




THE ROLE OF EFL/ESL TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAMS IN RAISING THE AWARENESS OF PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS OF INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE MODEL: A COMPARATIVE STUDY BETWEEN SAUDI ARABIA AND SINGAPORE

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ABSTRACT

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Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) empowers language learners with the skills to compare different cultures and raise critical cultural awareness. The present study aims to identify and compare the role of EFL/ESL teacher preparation program in raising the awareness of pre-service teachers of ICC Model in Saudi Arabia and Singapore. The author developed and applied an online questionnaire of the ICC Model to a sample of (30) faculty members in Saudi Arabia and (30) faculty members in Singapore. The descriptive comparative analytical approach was utilized to describe, analyze, and compare the present situation of the EFL/ESL teacher preparation program in raising the awareness of pre-service teachers of the ICC model in Saudi Arabia and Singapore. The results revealed the availability of the ICC in the EFL/ESL teacher preparation program in both countries. The study recommended reviewing and continually updating the EFL/ESL teacher preparation program at the College of Education according to the ICC Model to meet the needs and communicative competence of students.

Contribution/Originality: This study contributes to EFL/ESL teacher preparation by offering suggestions to reform the educational system through IC applications by comparing teacher preparation programs in Saudi Arabia and Singapore. This study is a pioneering work that links teacher's preparedness with the communicative competence of students.

1. INTRODUCTION

English is the language of international conferences, science, and technology in many countries risen to the level of a lingua franca (Al-Hassan, 2012). With the massive increase in the number of speakers of English, varieties of English, as well as cultures, have grown. There is an urgent need to raise the awareness of teachers of EFL (English as a Foreign Language) about the status of intercultural communication. Teaching English as a Second Language (ESL) is one area that aims to enhance the learners' attitudes, knowledge, and skills to interact successfully in intercultural situations. TESOL International Association has also recognized culture as a major domain in the Standards for the Recognition of Initial (TESOL International Association, 2010).

Intercultural communication (IC) enhances the ICC among learners. Its strategies and teaching content educates learners on various cultures and gives them an opportunity to compare different cultures and raise critical

cultural awareness. Such learners act as mediators to introduce the target culture to their local community through task-based learning and to evaluate learners' IC (Abdellah, 2017). Communicative competence is also a personal awareness of the appropriate rules in a social context. It includes efficiency and appropriateness in spoken and written languages (Awad, 2000). Barrett (2011) defines ICC as a set of situations, skills, knowledge, and behaviors to communicate effectively and appropriately in intercultural situations. ICC is important for ESL because English is used worldwide for different purposes as demonstrated by many ICC-based studies in Asia, e.g. Baker (2012) and Zhu (2011).

EFL has claimed a prominent status in Saudi education to achieve Saudi Vision 2030 and promote scientific and technological advancement in higher education through fostering international communication and relations (Al-Seghayer, 2014). Since Saudi EFL teachers play a key role in the successful implementation of this educational reform, EFL/ESL teacher preparation programs should be developed to achieve important ideological and pedagogical developments. While Singapore is culturally diverse, Saudi Arabia is culturally monotheistic. Therefore, the author chose the ICC model in Singapore to be a guide to reform the ICC model in Saudi Arabia. To the author's knowledge, no studies have examined the role of EFL/ESL teacher preparation programs in raising the awareness of pre-service teachers of the ICC model. The author investigated this role by comparing EFL/ESL teacher preparation programs in Saudi Arabia and Singapore.

2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Teacher preparation has preoccupied specialists worldwide because a teacher is an important factor in achieving educational objectives (Abdelsalam, 2006). In a globalized intercultural world, citizens get more in touch with one another due to the rapid increase in international travel, online communication and use of technologies. This contact has made IC an important component of communicative competence. However, in most EFL contexts, culture is taught traditionally by providing learners with facts about the L2 culture and traditions (McKay, 2002). Sundberg (2009) and Tupas (2014) argue that the traditional approach reinforces a stereotypical mindset because it considers the learners as passive reproducers of their culture and neglects the complexity of the culture. Moreover, Byram, Gribkova, and Starkey (2002) claim that learners should not forget that they belong to several cultural communities, in which national culture is also one.

Göbel and Helmke (2010) and Young and Sachdev (2011) report that ICC should be deeply understood in cultural and educational practices of ESL teachers in order to ensure professional development and the development of curricula. However, ESL teachers often encounter challenges to access teaching materials on ICC model. As a faculty member at the College of Education, Princess Nourah bint Abdulrahman University (PNU), the author has experienced that the design of EFL curricula for pre-service teachers is designed on the basis of instructors' perceptions rather than on students' needs. Accordingly, EFL teacher preparation programs should be developed based upon the ICC model. This can be achieved by comparing these programs in Saudi Arabia, where the ICC model is almost absent, to that of Singapore in which reforms to EFL curricula have been made.

The study attempts to answer the following major question: What is the role of the EFL/ESL teacher preparation program in raising the awareness of pre-service teachers of the ICC model in Saudi Arabia and Singapore?

It is divided into these minor questions:

1. What elements of the ICC model are included in the EFL/ESL teacher preparation program in Saudi Arabia?
2. What elements of the ICC model are included in the EFL/ESL teacher preparation program in Singapore?
3. What is the role of EFL/ESL teacher preparation program in raising the awareness of pre-service teachers of the ICC model in Saudi Arabia?

4. What is the role of EFL/ESL teacher preparation program in raising the awareness of pre-service teachers of the ICC model in Singapore?
5. What is the difference in the response to the ICC model among EFL/ESL pre-service teachers to achieve intercultural communication among the faculty members in Saudi Arabia and Singapore?
6. What is the difference in the available (planning, implementation, and evaluation) teaching performance in the EFL/ESL pre-service teacher preparation program among the faculty members in Saudi Arabia and Singapore?

3. SIGNIFICANCE

The present study covers a relatively new concept in the development of university education, in general, and teacher preparation programs, in particular, namely the ICC model. It offers a genuine contribution to EFL/ESL pre-service teacher preparation. It may help improve the educational system in Saudi Arabia concerning raising the IC for EFL teachers and students by reviewing pre-service teacher preparation in other countries. Therefore, the results of the study can motivate future relevant studies. Moreover, decision and policy makers and curriculum designers can revise and update teacher preparation programs at the colleges of education and professional development programs related to teaching the ICC model.

4. LIMITATIONS

- Object limits: (Language, cultural, contemplative, applied, and value) communicative competence
- Spatial and human limits: A group of faculty members specialized in EFL/ESL teacher preparation in Saudi Arabia and Singapore
- Temporal limits: Data were collected from 6/1/2019 to 19/1/2020.

5. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

5.1. Saudi Context

Curriculum design is a major challenge in Saudi EFL education because teachers should teach with a prescribed curriculum and participate in preselected activities. In Saudi Arabia, EFL teachers are mostly Arab-speakers, and the environment is teacher-centered rather than student-centered. Thus, they are authoritative and knowledge-providers rather than facilitative and supportive (Alrabai, 2016). Thus, learners primarily rely on them and become passive receivers (Alharbi, 2015; Alkubaidi, 2014).

The main goal of teacher preparation programs in Saudi Arabia is to prepare teachers academically, psychologically, and socially. Teachers should play social and psychological roles on and off-campus to direct the educational process in culture-specific contexts (Metwalli, 2008). Thus, teacher preparation should include multi-disciplinary programs. In Saudi Arabia, teacher preparation programs underwent two main phases. First, to prepare the largest number of teachers to work in public schools to provide adequate education, temporary institutions for preparing teachers were created, e.g. the Intermediate Teachers' Institute, Secondary Teachers' Institutes, Intermediate Teachers' Colleges, and Teachers' Colleges. Second, the skills of pre-service and in-service teacher education and training have been promoted and supervised by the Teachers' Colleges (Tawalbeh & Ismail, 2014).

Unfortunately, the quality of many teacher preparation programs in the Teachers' Colleges has been declining because of the dominance of traditional approaches (Bingimlas, 2009). The Arab Bureau of Education for the Gulf States highlighted some factors of the poor quality of teacher preparation programs in Saudi Arabia, including the poor preparation, irrelevant courses, lack of employment, and negative administrative perceptions of new teachers. Recently, some improvements have taken place at the Saudi colleges of education to increase the entry requirements and screening criteria for pre-service teachers. Collaboration with research centers to enhance teachers' practices and connections with schools to meet their needs have increased. Additionally, integrating modern trends and

technologies at the colleges of education has contributed to the improvement of the quality of education (Al-Zahrani, 2011).

5.2. Singaporean Context

Since 1987, English has become a means of instruction in Singapore. Because high proficiency is a considerable standard in EFL teaching, pre-service teachers should demonstrate proficiency and competence to communicate effectively in education by providing authentic information on the level of mastery, such as the Entrance Proficiency Test, an admission requirement at the National Institute of Education (NIE) (Low, Chong, & Ellis, 2014). Teachers who recognize and understand the role of effective communication in teaching achieve better results (Pelly, Tan, & Zhang, 2009). The Ministry of Education (MOE) in Singapore selected the IELTS exam to measure candidates' ability and competence (IELTS, 2003).

In Singapore, students' achievement in EFL is defined by national examinations. Before 2010, EFL classes were teacher-centered and exam-driven as they were characterized by the unevenness in language practice (Curriculum Planning and Development Division, 2006; Goh, Zhang, Ng, & Koh, 2005). Later, the reformed EFL syllabus focused on teaching the skills, learning strategies, attitudes, and behavior that necessitated the integration of visual, linguistic, and cognitive skills. Driven by the recommendation of MOE, the NIE runs a program entitled English Language Content Enhancement (ELCE) to enhance the level of English the post-graduate diploma in education for EFL teachers. This program includes three courses, namely Language Studies for Teachers, Pedagogical Grammar of English, and Understanding and implementing an English Language Curriculum (MOE, 2010).

5.3. Intercultural Communicative Competence

ICC is a complicated concept that has been addressed from different perspectives, such as ICC (Fantini, 2006; Porto, 2016) cross-cultural awareness, and intercultural awareness (Chamberlin-Quinlisk & Senyshyn, 2005). Byram (2009) argues that it is almost impossible to conclude a consensus definition of ICC. Competence is driven by culture, which is highly complicated and multi-layer (Furstenberg, 2010). ICC helps teachers confront the new social circumstances and requirements, and its teaching should be experimental and flexible (Byram, 2009). In the EFL context, ICC is the learners' ability to communicate effectively and adequately in English in a culturally diverse society (ATESL, 2011).

According to the Common European Framework of Reference, ICC means implementing intercultural awareness of communication practice among people belonging to various social communities (Council of Europe, 2001). To develop the global cultural consciousness of EFL students and improve the process of language learning beyond the linguistic/communicative abilities, educators use the (ICC) model proposed by Byram (1997). The core of this model is the purposeful inclusion of the IC along with the linguistic, sociolinguistic, and discourse competence that constitute the meaning of communicative competence. Byram (1997) involves four competence in the process of learning a language: linguistic, pragmatic, sociolinguistic, and intercultural. The ICC model comprises five aspects, namely attitudes, knowledge, skills of interpreting and relating, skills of discovery and interaction, and critical cultural awareness.

Regarding the attitudes' domain, learners should develop a wider perspective of other cultures and be willing to engage in a dialogue of equality and open-mindedness to suspend disbelief about foreign cultures. The knowledge domain refers to the cultural products and interactive practices of interlocutors in other cultures. Concerning the skills of interpreting and relating, learners must decipher actions and documents from other cultures and identify relevance to their own culture. Accordingly, learners integrate their attitudes, knowledge, and interpretation skills in real-life communications to engage in other cultures. Furthermore, Byram (1997) defines critical cultural awareness as the "ability to evaluate, critically and based on explicit criteria, perspectives, practices, and products in

one's own and other cultures and countries" (p. 63). By developing the ICC, learners can interact with people from other cultures while maintaining their own culture.

One important characteristic of professional EFL teachers is their IC. Thus, their perception of and implementation of the ICC in the classroom and intercultural communication education are eminent to the development of students' acquisition of intercultural communication in the classroom. Several studies addressed the relationship between the ICC and foreign language learning. Similarly, [Sercu \(2006\)](#) examined teachers' practices of ICC teaching and concluded that teachers were aware of the concept but did not master the approach.

[Göbel and Helmke \(2010\)](#) argued that because of the lack of teachers' IC training and the unavailability of the necessary material to teach IC, teachers rely on their own intercultural experience. [Xiaohui and Li \(2011\)](#) studied the Chinese EFL teachers' cognition of various aspects of ICC in terms of its conceptualization and perception in the classroom. They also looked into how teachers' perceptions of ICC can be related to the development of learners' other EFL competence. The results revealed that university EFL lecturers' conceptualization of ICC and its relevance to EFL teaching is ambiguous despite their perceived goal and strong desire to develop students' ICC. Thus, ICC should be integrated into English language teaching (ELT).

[Tian \(2013\)](#) concluded that teachers tended to discuss how ICC could be developed, than defining what it is, which showed uncertainty amongst teachers regarding the concept. The author argued that many teachers have not been exposed to the target culture. [Bergah \(2016\)](#) explored EFL teachers' beliefs and practices concerning the concept of IC. The study also reported the challenges to the efficiency of IC teaching due to a lack of teacher training, lack of emphasis on IC in curricula, lack of IC-based teaching material, and teachers' negative attitudes towards integrating IC in EFL teaching. [Bouslama and Benaissi \(2018\)](#) explored Algerian EFL teachers' perceptions of the IC, culture concepts, and the objectives of the intercultural approach (ICA) in ELT contexts. The authors analyzed participants' knowledge, perceptions, and understanding of the concepts to identify any obstacles to the effective IC teaching using semi-structured interviews. The results illustrated that many EFL teachers showed a lack of theoretical understanding of the ICA and its objectives, which negatively affect their IC practices. Therefore, EFL teacher preparation programs should be developed theoretically and practically.

In the Saudi context, numerous studies (e.g. [Al-Hazmi, 2003](#); [Khan, 2011](#); [Rahman & Alhaisoni, 2013](#); [Zafer, 2002](#)) investigated the role of EFL teachers in achieving communicative competence in the classroom through actual training. These studies called for a systematic approach for designing Saudi EFL/ ESL teacher preparation programs because the current programs are inadequate for the preparation of Saudi EFL/ESL teachers. However, these studies have not looked into the inclusion of intercultural education in the programs. [Abu-Ras \(2002\)](#) measured the applicability of the communicative approach to ELT in Saudi Arabia and reported that (89%) of EFL/ESL teachers did not receive adequate pre-service training. [Khan \(2011\)](#) argued that the dominance of Arabic reduced the value of English among Saudi students. Moreover, [Al-Saraj \(2014\)](#) revealed that Saudi culture is religious and conservative and refuses to change. Therefore, some people misbelieve that ELT may demolish the local culture, customs, and identity.

[Al-Seghayer \(2014\)](#) emphasized the urgency of reconsidering the study plan of the Saudi EFL/ESL preparation programs. Courses should be offered on how English works in the real world, the ever-changing nature of language, as well as the relationship between languages, culture, correctness, and appropriateness. [Alharbi \(2015\)](#) argued that Saudi students believed that English is irrelevant to professional success and they used Arabic in handling the different mass media. Moreover, the lack of real contexts off-campus hinders achieving the required language results of ESL. [Alrabai \(2016\)](#) examined the factors underlying the low achievement of Saudi students in English and identified sociocultural factors, such as the influence of Arabic as the mother tongue, religion, culture, and society concerning the success or failure of the English language learners. The author believes that the studies on EFL/ESL in Saudi Arabia reported the effect of culture in the success of language learning and the dominance of the monoculture in the educational environment. However, no studies have examined the role of cultural awareness

and ICC in the success of language learning in teacher preparation. Therefore, teachers should be trained in teaching ICC.

5.4. The Intercultural Communicative Competence and Pre-Service Teachers' Awareness

Constructively, teachers should be cultured and understand the new challenges of ICC teaching because learning multicultural languages provide meaningful relationships with issues, e.g. human rights and citizenship that cannot be acquired independently in a foreign country. EFL teachers' roles and profiles should be considered to resolve the challenges of language learning (Li, 2016; Piątkowska, 2015). Many authors have perceived the importance of ICC development in the pre-service teacher preparation programs (Dooly & Villanueva, 2006). For example, Tang and Choi (2004) investigated the IC of four EFL pre-service teachers. The results highlighted different levels of developing the personal and cultural competence of the teachers. Dooly and Villanueva (2006) examined IC and thinking among 160 university students from 8 countries and studying at 8 universities. The findings illustrated pre-service teachers' awareness to develop their intercultural awareness and communication skills for better future teaching.

DeJaeghere and Cao (2009) studied developing cultural awareness among 22 EFL pre-service teachers at American universities to identify how critical and multi-cultural education helped acquire multi-cultural perspectives. The results showed that the participants demonstrated deep cultural understanding of the integration of culture in teaching continuously. EFL teachers need to be trained in integrating IC in professional practices. This finding matched (Cushner & Mahon, 2009) that stressed that developing the ICC requires teachers who can transfer it to learners. Dervin and Tournebise (2013) investigated the perspectives of language pre-service teachers to identify their interest in cultural issues. They reported that culture in language teaching was not addressed properly in teacher preparation programs because little guidance is provided to achieve the cultural domain in practice and teachers' perception of the intercultural perspective and its development. Therefore, an IC paradigm shift should be achieved.

Polat and Ogay Barka (2014) identified the intercultural competence levels of pre-service teachers from Switzerland and Turkey. A Multicultural Personality Questionnaire and a personal information form were utilized to collect data from 185 pre-service teachers; 84 from Switzerland and 101 from Turkey. The intercultural competence levels of pre-service teachers in the two countries were found to be middling. Participants perceived themselves to be the most competent in the domain of cultural empathy, open-mindedness, social initiative, flexibility, and emotional stability. Swiss Pre-service teachers had higher intercultural competence than those from Turkey,

Li (2016) discussed the present situation of the EFL culture at the Chinese colleges and reported that the idea of many EFL teachers is ambiguous on the promotion of intercultural awareness among students. To promote the ICC in the classroom, EFL teachers should employ various teaching resources, e.g. textbooks, computers, radio, and magazines. However, teachers often rely on textbooks. Kaiser (2005) reported that educational materials define a great part of acquiring ICC among students. Byram (2013) argued that teachers and students need intercultural awareness. This interpretation may help inexperienced teachers understand ICC because it requires certain contexts, knowledge, and skills.

6. METHODOLOGY

6.1. Method

The author adopted the descriptive comparative analytical approach to describe, analyze, and compare the present situation of the EFL/ESL teacher preparation program in raising the awareness of pre-service teachers of the ICC model in Saudi Arabia and Singapore.

6.2. Population

The population comprised all EFL/ESL faculty members in Saudi Arabia and Singapore in the first semester of 2019/2020.

6.3. Sampling

The sample included (30) faculty members at King Saud University, Al-Imam Mohammad Ibn Saud Islamic University, and PNU in Saudi Arabia and (30) faculty members at Nanyang Technological University in Singapore in the first semester of 2019/2020 [Table 1](#).

Table-1. Sample description.

Variables	Saudi Arabia		Singapore		
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	
Academic degree	Demonstrator	7	23.3	1	3.3
	Lecturer	6	20.0	9	30.0
	Assistant professor	11	36.7	6	20.0
	Associate professor	6	20.0	11	36.7
	Professor	0	0	3	10.0
	Total	30	100%	30	100%
Years of experience in teacher preparation	0-5	9	30.0	1	3.3
	6-10	9	30.0	1	3.3
	11-15	2	6.7	3	10.0
	16-20	1	3.3	12	40.0
	21-25	4	13.3	12	40.0
	26-30	5	16.7	1	3.3
	Total	30	100%	30	100%
Participation in developing EFL/ESL teacher preparation programs	Yes	17	56.7	8	26.7
	No	13	43.3	22	73.3
	Total	30	100%	30	100%
Overseas academic degree	Yes	17	56.7	25	83.3
	No	13	43.3	5	16.7
	Total	30	100%	30	100%

Source: The data were extracted and statistically analyzed using frequency coefficients and percentages.

[Table 1](#) shows the variety of leaders participating in teaching according to the stage. The Saudi sample lacks (professor) because of the novelty of English language specialization at Saudi universities. The participants differ in the years of experience in teacher preparation to highlight their efforts in helping pre-service teachers master the different language skills. The participation in developing EFL/ESL teacher preparation programs rated (56.7%) and (26.7%) in Saudi Arabia and Singapore, respectively, suggesting the Saudi interest in raising the awareness of developing these programs. Saudi Arabia stresses the importance of education and promoting scientific and technological progress by enhancing international communication and relations to achieve the Saudi Vision 2030. Most of the participants received overseas academic degrees, suggesting an interest in promoting education and benefiting from others' cultures.

6.4. Tool

The ICC questionnaire was developed to highlight the role of the EFL/ESL teacher preparation program in raising the awareness of pre-service teachers of the ICC model. The relevant literature included [Bergah \(2016\)](#); [Bouslama and Benaissi \(2018\)](#); [Göbel and Helmke \(2010\)](#); [Tang and Choi \(2004\)](#). All these studies were reviewed to help develop the domains and items of the questionnaire. The instructions were formulated clearly and inserted at the beginning of the questionnaire. They included the description, responding, and objectives of the questionnaire.

Table-2. Competence required for ESL/EFL teacher to achieve intercultural communication.

Competence	Items	Total sample						
		Frequencies			Relative weight	Percentage	Ranking	Average dimensions
		required	somewhat required	Not required				
Language	Language skills (grammar, phonetics, semantics,...etc.)	23	6	1	82	91.11	1	72.45
	Social communication forms according to the social or official position	14	12	4	70	77.77	7	
	Understanding the common social dialects	3	20	7	56	62.2	13	
	Awareness of the social influence of different dialects	3	19	8	55	61.11	14	
	Awareness of the meaning of body language according to the culture	17	10	3	74	82.2	4	
	Understanding the effect of sound pitch and volume according to the culture	12	9	9	63	70	8	
Cultural	Recognize certain cultural products, e.g. literature and arts in the first and second language	7	16	7	60	66.66	10	
	Awareness of the differences and similarities between the native and target cultures	13	14	3	70	77.77	7	
	Awareness of the influence of social stratification and different classes (tribes and race diversity) on daily interaction	4	16	10	54	60	15	
Contemplative	Positive attitude towards learning the target language	13	15	2	71	78.88	6	
	Recognize the link between language and culture	16	12	2	74	82.2	4	
	Critical foresight of various practices, perspectives, and products of the target culture.	8	12	10	58	64.4	11	
	Interpret the targeted culture form the perspective of the native culture.	8	15	7	61	67.77	9	
	Accept other cultures from the perspective of the native culture	8	14	8	60	66.66	10	
Applied	Interpret documents related to events and situations of the target culture	5	13	12	53	58.8	16	
	Compare documents related to events and situations of the target culture with parallel	8	11	11	57	63.33	12	

	ones in the native culture						
	Collect data on target culture and practices	6	21	3	63	70	8
	Applying knowledge to target culture (prompt, instant, or automatic) in various situations	9	15	6	63	70	8
Value	Integrating between the mother and target cultures for the aim of understanding and accepting the target culture	8	17	5	63	70	8
	Expressing pride in ones' own culture.	18	10	2	76	84.4	3
	Having positive attitude to the community and speakers of the target language	16	11	3	73	81.11	5
	Having positive attitude to learning the target language	20	9	1	79	87.7	2

Source: The data were extracted and statistically analyzed using frequency coefficients, percentages, relative weights, and arithmetic means.

The draft of the questionnaire was formulated and presented to specialized reviewers to review and make modifications if any. The final form comprised the following five domains: Personal data, intercultural communicative competence, as well as the planning, implementation, and evaluation of the ICC model.

The questionnaire was based on a three-point Likert scale such as (required, somewhat required, and not required) for the ICC domain; while (available, somewhat available, and unavailable) were used for planning, implementation, and evaluation domains.

The questionnaire was presented to (6) reviewers of the Saudi EFL/ESL faculty members to give opinions on the items' appropriateness, clarity, comprehensiveness, and wordiness. Their agreement rated (97%-100%). That is, all items were approved. The validity of the questionnaire was estimated by calculating the square root of the reliability coefficient and rated (0.95) and (0.99) in Saudi Arabia and Singapore, respectively. Moreover, the reliability was estimated using Cronbach's alpha that equaled (0.92) and (0.98) in Saudi Arabia and Singapore, respectively. It was sent to the participants by e-mail who responded within (6) days. All the participants responded.

7. RESULTS

To answer the first question, the frequency, relative weight, and percentage of the responses to the items related to the ICC implied in the program of EFL teacher preparation in Saudi Arabia were calculated.

Table 2 illustrates that the percentage of the items rated (58.8: 91.11). The (language and value) domains were ranked first. The items of (language skills (grammar, phonetics, semantics,...etc.), (having positive attitude to learning the target language), and (expressing pride in ones' own culture) were ranked first, second, and third respectively. (Interpreting documents related to events and situations of the target culture) item was ranked last. The average (72.45) shows the high availability of the items.

To answer the second question, the frequency, relative weight, and percentage of the responses to the items related to the ICC implied in the program of EFL teacher preparation in Singapore were calculated.

Table 3 shows that the percentage of the items rated (93.33: 100). The (language and cultural) domains were ranked first. While (language skills (grammar, phonetics, semantics,...etc.) was ranked first, (social communication forms according to the social or official position) and (understanding the common social dialects) were ranked second. The average (97.1) indicates the high availability of the items.

To answer the third question, the frequency, relative weight, and percentage of the responses to the items related to the teaching performance of (planning, implementation, and evaluation) of the ICC model implied in the EFL teacher preparation in Saudi Arabia were calculated. See Tables 4, 5, and 6.

Table-3. Competence required for ESL/EFL teacher to achieve intercultural communication.

Competence	Items	Total sample						
		Frequencies			Relative weight	Percentage	Ranking	Average dimensions
		required	somewhat required	Not required				
Language	Language skills (grammar, phonetics, semantics,...etc.)	30	0	0	90	100	1	97.01
	Social communication forms according to the social or official position	29	1	0	89	98.88	2	
	Understanding the common social dialects	29	1	0	89	98.88	2	
	Awareness of the social influence of different dialects	29	0	1	88	97.77	3	
	Awareness of the meaning of body language according to the culture	29	0	1	88	97.77	3	
	Understanding the effect of sound pitch and volume according to the culture	29	1	0	89	98.88	2	
Cultural	Recognize certain cultural products, e.g. literature and arts in the first and second language	29	0	1	88	97.77	3	
	Awareness of the differences and similarities between the native and target cultures	30	0	0	90	100	1	
	Awareness of the influence of social stratification and different classes (tribes and race diversity) on daily interaction	26	3	1	85	94.44	6	
Contemplative	Positive attitude towards learning the target language	26	3	1	85	94.44	6	
	Recognize the link between language and culture	29	0	1	88	97.77	3	
	Critical foresight of various practices, perspectives, and products of the target culture.	29	0	1	88	97.77	3	
	Interpret the targeted culture form the perspective of the native culture.	25	4	1	84	93.33	7	
	Accept other cultures from the perspective of the native culture	29	0	1	88	97.77	3	

Applied	Interpret documents related to events and situations of the target culture	27	2	1	86	95.55	5
	Compare documents related to events and situations of the target culture with parallel ones in the native culture	27	2	1	86	95.55	5
	Collect data on target culture and practices	27	2	1	86	95.55	5
	Applying knowledge to target culture (prompt, instant, or automatic) in various situations	28	1	1	87	96.66	4
Value	Integrating between the mother and target cultures for the aim of understanding and accepting the target culture	29	0	1	88	97.77	3
	Expressing pride in ones' own culture.	27	2	1	86	95.55	5
	Having positive attitude to the community and speakers of the target language	26	3	1	85	94.44	6
	Having positive attitude to learning the target language	29	0	1	88	97.77	3

Source: The data were extracted and statistically analyzed using frequency coefficients, percentages, relative weights, and arithmetic means.

Table-4. Availability of training to plan for the delivery of the ICC model in the classroom for ESL/EFL pre-service teachers.

Competence	Items	Total sample						
		Frequencies			Relative weight	Percentage	Ranking	Average dimensions
		Available	Somewhat available	Unavailable				
Language	Plan curricular and extracurricular activities to raise awareness of the effects of body language, sound pitch and volume in the targeted culture.	0	12	18	42	46.66	6	50.20
	Plan curricular and extracurricular activities to train in forms of social communication according to the social or official position in the target culture	0	13	17	43	47.77	5	
	Plan activities that raise awareness of the linguistic components of the targeted language	0	19	11	49	54.44	1	
Cultural	Plan language activities that consider the cultural diversity of the learners within a supportive environment for learning	0	13	17	43	47.77	5	
	Plan learner-centered activities that promote positive attitudes toward various cultures	0	15	15	45	50	3	

Contemplative	Plan activities that support critical comparison between the native and target cultures	1	17	12	49	54.44	1
	Plan educational practices that support reflection and recognition of the relationship between language and culture	2	11	17	45	50	3
	Plan educational practices that support the formulation of a positive attitude to the target language	2	13	15	47	52.22	2
	Plan reflective situations that enhance the acceptance of other cultures	2	13	15	47	52.22	2
	Plan reflective situations to interpret the target culture from the perspective of one's own native culture	0	15	15	45	50	3
Applied	Plan comparative activities between the native and target cultures	0	15	15	45	50	3
	Plan simulation activities to train for prompt reactions in various situations accepted in the target culture.	0	14	16	44	48.88	4
	Plan learning activities to activate knowledge, attitudes, and skills of the target culture	2	10	18	44	48.88	4
Value	Plan learning scenarios to enhance the acceptance of and familiarity with the target culture	2	10	18	44	48.88	4
	Plan learning scenarios to promote pride in one's own native culture	0	14	16	44	48.88	4
	Plan scenarios to promote positive attitudes towards learning the target language and culture.	3	11	16	47	52.22	2

Source: The data were extracted and statistically analyzed using frequency coefficients, percentages, relative weights, and arithmetic means.

Table 4 shows that the percentage ranged (46.66: 54.55). The (contemplative and value) domains were ranked the highest. While (plan activities that raise awareness of the linguistic components of the targeted language) was ranked first, the items of (plan educational practices that support the formulation of a positive attitude to the target language) and (plan reflective situations that enhance the acceptance of other cultures) were ranked second.

Table-5. Availability of training to implement the ICC model in the Classroom for ESL/EFL pre-service teachers.

Competence	Items	Total sample						
		Frequencies			Relative weight	Percentage	Ranking	Average dimensions
		Available	Somewhat available	Unavailable				
Language I	Implement various learner-centered curricular activities to raise awareness of the effect of body language, sound pitch, dialects on communication according to the target	1	11	18	43	47.77	8	50.66

	culture						
	Implementing role play activities for appropriate social communication norms according to the target culture	1	11	18	43	47.77	8
	Build interactive activities that raise awareness of the linguistic components of the target language	1	13	16	45	50	6
Cultural	Implement activities that support critical comparison between the native and target cultures	3	11	16	47	52.22	4
	Implement culture-centered activities adopted by learners to be introduced to others.	2	10	18	44	48.88	7
Contemplative	Implement reflective activities to raise awareness of the language-culture relationship	2	15	13	49	54.44	2
	Implement activities to build positive attitudes to learning the target language	5	13	12	53	58.88	1
	Implement activities to enhance learners in acceptance of other cultures	2	12	16	46	51.11	5
	Implement reflective activities towards the interpretation of the target culture through one's own native culture		13	17	43	47.77	8
Applied	Implement comparative activities between the native and target cultures	3	11	16	47	52.22	4
	Implement self-learning activities to acquire knowledge of target culture and its practices.		16	14	46	51.11	5
	Implement authentic situations that highlight the learner's ability to activate knowledge, attitudes, and skills from the target culture	3	8	19	44	48.88	7
Value	Implement learning and educational situations that support the acceptance of and familiarity with the target culture		9	21	39	43.33	9
	Implement learning and educational situations that promote pride in the native culture	2	13	15	47	52.22	4
	Implement situations that develop a positive attitude to learning and culture of the speakers of the target language	3	12	15	48	53.33	3

Source: The data were extracted and statistically analyzed using frequency coefficients, percentages, relative weights, and arithmetic means.

Table 5 illustrates that the percentage ranged (43.33: 58.88). The (contemplative and value) domains were ranked the highest. The items of (implement activities to build positive attitudes to learning the target language), (implement reflective activities to raise awareness of the language- culture relationship) and (implement situations that develop a positive attitude to learning and culture of the speakers of the target language) were ranked first, second, and third, respectively.

Table-6. Availability of training to evaluate the ICC model in the Classroom for ESL/EFL pre-service teachers.

Competence	Items	Total sample						
		Frequencies			Relative weight	Percentage	Ranking	Average dimensions
		Available	Somewhat available	Unavailable				
Language	Evaluate the learner's awareness of the effects of body language, sound pitch and dialects on social communication using adequate scales, e.g. observation, as well as individual and group evaluation matrices	1	11	18	43	47.77	4	49.83
	Evaluate the learner's competence in using appropriate forms of social communication using adequate scales, e.g. observation, as well as individual and group performance evaluation	1	11	18	43	47.77	4	
	Evaluate the learner's knowledge of the linguistic components of the target language using appropriate scales, such as tests	4	9	17	47	52.22	2	
Cultural	Evaluate the learner's ability to do a critical comparison between the target culture and the native culture based on a performance-based evaluation, e.g. writing critical essays	3	8	19	44	48.88	3	
	Evaluate learners' efforts in introducing the target culture through projects, presentations, and debates	0	12	18	42	46.66	5	
	Evaluate the learner's perception of the relationship	0	14	16	44	48.88	3	

	between language and culture through projects, presentations, and debates							
	Evaluate the learners' attitudes to the target culture using surveys and questionnaires	14	16	1	75	83.33	1	
	Evaluate the learner's ability to accept the target culture via reflective journals and blogs	0	10	20	40	44.44	6	
	Evaluate the learner's ability to interpret the target culture through the perspective of the native culture via reflective journals and blogs	0	10	20	40	44.44	6	
	Evaluate the learner's ability to compare the native and target cultures via presentations, discussion, and debate	2	9	19	43	47.77	4	
Applied	Evaluate the learner's ability to activate knowledge, skills and attitudes in authentic social situations in the target culture using observation, group and individual performance evaluation	2	9	19	43	47.77	4	
	Evaluate the learner's acceptance of the target culture through surveys and interviews	2	9	19	43	47.77	4	
	Evaluate the learner's pride in the native culture through surveys, interviews, reflective journals, presentations, and discussions	0	12	18	42	46.66	5	
Value	Evaluate the learner's attitude toward the target culture through use of attitude surveys and interviews	1	7	22	39	43.33	7	

Source: The data were extracted and statistically analyzed using frequency coefficients, percentages, relative weights, and arithmetic means.

Table 6 shows that the percentage ranged (43.33: 83.33). The (contemplative, language, and cultural) domains were ranked the highest. The items of (evaluate the learners' attitudes to the target culture using surveys and questionnaires) and (evaluate the learner's knowledge of the linguistic components of the target language using appropriate scales, such as tests) were ranked first and second, respectively. (Evaluate the learner's ability to do a

critical comparison between the target culture and the native culture based on a performance-based evaluation, e.g. writing critical essays) and (evaluate the learner's perception of the relationship between language and culture through projects, presentations, and debates) were ranked third.

To answer the fourth question, the frequency, relative weight, and percentage of the responses to the items related to the teaching performance of (planning, implementation, and evaluation) of the ICC model implied in the EFL teacher preparation in Singapore were calculated. See Tables 7, 8, and 9.

Table-7. Availability of training to plan for the delivery of the ICC model in the classroom for ESL/EFL pre-service teachers.

Compete	Items	Total sample						
		Frequencies			Relative weight	Percentage	Ranking	Average dimensions
		Available	Somewhat available	Unavailable				
Language	Plan curricular and extracurricular activities to raise awareness of the effects of body language, sound pitch and volume in the targeted culture.	29	0	1	88	97.7	1	91.09
	Plan curricular and extracurricular activities to train in forms of social communication according to the social or official position in the target culture	29	0	1	88	97.77	1	
	Plan activities that raise awareness of the linguistic components of the targeted language	26	2	2	84	93.33	4	
Cultural	Plan language activities that consider the cultural diversity of the learners within a supportive environment for learning	28	0	2	86	95.55	3	
	Plan learner-centered activities that promote positive attitudes toward various cultures	28	1	1	87	96.66	2	
	Plan activities that support critical comparison between the native and target cultures	14	12	4	70	77.77	9	
Contemplative	Plan educational practices that support reflection and recognition of the relationship between language and culture	23	5	2	81	90	5	
	Plan educational practices that support the formulation of a positive attitude to the target language	28	0	2	86	95.55	3	
	Plan reflective situations that enhance the acceptance of other	28	1	1	87	96.66	2	

Applied	cultures						
	Plan reflective situations to interpret the target culture from the perspective of one's own native culture	17	10	3	74	82.22	8
	Plan comparative activities between the native and target cultures	20	7	3	77	85.55	7
	Plan simulation activities to train for prompt reactions in various situations accepted in the target culture.	20	7	3	77	85.55	7
	Plan learning activities to activate knowledge, attitudes, and skills of the target culture	20	7	3	77	85.55	7
	Value	Plan learning scenarios to enhance the acceptance of and familiarity with the target culture	23	4	3	80	88.88
Plan learning scenarios to promote pride in one's own native culture		25	4	1	84	93.33	4
Plan scenarios to promote positive attitudes towards learning the target language and culture.		28	0	2	86	95.5	3

Source: The data were extracted and statistically analyzed using frequency coefficients, percentages, relative weights, and arithmetic means.

Table 7 shows that the percentage ranged (77.77: 97.77). The (language, cultural, and contemplative) domains were ranked the highest. The items of (plan curricular and extracurricular activities to raise awareness of the effects of body language, sound pitch, and volume in the targeted culture) and (plan curricular and extracurricular activities to train in forms of social communication according to the social or official position in the target culture) were ranked first. (Plan activities that support critical comparison between the native and target cultures) was ranked last.

Table-8. Availability of training to implement the ICC model in the classroom for ESL/EFL pre-service teachers.

Competence	Items	Total sample						
		Frequencies			Relative weight	Percentage	Ranking	Average dimensions
		Available	Somewhat available	Unavailable				
Language	Implement various learner-centered curricular activities to raise awareness of the effect of body language, sound pitch, dialects on communication according to the target culture	29	1	0	89	98.88	1	85.55

	Implementing role play activities for appropriate social communication norms according to the target culture	29	0	1	88	97.77	2
	Build interactive activities that raise awareness of the linguistic components of the target language	29	0	1	88	97.77	2
Cultural	Implement activities that support critical comparison between the native and target cultures	9	18	3	66	73.33	7
	Implement culture-centered activities adopted by learners to be introduced to others.	9	18	3	66	73.33	7
Contemplative	Implement reflective activities to raise awareness of the language-culture relationship	28	0	2	86	95.55	4
	Implement activities to build positive attitudes to learning the target language	28	1	1	87	96.66	3
	Implement activities to enhance learners in acceptance of other cultures	28	0	2	86	95.55	4
	Implement reflective activities towards the interpretation of the target culture through one's own native culture	10	18	2	68	75.55	6
Applied	Implement comparative activities between the native and target cultures	15	14	1	74	82.22	5
	Implement self-learning activities to acquire knowledge of target culture and its practices.	15	14	1	74	82.22	5
	Implement authentic situations that highlight the learner's ability to activate knowledge, attitudes, and skills from the target culture	3	18	9	54	60	8
Value	Implement learning and educational situations that support the acceptance of and familiarity with the target culture	3	18	9	54	60	8
	Implement learning and educational situations that promote pride in the	28	2	0	88	97.77	2

	native culture							
	Implement situations that develop a positive attitude to learning and culture of the speakers of the target language	28	1	1	87	96.66	3	

Source: The data were extracted and statistically analyzed using frequency coefficients, percentages, relative weights, and arithmetic means.

Table 8 illustrates that the percentage ranged (60: 98.88). The (language, contemplative, and value) domains were ranked the highest. (Implement various learner-centered curricular activities to raise awareness of the effect of body language, sound pitch, dialects on communication according to the target culture) was ranked first. The items of (implementing role play activities for appropriate social communication norms according to the target culture) and (building interactive activities that raise awareness of the linguistic components of the target language) were ranked second.

Table-9. Availability of training to evaluate the ICC model in the classroom for ESL/EFL pre-service teachers.

Competence	Items	Total sample						Average dimensions
		Frequencies			Relative weight	Percentage	Ranking	
		Available	Somewhat available	Unavailable				
Language	Evaluate the learner's awareness of the effects of body language, sound pitch and dialects on social communication using adequate scales, e.g. observation, as well as individual and group evaluation matrices	25	4	1	84	93.33	2	85.39
	Evaluate the learner's competence in using appropriate forms of social communication using adequate scales, e.g. observation, as well as individual and group performance evaluation	25	4	1	84	93.33	2	
	Evaluate the learner's knowledge of the linguistic components of the target language using appropriate scales, such as tests	29	0	1	88	97.77	1	
Cultural	Evaluate the learner's ability to do a critical comparison between the target culture and the native culture based on a performance-based evaluation, e.g.	19	9	2	77	85.55	6	

	writing critical essays							
	Evaluate learners' efforts in introducing the target culture through projects, presentations, and debates	24	4	2	82	91.11	3	
Contemplative	Evaluate the learner's perception of the relationship between language and culture through projects, presentations, and debates	23	5	2	81	90	4	
	Evaluate the learners' attitudes to the target culture using surveys and questionnaires	19	9	2	77	85.55	6	
	Evaluate the learner's ability to accept the target culture via reflective journals and blogs	19	10	1	78	86.66	5	
	Evaluate the learner's ability to interpret the target culture through the perspective of the native culture via reflective journals and blogs	11	18	1	70	77.77	9	
	Evaluate the learner's ability to compare the native and target cultures via presentations, discussion, and debate	12	17	1	71	78.88	8	
Applied	Evaluate the learner's ability to activate knowledge, skills and attitudes in authentic social situations in the target culture using observation, group and individual performance evaluation	10	19	1	69	76.66	10	
	Evaluate the learner's acceptance of the target culture through surveys and interviews	13	15	2	71	78.88	8	
Value	Evaluate the learner's pride in the native culture through surveys, interviews, reflective journals, presentations, and discussions	11	16	3	68	75.55	11	

Evaluate the learner's attitude toward the target culture through use of attitude surveys and interviews	18	10	2	76	84.44	7	
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Source: The data were extracted and statistically analyzed using frequency coefficients, percentages, relative weights, and arithmetic means.

Table 9 shows that the percentage ranged (75.55:97.77). The (language and cultural) domains were ranked the highest. (Evaluate the learner's knowledge of the linguistic components of the target language using appropriate scales, such as tests) was ranked first. The items of (evaluate the learner's awareness of the effects of body language, sound pitch and dialects on social communication using adequate scales, e.g. observation, as well as individual and group evaluation matrices) and (evaluate the learner's competence in using appropriate forms of social communication using adequate scales, e.g. observation, as well as individual and group performance evaluation) were ranked second.

To answer the fifth question, the independent samples t-test was utilized to calculate the significance of differences in the mean responses of the participants to ICC.

Table-10. Significance of differences between the participants in ICC.

Competence	Saudi Arabia= 30		Singapore= 30		T Value	Significance
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Language	13.33	2.74	17.73	1.46	7.74**	Significant
Cultural	6.13	1.69	8.66	.92	7.18**	Significant
Contemplative	10.80	2.53	14.46	1.87	6.37**	Significant
Applied	7.86	2.17	11.56	1.56	7.55**	Significant
Value	9.70	1.78	11.56	1.501	4.38**	Significant
Total	47.83	9.29	64.00	7.10	7.56**	Significant

Note: (**) significant at the level of 0.01.

Source: The data were extracted and statistically analyzed using T-test to determine the significance of differences between the means of two groups.

Table 10 shows statistically significant differences in the mean responses to the scale of competence between participants in favor of Singapore.

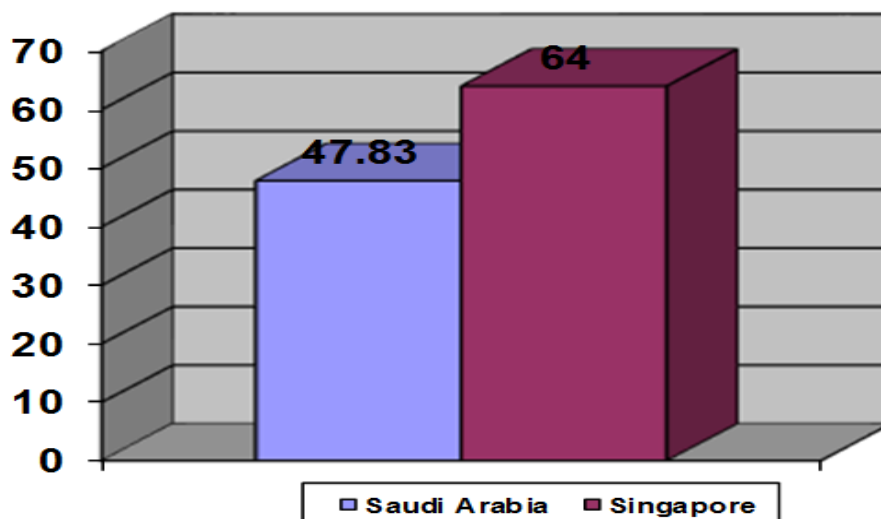


Figure-1 Shows the significance of differences between the Saudi and Singaporean participants in the total ICC.

To answer the sixth question, the independent samples t-test was utilized to calculate the significance of differences in the mean responses of the participants to the availability of (planning, implementation, and evaluation) teaching performance in the light of ICC.

Table-11. Significance of differences between the participants in the availability of (planning, implementation, and evaluation) teaching performance in the light of ICC. .

Variables	Saudi Arabia= 30		Singapore= 30		T Value	Significance
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Planning	24.23	6.86	43.33	6.54	11.027**	Significant
Implementation	22.80	6.93	39.90	5.78	10.375**	Significant
Evaluation	19.80	5.25	35.87	5.82	11.22**	Significant
Total	66.83	18.11	119.10	17.54	11.35**	Significant

Source: The data were extracted and statistically analyzed using T-test to determine the significance of differences between the means of two groups.

Table 11 illustrates statistically significant differences in the mean responses of the participants to the availability of (planning, implementation, and evaluation) teaching performance in the light of ICC in favor of Singapore.

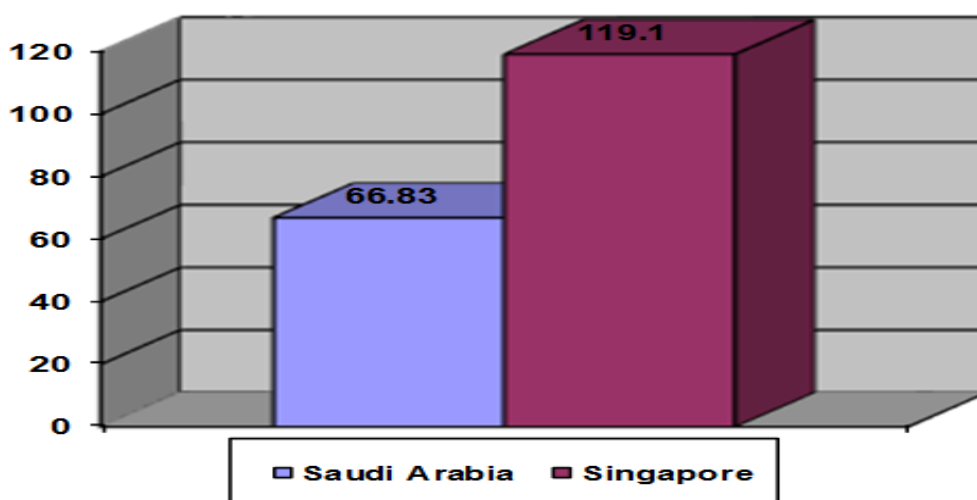


Figure-2 shows the significance of differences between the Saudi and Singaporean participants in the availability of the total teaching performances.

7. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

According to the results, all items related to the ICC implied in the program of EFL teacher preparation in Saudi Arabia were rated high, suggesting the availability of the ICC in the Saudi program. The author argues that these findings illustrate the readiness of the participants to engage in the target language learning and openness to foreign languages, despite the dominance of Arabic as the official language in all aspects of communication and daily interactions and the lack of contexts of real practice. Additionally, the participants were not trained in deciphering actions and documents from other cultures. These findings agree with Abu-Ras (2002); Al-Seghayer (2014); Khan (2011). The items related to the ICC implied in the program of EFL teacher preparation in Singapore were rated very high, suggesting the availability of the ICC in the Singaporean program. The author argues that the participants consider the importance of language as the basis of intercultural communication and recognizing the literature and arts of languages. All items were high because of the participants' ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in a culturally diverse community. These findings match with those of DeJaeghere and Cao (2009) and Dooly and Villanueva (2006).

Concerning the items related to the teaching performance of (planning, implementation, and evaluation) of the ICC model implied in the EFL teacher preparation in Saudi Arabia, the participants admitted the unavailability of the items in Saudi Arabia. Moreover, the participants also agreed on the unavailability of the implementation as well as evaluation items in the Saudi program. The author argues that the lack of (planning, implementation, and evaluation) items results from the weak understanding of integrating them in the program, the lack of the ICC

learning resources, and bad course design. The courses focus on learners' awareness of the ICC concept, not its teaching. Additionally, the available programs do not develop critical evaluation because they are offered traditionally. These findings match Abu-Ras (2002); Al-Seghayer (2014); Cushner and Mahon (2009); Khan (2011) and Rahman and Alhaisoni (2013).

Regarding the items related to the teaching performance of (planning, implementation, and evaluation) of the ICC model implied in the EFL teacher preparation in Singapore, the participants agreed on the high availability of all planning items of the ICC model in the Singaporean program. They also agreed on the high availability of most of the implementation and evaluation items of the ICC model in the Singaporean program. The author argues that the items of the ICC model are highly available because of the program's facilitation, such as online and face-to-face study and offering the program by one institution. The candidates should pass tests, the practices help communicate effectively and appropriately, and utilizing various learning resources. These findings agree with Byram (2013) and Sercu (2006).

The author attributes the difference in the response to the ICC model among EFL/ESL pre-service teachers to achieve intercultural communication among the faculty members in Saudi Arabia and Singapore to the fact that in Singapore the individuals are more aware of the ICC elements and integrate modern technology and attitudes in preparing EFL pre-service teachers. This finding matches Al-Zahrani (2011); Awad (2000); Barrett (2011) and Low et al. (2014). The significant difference in the available (planning, implementation, and evaluation) teaching performance in the EFL/ESL pre-service teacher preparation program among the faculty members in Saudi Arabia and Singapore can be ascribed to that the program in Singapore, which offers the largest number of practices to communicate effectively, activities that promote awareness of the target culture's linguistics, and a supportive learning environment. It also helps implement many educational alternatives and accept the target culture positively. This finding matches Al-Zahrani (2011); Awad (2000); Barrett (2011) and Low et al. (2014).

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

The author recommends

- Reviewing and updating the EFL/ESL preparation program at the College of Education based on the ICC model to meet the students' needs and ICC.
- Making changes to the educational institutions to fit the graduates' capabilities.
- Making a strategic plan to adopt various ICC models at Saudi universities.
- Inviting the faculty members to attend educational conferences and programs on the ICC domain.
- Supporting the pre-service and in-service teacher preparation programs using ICC programs.

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