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## An Exploratory Empirical Research on Hope for Learning English as a Foreign Language

Fariba Ghadyani\*, Mohammad Hassan Tahririan, Katayoon Afzali  
Sheikhbahaee University, Department of English Language and Literature, Iran

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### Abstract

There is a dearth of research on hope in studies of second or foreign (L2) language learning. Therefore, the present research contributes conceptually to a deep understanding of hope for learning English as a foreign language and the ways it may be developed. To do so, an exploratory mixed-methods design was employed. Using in-depth interviews, qualitative data was collected from the advanced-level adult Iranian EFL learners. Grounded-based analysis of the data led to the emergence of forty-seven items tied to seven main components as well as inter-relationships between them. In the quantitative phase, a 47-item questionnaire of hope for learning EFL was designed and then piloted. Next, to test the validity of the piloting phase findings, the refined 46-item questionnaire of hope for learning EFL was administered to a convenience sample of EFL learners (n=330). Statistical analyses of the testing data confirmed that forty-six items are linked to seven broad underlying components of hope for learning EFL. The main factors building the construct of hope for learning EFL were confirmed. Moreover, core factor, interconnections between the identified components were developed and validated. The findings can provide invaluable clues as to the development of educational interventionist programs in the future.

**Keywords:** *Hope, Learning EFL, Conceptualization, Theoretical Model, Positive Psychology*

### Introduction

Hope, a human experience, may be considered a matter of common-sense, which is part of an individual's understanding. Though it seems that all people are familiar with its meaning and

historically, literature on the subject is abundant; scientifically, the contemporary theories of hope, particularly those from the field of positive psychology (Seligman, 2006; Snyder, 2000), mark a turning point in conceptualizing hope (Gallagher, 2018). Additionally, hope has been acknowledged as a significant resource for academic achievement (Flores-Lucas et al., 2018). On the other hand, since a considerable number of EFL learners in the Iranian context continuously shared their experience of low hope for learning English with the authors of this paper, they thought to themselves whether the low hope of the learners for learning EFL could be improved, and how it might be possible. In this regard, in spite of the fact that the second/foreign language field of study has been permanently concerned with different variables influencing language learning, no conceptualization of hope has been institutionalized in the field, to the best of our knowledge. Therefore, this study adopted an exploratory mixed-methods grounded-based methodology to discover the precise meaning of hope for learning EFL. Additionally, the process involved in developing hope for learning EFL was also explored. To tackle the problem, this study sought to address the following questions:

**RQ<sub>1</sub>.** What are the components of hope for learning EFL (HLEFL) within the Iranian EFL context?

**RQ<sub>2</sub>.** How are the identified components of hope for learning EFL (HLEFL) interconnected to each other within the Iranian EFL context?

### **Review of the Literature**

Scientifically, research on hope to date has tended to focus on exploring it from different perspectives. Snyder et al. (1991) proposed a cognitive view of hope. It is composed of three components, including goals, pathways-thinking, and agency-thinking (Snyder et al., 2002a; Snyder et al., 2002 b). The pursuit of goals is highlighted as the major feature of human behavior in this theory (Snyder, 1994; Snyder, 2002), while positive expectations related to those goals constitute the essence of hope (Hiver, 2016). A goal is defined as something that each individual desires to achieve (Snyder et al., 2002b). A sense of sheer willpower to achieve goals in the future, past, and present is referred to as agency-thinking, while pathways-thinking refers to a sense of ability to provide plausible ways to accomplish goals (Snyder et al., 1991; Snyder, 1994). Therefore, according to Snyder (2000, 2002), hope is formed by a combination of agency-thinking and pathways-thinking. In addition, many researchers emphasized that setting goals is a component of hope (e.g., Itzhaky & Lipschitz-Elhawi, 2004; Kymä & Juvakka, 2007). Also, some dimensions akin to agency-thinking and path-ways-thinking were identified by other researchers. For instance, activity (Haase et al., 1992) and energy (Holt & Reeves, 2001) may be synonymous with agency-thinking; pathways-thinking may be reflected in the literature by the dimensions labeled as waypower (Worthington, 2003). Smith and Ellsworth (1985), in their emotion-based studies of hope, indicated that the experience of hope is closely linked with humans' evaluations of the environments surrounding them in terms of some cognitive dimensions. They determined six independent dimensions, namely attentional activity, human agency, certainty, situational control, anticipated effort, and pleasantness. Hope has also been studied by adopting a social-constructionist view. Averill et al. (1990) identified four social

norms of hope, including moralistic, prudential, priority, and action rules that regulate hope. They recognized hope as a universal emotion experience regulated by social norms. Additionally, according to the authors, though hope fulfills the main criteria of the behavioral emotion model, it is regulated by cognitions like social norms. They identified cultural differences in the meaning of hope by exploring American as well as Korean's conceptions of hope (Averill et al., 1990). Therefore, they suggested considering the socio-cultural context and subsuming it into the dimensional structure of hope to investigate the phenomenon (Averill et al., 1990). As the literature suggests, there is no single theory of hope since the majority of the adopted approaches vary in terms of their underlying components (Salkind, 2005; Flores-Lucas et al., 2018). Nonetheless, the cognitive understanding of hope posited by Snyder et al. (1991) has provided the basis for decades of hope research within and beyond psychology as a dominant approach (Gallagher, 2018). In this way, research on educational hope constitutes an important part of the literature on hope conducted by several scholars in their respective contexts.

In the inception, it was revealed that hope could predict learners' academic achievement, academic engagement, and academic performance (e.g., Snyder et al., 1991; Snyder et al., 1997; Snyder et al., 1999; Snyder et al., 2002a; Levi et al., 2014). Interestingly, Ouweneel et al.'s (2012) research indicated the indirect and direct influence of hope on academic engagement and also the development of positive emotions. A few studies of hope have verified its predictive power in different fields of study, for instance, in law (Rand et al., 2011), with high school learners (e.g., Gilman et al., 2006a; Gilman & Huebner, 2006b; Valle et al., 2006), and with students having difficulties in learning (Heiman & Shesmesh, 2012). Also, published studies on elementary school children (Marques et al., 2015), as well as college students (Curry et al., 1997; Buckelew et al., 2008), have linked hope with higher achievement test scores. Finally, Lenz et al. (2021) explored that hope as a protective factor positively influenced school climate among Hispanic/Latinx students.

Research into the effects of an intervention on hope level based on Snyder's (2002a) model has revealed increases in academic achievement. Feldman and Dreher's (2012) intervention to college students in a single-session program improved the level of hope from pre-treatment to post-test treatment. Studies of Pedrotti et al. (2008), as well as Madden et al. (2011), have also shown that intervention programs enhance the hope levels of students through positive impacts on personal and academic factors. Studies conducted by Feldman and Dreher (2012) and Feldman et al. (2015) imply the learnability of hope as a skill while it can be instilled and enhanced by the intervention. Finally, Ghadyani et al. (2020) developed specifically a grounded-based conceptualization of hope for teaching English as a foreign language (HTEFL). Their study could confirm the main factors and estimate the explanatory power of the items involved in developing HTEFL within the Iranian context.

The studies conducted in their own context by adopting Snyder's (1991) conceptualization of hope, point out that hope is a necessity for education. However, there are a few subtle points in this regard. First, as Sieben (2018) states, according to the theory of domain-specific hope (Robinson & Rose, 2010), hope works within contexts, and conceptualizations and measures of hope should reflect their respective contexts. Thus, domain-specific measures of hope are

stronger predictors of academic achievement as compared with general measures of hope. Second, if the specificity of different domains of life is taken into consideration, Snyder's (1991) model as a general measure of hope represents primarily a conceptualization of hope within Western cultural society (Flores-Lucas et al., 2018). Third, a small portion of studies has been conducted to conceptualize hope in educational contexts, specifically. Fourth, consequently, the literature on educational hope suggests that hope may also logically have a serious influence on the effectiveness of learning languages like English as a foreign/second language within their respective educational and also ecological contexts. However, as indicated earlier, to the best of the authors' knowledge, hope has not been conceptually institutionalized in the second/foreign language learning (SLL) field of study. Therefore, considering the specificity of socio-cultural milieus and field of study, this paper provides a categorical conceptualization of hope and a theoretical model of hope in an Iranian context of English as a foreign language (EFL).

### **Methodology**

An exploratory mixed-methods design-the taxonomy model was adopted in this study. In the first stage, the grounded theory method (GTM) was adopted as a qualitative research method to establish a framework for organizing concepts into categories and developing an emerging theoretical model since, as Glaser and Strauss (2011) state, a theory of the phenomenon under consideration emerges from the experiences of those who have experienced it and it is grounded on them. The Straussian GTM version (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, 1998; Corbin & Strauss, 2014) was adopted in this study to augment theoretical sensitivity (Hadley, 2017) and enhance the potential for generating new ideas; and also insights are put into the background (Corbin & Strauss, 2014). In the second step, the survey method was used to test quantitatively the qualitative findings.

### **Instruments**

In-depth interviews with the research participants generated the sources of primary data. Reviewing the relevant literature on the research topic provided the secondary data source. Thus, not to rigidify the analytic process, theoretical codes from the literature were used as a potential source of innovative associations and reflections. Thornberg (2012) has referred to this supplementation of GT technique with explicit literature review as informed GT (Kelle, 2019). Additionally, based on the results obtained from the qualitative phase of the study, the Likert-type questionnaire of HLEFL was designed and used in the quantitative phase of the study.

### **Participants**

Five advanced-level adult learners of EFL, including four women and one man, made up the purposive sample of participants in the qualitative phase of this study. Based on the 47 explored items, the measurement questionnaire of HLEFL was designed and piloted with a sample of thirty EFL learners. A convenience sample of 330 EFL learners from three Iranian provinces, including Tehran, Chaharmahal Bakhtiari, and Isfahan, participated in the testing phase of this

study. Twenty-one incompletely filled questionnaires were excluded from the analytical procedure.

The responses of the participants to the questions within the questionnaires' personal information sections were analyzed. It was revealed that 202 (65.4%) were female and 107 (34.6%) were male. The greatest age range was between the ages of 17 and 22 (52.1 % for females and 28.5 % for males). The majority of English language learners were of an intermediate level of English proficiency, with 41.4 percent (n=128) and 14.6 percent (n=45) respectively for females and males (Table 1).

**Table 1**

*Distribution of the Learners by Gender, Age, and English Proficiency Level in the Testing Phase*

	Age								Level of English proficiency							
	17-22		23-30		31-35		35-50		Elementary		Intermediate		Advanced			
Gender	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
<b>Female</b>	202	65.4	161	52.1	25	8.1	9	2.9	7	2.3	33	10.6	128	41.4	41	13.3
<b>Male</b>	107	34.6	88	28.5	14	4.5	3	1	2	0.6	20	6.5	45	14.6	42	13.6
<b>Total</b>	309	100	249	80.6	39	12.6	12	3.9	9	2.9	53	17.1	173	56	83	26.9

As Table 2 below indicates, of the 309 final test participants, 5 (1.6%), 36 (11.7%), and 49 (15.8%) respectively were studying for or had completed a Ph.D., M.A., or B.A. Moreover, 7 (2.35%) had a high school diploma. Finally, 212 (68.6%) were high school students. Participants with a university degree were engaged in a wide variety of academic fields.

**Table 2**

*Distribution of the Learners by Degree Level in the Testing Phase*

Gender	F		Degree									
			Doctorate		Master		Bachelor		Diploma		Students	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
<b>Female</b>	202	65.4	3	1	23	7.4	35	11.3	3	1	138	44.7
<b>Male</b>	107	34.6	2	0.6	13	4.3	14	4.5	4	1.3	74	23.9
<b>Total</b>	309	100	5	1.6	36	11.7	49	15.8	7	2.3	212	68.6

## Procedure

To jointly collect and analyze the data qualitatively, theoretical sampling (Glaser & Strauss, 2009) was used. It provided a purposive sample of participants. The unstructured interviews were initially conducted, the preliminary data was then analyzed, and theoretical concepts began to emerge. As the research advanced, they shifted toward more in-depth interviews. Each interview took approximately 40 minutes, and audio recordings of 600 minutes of interviews were made over the course of three months. After each interview session, they were transcribed verbatim and then compiled into a Word document to explore the participants' main concerns about the development of their hope for learning EFL as well as the interconnections between the

discovered main factors. Follow-up interviews were conducted till the constant data comparison technique revealed the theoretical saturation of data.

Open coding, axial coding, and selective coding were followed to analyze the qualitative data, while the 5W1H method was used. This process required moving cyclically between the three types of coding and reading recurrently the collected data. Open coding was used to label the emerged concept-indicators in terms of meaning units. Using axial coding, the identified concept-indicators were sifted, refined, and reassembled, and finally, dimensions were created. Eventually, a theoretical model of HLEFL was developed as a result of selective coding by refining the data, selecting the core category, and linking the core category with other selectively coded categories in a systematic way. Memo-writing, member-checking, and debriefing strategies were implemented to ensure the validity of the results.

To ensure the reliability of the coding results, the intracoder and intercoder reliability methods (Kvale, 1996) were adopted. They were estimated at 86% and 81%, respectively. Since the rates exceed 60 percent, the reliability of the coding findings is confirmed in terms of time (stability index) and between coders (replicability index). To estimate the rates, three randomly-selected sessions of the interviews were codified twice at one-week interval (Intra-coder) and an experienced university professor was requested to codify the three randomly selected interviews with the researcher (Inter-coder). The number of agreements is indicated as coding pairs (Table 3).

**Table 3**

*The Intra-coder and Inter-coder Reliability Results of HLEFL*

	Interview	Coding (N)	Agreements (N)	Non-agreements (N)	Calculated Reliability (%)
The intra-coder reliability results	1 <sup>st</sup>	40	18	4	90%
	3 <sup>rd</sup>	35	15	5	86%
	5 <sup>th</sup>	29	12	5	83%
	<b>Total</b>	104	45	14	86%
The inter-coder reliability results	1 <sup>st</sup>	40	16	8	80%
	3 <sup>rd</sup>	35	15	5	86%
	5 <sup>th</sup>	29	11	7	76%
	<b>Total</b>	104	42	20	81%

\*Reliability = Total number of ratings/ Number of ratings in agreement × 100

The quantitative phase was carried out to ensure the validity of the qualitative research findings. Pre-testing was performed to ensure the reliability of the researcher-designed measurement scale of HLEFL and to refine it. The refined 7-point Likert scale of HLEFL was administered to the participants of the testing phase, and they rated the randomly distributed items on it. It is mentioned that informed consent was obtained from all the informants before the

research began. Further, measurement models and structural equations models of this study were statistically analyzed using SPSS and Amos Graphics Version 24 software.

### The Qualitative Results

In response to the first research question, 47 indicators and 12 dimensions emerged during the coding process. Seven main categories, including interpersonal relationship, goal-setting, source, social purpose, emotion, certainty, and anticipated effort, emerged as the underlying components of hope for learning English as a foreign language (HLEFL) (Table 4).

**Table 4**  
*The Conceptual Framework of Hope for Learning EFL (HLEFL)*

Category	Dimension	Concept-indicator	Response (%)
Interpersonal relationship	Non-teacher-based	Learner's participation in class	100
		Classmates	60
		Friend's role	60
		Members of family	80
	Teacher- based	Getting encouragement from a teacher	80
		Discovering talents by teachers	80
		Using appropriate instructional methods and innovative strategies by teachers	80
		Teacher's good and happy mood	80
		Teacher's caring about learners' making progress	80
		Teacher's creation of a friendly atmosphere in the classroom	80
Goal-setting	Agency- thinking	Energetic goals	80
		Past experience	80
		Success in learning	60
		Achieving goals	80
	Pathways- thinking	Out of a predicament	80
		Around the problem	100
		Get major things	60
		Solve the problem	60

<b>Sources</b>	Cultural source	Religious beliefs or spirituality	60
		Knowledge of the native poetry and literature*	40
		Knowledge of the themes of hope in native poetry and literature	60
		Knowledge of or familiarity with foreign poetry and literature	80
		Knowledge of or familiarity with the themes of hope in foreign poetry and literature	80
<b>Human agency</b>	Other control	You influence	60
		Circumstance	80
			60
<b>Other source</b>	Attitudes, interests, or internal motivations	Instructional facilities	100
		Following patterns of the behaviour	80
			80
<b>Moralistic values</b>	Personal values	Family values	60
		Social values	80
			60
<b>Prudential values</b>	Possibility**	Practicality***	80
			80
<b>Priority</b>	Importance		100
<b>Pleasure</b>	Pleasantness****	Enjoyment*****	100
			80
<b>Attention</b>	Consider further	Devote attention	60
			60
<b>Certainty</b>	Understand	Sure about	60
		Predict	100
			80
<b>Anticipated effort</b>	Expend effort	Exert yourself	100
		Gradual learning	80
		Planning	60
		Practicing	60
			60

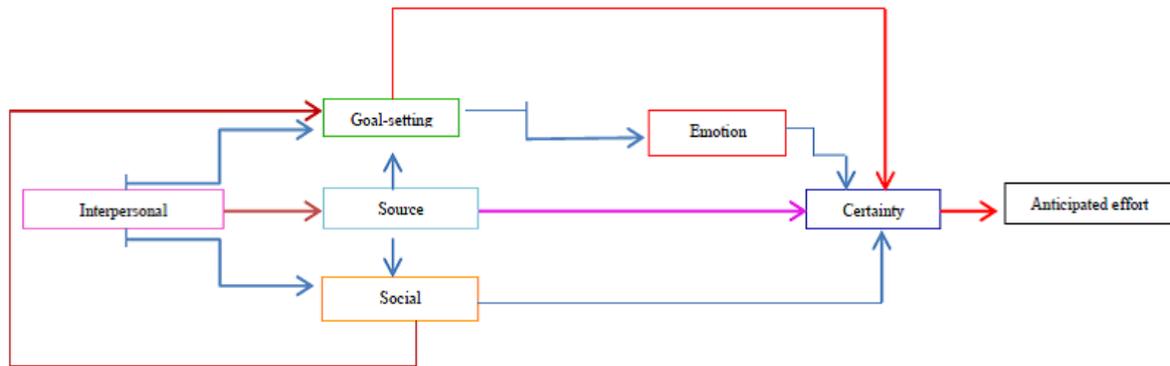
\*This item was removed at the end of the pilot phase analysis \*\* This item refers to an idea that may be true \*\*\* This item refers to the real facts of a situation \*\*\*\* This item refers to a passive feeling of pleasure \*\*\*\*\* This item refers to an active feeling of pleasure

In response to the second research question, certainty was discovered as a core factor and the relationships between the components were explored qualitatively; as a result, a qualitative theoretical model of HLEFL was developed. Figure 1 below represents the process by which the factors may function to create hope in EFL learners. Therefore, the first stage of the study

provided initial information about the construction of HLEFL and the way the components connect to each other to develop HLEFL.

**Figure 1**

*The Qualitative Theoretical Model of Hope for Learning EFL (HLEFL)*



### The Quantitative Results

All the findings of the qualitative phase were re-explored and tested for confirmation against the results of a multitude of statistical analyses. Data from the thirty questionnaires completed during the pilot phase was analyzed. Following the removal of one item from the questionnaire, the reliability of Cronbach's alpha test of 0.942 (above 0.7) was confirmed (Table 5). Further, analysis of the data gathered from the 309 completed questionnaires during the testing phase was performed. Accordingly, the overall reliability of Cronbach's alpha test of 0.954 (above 0.70) was confirmed (Table 5). Moreover, the quantities of Cronbach's alpha test for the questionnaire components at the end of the testing phase are shown in Table 5 below.

**Table 5**

*Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha Test Results for HLEFL Scale*

	Cronbach's Alpha	Item Numbers
<b>Pilot test</b>	.942	46
<b>Final test</b>	.954	46
<b>Interpersonal relationships</b>	.887	10
<b>Goal- setting</b>	.851	8
<b>Sources</b>	.853	10
<b>Social purposes</b>	.876	6
<b>Emotion</b>	.858	4
<b>Certainty</b>	.756	3
<b>Anticipated effort</b>	.826	5

### Factor Analysis

EFA was done to test all 46 items of the researcher-designed questionnaire of HLEFL based on the results obtained from the 309 completed questionnaires in the final test. The result of the

KMO measure of sampling adequacy (Table 6) at 0.922 shows the high suitability of the data or study sample. The values in excess of 0.60 (Field, 2018) represent the appropriateness of factor analysis; however, according to Kaiser, if the KMO is greater than 0.9, it is marvelous (Bajpai, 2011). Given the significance of 0.000 in the Bartlett test, which is less than 0.05 (Osborne, 2014), it is well established that there is a significant relationship between the variables and also the dataset is factorable (Phakiti, 2018) (Table 6). Therefore, both the results revealed an appropriate factor analysis model.

**Table 6**  
*KMO and Bartlett's Test Results for HLEFL Scale*

<b>Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy</b>		.922
<b>Bartlett's Test of Sphericity</b>	<b>Approx. Chi-Square</b>	7972.893
	<b>df</b>	1035
	<b>Sig.</b>	.000

In table 7 below, the initial eigenvalues correspond to the eigenvalues of the correlation matrix. The specific eigenvalue for the first factor is 16.466 in this test. The second column is indicative of the variance percentage for the factor. The sum of the seven components having eigenvalues exceeding 1 accounts for 61.484 percent of the total variance. Table 7 below presents the variances that were uniformly distributed among the factors in the third block. These are unlike the non-rotated eigenvalues, in which the first factor justifies the greater share of the variance. The remaining rows are not included in the table since the respective values are less than 1.

**Table 7**  
*Explained Total Variance Test Results for HLEFL Scale*

Component	Initial Eigen values			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	16.466	35.795	35.795	16.466	35.795	35.795	4.577	9.951	<b>9.951</b>
2	3.162	6.873	42.668	3.162	6.873	42.668	4.435	9.642	<b>19.593</b>
3	2.603	5.658	48.326	2.603	5.658	48.326	4.422	9.613	<b>29.206</b>
4	1.992	4.330	52.657	1.992	4.330	52.657	4.269	9.280	<b>38.486</b>
5	1.484	3.226	55.882	1.484	3.226	55.882	4.233	9.203	<b>47.689</b>
6	1.342	2.917	58.799	1.342	2.917	58.799	3.462	7.526	<b>55.215</b>
7	1.235	2.685	61.484	1.235	2.685	61.484	2.473	5.375	<b>61.484</b>
8	.996	2.348	63.832						

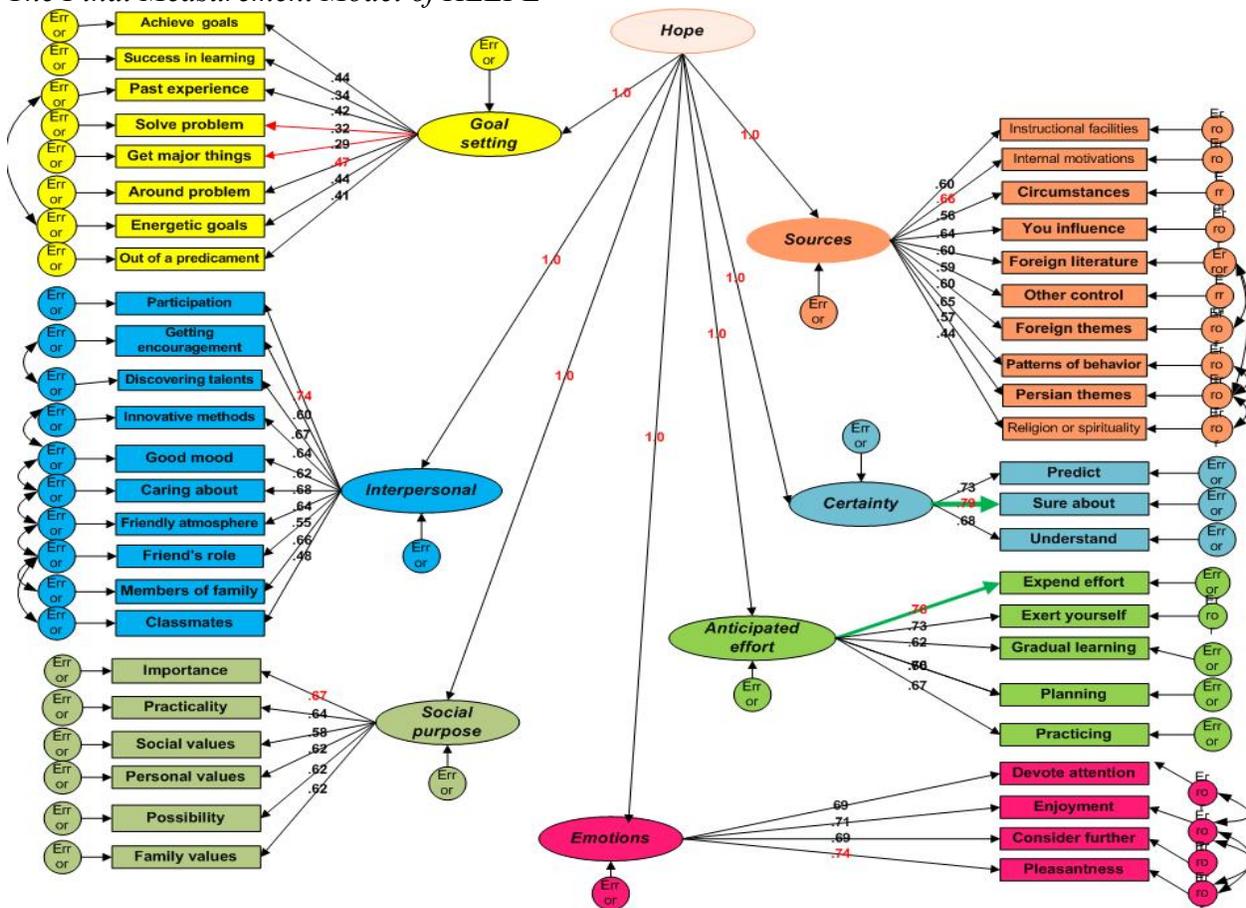
### Component Matrix

The rotated component matrix output containing the factor loadings of variables on the seven remaining factors after rotation is given in appendix A. The greater the absolute value of the coefficients, the higher the role of the factor in the overall variance of the target variable. As shown by this table, variables failing into their respective categories have been shown in red.

### Estimating and Testing the Measurement Models

Figure 2 presents the measurement model of HLEFL. This model illustrates second-order confirmatory factor analysis. The significance of the regression weights was indicative of the convergent validity of the model at the 99 percent confidence level.

**Figure 2**  
The Final Measurement Model of HLEFL



According to Table 8 below, the goodness of fit indices shows that the model fits the data at an error level of 1 percent. Also, the factor loadings as shown in the figure above reveals that hope has the explanatory power of 100% ( $1^2$ ) for all the variances of goal-setting, emotion, social purposes, certainty, anticipated effort, sources, and interpersonal relationship. As depicted in the figure and with regard to standardized regression weights results, it was found that latent

variables of goal-setting, interpersonal relationship, social, sources, certainty, anticipated effort, and emotion indicate the most explanatory powers for the variances of ‘around a problem’ with 22% (0.47<sup>2</sup>), ‘participation’ with 55% (0.74<sup>2</sup>), ‘importance’ with 45% (0.67<sup>2</sup>), ‘internal motivation’ with 45% (0.67<sup>2</sup>), ‘sure about’ with 62% (0.79<sup>2</sup>), ‘expend effort’ with 58% (0.76<sup>2</sup>), and ‘pleasantness’ with 55% (0.74<sup>2</sup>) respectively.

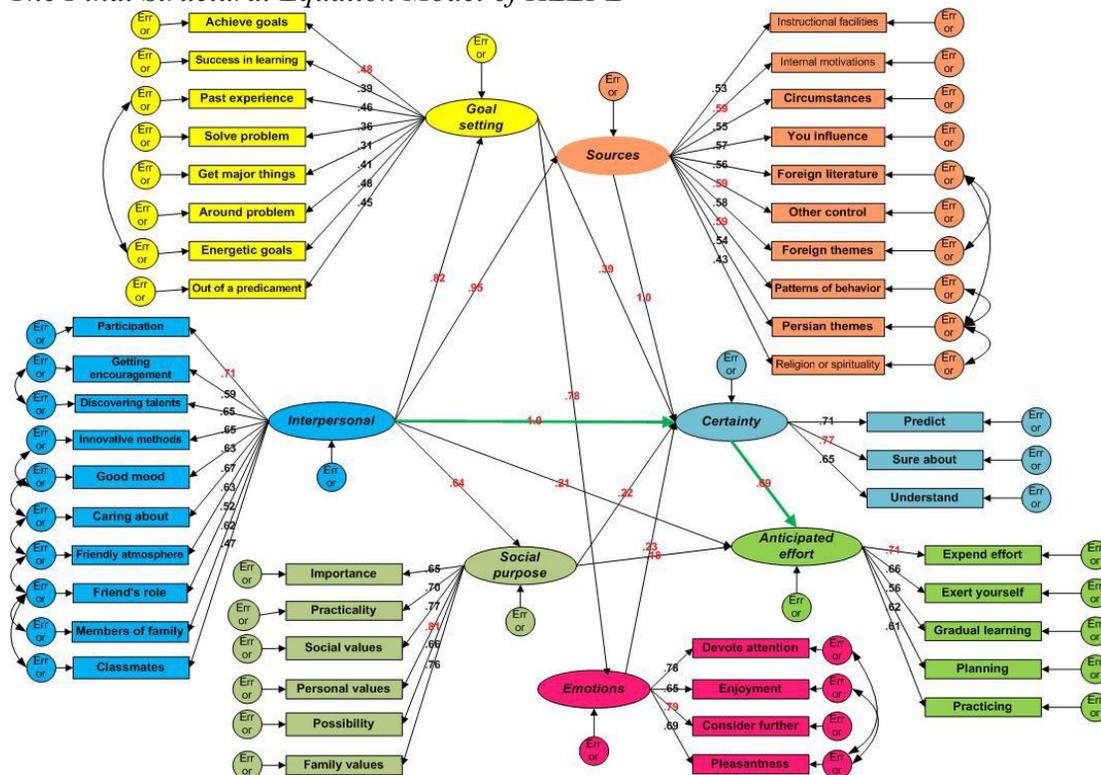
**Table 8**  
*The Goodness of Fit Indices (GFI) Results for HLEFL Models*

	X2	DF	P	RMSEA	CMIN/DF	CFI
The measurement model of hope	2581	973	0.615	0.073	2.652	0.745
The structural equation model of hope	1945	958	0.687	0.058	2.030	0.843

**Estimating and Testing the Structural Equation Models**

Figure 3 below illustrates the paths which represent twelve hypothesized relationships. Three of the twelve relationships are between each of the latent variables of certainty, interpersonal relationship, and social, as well as the latent construct of anticipated effort. Five of the total relationships are between each of the latent variables of sources, goal-setting, interpersonal relationship, social, and emotion, as well as the certainty construct. The three hypothesized relationships are between the latent construct of ‘interpersonal relationship’ and each of the latent variables of social, goal-setting, and source.

**Figure 3**  
*The Final Structural Equation Model of HLEFL*

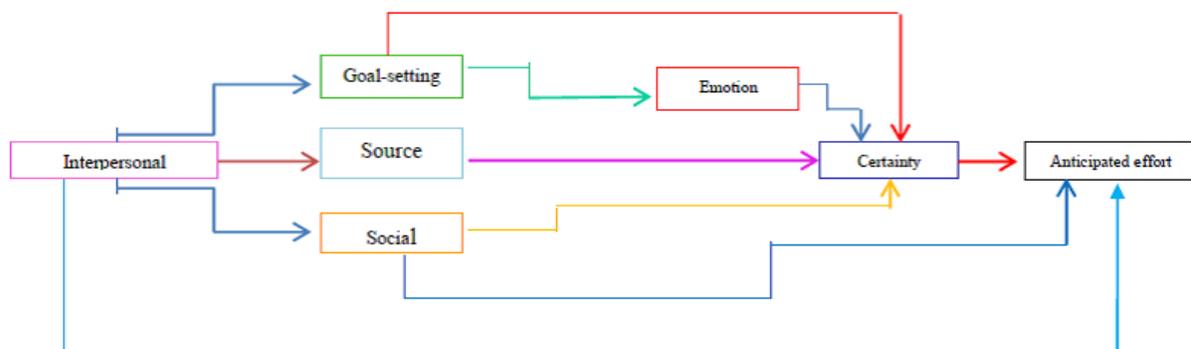


The last hypothesized relationship is between the latent variable of goal-setting and the emotion construct. All directions were identified as positive for those effects. The goodness-of-fit indices, as shown in Table 8 above, all indicate the validity of the model at 99 percent of confidence. The significance of the regression weights results also demonstrates the validity of the model and confirms the above hypothesis at 99 percent of confidence. Considering the standardized regression weights as illustrated in the figure above, the latent variables of certainty, interpersonal relationship, and social constructs have meaningful effects on the anticipated effort construct at the effect powers of 0.69, 0.21, and 0.18, respectively. In the same vein, the latent variable interpersonal relationship has positive and meaningful effects on the social, goal-setting, and sources constructs at the effect powers of 0.64, 0.82, and 0.95, respectively. Additionally, the latent variables, namely sources, goal-setting, interpersonal relationship, social purposes, and emotion have meaningful effects on the certainty construct at the effect powers of 1, 0.40, 1, 0.22, and 0.23. Likewise, at the effect power of 0.78, the latent variable goal-setting has a positive and significant influence on the emotion construct.

It was revealed that goal-setting, emotion, certainty, anticipated effort, interpersonal relationship, sources, and social purposes constitute the underlying factors that influence the development of HLEFL. Moreover, Figure 4 below displays the developed final theoretical model of HLEFL.

**Figure 4**

*The Final Theoretical Model of HLEFL*



## Discussion

The 46 challenges in seven categories reveal a comprehensive picture of the factors that influence HLEFL (Figure 2). The seven categories include interpersonal relationship, social purpose, goal-setting, emotion, certainty, source, and anticipated effort. In addition, as depicted in the measurement model of hope, the most influential factor in developing HLEFL is the variable ‘sure about’ (0.79) within the certainty category in a general perspective. It highlights the role of the learner’s trust in their developed hope. Next, ‘expend effort’ (0.76) well underlines the role of effort in creating HLEFL. Further, in the following order, the variable

‘learner’s participation’ (0.74) tied to the category ‘interpersonal relationship’ supports the importance of learners’ active involvement in learning English to build the potential for creating hope. On the other hand, the least effective factor in HLEFL involves the variable ‘get major things’ (0.29) from the ‘goal-setting’ variable in the sense of discovering different ways to help the learner learn the most important areas of learning. Next are the variables ‘solve problem’ (0.32), and ‘success in learning’ (0.34) which mean ‘finding a solution to the problem when others do not have great hope for learning English’ and ‘having a lot of success after learning English’ respectively.

The ‘active participation of the learner’ linked to the category ‘interpersonal relationship’ plays the most important role in realizing the hope, but the variables ‘classmates’ and ‘friend’s role’ play the least part. Interestingly, overall the ‘teacher-based’ variables outweigh the ‘non-teacher-based’ variables.

In the category ‘social purposes’, the variable ‘importance’ is given the most major role; however, alignment of the learner’s goal with social values has the least impact on the realization of hope. The emergence of the factor ‘social purposes’ as a key concept of HLEFL coincides with the findings of earlier studies (Averill et al., 1990; Haase et al., 1992; Bruininks & Malle, 2005; Elliott & Olver, 2007; Duggleby et al., 2010).

The variables’ internal motivations’, ‘patterns of behavior’ and ‘you influence’ tied to the ‘sources’ category have the most impact on developing the hope. The emergence of the variable ‘spirituality or religion’ linked to the ‘sources’ category supports both Bland and Darlington’s (2009) and Nowotny’s (1989) findings on the definition of hope. Contrary to what might initially be assumed, religious or spiritual beliefs do not seem to play a serious role in developing HLEFL. The indicators including ‘instructional facilities’, ‘foreign literature’, and ‘foreign themes’ also have acceptable roles in this model. In the ‘certainty’ category the variable ‘sure about’ partially indicates a more effective role than those of ‘predict’ and ‘understanding’. In the ‘emotion’ category, both the ‘pleasant’ feeling and ‘enjoyable’ sense of the hope experience explain slightly stronger the realization of hope than the variables ‘consider further’ and ‘devote attention’ do. Finally, in the category of ‘anticipated effort’, both the ‘expend effort’ and ‘exert yourself’ have the most important roles.

As illustrated in Figure 3 and also Figure 4 above, HLEFL can be achieved through the seven paths as follows:

[1]	Interpersonal relationship	0.82	Goal-setting	0.39	Certainty	0.69	Anticipated effort
		→		→		→	
[2]	Interpersonal relationship	0.82	Goal-setting	0.78	Emotion	0.23	Certainty 0.69
	Anticipated effort	→		→		→	→
[3]	Interpersonal relationship	0.95	Sources	1	Certainty	0.69	Anticipated effort
		→		→		→	
[4]	Interpersonal relationship	1	Certainty	0.69	Anticipated effort		
		→		→			
[5]	Interpersonal relationship	0.64	Social purpose	0.22	Certainty	0.69	Anticipated effort
		→		→		→	

[6] Interpersonal relationship 0.64 Social purpose 0.18 Anticipated effort

→ →

[7] Interpersonal relationship 0.21 Anticipated efforts

→

The strongest route is Route 4 and the weakest is Route 7. The path to HLEFL starts from the factor ‘interpersonal relationship’ and ends with the factor ‘anticipated effort’. The effective role of the factor ‘interpersonal relationship’ was underlined as it provides the spark needed in the first stage of the hope process. Exploring ‘interpersonal relationship’ as one of the main components of HLEFL in this research is similar to the findings of previous studies in the sense that ‘interconnectedness’ or ‘relationship’ have been identified as a dimension of the hope structure (e.g., Benzein et al., 2000; Turner & Stokes, 2006; Harris & Larsen, 2008).

In this way, the direct effect of the ‘interpersonal relationship’ factor on the ‘anticipated effort’ is weak. This means that the ‘source’, ‘social purpose’ and ‘goal-setting’ variables need to effectively play their mediating roles to result in developing the hope. Once this path is mediated by the factor ‘certainty’, it will have the greatest impact on achieving it. Therefore, it becomes clear that trust in the developed HLEFL has a very decisive role in developing the hope process. The factor ‘certainty’ as a missed factor was discovered, which acts as a core factor within the hope process. Further, most of the influential factors in the hope process have close links with this core factor. Therefore, HLEFL without the core factor is not much realizable.

Given the path to the hope mediated by the ‘social purpose’, it is well regarded as a reducing factor within the path of ‘interpersonal relationship’ to the ‘anticipated effort’. However, if the ‘certainty’ mediates the ‘social purpose’ path to the ‘anticipated effort’, it may show a triple incremental effect compared to that of the ‘social purpose’ direct path to the ‘anticipated effort’, which clearly illustrates the role of ‘certainty’ in realizing HLEFL.

The ‘source’ intervention in the ‘interpersonal relationship’ path to the ‘certainty’ reveals a reinforcing effect. It serves well to justify the role of the ‘sources’ alongside the ‘certainty’ in the path of the ‘interpersonal relationship’ to the ‘anticipated effort’. The ‘interpersonal relationship’ path to the ‘anticipated effort’ through the ‘goal-setting’ can be mediated in two ways. First, once the ‘emotion’ mediates the ‘goal-setting’ path to the ‘certainty’, a reducing effect is evident. The second route, on the other hand, reflects the same path without the ‘emotion’ mediation. Therefore, it seems that if the ‘goal-setting’ path to the ‘certainty’ is conditioned by the ‘emotion’, this would lead to a diminishing effect on developing HLEFL. This finding implicitly suggests that ‘emotion’ is the consequence of ‘cognition’ which seems to be consistent with the findings of studies done by Snyder et al. (2002a) and Snyder et al. (2002b). However, the present study recognized both ‘emotion’ and ‘goal-setting’ as the two of the seven main components of HLEFL simultaneously. Moreover, in some respects, the results of this study are comparable with the findings of Smith and Ellsworth (1985), in that they revealed that the ‘uncertainty’ dimension distinguishes hope as a feeling from other human emotions and it also needs to be evaluated by the cognitive power of an individual’s mind. However, what sets this study apart from their research is that hope for learning EFL is much more than just an ‘emotion’ and it

requires to be followed by the ‘certainty’ component of hope. In other words, HLEFL encompasses the ‘certainty’ as a distinct factor to evaluate the developed hope.

The present study offers a multi-componential theoretical model of HLEFL. HLEFL can be developed via multiple paths while the component goal-setting is not necessarily involved in the process. Interestingly, this finding is consistent with the result of Li et al.’s (2021) investigation, in which they demonstrated that Snyder’s (1991) theory of hope was rarely represented U.S. college students’ lay beliefs about hope. Additionally, the theoretical model of HLEFL is a conjoined model in terms of agency (Markus & Kitayama, 2003), given the identified components of interpersonal relationship, social purpose, and source.

## **Conclusion**

This mixed exploratory study developed a conceptual framework consisting of 46 items attached to seven main factors that affect the development of HLEFL as well as the theoretical process of HLEFL. It was revealed that the ‘sure about’ within the certainty category is the most influential item influencing the development of the EFL learners’ hope while the least include the item ‘get major things’ linked to the ‘goal-setting’ variable. The final theoretical model of HLEFL begins with the ‘interpersonal relationship’ and ends with the ‘anticipated effort’. The factor ‘certainty’ was discovered as the core concern of developing HLEFL. As the outcomes of this study reveal, only through one path, can HLEFL be activated emotionally and consequently, it activates the ‘certainty’. It is worth examining why the component emotion is merely activated by the goal-setting. The key point is that there is a need for the emotional experience of hope to end up with the certainty to bring about the anticipated effort. Furthermore, HLEFL was conceptualized as a phenomenon far more than just an emotive, cognitive, or social (environmental) structure.

This process seems to be in harmony with the habit loop cycle within the field of behavioral psychology (Clear, 2018). The phenomenon of hope for learning English language can then be suggested as a behavior to help achieve a deeper understanding of the developed final theoretical model of hope for learning EFL. At the first level, the factor interpersonal relationship should be present to begin the process of developing the hope since, according to this behavioral cycle; the extracted concept-indicators (cues) tied to their surrounding internal and external environments primarily trigger the language learners’ brains to initiate the formation of the hope behavior. In other words, their brains continuously analyze neurologically the external and internal environment to get cues for the location of rewards (gains) (Clear, 2018). In the second step, learning English can be recognized as the reward (gain) leading to cravings (desires) of the language learners for obtaining them while different learners are led to learning English by different cues. In the third step, cravings lead to response (act or effort). Therefore, without the three steps, including cues, craving, and response, the hope behavior does not occur, and without the reward as the final fourth step, the behavior cannot be repeated (Duhigg, 2012). Regarding the core component certainty, the language learners should analyze and evaluate whether their understanding of their surroundings sounds correct. For the anticipated effort factor, the English language learners should perform an appropriate mental response in order to obtain the reward, that is, they must actually put effort into doing it until they finally learn the English language. As

demonstrated, without the three pillars of interpersonal relationship, certainty, and anticipated effort; the behavior of hope for learning English will never take place. Additionally, it is expected that achievement in learning the English language as the reward would provide the repetitive development of the hope which leads to institutionalized hope for learning English.

The other four factors, including emotion, goal-setting, social purpose, and source may also give cues to the language learners in the process of creating hope. To explain why the goal-setting factor is not necessarily involved in this process, it seems that the manifestation of the concept-indicators 'English learner's participation in class' and 'using appropriate instructional methods and innovative strategies by teachers' linked to the interpersonal relationship category can be suggested as alternatives to the agency and pathways respectively. Further, the manifestation of the concept-indicators 'you influence' and the instructional facilities and patterns of the behaviour' tied to the source factor may offer the alternatives to the agency and pathways, respectively. Moreover, the component emotion is merely involved in one path preceded by the goal-setting factor. To tackle the issue, two discrete reasons may be explained. First, alternately, the sense of craving can be traced back to the concept-indicators 'interests and internal motivations' connected to the source category. Second, the values related to the social purpose category may embrace cues like 'desire to learn English' instead.

### **Implications and Suggestions for Future Research**

Awareness of the effective factors and understanding the mechanism of those actions represented as multiple paths to the hope allow selection, application, and intervention in the process of developing and strengthening HLEFL considering the dynamics of socio-cultural milieu. Additionally, the results can be utilized by curriculum evaluators and program developers desiring to evaluate the effectiveness of foreign or second language education programs.

Since items linked to the goal-setting category related to HLEFL measurement model indicate the least overall impact as compared to those tied to the other components, it is proposed as a theme that requires further examination in future research. In case, higher participation from a more diverse learner population is achieved, further validation of the findings can lead to a more thorough knowledge of the subject matter. The findings can open up new vistas for further similar research in other contexts of language learning. It may be suggested that future research focus more on explaining why the observed variables such as classmates, friend's role, social values, religious beliefs, and spirituality have less influence on developing HLEFL.

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## Appendix A

### Rotating component matrix test results for HLEFL scale

Item	Component						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
v1	.325	.288	-.122	.518	.233	-.139	.237
v2	.161	.386	-.132	.528	.245	-.128	-.162
v3	.082	.242	-.208	.489	-.105	.005	.260
v4	.203	.407	-.158	.494	.156	.120	.267
v5	.109	.387	-.279	.511	.194	.178	.119
v6	.260	.319	.035	.532	.178	.161	-.001
v7	.315	.410	.109	.456	.324	.114	-.078
v8	.281	.392	-.038	.532	.237	-.068	-.051
v9	.555	.183	-.335	-.032	-.381	-.322	.041
v10	.666	.281	-.273	.059	-.269	-.100	-.071
v11	.633	.158	-.281	-.010	-.362	-.147	.063
v12	.655	.312	-.147	.045	-.194	-.181	-.129
v13	-.205	.273	-.169	-.146	.656	-.002	-.193
v14	-.222	.339	.148	-.400	-.006	-.112	.446
v15	.161	.266	.246	-.476	-.024	.104	.579
v16	.089	.051	-.026	-.152	-.175	.014	.657
v17	-.114	.026	.685	-.012	-.144	.076	.273
v18	.286	.225	.224	-.411	.011	.374	.561
v19	-.136	.164	.303	-.086	-.201	.098	.584
v20	.129	.279	.261	-.395	.019	.253	.532
v21	.039	.172	-.120	-.152	.075	.656	-.361
v22	-.058	.100	-.152	-.190	.688	.053	-.213
v23	.335	-.165	.567	.287	-.183	.100	-.135
v24	.367	-.073	.636	.290	-.160	.132	-.177
v25	.374	-.078	.634	.346	-.167	-.019	.008
v26	.407	-.071	.609	.391	-.250	.110	.044
v27	.361	-.230	.667	.234	-.094	-.035	.105
v28	.260	-.276	.633	.147	-.087	-.054	.227
v29	.137	-.233	-.142	-.087	.098	-.154	.650
v30	.397	-.004	.574	-.168	.222	-.134	-.134
v31	.082	-.102	.251	-.199	-.081	-.025	.566
v32	.166	-.109	.630	-.009	-.108	-.184	-.221
v33	-.153	-.194	-.105	.056	.091	.730	.016
v34	.208	-.070	-.118	-.067	.746	-.178	-.073
v35	-.237	-.346	-.029	-.179	.191	.609	.143
v36	-.244	-.246	-.065	-.105	.135	.685	.058
v37	-.267	-.367	-.114	.019	.162	.631	.092
v38	.503	-.023	.435	-.085	.279	-.157	-.100
v39	.346	-.243	.061	-.076	.033	-.005	.652
v40	-.036	-.225	.134	-.162	.233	-.158	.567
v41	-.437	.507	-.276	.004	-.005	.135	-.115
v42	-.218	.655	-.183	-.030	.213	.245	-.186
v43	-.415	.598	-.336	-.021	-.017	.287	-.012
v44	-.406	.527	-.304	.004	.047	.285	-.020
v45	-.279	.643	-.202	.044	.089	.364	-.188
v46	-.265	.581	-.249	.049	-.093	.124	-.130

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**Competing interests**

No, There Are No Conflicting Interests.

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