

Syed Azaz Ali Shah *

Abdul Hamid Khan †

Abdus Samad ‡

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L2 Motivational Self System of the Seminary Students learning English Language in Pakistan

Abstract:

This study tests the validity of Dörnyei (2005) L2 Motivational Self System in a new context of Madrassa. A mixed-method approach has been applied in this study. A structured questionnaire was designed and distributed among 1000 students of fifteen different Madrassas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province of Pakistan. The current study posits that the Dörnyei model of the L2 Self System is not valid in the Madrassa context. The study examines that ideal and Ought-to L2 selves are the weakest contributors in motivating Madrassa students for second language learning. The findings reveal no significance among the three main components (ideal self, ought-to self and L2 learning experience) of the L2 Motivational Self System. Moreover, the new construct of learning English for religious purpose was found useful, and all the participants showed their interest in it. This study concluded that multiple personal and religious factors strongly affect the motivational level of Madrassa students.

Key Words:

L2 Motivational Self System, Madrassas, Ideal Self, Ought-to Self and L2 Learning Experience

Introduction

This study focuses on the L2 Motivational Self System of Madrassa students at Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province of Pakistan. It investigates the lack of motivation, coupled with other multiple socio-economic factors responsible for this aspect of their learning. This research problematizes this issue in order to highlight the reasons behind this mindset. It considers different perception about the English language and culture.

According to [Baugh \(2003\)](#), English is the “lingua franca” of the world, and the reason is that the speakers of this language are highly influential in world politics, science, democracy, and almost all other areas of human life. Thus, in the field of applied linguistics, learning and teaching of the English language is the focal point from various perspectives ([Sameer, 2009](#)).

In addition to many other factors, motivation for learning English language plays an important role. Motivation not only fuels learning of the students, but also encourages teachers towards effective language teaching methods. [Islam \(2013\)](#), and [Ali \(2016\)](#) have explored and identified motivation at different levels of education in Pakistan. However, as far as the analysis of the motivation in Madrassa students is concerned, this area seems barren and unexplored to the best of my knowledge and needs to be explored.

The current study focuses on the analysis of L2 motivational Self System of seminaries students in Pakistan. What are the motivational factors that are influencing L2 self of seminary students in Pakistan? How well the Dörnyei L2 does

Motivational Self System fit the data? I have used a mixed-method (qualitative/quantitative) in the current study. Data has been collected through questionnaires and semi-structured interviews from different districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP hereafter) in Pakistan. This study aims to explore L2 motivational factors and the validation of [Dörnyei's \(2009\)](#) L2 Self System in the seminary students of Pakistan during the L2 learning process.

* PHD Scholar, Qurtuba University Peshawar, KP, Pakistan.

† Qurtuba University Peshawar, KP, Pakistan.

‡ Assistant Professor/Chairman, Department of English, Kohat University of Science and Technology, Kohat, KP, Pakistan. Email: dr.samad@kust.edu.pk

Background of the Study

This study has been conducted in the backdrop of the different views on the way *Madrasa* education is important and why these students shirk from learning the English language

The purpose of this section is to describe the geographical location, population, literacy rate, and socio-linguistic view of Pakistan and its province KP, where the data has been collected for the current study. These details help in understanding and explaining the attitude of Pakistani *Madrasa* students towards English language learning and the L2 motivation of the participants. Firstly, the overall linguistic and geographical details of Pakistan in general and then of KP, in particular, are discussed. Secondly, this section not only explains the status of English in Pakistani society and its educational system but also highlights the role and place of English in *Madrasas* and its recent inclusion in the curriculum.

Socio-Linguistic Background of Pakistan

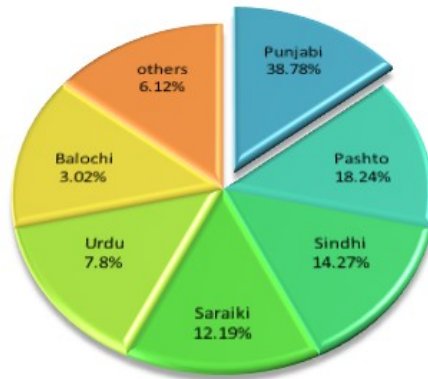
Pakistan is a multi-cultural and multilingual country. According to Shamim (2011) and Asher (2008), 72 different languages are spoken in Pakistan. According to the Population Census Organization (PCO) of Pakistan April 15, 2020), the country has a total population of almost 200 million, the fifth most populous country in the world, making up 2.83% of the whole world.). The literacy rate in the country is 43.90%, which is very far below world standards (Ministry of Education, 2009). According to Capstic (2011), Pakistan spends 2.9% of the budget on education, one of the lowest in the world. The census of (2001) also revealed that male literacy figure stood at 55% whereas female literacy figure at 32% in the country. Almost 65% of people are living in rural areas, and 35.1% are living in big cities. The female population is 48% in Pakistan, according to the latest census conducted in (1998) and published in (2001).

The country has four provinces, Punjab, Sindh, KP and Baluchistan); two autonomous provinces (Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Gilgit Baltistan) and the federal territory (FATA) also the capital of Pakistan, Islamabad. According to Rehman (2003, 2007), a huge population of the country (almost 96%) speak the regional languages, Punjabi, Pashto, Sindhi, Saraiki, Urdu, and Balochi, as their native language. Punjabi and Saraiki have mutually understood languages of the Punjab province, which is the most populous province of Pakistan, 56.3% of the whole population. Pashto, Balochi, and Sindhi are spoken in the other provinces of the country. Urdu, the national language of the country, has a limited number of native speakers and is understood in all parts of the country ([Mansoor, 2004](#)). According to the (Census 2017), the six major languages can be seen in the following table.

Table 1. The Linguistic Profile of Pakistan

Main Languages	Speakers Percentage	Regions	Status
Punjabi	38.78%	Punjab	Regional
Pashto	18.24%	KP and Ex FATA	Regional
Sindhi	14.27%	Sindh	Regional
Saraiki	12.19%	Southern Punjab	Regional
Urdu	7.8%	Urban Sindh and some parts of Punjab	Regional
Baluchi	3.02%	Baluchistan	Regional
Others	6.12%	Different parts of Pakistan	Local

Pashto is the second-highest language spoken in the country, as shown in the pie chart on the next page.



Significance of the Study

This study is an addition to the area of English language teaching (ELT). The study also shows the positive side of Pakistani *Madrassas* by adding English subjects to their curriculum. After the incident of 9/11, such places were only known as the terrorist's hubs in the world and mainstream media (Rehman, 2007). This study also incorporates the common hypothesis of Pakistani education policymakers that the *Madrassas* education system does not welcome secular education in general and the English language in particular.

This study is important to bring harmony to the education system of the country, and all institutions should practice an education system that should be acceptable to all type of schools. The study also plays the role of bridging *Madrassa* and universities students as the study revealed that due to better proficiency in the English language, university students consider *Madrassa* students inferior in education.

Literature Review

Motivation

Motivation is a juxtaposition of factors that stimulate human actions; motivation stimulates people to think and behave. According to Dörnyei (2006), motivation is concerned with

“The direction and magnitude of human actions, that is, the choice of a particular action, the persistence with it and the effort expended on it”.

Motivation emanates from ambition or aspiration, which later on counsel human actions. Motivation is difficult to define as it does not only contain alternatives, instructions, and continuance of human conduct but also has manifold arguments behind all these aspects. The multidimensional nature and the broad range of motives for human conduct make it hard to elaborate a universal and "an integrative 'super theory of motivation". This is the reason that investigators must concretize their concentration on its unidentified aspects while theorizing it (Dörnyei and Ushioda, 2011). Here, I will attempt to define the idea of motivation (in terms of L2 context) with the assistance of several interpretations offered by other researchers.

The success and failure of a second language learner are determined by the level of motivation he has. In most cases, motivation is related to one's intentions, enthusiasm, and thirst for doing-or achieving something. It is not easy to explain the term 'motivation' in a single line definition because its definition varies from person to person. It is interesting to note that what motivates one person may not motivate others (Hadfield, 2013). I am going to discuss some well-known definitions of motivation by different dictionaries and experts.

The Oxford Online Dictionary (2014) describes the term motivation as a desire or willingness to do something.

Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary (4th edition) explains motivation as enthusiasm for doing something or the need or reason for doing something.

Macmillan Dictionary illustrates the term motivation as a feeling of enthusiasm or interest that makes you determined to do something.

Motivation being a mind-related phenomenon has also been defined by psychologists as well. M. David (1991) defines motivation as the 'reason(s) by which a person starts the activities or the process through which activity is directed and sustained in a certain period so that one should meet his/her needs. Such needs can be physical as the need for food or psychological as the need for validation. Psychologists have proposed many theories dealing with different aspects of motivation. Some of these theories talk about need and others about arousal and instinct. The Dictionary of Psychology (2012) defines motivation as:

It is a driving force that sets a direction to the human or animal behavior at conscious or unconscious level" or "A level of willingness that a person has for achieving his goals, a level can be physical or mental.

Dörnyei and Hadfield (2013) consider teachers' role extremely important in developing students' motivation towards learning. Maintaining the students' motivation throughout the semester is one of the most challenging tasks for teachers. Burden and Williams (1997) are of the view that motivation is a kind of mental activation/force that gives power to a person (physical or mental) to achieve his goals. Motivation not only plays a role in a man's social life, but it also plays a vital role in successful educational. Hunts and Wiseman (2008) describe motivation as the inner urge that is aroused in a person at certain times who has the aim of achieving something. That urge may have a huge impact (positive/negative) on human conduct when it comes to achieving his goals.

Pintrich (2003) considers motivation a very complex term. He believes that it is almost impossible to find out why someone is doing something as the reasons behind that action can vary over time. He further adds that motivation is divided into two types, intrinsic and extrinsic, and it is not easy to ascertain which kind is forcing students to learn or get an education. He further says we often cannot be sure which type of 'motivation' is at work because most of the time, both types of motivation are at work behind a person achieving something. In line with this argument Pintrich (2003) has given four dimensions that contribute to motivation:

1. **Competence:** Are the students capable of completing a task?
2. **Autonomy/control:** How will students control a given task? It creates a direct link between their actions and the outcomes.
3. **Interest:** Is the task interesting for the students? Is the effort worth making?
4. **Relatedness:** What would be the reaction of others? Will he get any approval from his/her classmates or from society?

These four dimensions are drawn from the works of many other scholars as well. V. Eskja (2017), in his article "The Impact of Motivation in an Educational Environment", explains the positive side of motivation in education and the negative effects of demotivation in the same environment. He has defined how to bridge the internal and external motivational factors together. He also throws light on how to bridge the gap between teachers and students in the academic and educational environment. He further explains the role of a teacher as a motivator so much so that he would always encourage his students; he should have a dynamic and vivacious personality and should work on the positive attitude of the students. He further stresses the bridging of the communication gap between teachers and students, which is a hindrance to the motivation of students and their learning process. His study is based on the theories of Herzberg (1964), Maslow (1943), and McClelland (1957).

Eskja (2017) says that time has changed. Technology has replaced many old things; teaching methods are one of them. He urges pedagogues to pay special attention to the adaptation of motivation in learning. He supports William (2011), five entities that are influencing students' motivation level and plays a vital role in the L2 learning process they are teacher, student, method, content, and environment. He quoted Palmer (2007)

as saying that quality education is only possible when you motivate your students. Teachers should monitor and evaluate students' motivation throughout the academic year. When your students ask more and more questions, do their assigned tasks enthusiastically and are eager to learn more and more, these are the signs which show that your students are motivated to learn.

L2 Motivation Self System

The idea of the L2 Motivation Self System Stage (L2MSS) was proposed by [\(Dörnyei 2005\)](#). L2 motivation Self System judges L2 learners on three different levels;

1. The ideal self is when a learner wants to speak a second language; he likes English for the sake of English, and he carries an image or portrait of his ideal person that he wants to become. Dörnyei explains the ideal self as “the L2 specific facet of one’s ideal self”.
2. Ought-to L2-self is “the attributes that one believes one ought to possess? For example, responsibilities, obligations, and various duties to avoid possible negative outcomes from the people or family and friends”. The learner tries to do his best, possibly not because he loves the language but because he loves his family and wants to take care of it. He tries to avoid any possible negativity in the future by not getting good marks in English.
3. The learning experience is the last element of L2MSS. Second language learning experience refers to “situational specific motives related to the immediate learning environment and experience”.

Overview of the Studies Conducted on Learners’ L2 Motivational Self

L2 motivation Self System has been tested in many countries such as Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Hungary, China, Japan, and Iran (Islam, 2013; Al-Shehri; Ryan 2009; Taguchi, Magid, and Papi 2009) for its validation. In the coming lines, I am going to discuss some of the relevant studies briefly.

[Islam \(2013\)](#) has researched Dörnyei’s L2 motivation Self System system in Pakistani universities. The topic of his study was “L2 Motivation Self System and Relational Factors Affecting the L2 Motivation of Pakistani Students in the Public Universities of Central Punjab, Pakistan”. Islam’s thesis presents the motivation level of Pakistani undergraduate students for the English language by using the L2MSS of Dörnyei (2009).

The aim of the study was twofold; firstly, to check the usefulness of Dörnyei’s presented Self System of L2 motivation in the Pakistani context, and secondly, to find other related factors for boosting motivation in the second language process. He distributed 1000 questionnaires in undergraduate students of seven public sector universities in Punjab. Mix method approach was adopted for the said study. The study got noteworthy results and support in terms of validating the L2 system in the Pakistani context. The students’ high motivation for the English language has been shown in both qualitative and quantitative results. In the qualitative section, “I will learn English till death”, the type of responses was noted that shows how much students were motivated for L2 learning ([Islam, 2013](#)).

Milieu had a huge role in the L2 motivation of the students and influenced the future self of the students in that study. [Islam \(2013\)](#) urges scholars to explore this theory of L2MSS more in the Pakistani context. [Islam \(2013\)](#) has constructed the new concept of National Interest in the study as well; the theme of the construct is how students can play an important role in the economic development of the country with a promising performance in the English language.

Research Questions

This study had many research questions. However, in this paper, the researcher focused on addressing only the following major research questions:

1. What are the motivational factors influencing the L2 self of the seminary students in Pakistan?

2. How well does the Dörnyei L2 motivational Self System fit the data?

Methodological Structure of the Study

To explain and examine the L2 motivation of the *Madrassa* students, the researcher has adopted a mixed method approach in the current study. In this regard, the L2 motivation of seminary students has been tested using the lens of L2MSS and other motivational factors in the L2 learning process. The researcher has added 10 questions to the structured questionnaire at the end of the chapter (purely related to learning English for religious purposes). Both qualitative and quantitative approaches have been adopted for data collection and analysis in this study (mixed method).

In the typology of mixed-method research design, this research falls in the category of ‘partially mixed concurrent dominant status design’. This typology of the mixed method is given by Leech (2007). In this category, both approaches, qualitative and quantitative, happened at the same time, and one of them, the quantitative, in the case of this study, has got more emphasis than qualitative (Leech, 2009).

Selection of the Sample

The researcher has selected the last four *Darjas* (classes) for this study as they are senior and mature. Zenter (2007) claims that a suitable vision for the future self does not develop in childhood. I selected *KHAMISA* (GRADE 5), *SADISA* (GRADE 6), *SABIA* (GRADE 7), and *SAMINA* (GRADE 8) for the current study.

Description of the Sample of this Study

Overall, 1000 questionnaires (almost 62 in each *Madrassa*) were distributed among the students of fifteen *Madrassas*. I received positive responses from (93%) students by receiving 933 filled questionnaires. I omitted the incomplete questionnaires or the questionnaires filled in a careless manner.

Table 2. Background Information of the Students

Details	Sample	Percentage
Sample	933	93.3%
Gender		
M	776	83.17
F	157	16.82
Year of Study		
5 th (Khamisa)	131	14.0
6 th (Sadisa)	157	16.8
7 th (Sabia)	247	26.4
8 th (Samina/Alia)	398	42.6

Table 1 shows a huge gender diversity where only 16% of the sample is female. It was a hard task to collect data from female (*BANAAT*) *Madrassas* students due to their strict religious (*parda*) obligation.

Table 3. District Wise Distribution of the KP for Collecting Data

Southern Areas	Central Areas	Northern Areas
Banu	Peshawar (F)	Malakand
Karak	Mardan (F)	Dir
Hangu	Charsada (F)	Swat
Kohat	Sawabi (F)	Mansehra
	Nowshehra (F)	

(Note) “F” indicates female *Madrassa*

The whole province has been divided into three parts southern, central, and northern. Secondly, one Madrassa from each district has been selected for the data collection process, including two EX-FATA areas. Female *Madrassas* were affiliated with the boy's *Madrassas*; however, their sections were separate.

Data Collection Tools

Two tools used for data collection were structured questionnaires and semi-structured interviews.

Structured Questionnaire

A structured questionnaire was used for collecting quantitative data. The purpose of the questionnaire was to find the L2 motivation factors in *Madrassa* students. [Islam \(2013\)](#) has developed a new concept of national interest as a future self. I also included that for *Madrassa* students by adapting his questions.

Ten questions were added in the last portion of the questionnaire, purely based on learning English for serving religion (motivation factor) in a better way, domestically, nationally, and internationally. Some questions were deleted; for example, "Do you like watching English movies" as such questions were useless in the *Madrassa* context because they consider watching movies an unIslamic act. (Shaikh Muhammad Ahmad Ismael 2006).

The Procedure of Quantitative Data Analysis

While analyzing quantitative data, I kept a few things in mind. Firstly, it was noted that either motivational factors are the same for male and female students, or they can be different in both genders. For that purpose, the data were analyzed in two stages; first, the overall tabulation was completed through SPSS 20.0 software, and secondly, the gender-wise analysis was made through the same software. Secondly, the entire tables were described in detail with the motivational factors which are different for male and female students.

Furthermore, Dörnyei (2007) L2 Motivational Self System has been observed in the overall analysis. It has kept been in mind that either this system exists in the second language learning process or not. Fourthly, the new construct 'learning English for religious purposes has been highlighted with more details.

Results and Analysis

Reliability Analysis of the Questionnaire

To find out the reliability of all scales of the questionnaire, another test was conducted for this purpose after entering data into SPSS (V20). In this regard, Cronbach Alpha Coefficients were calculated with the help of SPSS software.

Two scales (National Interest and Religious Interest) have more than .7 alpha values which are highly acceptable in social science studies and other studies conducted on L2 motivation. Furthermore, six scales (Ideal L2 self, ought to L2 self, English anxiety, instrumentality-prevention, Instrumentality-promotion, and International posture) have alpha value close to .7, which also has a satisfactory inter-item correlation. The scale of 'Religious Interest' has the highest value of .81, which shows the interest of the sample for learning English to serve Islamic religion, which is further explained in the interview section.

Table 4. Scales Reliability Test in the Questionnaire

S. No	Scales	No. of Items	Cronbach Alpha	Mean Interitem Correlation
1	Ideal L2 self	8	.63	.20
2	Ought-to L2 self	6	.67	.28
3	Attitudes to Learning English	3	.60	.31

4	Attitude towards L2 Community	6	.58	.22
5	Cultural Interest	2	.50	.14
6	English Anxiety	4	.68	.29
7	Intended Learning Efforts	6	.62	.18
8	Instrumentality – prevention	5	.66	.23
9	Instrumentality – promotion	7	.69	.26
10	Integrativeness	3	.28	.10
11	International Posture	8	.67	.32
12	National Interest	5	.71	.43
13	Milieu	6	.59	.21
14	Religious Interest	10	.81	.40

I have excluded integrativeness from further analysis, which scored the lowest alpha value of .28 and meant inter-item of .10. In this case, the values are very low to measure the L2 motivation of the present sample. Unlike Islam (2013), the scale of Ought to L2 self has not very high alpha value (only .67) and inter-item correlation (.28) which is in line with the (Lukacs 2010) and (Csizer 2008) studies. It has been included for the analysis despite its low values as it plays an important role in measuring the L2 motivation or demotivation of the sample. Apart from that, instrumentality promotion and instrumentality prevention scored good alpha values, corresponding with the results of Taguchi (2009), which are kept for further analysis.

Motivation Factors

Table 5. L2 Motivation Factors for *Madrassa* Students

FACTORS	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean
Cultural Interest	933	1.00	6.00	3.77
Attitudes towards L2 Community	933	1.17	5.67	3.55
Instrumentality (Promotion)	933	1.26	5.80	3.50
Instrumentality (Prevention)	933	1.00	5.80	3.37
International Posture	933	2.00	5.67	3.96
English Anxiety	933	1.25	5.50	3.49
Attitudes towards Learning English	933	1.00	6.00	3.29
Milieu	933	1.17	5.67	3.40
Ideal L2 Self	933	1.25	5.75	3.35
Ought-To L2 Self	933	1.00	5.24	2.51
Intended Learning Efforts	933	1.00	5.50	3.43
National Development	933	1.20	6.00	4.06
English Learning for Serving Religion	933	3.10	5.90	4.82

Note 1:

As the Likert scale consists of 1-06 scales, so the average or mean is $(1+2+3+4+5+6)/6=3.5$.

Thus, the factors whose mean/average score is above 3.5 are the motivating factors and vice versa.

Here in this table, all the blue highlighted factors are the motivating factors; make sure that all the statements are of reverse order.

Note 2:

On the Likert scale of two points, that is 1 and 2; their a mean score is above 1.5; then it shows that females are more motivated than male and if it is below 1.5 then males are more motivated than female. In this case, males are more motivated as compared to females.

The L2 future selves of *Madrassa* students have been influenced by different motivational factors to learn English which has been explained in this section. The most prominent of which is learning English for religious purposes that dominated other motivational factors in the *Madrassa* setup. The basic objective behind learning English was to spread Islam in the entire world; more than 90% showed their keen interest in it.

Regression Model Based on Ideal L2 Self, Ought to L2 Self, Attitude to Learning English and Learning English for Serving Religion as a Criterion Measure

Table 6. Religious Interest and L2 Self System

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. The error of the Estimate
1	.410 ^a	.168	.166	.67952

a. Predictors: (Constant), ATTITUDES TO LEARNING ENGLISH, OUGHT-TO L2 SELF, IDEAL L2 SELF

The above model shows R square of 0.168, which shows explains that 16.8% variation in the response variables is explained by the independent variables considered in the study.

Table 7. ANOVA^a

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	86.864	3	28.955	62.707	.000 ^b
Residual	428.965	929	.462		
Total	515.829	932			

a. Dependent Variable: ENGLISH LEARNING FOR SERVING RELIGION

b. Predictors: (Constant), ATTITUDES TO LEARNING ENGLISH, OUGHT-TO L2 SELF, IDEAL L2 SELF

Table 8. Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	3.987	.085		47.100	.000		
Ideal L2 self	.050	.062	.054	.801	.424	.456	2.193
Ought-to L2 self	-.020	.012	-.223	-1.575	.127	.705	1.419
Attitudes to learning English	.189	.026	.292	7.282	.000	.557	1.794

a. Dependent Variable: ENGLISH LEARNING FOR SERVING RELIGION

The above tables explain that the model is statistically significant with a p-value .000. In the table having coefficients of independent variables in the model, the results portray that attitude to learning English is significant, with a 1 percent level of significance. Apart from that, ideal L2 self and ought to L2 self is insignificant to the dependent variable English learning for serving religion. These results are further supported by the qualitative data frequencies and elaborated under the quantitative data.

Findings of Qualitative Data

This chapter has provided important findings of qualitative data.

This chapter has provided the fact that the core motivation for learning English at *Madrassas* is to spread the Islamic religion throughout the world. None of the thirty participants showed any type of disagreement with the questions asked in this regard.

This chapter has presented the attitude of *Madrassa* students towards the culture of the L2 community and L2 speakers. Surprisingly, all thirty participants showed a negative attitude towards English culture.

Conclusion

Research Questions and their Findings

The current study was based on four main questions. In this paper, I have taken only two.

Question one was

1. What are the motivational factors influencing the L2 self of the seminary students in Pakistan?

In response to the above question, it has been revealed that the motivational factors that are influencing L2 self of the seminary students in KP, Pakistan are: English learning for serving religion, national development, culture interest, attitude towards L2 community, instrumentality (promotion), international posture and intended learning efforts.

Question two was

2. How well does the Dörnyei L2 motivational Self System fit the data?

The finding for this question has shown that the L2 motivational Self System of Dörnyei does not fit the data in all aspects. This has been examined in qualitative and quantitative data that ideal and ought-to L2 selves are the weakest contributors in motivating *Madrassa* students for second language learning.

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