research concentrated on how classroom and school procedures affected motivation, the effect of student-teacher, and student-students relationship on motivation, and school transition and its impact on motivation (Wigfield et al., 2019). In terms of learning a foreign language, many researchers have described motivation as a significant factor (Ushioda, 2013). Some researchers attest that motivation has positive effects on foreign language learning (Ilter, 2009). Kalanzadeh., Soleimani and Bakhtiarvand (2014) argue that motivated students learn a second language faster and more efficiently.

Regarding EFL teachers' perceptions about English language teaching through online learning during the Pandemic, the researchers in field have been carrying out research in international contexts. For instance, Rahayu and Wirza (2020) carried out a qualitative research study with EFL teachers in Indonesian context. The findings of the study showed that the participants had positive perceptions towards the usefulness of online learning system. However, most of the participants were not agreed regarding the effectiveness of online learning. Al-Sharah et al. (2021) conducted a research study in the Jordanian context by using a survey questionnaire. The findings showed that EFL teachers felt the need of subject matter knowledge and socio-effective skills as their top priority. The findings also indicated that the participants were in favor of developing a constructive approach for students to learn out of school. In another study, Dewi (2021) explored EFL pre-service teachers' perceptions by collecting data through interviews. The findings of the study revealed that the pre-service teachers were familiar with different technological tools for teaching and learning during the Pandemic. However, the participants were unsure about teaching during the Pandemic, due to their lack of experience.

The available literature suggests that technology plays a significant role in learning a foreign language. Stockwell (2013) describes that digital technology has proven beneficial not only for English language teachers but also for English language learners for multiple reasons, for example, accessibility to resources, and opportunities of communication with native speakers of English language across the globe. He further states that one of the justifications of adoption of technology in language pedagogy is added as increased motivation. Some argue that students have opportunities to have a real-world experience through technology (Halili, 2019).

Ahmadi and Reza (2018) recommend using technology as a tool in language teaching. Various studies were conducted on the usage of technology and its relationship with language learning. Regarding technology and motivation, research indicates that the usage of technology enhances students' motivation towards learning (Godzicki et al., 2013). Al-Mohammadi and Derbel (2014) conducted research with post-secondary students on the impact of technology on EFL learners' perceptions, motivation, and interests. They found that the integration of technology in ELT influenced EFL learners' motivation and performance.

2.2 Use of Madrasati

As we mentioned earlier, Madrasati platform has been used in Saudi Arabia since 2020, very few research studies had a focus on it. All these studies were published in either 2021 or 2022. The published studies have covered some components of Madrasati. For example, Alkinani and Alzahrani (2021) examined the effectiveness of Madrasati by surveying 200 randomly selected teachers. Their findings indicated that Madrasati had a positive effect on teaching. Their findings also indicated that teachers were highly satisfied by using the platform. In another study, Aldossry (2021) found that the students only used the synchronous part of Madrasati platform and neglected the asynchronous part of the platform. Aldossary found that technical knowledge and training of using the platform was very important.

Regarding EFL learners' engagement in online courses, Oraif and Elyas (2021) surveyed 379 Saudi females English language learners. The findings revealed a high level of engagement among EFL students. Alqahtani (2022) conducted a research study on English language teachers' perspectives on using Madrasati. He collected data from 24 male and female teachers. The findings suggested many benefits of using Madrasati such as faster marking, interaction among students and teachers, more opportunities for students for self-learning, learning outside the conventional classrooms and learner autonomy.

2.3 Advantages of Online Learning—Madrasati an Online Tool

Available literature on online learning suggests that online learning has many potential benefits for its stakeholders. Appana (2008) reviewed the studies on online learning and reported some of the potential advantages of e-learning. These include increase access to courses, improved quality of learning, better student preparation and lifelong learning. Boettcher and Conrad (2021) explain that online learning is more flexible in terms of accessibility. Online learners can have access to online courses from anywhere and at any time. In the same way, the courses are flexible for online teachers. They can teach from any distance. In addition to accessibility and flexibility, Gilbert (2015) argued that online learning had better opportunities for self-regulated learning. In one of the recent studies, Yuhanna, Alexander and Kachik (2020) report some more advantages of online learning. One of the advantages is the easy access to educational material. They further describe some other benefits such as searching documents with one click, exchange of ideas with experts and with peers, comfortable communication through emails, and low cost of hardware and software. Mukhtar et al. (2020) carried out a case study with twelve university faculty members and twelve students. The data were collected through focus group interviews. One of their findings was that online learning reduced the cost of travelling and other expenses.

2.4 Use of Technology During COVID-19

Online learning has become increasingly popular among educators, researchers, policy makers due to the Pandemic crisis. Most, if not all, institutions shifted towards online learning. Even, the most traditional institutions with reluctance started embracing online learning considering it as a panacea during the challenging times (Dhawan, 2020). Of course, there were many challenges to embrace emergency online teaching. Daniel (2020) calls COVID-19 itself a big challenge for educational institutions. The majority of scholars working in primary/elementary, junior high, high and post-secondary institutions were convinced that most of the institutions were facing challenges during COVID-19. Pokhrel and Chhetri (2021) reviewed the literature on impact of COVID-19 on learning. The authors reported many challenges e.g., affordability, accessibility, flexibility, learning pedagogy, and educational policy. They further reported that online assessment was another major challenge which had created confusion not only for students but also for parents.

Several researchers have reported the use of various digital tools during COVID-19. For example, Al Mahmud (2022a) stated the use of Blackboard Collaborate for teaching English language speaking skill in one of the universities in Saudi Arabia during COVID-19. Pokhrel and Chhetri (2021) argued that COVID-19 has opened vistas for online learning. They reported that various digital tools were used for teaching and learning during the Pandemic. Mukhtar et al. (2020) added some tools e.g., Adobe connect, WebEx, Skype for business, Edmodo, Google meet, and Microsoft Teams. Daniele (2020) suggests the use of staff preparation and training to best cope with crisis of education during COVID-19. In fact, several researchers recommended the use of various

strategies and techniques for online teaching. For example, Mahmood (2021) suggested some pedagogical strategies for online teaching during the Pandemic. The strategies include voice and pitch management, teacher-student interaction, provision of technology in neglected areas, flexible assessment policies, back up plans, recorded online classes, and making smaller modules in online classes. During teaching some educators relied on synchronous teaching while others relied on asynchronous teaching (Sunasee, 2020). Salman et al. (2022) conducted a research study with EFL learners in one of the universities in Iraq. The researchers found that electricity and availability of internet were two major barriers in teaching online. They further found that some of the students were not interested in grammar. The researchers favored in-person classes.

2.5 Use of Technology for Teaching Language Skills

Technology have been used to teach all the four skills in a language learning environment. According to Bahadorfar and Omidvar (2014), different modern technologies are used to improve speaking skill in learning a foreign language. They further describe some of the technological tools that help learner to improve their speaking skill. In order to improve speaking skill, they suggest the use of various technological tools e.g., speech recognition software and videos. Sosas (2021) conducted a phenomenology study with twenty-one participants to explore the adoption of technology and its effect on teaching and learning speaking skill. Sosas found that technological tools were helpful in teaching speaking skill. In the same way, various technological tools are used to enhance listening skill in learning a foreign language. For example, youtube videos, podcast, google classroom, and mobile apps are used to enhance listening skill. Some often recommends use of youtube to enhance listening skill (Pratam et al., 2020). Pratama et al. (2020) advocate the usage of youtube due to its benefits of creating fun in the classroom and developing students' creativity. In one of the studies, Kim (2013) found that Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) can also improve students' listening skill.

Technological tools are also used to improve writing skill. A review of the research by Williams and Beam (2019) suggests that teachers face challenges to integrate technology for teaching writing skill. However, if implemented properly, digital technology improves students' motivation to engage with writing skill. Yundayani et al. (2019) investigated how Canva affected EFL learners' writing skills in Indonesia. The findings showed that Canva had a positive effect on improving students' writing skills. Technology also offers help in teaching reading skill in a foreign language learning environment. Researchers such as Rashtchi and Hajihassani (2010) argue that web-blogs could improve reading skill. Others argue in favor of using online dictionaries, multimedia projectors and laptops for teaching and learning vocabulary for reading development (Hassan, 2012). Tuan (2011) carried out an action research study and found that WebQuest enhanced students' reading skill. In Saudi Arabia context, Al Mahmud (2022b) was interested in investigating the impact of audiovisual aids to improve students' reading fluency. The findings show that audio-visual aids have positive effects on developing students reading skill in EFL. Saqlain, Al-Qarni and Ghadi (2013) conducted a research study to explore English teachers' readiness to integrate digital technology in teaching and learning. The findings indicated some important factors e.g., lack of funding, scarcity of technology in schools and paucity of teacher training to use digital technology. In a separate study, in the post-secondary context, Saqlain and Mahmood (2013) found that digital technology tools were available for usage. However, there was a lack of training to use the tools. Additionally, the participants complained about technical issue.

3. Methods

According to Siegel (2012), researchers use a wide range of methods and techniques for research studies. We designed a mixed methods research study. The main reason to design the mixed methods research is that we had access to quantitative and qualitative data to better understand our research problem and questions. More specifically, we designed explanatory sequential mixed methods design. The rationale of using explanatory sequential mixed methods design is to get a general picture of the problem through data collection from surveys and the qualitative data collection will refine the general quantitative picture (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019). At the first stage, we used survey research because we were interested in gaining insight into teachers' thoughts, opinions, ideas, and attitudes (Brewer, 2009). There were multiple reasons for using survey research. For example, Creswell and Guetterman (2019) described survey research as time saving way to collect data and having access to geographical dispersed population. The further mentioned that survey research could be used to explore individuals' opinions, beliefs, and attitudes. We explored in-service teachers' opinions and beliefs about motivation of teaching English through Madrasati during the pandemic. At the second stage, we interviewed purposefully selected participants to gain deeper understanding of the research problem. The educational directorate of Jeddah is one of the largest educational directorates in Saudi Arabia. It was very time consuming to send questionnaire through regular post. Therefore, the researchers used electronic surveys to send the participants. After gaining the insights from the surveys, for the interviews, both the researchers purposely chose

ten participants to deepen the understanding about the phenomenon. All the participants had some experience of teaching English as a foreign language through technology.

3.1 Research Participants

We randomly selected 382 teachers as participants of the study. The participants belonged to both genders e.g., male and female (236 males and 146 females). The participants had a variety of educational qualification. The participants had teaching experience from one year to more than twenty-one years. For the qualitative part of the study, ten English language teachers including five male and five female teachers were purposely selected. We obtained the qualitative data through interviews.

3.2 Instrument

An instrument was designed with twenty-four questions relevant to English language teaching through Madrasati during the pandemic. The questions were divided in five main categories e.g., flexibility of online teaching, online teaching practice, online teaching tool, online students' setting, and challenges of online teaching. After piloting the instrument, the link of the questionnaire was sent through emails. For interviews, five male and five female in-service teachers volunteered. They were interviewed to gain an in-depth knowledge of the phenomenon.

3.3 Procedure

A detailed invitation letter was sent to the participants. The letter included the information about the topic and purpose of the study, and researchers' contact information. The time commitment and the anticipated risk of study participation was communicated to the participants in the letter. We also sent a request letter for their voluntary participation in the study. We assured the participants that their identity would remain confidential. All the information about the research study was sent to the participants before administering the survey. We also clearly communicated to the participants the completion time of the survey. Then, the survey was sent to the participants through WhatsApp and a link was included for the google survey. A survey design was used as a research instrument. The instrument was used to collect the data from the participants in Spring 2022. The participants of the research study were all English teachers including males and females from the Jeddah educational directorate. After collecting the quantitative data, ten participants were purposefully selected for the qualitative data. All the ethical procedures were followed by sending the consent letter, a detailed letter about the study, contact information of the researchers, voluntary participation of the participants, any harm to the participants, and withdrawal at any time during the study.

3.4 Data Analysis

The data were analysed by using a computer operated software. The researchers carried out analysis of the survey data using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) 22. Categorical data displayed using tables. T-test was used for data analysis. We analysed the qualitative data by using codes and generating themes.

4. Findings

4.1 Quantitative Findings

The quantitative data indicated that the teachers' positive perceptions towards using Madrasati platform. The statistical analysis showed a major difference between the scores of men ($M = 3.77$) and women ($M = 4.17$), and $p = 0.000054$. However, certain topics received unfavorable comments from respondents who strongly disagreed with the use of the Madrasati platform. More specifically, I was satisfied with online assessment with Madrasati, I noticed that students' attendance was better in my online classes, I faced technical issues e.g., connectivity.

4.1.1 Teachers' Characteristics

In this study, teachers' sample size was 382, with a response rate of 100%. About 236 (61.8%) were men, and about 146 (38.2%) were women. Four participants were Diploma graduates' instructors (1%), 331 were B.S. graduates (86.6%), 37 were M.S. holders (9.7%), and 10 were PhD holders (10.6). Nine (2.4%) all the participating members had 5 years of experience or less, 130(34%) had 1–6, 132(34.6%) had 11–15 years, 56(14.7%) had 16–20 and 55(14.4%) had 20 years or more. The scale, comprising of 24 items, displayed extremely high reliability (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.83$, CI: 0.73–0.88). The average experience rating for teachers was 3.9, which is favorable while using the Madrasati platform. Table 1 provides a detailed breakdown of the fundamental traits of the teachers.

Table 1. Standard demographics of the participants

Factors	Male teachers (%)	Female teachers (%)	t-test value	P value
Count	236 (61.8%)	146 (38.2%)		
Work experience between				
1 to 5 years	7	2	X ² =97	0.000
6 to 10 years	36	94		
11 to 15 years	103	29	(df=4)	
16 to 20 years	45	11		
21 years and above	45	10		
Qualifications				
Diploma	3	1	X ² =19	0.000
B.sc	191	140	(df=3)	
M.Sc.	35	2		
PhD	7	3		
Teaching level				
Elementary	38	8	X ² =29	
Intermediate	64	16	(df= 2)	
Secondary	134	122		
Sector				
Public	206	126		
Private	30	20		
Do you know what Madrasati platform is	0.98	1	1.58	0.141
Have you used Madrasati platform in your teaching	0.99	0.96	1.98	0.045
Teaching through Madrasati means I have more family time	3.87	4.67	7.7	0.000
By using Madrasati, I enjoyed the flexibility of place (I can teach from anywhere)	4.50	4.83	5.2	0.000
Madrasati platform including different tools facilitated online teaching.	4.30	4.82	7.05	0.000
Online teaching through Madrasati helped me with reduced cost of transportation.	4.46	4.85	5.69	0.000
I enjoyed teaching online through Madrasati.	4.01	4.21	1.11	0.23
I had increased autonomy in online teaching.	4.09	4.76	8.23	0.000
I was satisfied completing each lesson through Madrasati.	4.05	4.19	1.61	0.19
Online teaching through Madrasati provided me better time management.	4.09	4.15	0.68	0.49
Using Madrasati had motivated me to use different activities and strategies.	3.93	4.83	8.84	0.000
Using Madrasati helped me to engage and motivate my students.	3.81	4.71	8.98	0.000
I was satisfied with online discussions using Madrasati.	3.58	4.44	6.05	0.000
I was satisfied with online assessment with Madrasati.	2.54	2.92	7.79	0.000
I created online collaboration through Madrasati.	3.80	4.61	8.26	0.000
I learned new skills to use online teaching tool.	4.34	4.86	8.10	0.000
I noticed that students' attendance was better in my online classes.	2.65	2.55	3.38	0.001
Students actively participated in my online class.	3.69	3.88	1.88	0.06
I had more student-teacher interaction through Madrasati.	3.65	4.52	8.24	0.000
I had more opportunities to engage students by using Madrasati.	3.77	4.57	8.22	0.000
Our students were not ready to use Madrasati for online learning.	2.87	2.11	5.2	0.000
Madrasati was not well designed.	2.42	1.39	8.62	0.000
I felt that my students did not want to turn on cameras due to cultural issues.	4.02	4.65	6.76	0.000
I have not received training to teach online classes.	3.55	3.75	4.52	0.000
I believe that it is hard to build relationships with students without visual cameras on.	3.28	4.39	8.59	0.000
I faced technical issues e.g., connectivity.	2.753	2.65	1.71	0.08
Overall score	3.77	4.17	8.1	000

4.1.2 Inferential Statistics

The effects of teacher-related characteristics (gender, experience, sector, and certification) on their utilization of the Madrasati platform were investigated using the Poisson generalized linear regression technique. The researcher calculated the total of all the response scores using Poisson regression stages (Table 2).

Working experience only between 6 to 15 years was linked to statistical significance in using distance learning programme, Madrasati platform. IRR ratio for the 6–10 was 1.183 (i.e., an increase of 18% in teaching experience score compared to teachers having less than 5 years of experience), and $p = 0.001$. For the next category, 11–15 years’ experience teachers IRR was 1.156 (i.e., an increase of 16% in teaching experience compared to new teachers. The results indicated that general teaching experience using Madrasati platform.

Table 2. Scores for the effect of background demographic factors on experience of teachers using Madrasati platform

Factor	IRR	95% CI IRR	Estimate	SE	T value	P value
Gender: Female	0.829	0.28 to 2.4	-0.183	0.543	1.11	0.732
Education: B.Sc.	0.55	0.087 to 3.68	-0.570	0.955	-0.45	0.782
Education: MSc	0.655	0.17 to 2.50	-0.432	0.685	0.355	0.253
6–10 Experience	1.183	0.55 to 2.6	-0.573	0.403	-2.33	0.001
11–15 Experience	1.157	0.57 to 2.1	0.423	0.311	-2.13	0.0023
20+ Experience	1.626	0.47 to 3.54	0.345	0.512	2.21	0.032

Note. IRR = incidence rate ratio; CI = confidence interval; SE = standard error.

Figure 1 shows minor difference as per teaching experience and background qualification of using Madrasati platform. The mean scores were 3.633, 3.94, 3.80, and 3.60. $P = 0.653$ was found for diploma, B.S., M.S., and PhD holders.

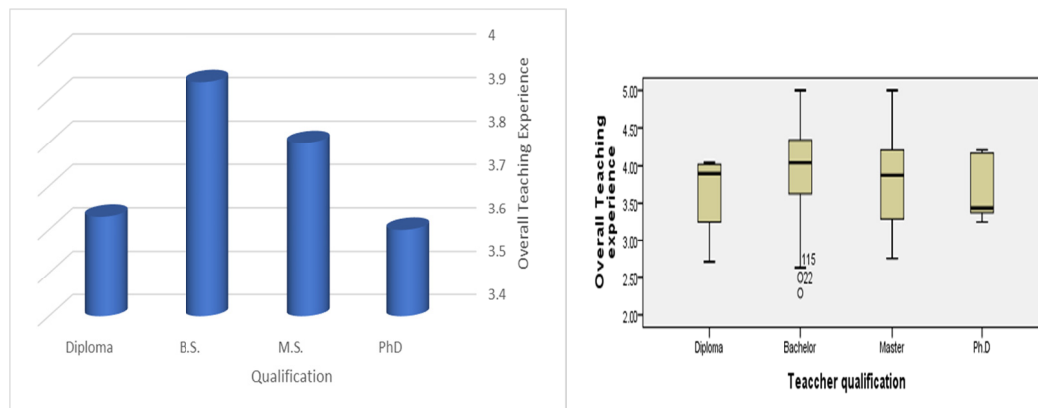


Figure 1. Distribution of teachers’ experience according to qualification

Figure 2 shows that teaching experience was significantly impressive in terms of using Madrasati platform. The < 5 years group scored 3.81, compared to 6–10 years of experience ($M = 4.18$) and 11–15 years of experience ($M = 3.85$); $p = 0.0015$.

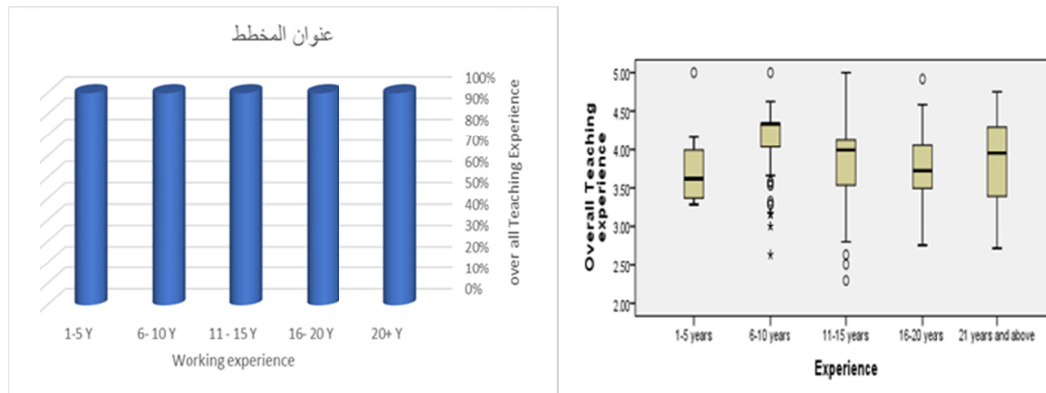


Figure 2. Distribution of teachers' overall scores based on teaching experience.

As illustrated in Table 1, There were 146 (38.2%) female instructors and 236 (61.8%) male teachers. The mean score for male teachers was 3.77, which was lower than the mean score for female teachers, which was 4.17. This distinction was statistically significant ($t = 8.1, p = 0.000054$).

4.2 Qualitative Findings

Ten (five male and five female) in-service teachers were purposely selected to participate in the study. The open-ended questions were asked in the interviews to the participants. We recorded all the interviews. After that the interviews were transcribed. After reading the interview transcriptions three times, codes and then themes were generated from the interview transcripts. We generated four main themes e.g., flexibility, teaching with technology, motivation of using Madrasati, and challenges. All the participants agreed that Madrasati platform provided them flexibility of place. For instance, Faisal stated, "I enjoy teaching through Madrasati because I can teach my classes from any feasible distance. I may be at home, at a café or at a vacation point. I can teach from there". Female participants were happy with the flexibility. However, they mentioned that they had to do domestic chores as well. Therefore, they were in favor of in-person classes. Fatima stated, "when we are at home, we have to cook, we have to do other domestic chores. But when we are at schools, we just teach. We don't do domestic stuff at schools". However, the female teachers were happy with flexibility because they have more time to take care of their kids. Researchers are agreed that online learning provides flexibility (Conrad, 2021). The participants also mentioned that they spent less money on transportation. These results are aligned with the findings of Mukhtar et al. (2020). One of their findings was that online learning reduced the cost of transportation.

The other theme we generated from the interview transcripts was teaching with technology. All the participants were very satisfied with the use of Madrasati. They mentioned that they were eager to see how technology would be used for teaching from distance. The findings are consistent with findings of Stockwell (2013). Stockwell provides one of the justifications of using technology for English language teaching is that it increases motivation. Ali stated, "I frequently use technology in my daily life. However, I was very much interested in using technology for teaching. Madrasati has opened a new door for teachers". Some participants mentioned that Madrasati provided them opportunities to use different online teaching strategies. They further stated that they would keep using Madrasati if needed in the future. One participant said, "To be honest with you. I will keep using Madrasati as this is a very helpful platform for teaching".

Another theme was motivation of using Madrasati. Interestingly, all the participants agreed that Madrasati motivated them to teach online and engage students in teaching and learning process. They viewed Madrasati as an engaging platform. The qualitative results of our study support the outcomes of Oraif and Elyas's (2021) study. According to their study, EFL students were engaged thoroughly when Madrasati was used for teaching English language. One participant of this study stated, "Madrasati helped me to engage my students better. I can interact with them very easily. They can ask questions and I can provide feedback promptly". The participants stated Madrasati platform was a great source for using different learning strategies and tools. For example, one participant mentioned, "Madrasati has motivated me to use different learning activities as well as different teaching strategies". Another participant stated that Madrasati provided them a variety of technological tools to use in their teaching.

In addition to what motivated the participants to teach during the Pandemic, they also talked about some of the

challenges that they faced while teaching. From the interview transcripts, we generated another theme as challenges. The participants stated different challenges. As the Madrasati was a new platform for teachers to use and they had to use it in emergency, some of the participants emphasized on the need of training of using Madrasati for in-service teachers as well as for novice teachers. Ali stated, "if we prepare our pre-service teachers about how to use Madrasati, we will have trained teachers and they will not struggle much on using this platform". Huang (2020) emphasized the need of training in online teaching and learning conditions. One participant mentioned that connectivity was a challenge at some sites. He stated, "although the internet is working fine in cities. However, it is a major issue in some of the rural communities". Some of the participants stated that home environment was not suitable for some of the students where students have various other distractions including other technological tools e.g., social media. Therefore, they found difficulties when teaching synchronous classes. Salma stated, "I can see that distraction at homes is a major challenge for some of the students because they don't have proper spaces to study at homes. When I taught, I heard different tones of ringing cell phones and text messages". Pazilah et al. (2019) discovered that one of the biggest obstacles to the adoption of educational technology was distraction.

5. Discussions

The focus of the study was on investigating motivation towards teaching English language using digital technology during COVID-19. The focus was Madrasati platform- distance learning tools commonly used in Saudi Arabia. The data were collected by using survey design and by interviewing participants.

We started our research with the question about motivation. The first question was what were the motivational factors of Teaching English language skills during COVID-19 using Madrasati? As Madrasati is a distance learning platform, our findings show that there were some motivational factors of teaching English language. One of the findings was that English teachers had more time for their families. The other motivational factor was flexibility of place. Teachers could teach from any suitable place. A major percentage of teachers were indicated the flexibility of place through Madrasati was one of the major motivational factors. The findings support the arguments and the findings of some previous studies including Appana (2008), Boettcher and Conrad (2021), and Yuhanna, Alexander, and Kachik (2020). These studies indicated that flexibility of time and place was one of the main advantages of online learning. Some participants also experienced that cost effective transportation was one of the motivational factors. These findings of cost effectiveness are in consistent with the results of Mukhtar et al., (2020).

As researchers, we were interested in learning about English teachers' responses in terms of their genders, their qualifications, and their work experience. We investigated our second question, are there statistical differences among teachers' responses according to their gender, qualifications, and experience? It was clear that the difference in educational qualification did not have major variation in terms of using Madrasati. All the in-service teachers had the similar experience of using Madrasati. The trained teachers with 6-10 years of teaching experience were better at using Madrasati platform. In terms of the response rate, the participants with varied qualification e.g., diploma, bachelor, master's, and PhD degree holders had the same response rate. Considering genders in our study, females have more positive attitude towards using Madrasati that the male participants.

We explored our third research question about Madrasati. The third question was What are the teachers' perceptions EFL teaching and learning through Madrasati? Broadly speaking, there was positive feedback from respondents in relation to perception about teaching practice through Madrasati platform with high level of agreement for the most of items. As Madrasati is an online tool, the findings were very relevant to online learning. More specifically, by using Madrasati, I enjoyed the flexibility of place (I can teach from anywhere). I had increased autonomy in online teaching (skills?), had the highest level of agreement, almost teachers were strongly agreeing with it. These findings were consistent with the findings from studies of Oraif and Elyas (2021) and Alqahtani (2022). Also, there were some items that had good level of agreement, for example, Online teaching through Madrasati provided me better time management. However, the male teachers were not sure whether their students were ready to use Madrasati platform for online learning or not. Also, the credit goes to Madrasati platform administration to get positive feedback about teachers' perception about teaching practice through Madrasati platform.

6. Limitations

This study has some limitations. For example, in this study the participants were selected from one educational directorate of Saudi Arabia. Therefore, we cannot generalize the findings to the other parts of the world. Of course, there might be some similarities in findings if the study is replicated in other contexts. The second

limitation is also relevant to geographical areas that is use of Madrasati in Saudi Arabia. Thus, the results of this research may be different from the outcomes of other studies involving the use of digital tools in other parts of the world. We also anticipate that adopting alternative digital technologies for teaching and learning, even in Saudi Arabia, could provide different results.

7. Recommendations

Upon completing our research on perceptions about motivation towards teaching English language using digital technology during COVID-19 with the focus on Madrasati, we have some recommendations for educators, researchers, and policy makers in the field. In our research study, we used in-service teachers as participants of the study. A study could be beneficial involving students to understand their motivation towards learning English language through Madrasati during COVID-19. It would be helpful to conduct a research study involving pre-service teachers to investigate their ability to use online Language teaching platforms. We also recommend conducting an in-depth study on challenges of using Madrasati for better learning conducive results by involving students and teachers. As we have discussed earlier, various digital tools, platforms and learning management systems like Moodle, Skype, Telegram, Google Classroom, Microsoft Team and WebEx are used for online education. It would be beneficial to explore what other digital tools are used in EFL teaching in Saudi Arabia. We have used English language teachers as participants for our study, it would be helpful to investigate how do teachers of other subject use Madrasati for their teaching. Our study has a focus on educational directorate in Saudi Arabia. A study would be conducted on a large scale by involving participants from whole country.

8. Conclusion

Our main objective was to examine instructors' motivation for adopting digital technology to teach English (distance learning tool – Madrasati) during COVID-19. Prior to 2020, practically all Saudi Arabian academics likely to believe that face-to-face instruction predominated in schools. However, after the disruption by the pandemic, many schools started adopting digital technology for teaching and learning. Madrasati was one of the most widely used digital platform in Saudi Arabia during the Pandemic. As we stated earlier, several studies were conducted on Madrasati. However, there is a dearth of literature about teachers' motivation towards teaching English language by using Madrasati. It is hoped that this study will pave the way for using digital technology for EFL teaching in Saudi Arabia.

The available literature indicates that motivation is one of the important factors in teaching and learning. Additionally, some scholars also reported that digital technology was beneficial for learning. They argued that digital technology could be used to boost motivation for teaching and learning English as a foreign language. In Saudi Arabia context, Madrasati was considered as the most engaging digital tool. The studies reported the teachers were very satisfied with the application of Madrasati. Our review of the studies showed many advantages of online learning. As Madrasati is an online platform, we anticipate the same benefits for teachers and learners who use Madrasati. Of course, pre-service teacher preparation and in-service professional development for employing these technological tools, particularly Madrasati, would be advantageous to raising educational standards across the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

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