



ATTITUDE AND ACHIEVEMENTS MOTIVATION OF ARAB POSTGRADUATES IN LANGUAGE CENTRES IN SELECTED MALAYSIA PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES TOWARDS LEARNING OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE

IDRIS MARIAM OLUWATOYIN



SULTAN IDRIS EDUCATION UNIVERSITY

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TOWARDS LEARNING OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE

IDRIS MARIAM OLUWATOYIN

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RECOGNITION

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ABSTRACT

The purposes of this study were to investigate the attitudes and achievement motivation of Arab postgraduate towards learning of English language in selected public universities in Malaysia and to determine the relationship between attitudes and achievement motivation of the respondents. The respondents were 226 Arab postgraduates in language centres in the selected public universities in Malaysia learning English language. The research questionnaires used for this data collection were adopted and consist of six dimensions which were emotion, behavioural, cognitive (attitudes), mastery, performance, and avoidance goal (achievement motivation) with 54 items altogether. The data from the returned questionnaire were statistically analysed by using the SPSS program for percentage, frequency, mean, standard deviation, t-test, and ANOVA. Findings from this research revealed that the respondents have a positive attitude and achievement motivation towards learning English Language. Furthermore, there were no statistically significant differences in attitudes and achievements motivation of the respondents in a team of gender. Finally, the finding indicates that there is a positive and strong relationship between attitudes and achievements motivation as the three dimensions used to measure attitudes were significantly correlated with the three dimensions used to measure achievements motivation. There was positive correlation between attitudes measured by emotion and achievements measured by mastery, $r=.164^{**}$, $n=226$, $p<.05$. Attitude measured by emotion and achievements measure by performance also shows a positive correlation, $r=.164^{**}$, $n=226$, $p<.05$. Also attitudes measured with emotion and achievements measured with avoidance shows positive correlation, $r=.173^{**}$, $n=226$, $p>.05$. The findings could be useful for researchers and teachers by helping students improves their attitudes and motivation by conducting effective teaching and learning strategies to develop students' attitudes and motivation.



SIKAP DAN PENCAPAIAN MOTIVASI PELAJAR ARAB PASCASISWAZAH DI PUSAT BAHASA DI UNIVERSITI AWAM YANG TERPILIH DI MALAYSIA KEARAH PEMBELAJARAN BAHASA INGGERIS

ABSTRAK

Tujuan kajian ini adalah untuk mengkaji sikap dan pencapaian motivasi pelajar pascasiswazah Arab kearah pembelajaran bahasa Inggeris di universiti awam terpilih di Malaysia dan untuk mengetahui hubungan antara sikap dan pencapaian motivasi responden. Responden adalah 226 pelajar pascasiswazah Arab di pusat bahasa di universiti awam terpilih di Malaysia yang mempelajari bahasa Inggeris. Soal selidik penyelidikan yang digunakan dalam pengumpulan data ini diadopsi dan terdiri dari enam dimensi iaitu emosi, tingkah laku, kognitif (sikap), penguasaan, prestasi, dan tujuan penghindaran (pencapaian motivasi) dengan 54 item keseluruhannya. Data dari hasil borang soal selidik dianalisis secara statistik dengan menggunakan program SPSS untuk peratusan, frekuensi, min, sisihan piawai, ujian-t, dan ANOVA. Dapatan dari penyelidikan ini menunjukkan bahawa responden mempunyai sikap positif dan pencapaian motivasi kearah pembelajaran Bahasa Inggeris. Tambahan pula, tidak ada perbezaan yang signifikan secara statistik dalam sikap dan pencapaian motivasi responden dalam satu kumpulan jantina. Akhirnya, penemuan menunjukkan bahawa terdapat hubungan positif yang kuat antara sikap dan pencapaian motivasi kerana tiga dimensi yang digunakan untuk mengukur sikap berkorelasi secara signifikan dengan tiga dimensi yang digunakan untuk mengukur pencapaian motivasi. Terdapat korelasi positif antara sikap yang diukur oleh emosi dan pencapaian yang diukur dengan penguasaan, $r = .164^{**}$, $n = 226$, $p < .05$. Sikap yang diukur oleh emosi dan pencapaian yang diukur dengan prestasi juga menunjukkan korelasi positif, $r = .164^{**}$, $n = 226$, $p < .05$. Juga sikap yang diukur dengan emosi dan pencapaian yang diukur dengan penghindaran menunjukkan korelasi positif, $r = .173^{**}$, $n = 226$, $p > .05$. Penemuan ini dapat memberi manfaat kepada penyelidik dan guru dengan membantu pelajar meningkatkan sikap dan motivasi mereka dengan menjalankan strategi pengajaran dan pembelajaran yang berkesan untuk mengembangkan sikap dan motivasi pelajar.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
RECOGNITION	ii
APPENDIX	iii
ABSTRAK	iv
ABSTRACT	v
CONTENT	vi
LIST OF TABLES	vii
LIST OF FIGURES	viii
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	ix

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1	Introduction	1
1.2	Background of the Study	1
1.3	Statement of the problem	13
1.4	Objectivs of the study	18
1.5	Research Questions	19
1.6	Research Hypotheses	20
1.7	Significant of the Study	21
1.8	Theoretical Framework	22
1.8.1	Tri- component Attitude model	22
1.8.2	Achievement Motivation Theory	25
1.9	Conceptual Framework	28
1.10	Scope and Limitation of the Research	30
1.11	Definition of Terms	31

1.11.1 Attitude	31
1.11.2 Achievement motivation	31
1.11.3 Postgraduate Arab students	31
1.11.4 Proficiency	31
1.12 Summary	32

CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction	33
2.2 Concept of Attitude	34
2.3 Components of Attitude	37
2.3.1 Behavioral Aspect of Attitude	37
2.3.2 Cognitive Aspect of Attitude	37
2.3.3 Emotional Aspect of Attitude	38
2.4 The Attitude Models	39
2.4.1 Expectancy-value model	39
2.4.2 Three - component model	40
2.4.3 Association model	42
2.5 Attitudes and related concepts	44
2.5.1 Beliefs	44
2.5.2 Values	45
2.5.3 Ideologies	46
2.5.4 Social identity	47
2.6 Measurement of Attitudes	49
2.6.1 Direct measurement of attitudes	50
2.6.1.1 Quantitative methods	50

2.6.1.2	Thurstone's equal appearing intervals method	50
2.6.1.3	Likert's method of summated ratings	51
2.6.1.4	Osgood Suci and Tannenbaum's Semantic Differential	52
2.6.2	Qualitative methods	53
2.6.3	Indirect measures	54
2.6.4	Behavioral observation	55
2.6.5	Implicit measures	55
2.6.6	Response competition measures	56
2.6.7	Matched-guise technique	57
2.7	Attitudes and behavior	59
2.7.1	The attitude-behavior relationship	59
2.8	Attitudes and Information Processing	61
2.9	Roles of Attitudes in Learning	62
2.9.1	Positive Attitudes and Learning	63
2.9.2	Awareness of the necessity triggers positive attitudes	63
2.9.3	Instrumental orientation elicits positive attitudes	64
2.9.3.1	Instrumental motivation	64
2.10	Language and its Scope	67
2.11	Attitude and Language Acquisition	68
2.12	Motivational role of Attitudes	70
2.12.1	Motivation	71
2.12.2	Intrinsic Motivation	72
2.12.3	Intrinsic motivation to know and understand	75
2.12.4	Intrinsic motivation to accomplish things	76

2.12.5	Intrinsic motivation to experience stimulation	76
2.12. 6	Extrinsic Motivation	77
2.12.7	Amotivation Motivation	80
2.13	Research on the effects of external rewards on intrinsic motivation	82
2.14	The impact of self-determination on achievement related behaviours	83
2.15	Research on the effects of external rewards on intrinsic motivation	85
2.16	Research on intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, amotivation and achievement related behaviors	87
2.17	Achievement Motivation	89
2.18	The Need to Achieve	92
2.19	The Fear of Failure	96
2.20	The Probability of Success	97
2.21	Perception of the Outcome	101
2.22	Other Test Methods	102
2.22.1	Story Sequence Analysis	102
2.22.2	Thematic Apperception Test	103
2.22.3	Survey	103
2.23	Classroom settings and achievement goal orientations of students	103
2.24	Implications of Motivation for Future Academic Success	106
2.25	Future of Achievement motivation	108
2.26	Theoretical Relations Between Achievement Motivation and Academic Achievement	113
2.27	Theories of Achivement Motivation	116

2.27.1	Atkinson and Feather's Theory (1966)	116
2.27.2	Expectancy Value Theory	117
2.27.3	Hierarchical Model of Approach and Avoidance Achievement Motivation	118
2.28	Summary	119
2.29	Related Studies in Malaysia	120

CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1	Introduction	123
3.2	Research Design	123
3.3	Population and Sample	125
3.4	Sampling and Sampling Technique	125
3.5	Research Instrument	128
3.5.1.	Attitudes and Motivation Test Battery (AMTB) Designed by Gardner	129
3.5.2	Adapting the AMTB to the current research	130
3.5.3	Description and Internal Consistency of the AGQ	131
3.5.4	Adaptation of the AGQ Subscale	133
3.5.5	Mastery goal orientation subscale	133
3.5.6	Performance- approach goal subscale	133
3.5.7	Avoidance goal subscale	134
3.6	Validity and Reliability of the Instrument	134
3.6.1	Validity of Instrument	134
3.6.2	Content Validity	135
3.6.3	Construct Validity	135
3.6.4	Reliability of Instrument	136

3.7	Data collection procedure	137
3.7.1	Demographic Information	137
3.7.2	The Scale	138
3.7.3	Pilot study	138
3.8	Data Analysis Procedure	139
3.8.1	Result of Data Analysis on Pilot Study	140
3.8.2	Demographic Information on Gender	140
3.8.3	Demographic Information of Academic Qualification	141
3.8.4	Reliability Test of the Research Instrument for the Pilot	143
3.8.5	Validity Test of the Instrument for the Pilot Study	147
3.8.6	The Anti-Image Correlation of Attitude Questionnaire	151
3.8.7	The Anti-Image Correlation of Achievement Motivation Questionnaire	153

CHAPTER 4 DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

4.1	Introduction	160
4.2	Analysis of Demographic Information of Respondents	161
4.2.1	Gender of the Respondents	162
4.2.2	Age of the Respondents	162
4.2.3	Academic Level of the Respondents	163
4.3	Normality Test	164
4.3.1	Normality Test for Demographic Information	164
4.3.2	Normality test for the items in the dimensions	165
4.3.2.1	Emotional	165
4.3.2.2	Normality Test for Behavioral	167
4.3.2.3	Normality Test for cognitive	168
4.3.2.4	Normality test for Mastery Approach goal	168

4.3.2.5	Normality test for performance Approach	169
4.3.2.6	Normality Test for Avoidance Approach	170
4.4	Analysis of Data for Research Questions	170
4.4.1	Respondents' Attitudes towards Learning English Language	171
4.4.2	Respondents 'Achievements Motivation towards Learning of English	172
4.2.3	Attitudes and Respondents' Gender	173
4.4.4	Achievements Motivation and Respondents' Gender	174
4.4.5	Relationship between Attitudes and Achievement Motivation of respondents	176
4.4.6	Attitudes towards Learning the English Language based on the selected universities	177
4.4.7	Achievement motivation towards Learning the English Language based on the selected universities	179

CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSION, DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1	Introduction	182
5.2	Discussion of Findings	183
5.2.1	Participants Characteristics	183
5.2.2	Attitudes of Arab postgraduate towards learning of English Language	184
5.2.3	Achievements motivation of Arab postgraduate towards learning of English	184
5.2.4	Attitude of Arab postgraduate towards learning of English language in terms of gender	185
5.2.5	Achievement motivation of Arab postgraduate towards learning of English language in term of gender	185

5.2.6	Relationship between attitude and achievement motivation of Arab postgraduate towards learning of English Language	186
5.2.7	Mean score of the respondent's attitudes towards learning of English Language based on the selected universities	186
5.2.8	Mean score of the respondent's achievement motivation toward learning of English Language based on the selected universities	187
5.3	Conclusion	187
5.4	Recommendation	190
5.5	Limitations and suggestions for future research	191
	REFERENCES	193

LIST OF TABLES

Table No.		Page
3.1	Determining Sample size from given Population	126
3.2	Scale of instruments	127
3.3	Original and adopted subscale developed by Gardner (1985)	129
3.4	Sub- scales and No of items for the adapted achievement motivation questionnaire	133
3.5	Demographic distribution of gender of the respondents for this study	139
3.6	Academic Qualification of the Respondents	140
3.7	Demographic Information of Age range of Respondents	141
3.8	Reliability Statistics for Emotional	142
3.9	Reliability Statistics for Behavioral	143
3.10	Reliability Statistics for Cognitive	144
3.11	Reliability Statistics for Mastery goal	144
3.12	Reliability Statistics for performance-approach goal	145
3.13	Reliability Statistics for Avoidance goal	145
3.14	The Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Test of all the six constructs	146
3.15	KMO and Bartlett's Test	147
3.16	Communalities table for Attitudes Questionnaire	148
3.17	KMO and Bartlett's Test	150
3.18	Communalities of Achievement Motivation Questionnaire	151
3.19	KMO and Bartlett's Test	152
3.20	Communalities	153
3.21	Rotation Component Matrix	155

4.1	Gender of Respondents	162
4.2	Age range of respondents	163
4.3	Academic level of the respondents	164
4.4	Normality test for demographic information	165
4.5	Normality Test for Emotional	166
4.6	Normality test for behavioral	167
4.7	Normality test for cognitive	168
4.8	Normality test on mastery approach goal	169
4.9	Normality test on performance approach	169
4.10	Normality test for avoidance approach	170
4.11	Respondents' attitudes towards learning the English language	169
4.12	Respondents' achievements motivation towards learning the English language	172
4.13	Attitudes and respondents' gender	173
4.14	Achievements motivation and Respondents' Gender	175
4.15	Relationship between Attitudes and Achievement motivation of the respondents	176

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure No.		Page
1.1	The tri component of attitude	24
1.2	Hierarchical Model of Approach and Avoidance Achievement Motivation of Elliot and Church	25
1.3	Theoretical framework of the Study	27
1.4	Conceptual framework	29
2.1	Relationship between attitudes and affect, cognitive and behavior	42
3.1	Distribution of Respondents based on Gender	140
3.2	Distribution of Respondents based on Qualification	141
3.3	Distribution of Respondents based on age	142
3.4	Illustration of the Quantitative Research Methodology used in this Study	159

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AMBT	Attitude and Motivation Test Battery
AGQ	Achievement Goal Questionnaire
CLA	Communicative Language Ability
CGPA	Cumulative Grade Point Average
EFL	English as Foreign Language
EFA	Explanatory Factor Analysis
FA	Factor Analysis
KMO	Kaiser Meyer- Olkin
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
IIUM	International Islamic University Malaysia
UPM	Universiti Putra Malaysia
UKM	Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia
WOFO	Work and Family Orientation Questionnaire
WOFO	Work and Family Orientation Questionnaire



LIST OF APPENDIXES

	Page
Research Instrument	201
Items – Total Statistics for Reliability Result for Emotional	208
Items – Total Statistics for Reliability Result for Behavioral	209
Items – Total Statistics for Reliability result for Cognitive	209
Items – Total Statistics for Reliability result for Mastery Goal	210
Items– Total Statistics for Reliability result for Performance approach Goal	210
Items – Total Statistics for Reliability result for Avoidance Goal	211



CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Problem statement and the background of this study will be discussed in this chapter. Also, research question, significance, limitation of the research and conceptual framework. Operational definition will also be discussed here.

1.2 Background of the study

Attitude is known as an essential and distinctive thought in social science, it has as well maintained its position as a central concept on the field. According to (Latchanna, G. & Dagneu, A, 2010) Attitude is an essential part to understand human behavior and is considered as a mental state includes feelings and beliefs.



Baker (1992) considered attitudes as “a hypothetical construct used to explain the direction and persistence of human behaviour”. Garrett (2010) states that attitudes are “an evaluative orientation to a social object. Bassili & Brown (2005) considered attitudes as an emergent properties of the activity of microconceptual networks that are potentiated by contextually situated objects, goals and task demands. According to Gardner, (2005) attitude is an intellectual and neural state of willingness, formulated through experience, applying a directive or dynamic influence upon the individual ‘s response to all objects and situations with which it is associated. (Dattamajumdar, 2005) views attitude as the total sum of an individual mental construct against some person, object, institution, and idea. Additionally, attitudes can be defined as a fundamental factor that enhances the acquisition of another language especially in a school environment where other learning factors depend on. Masgoret and Gardner (2003)



In general, attitude can be defined as a hypothetical cognitive behaviour that promotes, describes specific construct and give an explanation on their direction and constancy. Al Noursi (2012) maintains that the type of students’ attitudes towards the target language and the teacher is a vital criterion in determining students’ success and/or failure in learning a foreign language. In a different context, Karahan (2007) avers, “Positive language attitudes let learner have positive orientation towards learning English”. Greenwald & Banaji, (1995) proposed that the attitudes of students toward English as a foreign language is one of the affective variables that can affect both their English proficiency and classroom behaviours. For example, if a student has members of an English club receives a great deal of recognition for his/her outstanding performances in the club, such student is likely to have a positive attitude toward English and to try harder to learn English.





Also, researchers like Ma and Xu, (2004) stated that the positive attitudes of students towards learning of mathematics lead to student's success towards the subject. It was also reported by Willis, (1995) that "Poor attitude towards mathematics has often been cited as one factor that has contributed to lower participation and success of girls in mathematics". However, Schiefele, and Csikszentmihalyi, (1995) argue that the attitude and interest of a student in a particular subject determined the success or failure of the student in the said subject. They argue further that gender differences is not a factor to success or failure as an individual assumption on gender and learning is based on one's personal opinion about own abilities and the sex role. Linn (1992) also stated that attitudes is one of the major factors that affect students' participation in science as a subject and have an impact on students' performance in science subjects. Olatoye (2002) further explained that student's attitude towards science has a strong effect on their success in the subject. Generally, it is believed that the attitudes of students towards a particular subject is a major determinant of their success or failure in that subject.

In other words, a positive attitude towards a subject could result in good performance in the subject. Olowojaiye (2000) asserted that teachers can help students create positive attitudes towards a subject with effective teaching strategies. This suggests that teachers could enhance the student's attitude towards science subjects through effective teaching strategies. Furthermore, students whose friend, teacher, parent, or sibling shows a positive approach or view towards learning a particular skill or subject, may be encouraged to develop a favourable attitude towards the subject to improve on the skill or the subject as well. According to research attitudes could be positive or negative; both have an influence in the learning process.





There have been numerous studies by various researcher on the causes of a lack of positive attitude among the learner. Woolfolk and McCune-Nicolich (1984) asked whether the lack of positive attitudes is really the fault of the school. Classroom teachers Sparks & Ganschow, (1995), responded positively to the above question and their answer is "yes. "They argue that increasing positive attitudes of learners toward a foreign language is one of the primary tasks of the teacher. Also, Wlodkowski, (1981) stated that students bring in particular attitudes with them at the commencement of a class or lesson. These attitudes brought to class by the students have an impact on student motivation for learning the foreign language such as English.

However, in Gardner (1985) opinion evaluation of a person's attitude should be established on the thought and belief about the item of the attitude. The measurement of an object attitude should be referred to some specific behaviour According to Cook (2001, p. 119), one crucial factor identified by researchers that could affect learners' attitudes towards the acquisition of a foreign language is the students' own cultural background. These factors are deeply rooted in the students' inner minds. The level of relationship between students own cultural background and that proposed by the foreign language often influences their attitude towards the language and their desire to learn it. Based on this, Lambert, (1990) explains the difference between 'additive and subtractive' which are the two major forms of bilingualism. Additive bilingualism is a situation where the learner feels they are learning a new skill and add to their experience through acquiring another language, without the fear of losing anything from their initially acquired knowledge or what they have already known.





In subtractive bilingualism, the learner feels that the acquisition of another language menace or will threatens their initially acquired language. Research has shown that additive situation yielded a positive result, while subtractive situation does not yield positive result. The study of Vogt and Oliver, (1999) which explore students' general attitudes towards learning of the English language instructions in classrooms in the Kuwait University, shows that a larger percentage of the respondents are positively inclined toward English based curriculum and English language learning. Also, Ghani (2002) studies reveal that the attitudinal factors and English language proficiency of her respondents was positively correlated.

Rabideau, (2005) defines motivation as a driving force behind our actions, needs, desires, and life ambition. It can also be described as internally stimulated condition that stimulates, lead and maintain a construct in an individual. (Pintrich & Schunk, 1996) stated that motivation is a construct that allows the completion of basic intellectual behaviour, such as planning, organization, decision-making, learning, and assessments. Motivations can also be defined as a construct that has a greater influence on the organization of some cognitive contracts which includes :(1) meaningful work (2) Job security (3) Promotional channels (4) A sense of achievement Promotional channels (5) Opportunities. Sparrow (1998). Furthermore, achievement motivation can be view as a drive to excel in learning tasks combined with the capacity to experience tried in accomplishment (Eggen, Manchak, 1994). Atkinson (1964) explains that achievement motivation is a thought that tries to put into account what determined the magnitude direction and consistency of individual behaviours.



The eagerness to do well in relative to some standard of excellence is an act achievement Motivation Dave and Anand, (1979). While Colman, (2001) his opinion viewed the achievement motivation concept as a social related form of motivation that involves competition in other to meet the desired standards of excellence. According to McClelland, (1985) achievement motivation could be described as the difference in an individual on to what extent a person can strive in other to achieve certain reward, which could be in form of praise, feelings of personal mastery and physical. Zenzen (2002) stated that learners are usually motivated through their desire to attain a specific reward, he further explains his opinion by saying that an individual who wishes for success, work hard very hard to attain it. Schmidt and Frieze (1997) argued that an individual with achievement motivation drives usually perform their task to outperform the other people. They are also known with the unique nature of meeting or surpassing any standard of excellence.

Elliot and McGregor (2001) achievement goal orientation theory is based on the fact that student's academic outcomes are influenced by the kind of goal that was set by such student at the commencement of the academic tasks Elliot and McGregor (2001) divided their model of achievement motivation into two classes; mastery goals this means the ability to "master" the task given while performance goals meaning showing better and remarkable performance compare to others. It has been revealed by various researchers that learner that choose the mastery goals, often aim to engage in more adequate cognitive processing approaches Noar and Anderman (2005).

The social goal is another type of goal, this goal centered on the social motive as the major interest in trying to achieve in academics. Achievement motivation can also be

view as a construct that is social-psychological in nature. Maehr (2008, 918). This frequently happens when we have many people, a situation that occurs when coming together of people can cripple or influence their commitment to a given task. The result of Mallalah (2000) studies on his investigation about students' attitudes and motivation towards learning English as a foreign language and achievement in the English language reveal that the achievement of the respondents was positively associated with their motivation and attitudes toward the English language.

Likewise, the study of Hameed and Shakir (2004) on the achievement and attitudes of the higher secondary stage in the Punjab, Pakistan on the English Language indicates that the respondents have a lightly positive relationship between their attitudes and achievement of English language. Some research had also been done previously, in other to determine the attitudes and effect of motivation on the Arab students towards English language learning. For example, Al-Quyadi, (2000) studies the attitudes and motivation of Sana'a University, English majors' student towards learning English; it was conducted to study the psycho-sociological variables such as (stress and depression) in the learning of English in the faculties of Sana'a University in Yemen.

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Suleiman (1993) studied the motivation and attitudes for the Arab students at the Arizona State University towards learning English as a second language. The research results indicate that Arab students lack integrative motivation due to their sociopolitical and sociocultural environment. Al-Shalabi (1982) also conducted research on the motivation of learning English as a foreign language among the Kuwaiti university students. The result shows that almost all participants are learning English for instrumental purposes. However, the Study by Mohamad (2011) on the attitude of Libya secondary school students towards learning of English language showed that the students have a negative attitude towards learning of English language.





Language is the primary or main source that makes this universe a global village. Language learning is contending to be the pillar of human existence. It is global and a natural procedure for every individual. Language acquisition could help to express thought and feeling, hopes, and dreams Tavit, (2009). It is the dream of every individual and nation to learn an economically strong and socially advanced language to get through in the global world. Language performs an essential function in teaching and learning. In today's world, many countries acquire most of their knowledge and learn many other skills through the use of English as a medium of instruction, which made it mandatory for everyone to learn it as a second language.

Acquiring English as a second language in a county which uses English as a medium of instruction helps the non-native English language speaker participate well in class activities and express their opinion. Education is an influential mechanism which aids the modification of child behavior to suit the demand and expectation of the society. Attitude and motivation are essential parts of learning, therefore, it becomes a fundamental component of language acquisition and learning pedagogy. Motivation and Attitudes, being linked frequently to actual classroom studying situations are very significant and crucial contributing elements within the second language learning process. The continuous works of Gardner and Lambert since 1959 onwards are reliable proofs that these two component have a top-notch bearing on the language learning process.

An impressive number of study has been conducted on the influence of motivation and attitudes in Second foreign language studying by different researcher such as, (e. Gardner, 1985, 2000, 2001; Gardner and Lambert, 1959, 1971; Gardner, Smythe, and





Clement, 1979). These researchers have overseen sizeable studies on attitudes and motivation and their interrelationship with linguistic overall performance of learners, affirming the role of influential elements in second language acquisition. They proposed that the successful learner of a second language need to be psychologically prepared to collect symbolic elements of an extraordinary ethno-linguistic community, and to impose elements of another way of life into one's own life space (Khanna & Agnihotri, 1994).

There is a standard consensus among these researchers that the best way to get insight into the knowledge gaining technique is to study the learners' motivation and attitudes towards learning English language. Also, it's far generally agreed among researchers that positive attitudes help the gaining of knowledge, although attitudes do not decide the behavior. The extent of achievement in amassing a second or foreign language (L1) is to a large degree determined with the aid of learners' individual differences such as aptitude, attitudes, and motivation. This lingers as a well-established fact in applied linguistic studies (Baker 2001; Gardner 2001; Gass & Selinker 2001).

According to Abraham Maslow, there is a very strong significant relation between motivation and learning increases. Woolfolk, (2004) also stated that an individual can concentrate on greater level needs of intellectual achievement when the desire for love and belongingness are met, at this stage desire to learn increases. Pintrich, (1989) stated that an attitudinal concept in learning has always played a significant role in educational psychology.





According to Zainol Abidin et al., (2011) learning and acquiring of language has a vital role in helping the individual to communicate his or her opinions. The impact of attitude and motivation in foreign language learning has been a major concern to foreign language researchers. Lately, quite a large number of people are keen in the thought that motivation and attitude aids the learning of a second or foreign language, which is contrary to the past. Masgoret & Gardner, (2003) stated that motivation and attitudes have been strongly connected with second language learning. Learning a new or foreign language in the past was attached to intelligence and verbal ability, while attitude and motivation as factors were not considered important in all ramification. Recently, this thought and belief have changed. Furthermore, Masgoret and Gardner (2003) stated that attitudes and motivation are major tools in learning another language in classroom situation as other factors dependent on them. Previous studies have shown a strong relationship between attitude, motivation and language learning.

"The unique stimulant in L1 motivation research comes from the social psychology since studying the language of another community simply cannot be detached from the learners' social dispositions towards the speech community in question (Moiinvaziri, 2008, p.116)". This is due to the fact an ESL/EFL learner's motivation in language studying is stricken by his/her attitudes in the direction of mastering the language. The relation between motivation and attitudes have been considered a high concern in language studying research. Gardner and Lambert (1971, p.3) country that "his (the learner) motivation to examine is notion to be decided via his attitudes towards the alternative organization in particular and via his orientation towards the learning task itself". Furthermore, Lifrieri (2005), emphasizes that "attitudes are important, however insufficient situations for linguistic attainment





(ibid, P.14)". Only while works together with motivation proper do attitudinal tendencies associated with the stages of student's engagement in language learning, and to attainment" Stephen Krashen (2001) .

The discussion above indicates that, a higher cognizance of the importance of students' motivations and attitudes might help EFL curriculum designers to invent language teaching packages that generate good attitudes and motivations which result in producing more successful EFL learners. Also, this can assist the people that writes on the attitudes and motivation on how to address students' motivation and attitudes (Midraj et al ., 2008). Having identified the importance of motivation and attitudes towards learning English, it is crucial to conduct this study in Malaysia where many Arabs national chose as their study destination. This could be attributed to the country's Islamic value and owing to the fact that Malaysia is a Muslim majority country.

It is also important to note the fact that some of the Arab students are learning English language at the higher institution for the first time, and are expected as an international student to write and present their thesis and term papers in the English language. The above stated facts motivated the researcher in exploring attitudes and achievement motivation of the Arab postgraduate student in the country towards learning of English language which is a prerequisite that determines their academic success or failure in Malaysia where English is used as the medium of communication in some of her universities

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1.3 Statement of the problem

Learning of English language to Arab students has always been a tasking challenge to EFL (English as a Foreign Language) students because it is a foreign language. This refers to learning of English by students from or in countries where it has not been traditionally used (McArthur, 2005). Arab students are faced with numerous challenges while learning English Language. As there is none or very limited chances in the Arab countries to learn English through natural interaction in the target language (Rabab'ah, 2003).

Noticeably, there has been a rapid growth of the number of Arab postgraduate students and other nationalities from the Middle East in Malaysia public universities Al Zubaidi and Rechard (2010). Malaysia as a multicultural county English is considered and spoken as an active second language (Thirusanku & Yunus, 2014), International students in the university are expected to write their thesis in English and acquire some level of proficiency. As a new student, Arabs as international students in Malaysia face many challenges that might have an effect on their learning.

There are quite a number of learning challenges to which they need to adjust such as: adapting to the different accents of the lecturer as well as various teaching



methodologies, students might find it a little bit frustrating in understanding class lecture and these may make their participation in the classroom activities not encouraging. Al Zubaidi and Recharad (2010). It has been established in various research that some international students might have problems with some aspects of English. Liu (1999) states in his research that English language obstacle creates a major dilemma for students who are Chinese national, as most of them have a problem with listening and speaking. Also, according to the research carried out by Grayson (2005) to investigate the nature of the English language problems faced by domestic and international students of different origin and language groups in four universities, in relation to assessing their academic achievement, shows clearly that most of the students both domestic and international in the four universities reveal that they have problem in different areas of English Language which in turn have an effect in the students' academic achievement.



Al Zubaidi and Recharad (2010) in their study "Arab Postgraduate Students in Malaysia: Identifying and overcoming the cultural and language barriers" noted that Arab students lack sufficient English skills. Riedlinger, (2008) also, stated that the communication barrier has been identified as the main problem facing the Arab postgraduate students because using verbal or nonverbal communication misconception could happen. Alrashidi1 and Phan 2015) revealed that most Arab students are not intrinsically motivated, and they lack the basic language skills that would enable them to express themselves easily in the classroom. Kambal (1980) stated in his research carried out in Sudan that the weakness of verb structure is the major problem of his respondents.

As quite a large number of the students studying the English language as a subject or course have problems with concord and tenses. Additionally, he found out that the





students have problem with the proper usage of tenses such as the sequence of time substitution of tenses as well as correct use of perfect tenses. Al Shumaimeri (2003) stated in his study conducted in Saudi Arabia that “Teachers have pointed out that students leave the secondary school stage without the ability to carry out a short conversation in English language”. The statement above shows that despite the fact that the students have been studying the English language for several years, they still lack proficiency in the subject.

In the studies of Suleiman (1993) which investigated Arizona State University Arab student motivation and attitudes for learning English as a second language. The results indicate that the cultural and sociopolitical environment of the respondents affected the lack of their integrative motivation. The study of Al-Shalabi, (2007) reveals that majority of the respondents who were students of Kuwaiti university learning English as a foreign language stated that they are acquiring the knowledge for instrumental purposes. Mukuttash, (1983) in his studies stated that deficiency in the curriculum and teaching methodology used in teaching English Language in some institutes of learning causes problem for the Arab students regarding learning of English language

Also, Zughoul (1984) argued that the problem faced by the Arab students is as a result of poor English language learning surrounding and lack of personal effort of the students during class activities. According to Al-Zubaidi and Recharad (2010), a significant number of Arab postgraduate students in Malaysia lack sufficient English skills. It is also worth mentioning that 35% of the participant in their study identified language barriers as their main grief.

Therefore, these students are faced with English Language proficiency problems such as: (1) speaking (2) listening (3) writing (4) reading which affects their academic





performance and consequently, cause psychological problems. In the study of Al-Zubaidi and Richard (2010) it was stated that lack of proper understanding of the English language usually results in either student feeling reluctant to participate in the class discussion or absconding from classes during personal or group presentation which in return affect their grade in the course and eventually, lead to graduating with weak academic performance. This challenge also led to difficulty in adjusting to the various accent of instructors and understanding the class.

Students might get nervous and frustrated in the class because of their inability to comprehend the message of the instructor due to poor understanding of English language and lack of listening skill. Reading been well known as one of the skills of language proficiency is also one of the barriers which affect student academic performance. A student who could not read and comprehend the course book or read the examination instruction very well may not perform excellent in the examination and that will eventually lead to weak academic performance. Similarly, lack of writing skill makes the problem more complex, as in the country International students dissertations are expected to be written in English Language. This could be a major stress and can create significant problems and barriers in their academic life. In line with Fageeh (2011) writing skill is an essential skill for student learning English language as a foreign language (EFL learners) as it is an integral part of language learning.

This fact is heavily backed by some studies carried out in Arab counties. According to the studies conducted by Hefferman, (2006) he stated that writing proficiency is the base of all other language skill, as other language skills depend strongly on it, another researcher like Tahaine (2010, p.79) affirmed it and also emphasized the





significance of writing skill stating that writing skill “ is needed for taking notes, describing objects or devices and writing essays, answering written questions, writing their compositions, writing experimental reports, etc” However, there are some other problems related to the personality of the Arab student such as; personal affection to their culture and individual attitude towards learning of English language. Al-Zubaidi and Rechards, (2010) stated that in addition to language barriers cultural differences present an additional challenge for the Arab student.

Also, Grayson (2005) in his study to identify the nature of the English language problem faced by international and domestic students in four universities indicates that large numbers of these students show that they have various aspects of language which affect their academics performance. All these problems and many others have an influence on the academic achievement of the Arab students. There are quite a number of international students who are forced to quit their academic pursuit due to poor understanding of English language, especially not able to express themselves in during class presentation or discussing their progress with their supervisor as a result of the language barrier. Zhai (2004), stated that international student having language challenges and cultural differences in the school is having a major problem. Also, Andrade (2006) testifies that some international student often faces challenges such as English language problem, loneliness, and homesickness. According to Tseng and Newton (2002), the summary of the challenges of the international students are personal psychological adjustment, general living adjustment, academic adjustment, and social-cultural adjustment.

Based on all the challenges highlighted, the researcher believes that it worthy to investigate the attitudes of the Arab postgraduate student towards the learning of English





language which represents a strong prerequisite to their academic success or failures in Malaysia where some universities use English language as part of their medium of instruction. Many studies have been conducted on the attitude and motivation of students towards learning the English language in Malaysia. Based on researcher little knowledge none have looked into the attitudes of Arab postgraduate student in Malaysia Universities towards learning of English Language.

1.4 Objectives of the study

The objectives of the study are;

1. To analyze the attitudes of Arab postgraduates towards learning of English language in selected public universities in Malaysia.
2. To investigate the achievement motivation of Arab postgraduates towards learning of English language in selected public universities in Malaysia
3. To examine if there is any statistically significant difference in the attitudes of Arab postgraduates towards learning of English language in selected public universities in Malaysia in terms of gender?
4. To analyze if there is any statistically significant difference in the achievement motivation of Arab postgraduates towards learning of English language in selected public universities in Malaysia in terms of gender?
5. To determine and show if there is a relationship between attitude and achievement motivation of Arab postgraduates towards learning of English Language in selected public universities in Malaysia?
6. To determine the mean score of the respondent's attitudes towards learning of English based on the selected universities.



7. To investigate the mean score of the respondent's achievement motivation towards learning of English based on the selected universities.

1.5 Research Questions

The research questions of the study are:

1. What are the attitudes of Arab postgraduate towards learning of English language in selected public universities in Malaysia?
2. What are the achievement motivation of Arab postgraduates towards learning of English Language in selected public universities in Malaysia?
3. Is there any statistically significant difference in the attitude of Arab postgraduate towards learning of English Language in selected public universities in Malaysia in terms of gender?
4. Is there any statistically significant difference in the achievement motivation of Arab postgraduates towards learning of English Language in selected public universities in Malaysia in terms of gender?
5. What is the relationship between attitude and achievement motivation of Arab postgraduate towards learning of English Language in selected public universities in Malaysia?
6. What are the mean score of the respondent's attitudes towards learning of English Language based on the selected universities?
7. What are the mean score of the respondent's achievement motivation towards learning of English Language based on the selected universities?

1.6 Research Hypotheses

The following are the hypotheses of the study

1. There is no statistical significant difference in the attitudes of Arab postgraduates towards leaning of English language in selected public universities in Malaysia
2. There is no statistical significant difference in the achievement motivation of Arab postgraduates towards learning of English language in selected public universities in Malaysia.
3. There is no statistical significant difference in the attitudes of Arab postgraduates towards learning of English language selected public universities in Malaysia in terms of gender
4. There is no statistical significant difference in the achievement motivation of Arab postgraduates towards learning of English language selected public universities in Malaysia in terms of gender
5. There is no statistical significant relationship in the attitude and achievement motivation of Arab postgraduates towards learning of English language in selected public universities in Malaysia
6. There are no statistical significant differences in the mean score of the attitude of the respondents towards learning of English language based on the selected universities.
7. There are no statistical significant differences in the mean score of the achievement motivation of respondents towards learning of English language based on the selected universities.

1.7 Significance of the Study

Attitude and motivation are important variables influencing and contributing to foreign language acquisition. These variables may hamper effective teaching and learning when lacking. The study of the attitude and achievement motivation of Arab postgraduate students in Malaysia universities might help discover what the Arab students experience in the learning process. Hence, the concept is related to the focused context of attitude and achievement motivation relating to the focused context. Also, it may enlighten teaching professionals, policymakers and experts about some of the beliefs held by the students on the variables under context in order for these professionals to make decisions regarding their practices as the need may be.

In addition, Students as well could benefit from the current study by making their attitudes and what motivates them known to English education practitioners who may reflect on their overall practices and policies regarding the learning of English. Finally, the findings of the current study may help the researcher to identify areas of future research in regard to learners' attitudes and motivation for the benefit of the English language.

1.8 Theoretical Framework

Theoretical Framework is a model that guides a researcher towards the forming of the conceptual model adopted in the research. There are several theories and models on attitudes and motivation. However, the researcher will use (1) Tri- component model of attitudes and (2) Achievement motivation theory to explain the underlying philosophy of the study. The models and theories will guide the researcher in formulating and

developing the conceptual framework of this study. The explanation of the above-mentioned models and theories are presented in the following subsection:

1.8.1 Tri- component Attitude model

The Tri-component attitudes model was proposed by Rosenberg & Hovland (1960). The model is of the opinion that although an attitude is a single entity, it has three interrelated aspects or components (Oskamp 1991). Figure 1.1 offers a graphic elucidation of the interrelationship between the three components. According to the tri-component model, attitudes comprises three components.

The three elements are (1) emotional (feeling) (2) behavioral and (3) cognitive (beliefs). The emotion experienced is linked with an object, person or situation (Tate, 1999). This could be either positive or negative, although it is also commonly scaled for significance, for degree of effect (Erwin, 2001). According to Muller, 1986 cognitive component of attitudes is related to an individual thought such as belief and even pre perception notion about a particular object. Similarly, cognitive shows our belief about the attitudinal object (Muller, 1986).

Furthermore, cognitive can be seen as the relationship an individual perceived between aspects of the object of psychological significance. For instance, the cognitive element of our attitudes toward a university education may be centered on our perception of a relationship between higher and future occupational success (Erwin 2001). Oskamp, (1991) argued that an individual act on their beliefs and if the belief changes the attitude towards the object will change accordingly. Zimbardo and Leippe, (1991) stated that



people's thoughts and feelings may supply most of the structure of their attitude, behaviors, and determine individual attitude. Behavior as a component of attitude and instrument structure can be subdivided into two.

The first subdivision maybe referred to as intentional behaviors, this involves an individual plan to act in a particular manner before carrying out a course of action (Zimbardo and Lieppe, (1991). According to Oskamp, (1999) quite a large number of the modern theorists believe that behavioral component should be a predisposition, tendency or intention such as to behave in a certain way instead of an overt act -actual behaviors they also argued that many studies should apply the behavioral intentions rather than actual behaviors. The second type of behavioral component is referred to as "actual behavior" The two types of behavior listed above comprise the items 'would and should'.

The item 'would' indicates a behavioral intention toward the attitude object. The 'should' item expresses behavioral preference for social action. Below are the three categories of attitudes (Muller, (1986).

- 1- Feeling: I like electrical prepaid card.
- 2- Belief: Electrical prepaid card is economical to run.
- 3- A) I would use electrical prepaid card if I had the chance.
- 4- B) There should be a tax incentive for the people who use electrical prepaid cards

The intentional behaviors are preferred by many empirical researchers. The researcher argued that it has a better relationship with attitude laboratory studies compared to the actual behavior. According to Erwin, (2001) behavioral intention usually has a far stronger and reliable association with the expressed attitude than overt behavior. The



three components of attitude are generally believed to be interrelated, consistent with one another and internally organized (Feldman, 1985).

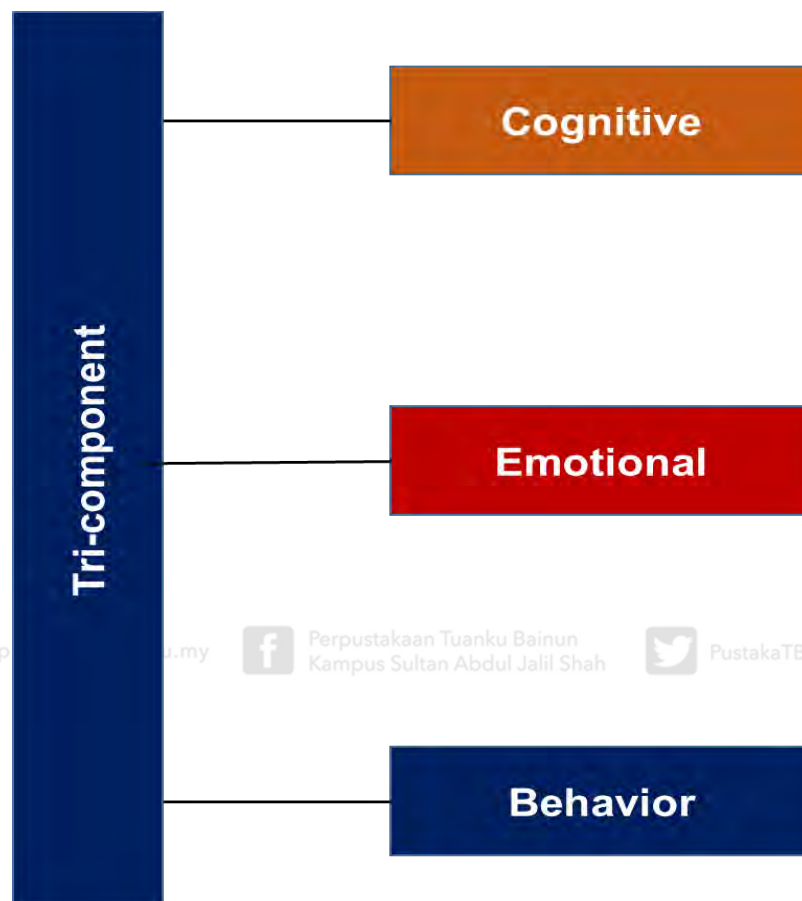


Figure 1.1. The tri component of attitude

1.8.2 Achievement Motivation Theory

Achievement motivation theory was initially developed by Atkinson and McClelland in the 1950s and early 1960s. Historically, achievement motivation theory argued that achievement is the result of an emotional conflict between striving for success and avoiding failure. Thereafter, different contemporary researchers developed their theory upon the basic theory developed by Atkinson and McClelland. The researchers came up

with a more comprehensive model which do not limit the research on achievement to desire only but rather, consider different factors to investigate achievement motivation such as goals as a drive to achievement.

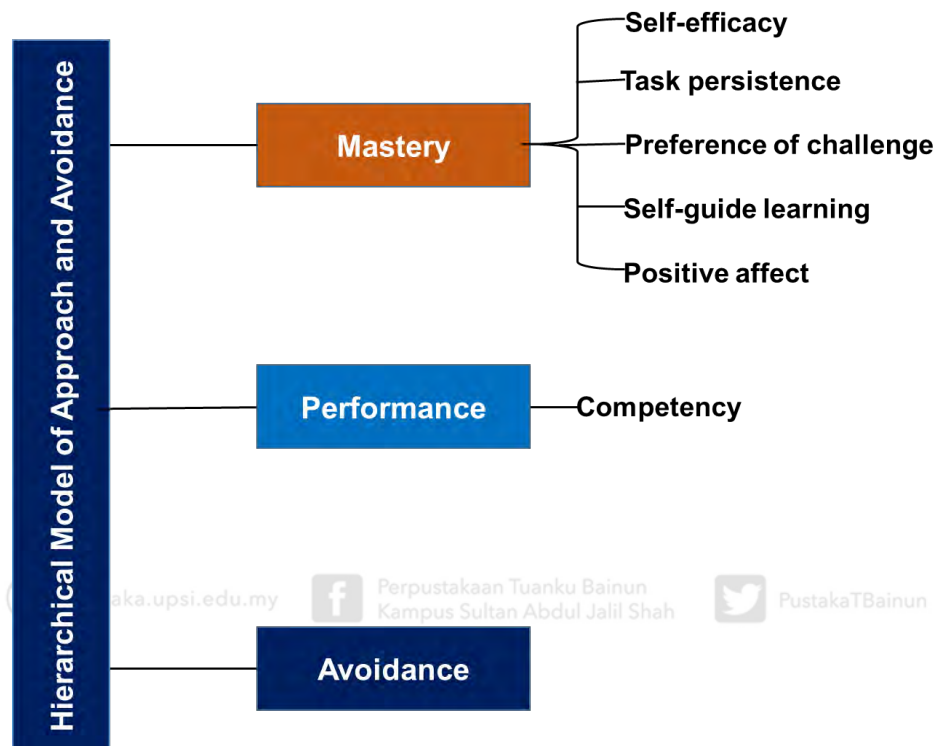


Figure 1.2. Hierarchical Model of Approach and Avoidance Achievement Motivation of Elliot and Church.

For this purpose, the researcher will adopt the Hierarchical Model of Approach and Avoidance Achievement Motivation proposed by Elliot and Church (1997). The model was derived from modifying and developing past studies on goal-centered theory such as Dweck and Leggett goal-centered theory proposed in (1988), for this reason, it is given due consideration for the study. The development of the Hierarchical Model of Approach and Avoidance Achievement Motivation by Elliot and Church (1997) was based on their study which considered the influence of *approach* versus *avoidance* achievement orientations on performance and mastery goal outcomes in their research



study. They proposed three main domains of goal identification. They suggested that: (a) mastery goals (b) avoidance goals (c) performance goals, were to be considered when assessing the factors of achievement motivation.

The first domain of goal proposed in Elliot and Church (1997) model is mastery goals: Proficiency development is the main focus of this goal. Mastery-oriented folks are identified through their preference to enhance competence, which is related to positive results such as high self-competency, task persistence, likewise desire for challenge, self-guided learning, positive affect, and wellbeing. Elliot & Church, (1997) stated that performance-approaching goals and mastery goals aids intrinsic motivation and corresponded with high achievement motivation. According to Ablard and Lipschultz (1998), goal mastery students were identified with engagement with continuous knowledge even when they have less performance in the academic pursuit, they still adjust increases their learning strategy and learning. Also, Chi-hung (2002) argued that mastery goals and efficacy beliefs were the powerful predictors for a student to apply various forms of self-regulated learning strategies.

Secondly, the model proposed a performance approach as the next domain of goal identification. According to this model, the performance approach centered on the improvement of positive judgment toward proficiency. Performance-motivated students are possessed by their desire to exhibit competence, which is associated with a dysfunctional pattern of cognition, affect, behavior, and surface rather than in-depth learning strategies (Kaplan & Maehr, 2007). Elliot & Church, (1997) stated that performance-approaching goal aids intrinsic motivation and corresponds with high achievement motivation. Lastly, performance-avoidance goals is the last domain



suggested by the Hierarchical Model of Approach and Avoidance Achievement Motivation of Elliot and Church (1997).

The performance-avoidance goals focused on avoiding negative judgment of competency. Avoidance orientated goal individuals do not like any form of ability appraisal and competition, likewise they do not consider competence as something to be placed in a high value. According to the finding of Elliot and Church (1997), there is a wide difference between a person with an avoidance orientation and an individual with achievement orientation as the former exhibit lower levels of academic performance while the later demonstrate otherwise. It further reveals that a person with the orientation of avoidance achievement is likely to perform poorly in his or her academic pursuits while those with achievement goals are likely to do better in their studies. In summary, the theoretical framework of this study can be summarized in Figure 1.3.

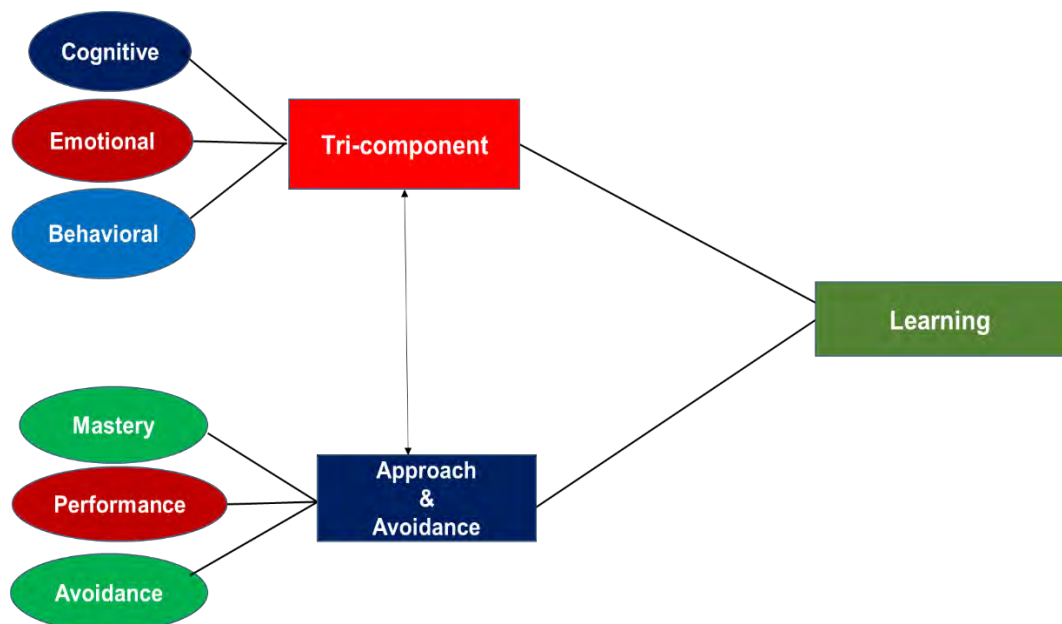


Figure 1.3. Theoretical framework of the Study

1.9 Conceptual Framework of the Study



To explore the attitude of Arab postgraduate students in Malaysia, a conceptual framework is developed from the model and the above-discussed theories. A conceptual framework is defined by Robson (2011) as the combination of concept, presumption, belief, theories, and assumptions that justify the studies. Conceptual framework can also be view as a distinctly produce, visual or, written product which gives a comprehensive explanation about the fact to be studied. Miles and Hubberman (1994). The conceptual framework of this study consists of different models used and adapted by for the research in a brief way which may assist the reader to comprehend the main idea under review.

The input and output process is used to present the conceptual framework. Putting together of theories to generate the process is referred to as the input. The process is the derived concept from different theories while the output is referred to as a result that is generated out of the input as well as the process that will be investigated by the researcher. The input, output process was chosen by the researcher so as to create a clearer concept to the proposed reader, to make the research procedure easy, and generate a better outcome that can be accessible to people of different research background.

A systematic approach has been used to formulate the conceptual framework for this study, which is divided into three main stages: stage I, 2 and 3. The input stage is presented in stage. Here, the theory of tri component of attitudes which consists of three dimensions: 1) cognitive, 2) emotional, 3) behavioral and achievement motivation theory which also consist of three constructs: 1) mastery 2) performance 3) Avoidance. While the 2nd stage presents the learning process which means the attitude (behavioral) held by



a learner and the motivation (environmental) to accomplish a task in learning could have an effect on learning outcomes.

Possible overall result of the input and process stage was presented in stage 3 which is the final stage. The outcome of stage one and two establish a positive learning outcome. If the students show a positive attitude and have achievement motivation goals towards learning, it will lead to high performances. Not only that it will also stimulate learning and brings about good academic grades. The researcher, therefore, conceptualized the model as shown in Figure 1.5.

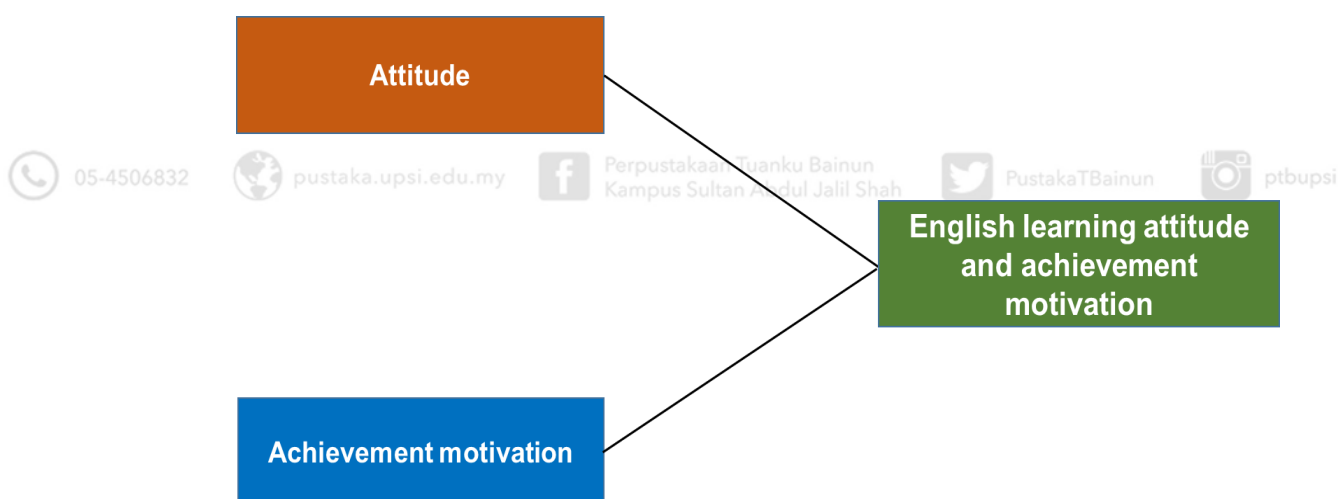


Figure 1.4. Conceptual framework

1.10 Scope and Limitation of the study

This study shall only investigate the attitudes and achievement motivation on Arab postgraduate students in selected public universities in Malaysia. Therefore, the scope of this studies will only cover attitude and achievement motivation of Arab postgraduate in English language program in the selected public universities.

1.11 Definition of Terms

1.11.1 Attitude

Attitudes is referring to in this study as ways or manner by which an individual behaves and feels about a certain object rather than a depiction of what they can do or know.

1.11.2 Achievement motivation

In this study, Achievement motivation is seen as the difference in each of the Arab postgraduate students on to what extent an individual can strive in other to achieve certain reward, which could be in form of praise, feelings of personal mastery, and physical.

1.11.3 Arab Postgraduate students

This refers to Arab postgraduate students who are currently in the English language centres of their respective universities for the purpose of acquiring English language in the selected public universities in Malaysia.

1.11.4 Proficiency

The competency to act or exhibit successfully a knowledge that has already been achieved. Proficiencies assure that learners are well educated, have successfully exhibit aspects of the knowledge they acquire, as well as to attain a depth of academic experience during their school career.

1.12 Summary

The introductory part of the study was revealed in this chapter. It also presents the background information of the different constructs used in the study. The gap of the study was also identified, which draws the attention of the reader to the aim and purpose of the study. Furthermore, related theories that will model the research was also presented in this chapter. In addition, some related questions that the study intends to make clarifications on were also explained. Finally, it mentions the importance of the present study to the learner. Analysis of the related literature about the study would be revealed in the next chapter. This chapter will give a clear explanation of the opinion of the previous researchers on the research topic.