

Male and female students' motivation for learning at senior high school

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to determine the differences in motivation to learn English based on gender between male and female students at the high school level. The researcher used two types of motivation, namely intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation, to analyze the differences in motivation between male and female students. The research data was obtained through purposive sampling of 23 students in class XI B at SMAN 1 Jelimpo. The research method used was a descriptive qualitative method with three main instruments, namely observation, questionnaires, and interviews. Before use, the research instruments were modified by the researcher to suit the research needs. Based on the research results, it was found that there were differences in learning motivation between male and female students. Male students tended to have more dominant intrinsic motivation, with a questionnaire result percentage of 57%. Meanwhile, female students showed nearly balanced motivation between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, with a questionnaire percentage of 49% for intrinsic motivation and 51% for extrinsic motivation. Thus, the results of this study are expected to contribute to the development of more effective English learning strategies by considering gender-based motivation differences in the high school environment.

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INTRODUCTION

In Indonesia, English is one of the most significant subjects to be studied in schools, from elementary to high school. The ability to speak English is not only needed in the field of education but also as a means of wider communication and provides opportunities for better job and career prospects. However, achieving good English proficiency will not be possible without strong motivation from students. Motivation is the key to encouraging students to learn and master English. Motivation is a

condition that encourages a person to behave, act in a certain way, and participate in an activity (Sabiq et al., 2021). In the context of learning, motivation also acts as a driver that allows a person to show what has been learned.

Vero and Puka (2017) state that motivation is one of the psychological factors that can affect student learning achievement. However, every student has different motivations, including differences based on gender. Female and male students often do not realize that their motivation can differ, so some of them find it difficult to learn English. Apart from students, teachers also play a role in understanding these motivational differences to create learning activities that suit the needs of each gender. With the right approach, teachers can help students increase their interest in learning so that English learning outcomes will be better. In addition, students need to realize that learning English is not just about fulfilling school obligations, but also a reason to motivate themselves to master it better.

Motivation in English language learning can be divided into two main types, namely intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation refers to the internal drive that makes students learn English because of personal interest and enjoyment. Hayikaleng et al. (2016) state that intrinsic motivation in language learning refers to the motivation to engage in an activity because it is fun and interesting to participate in. Intrinsically motivated students tend to be more active and engaged, especially in the English learning process in class or when participating in discussions, because they enjoy learning and want to develop their English skills.

On the other hand, besides intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation also plays an important role in English learning. Extrinsic motivation is motivation that comes from outside and encourages students to learn. Hayikaleng et al. (2016) state that extrinsic motivation refers to the performance a person does to obtain rewards such as good grades. Extrinsic motivation in English learning often arises from the influence of people around students, such as teachers, peers, and encouragement from parents who want their children to achieve better academic performance. However, in the context of motivation to learn English, gender differences are also an important factor to consider. Researchers point out that intrinsic and extrinsic motivation can differ between male and female students, influenced by various factors. Therefore, understanding gender-based motivational differences can help in designing English learning strategies that are more effective and responsive to the needs of each group of students.

Given the theoretical framework above, it is also important to examine how these motivational types manifest in real educational contexts. At SMAN 1 Jelimpo, teachers often face differences in students' motivation in learning English. Based on an interview with an English teacher at the school, the teacher mentioned that motivation to learn usually comes from friends and family environment. In depth, the researcher has not identified the difference in motivation between male and female gender. Knowing this, the researcher sought to investigate more deeply the differences in motivation that exist at SMAN 1 Jelimpo. Thus, this study will focus on investigating the differences in motivation levels between males and females in learning English.

Previous research by Dwinalida & Setiaji (2022) showed that the majority of students (79.3%) had positive motivation in learning English, with their main motivation being to get good grades and feel proud when they can speak the

language. The results of other studies, such as Maulizar (2019), based on the results of his research, state that students are highly motivated to learn English. They have various reasons for learning English. Students are able to communicate well and utilize their ability in English to help each other, and encourage other students to practice English to continue their studies. Some previous studies have explored students' motivation in English language learning in general, but there is a lack of research that specifically highlights the difference in motivation between male and female students, especially at the senior high school level. Although a number of studies have discussed motivation broadly, few have deeply analyzed the differences in motivation levels based on gender, as well as examined the types of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation possessed by each student. Therefore, this study aims what are the determine the difference in English learning motivation between female and male students at SMAN 1 Jelimpo?. This study also focuses on analyzing intrinsic and extrinsic motivation at Jelimpo 1 Public High School.

METHOD

This study employs a descriptive qualitative method. As stated by Harahap and Widiastuty (2022), qualitative research allows researcher to interpret participants' experiences or phenomena in greater depth. In this study, a qualitative approach will us chosen to understand the motivation of high school students in learning English based on gender differences between female and male students. The subjects in the study totaled 23 students, consisting of 12 male and 11 female students. As explained by Nasution (2023), the data in qualitative research consists of words, sentences, and paragraphs that carry meaning related to the research. Therefore, the qualitative approach is considered appropriate because it provides detailed insights into the learning motivations of male and female students and allows for an understanding of intrinsic and extrinsic motivations through observation, interviews, and questionnaires. The researcher conducted non-participatory observation, acting only as an observer without interfering in the English language learning activities in the classroom. The researcher recorded the behavior, interactions, and responses of students during the learning process in the form of field notes based on indicators of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. The structured questionnaire is adopted from Dwinalida & Setiajais (2022). The questionnaire consisted of 20 questions and distributed to 23 students in class XI B at SMAN 1 Jelimpo. The data from the questionnaire provided an overview of the level of motivation among male and female students, which was then analyzed to identify patterns and differences based on gender. In this study, the questionnaire is designed as a closed-ended questionnaire and used a 4-point Likert scale (4 = Strongly Agree, 3 = Agree, 2 = Disagree, 1 = Strongly Disagree). Furthermore, semi-structured interviews will be conducted with 4 students, consisting of 2 male students and 2 female students. Students were selected based on their level of motivation (high vs. low). The interviews were conducted with the aim of obtaining in-depth responses from male and female students, which were used to enrich the data obtained from the questionnaire.

1. Observation Results

Observations were conducted to see the differences in intrinsic and extrinsic motivation between male and female students during the learning process in the classroom. Data was collected by observing student behavior that reflected internal learning motivation (intrinsic motivation) and external motivation (extrinsic motivation).

a) Intrinsic Motivation

1) Male Students

The results of the study show that male students have a fairly dominant level of intrinsic motivation in learning English. This was evident when the researcher observed the male students. Several indicators were observed, such as the male students' enthusiasm in answering the teacher's questions during the learning process and their courage to speak in English even though their skills were not yet perfect. The researcher also observed that male students take the initiative to learn independently, such as by seeking additional resources outside of the material taught in class. In addition, male students also showed a proactive attitude by frequently asking questions to teachers and female classmates when facing difficulties. Through the researcher observations, it was found that 7 out of 12 male students actively asked questions to teachers during the English learning process in class. In addition, male students also frequently displayed expressions of joy, such as smiling, while participating in English learning in class.

2) Female Students

On the other hand, female students also showed intrinsic motivation in learning English, although the intensity tended to be lower than that of male students. Through the researcher observations, it was seen that some female students also showed courage in speaking English even though their abilities were not yet perfect. Some other female students also showed expressions of joy, such as smiling, during English lessons in class, although some other students showed expressions of boredom during English lessons. In addition, female students also showed initiative to study independently by looking for additional material outside of what had been taught. However, female students were not as active as male students in asking questions when they encountered difficulties. Based on the researcher observations, only 3 out of 11 female students actively asked questions to the teacher when they encountered difficulties in learning English in class.

b) Extrinsic Motivation

1) Male Students

In terms of extrinsic motivation, there are differences between male and female students. Male students tend to have a higher interest in learning English, which is initially driven by internal motivation and then reinforced by external factors. Based on the researcher observations, some male students showed greater interest when the teacher used learning media such as LCD projectors. This was evident when the teacher asked students to identify English sentences on the presentation slides, with 4 out of 12 male students actively raising their hands to answer. However, the researcher also observed that in terms of maintaining classroom cleanliness and tidiness, most male students demonstrated a lower level of sensitivity compared to female students. For example, when there was trash on

the classroom floor, male students tended to leave it there and not clean it up immediately.

2) Female Students

Conversely, female students' motivation to learn English is more influenced by external factors. Based on the researcher observations, most female students are more sensitive to classroom conditions, such as maintaining cleanliness, and are more obedient to classroom and school rules to avoid punishment. Additionally, the researcher found that female students' motivation is significantly influenced by social factors, as evidenced by 8 out of 11 female students being motivated to speak English when they see their peers speaking English, even if it is not perfect. Thus, female students' extrinsic motivation is more influenced by their surroundings, which is the primary factor in the English learning process. The results of the observation show that 60% of male students' active participation in class is driven by intrinsic motivation, such as independent learning initiatives, the courage to ask questions and participate, and expressions of excitement during lessons. Meanwhile, 70% of female students' active participation is dominated by extrinsic motivation.

2. Questionnaire Results

The closed-ended questionnaire data in this study contained 20 statements given by the researcher to students to collect data. The researcher also used two types of motivation to collect data, namely intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation. The following is the result of the questionnaire data analysis presented in the form of a diagram that describes the level of motivation to learn English among male and female students.

a) Male Students

The results of the study on the motivation of male students in learning English in class XI B at SMAN 1 Jelimpo can be seen in the diagram below:

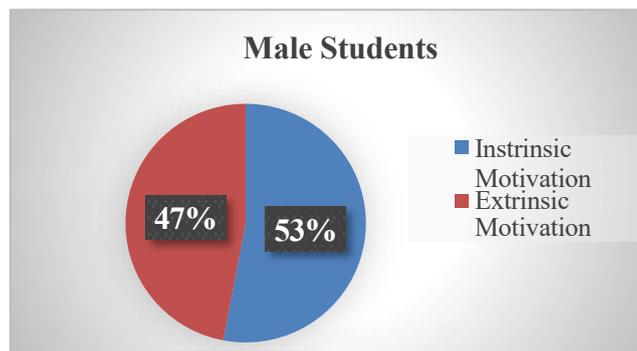


Figure 1. Percentage diagram of male students motivation

Based on Figure 1.1 in the questionnaire data above, the motivation to learn English among male students in class XI B at SMAN 1 Jelimpo is dominated by intrinsic motivation at 53%, indicating that more than half of the male students are motivated by personal satisfaction and a deep interest in the process of learning English. Most students stated that they enjoy the process of learning English, with the majority strongly agreeing and agreeing that students enjoy the process of learning English. Additionally, motivations such as the

desire to use English when traveling to English-speaking countries also play an important role in student motivation. However, extrinsic motivation among male students tends to be lower than intrinsic motivation, at 47%. This extrinsic motivation includes incentives such as academic obligations and school requirements. Meanwhile, the majority of students stated that support in the form of rewards or influence from the surrounding environment has a smaller influence among male students.

b) Female Students

The results of the study on the motivation of female students in learning English in class XI B at SMAN 1 Jelimpo can be seen in the figure below:

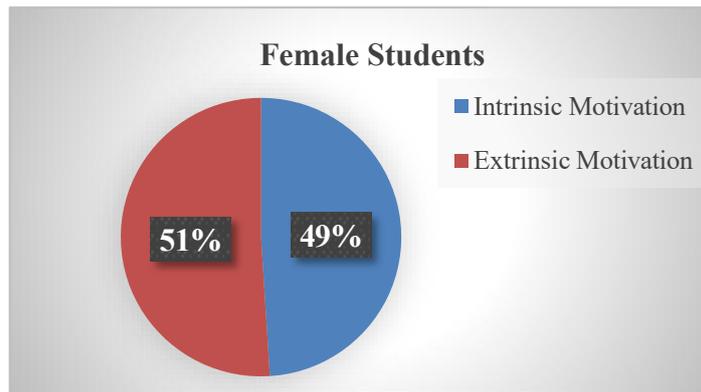


Figure 2. Percentage Diagram of Female students motivation

The results of a questionnaire survey of female students in class XI B at SMAN 1 Jelimpo show a relatively balanced pattern of motivation between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, with percentages of 49% and 51%, respectively. Extrinsic motivation is slightly more dominant, with most students learning English because the subject is mandatory at school, and social pressure from family and friends also serves as a reason for students to learn English. Additionally, female students predominantly acknowledge that they learn English to make their families proud and are inspired by friends who are already proficient in English. However, in terms of intrinsic motivation, such as the desire to master several foreign languages or to be part of an English-speaking community, female students showed a relatively lower percentage of disagreement compared to male students. This indicates that female students' motivation to learn is almost balanced between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.

3. Interview Results

Intrinsic Motivation The interview data in this study consists of 10 questions asked by the researcher to students to explore more in-depth information about their motivation for learning English. The researcher used two types of motivation as the focus of data collection, namely intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation. The following presents the results of the interview data analysis, which describe the views and experiences of male and female students regarding motivation in learning English.

a) Intrinsic Motivation

1) Male Students

The intrinsic motivation of male students in learning English is mainly driven by pride and enjoyment in the learning process itself. Based on interviews with several male students, they stated that the reason they like learning English is because mastering the language gives them personal pride. As Student A said, ***"I like learning English because mastering English is a source of pride for me."*** However, almost all male students face the same challenge, which is difficulty in understanding vocabulary. As Student B said, ***"Sometimes I like and dislike learning English because I have difficulty understanding the vocabulary."*** Some students also said that even though they did not always understand all the material, they still enjoyed learning in class. As Student A said, ***"I enjoy learning English in class because I don't have to take too many notes from the book."*** The reasons for learning English varied among male students. Some male students said that their goal in learning English was to make friends from other countries or to boost their confidence. Meanwhile, other male students have the goal of learning English to feel proud of themselves. Additionally, based on the interviews, male students spend approximately three hours per week learning English at school, despite facing challenges such as difficulty memorizing vocabulary and grammar.

2) Female Students

Based on interviews, female students' intrinsic motivation also stems from internal drives, particularly to achieve personal goals and feel confident. Some female students stated that they enjoy learning English to realize their dreams. However, some female students also stated that they dislike English lessons because they find the subject difficult to understand. Student C stated, ***"I don't really like learning English because the language is difficult to understand."*** Although English is a difficult subject to understand, some students still attend classes because it is compulsory. As mentioned by Student C, ***"I study English because it is a compulsory subject at school."*** However, some female students feel bored when studying English because of the long class duration. Additionally, the main challenges faced by female students are similar to those faced by male students, namely difficulty in memorizing vocabulary and understanding grammar. Student C mentioned, ***"My challenge is difficulty in memorizing vocabulary and using grammar,"*** while Student D added, ***"The challenge I face is difficulty in understanding vocabulary."*** Additionally, the time spent by female students learning English at school is largely the same as that of male students, which is approximately three hours per week.

b) Extrinsic Motivation

1) Male Students

Extrinsic motivation in male students in learning English tends to be influenced by appreciation and support from the surrounding environment, especially from teachers and parents. Through interviews, some male students stated that they felt happy when they received praise from teachers

and parents, as expressed by Student A, ***"I feel happy because my teachers and parents praise me when I study English at school."*** However, some students also admitted that they rarely receive praise from their parents, as mentioned by Student B, who said, ***"I feel happy when I receive praise from teachers at school, even though my parents rarely praise me when I study English."*** In terms of pressure or threat of punishment, the researcher found that the majority of male students do not feel afraid or motivated by punishment. Student A stated, ***"I am not afraid of punishment when learning English because I am interested and enjoy the learning process on my own."*** The researchers also found that the duration of male students' English learning at home varied. Some students stated that they used English for about two hours each week. Meanwhile, other male students revealed that they never used English outside of school. This shows that the role of the family environment is very important for male students' motivation to learn English.

2) Female Students

Conversely, extrinsic motivation among female students is more dominant and evident in daily life. Through interviews, the researcher found that most female students learn English to avoid punishment and get good grades, as expressed by Student C, ***"Yes, of course. I study English at school because I am afraid of getting low grades and want to avoid punishment."*** Additionally, the researcher found that praise and rewards from teachers and parents significantly influence female students' motivation to learn. Based on interviews, the researcher found that some female students enjoy learning English because teachers and parents give rewards if students can speak English in class. Furthermore, regarding the duration of English learning at home, interview results indicate that the use of English by some female students outside of school remains limited. As stated by Student C, ***"At home, I use English for one hour every week,"*** while some other female students admitted that they never speak English when outside the school environment. Additionally, most female students expressed that they enjoy learning English more when classroom facilities are supportive, such as the use of an LCD projector when teachers teach and a clean classroom environment. This indicates that extrinsic motivation is very important for female students in learning English.

DISCUSSION

Based on research data involving observation, questionnaires, and interviews with students of class XI B at SMAN 1 Jelimpo, it shows that there is a significant difference in English learning motivation based on gender between male and female students. The findings show that the motivation to learn English among male students in class XI B at SMAN 1 Jelimpo is dominated by intrinsic motivation, which is the motivation to learn that comes from within the students themselves. This finding is in contrast to Laraserra (2024) previous research, which explained that male and female students have equal intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation so that her research has no significant difference. Intrinsic motivation in male students arises from personal interest, pride, and satisfaction that students feel

when learning English, thus making students actively engage and persevere despite facing difficulties such as difficult vocabulary and grammar. Nonetheless, this finding is in line with Ahmad's (2019) research, which states that internal interest significantly affects student success, thus being a key factor in ensuring students are actively engaged and focused in the English learning process.

Observation data supports this, with 60% of male students' active participation in class driven by intrinsic motivation, such as self-learning initiatives, courage to ask questions and participate, and expressions of excitement during lessons. While the remaining 40% comes from extrinsic motivation, namely encouragement from the surrounding environment, such as support and praise from teachers or parents. The questionnaire data also showed the same result, with 53% of male students' motivation dominated by intrinsic motivation, indicating that most learn because of personal interest and satisfaction, not solely by external factors. However, the interview results show variations, where although intrinsic motivation plays a major role, some male students are also influenced by extrinsic motivation such as praise from teachers and parents. This indicates that extrinsic motivation serves as a reinforcer that strengthens their internal drive, making the learning process more enjoyable and meaningful.

Meanwhile, female students' motivation in learning English shows an almost balanced combination of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, although in observations and interviews, extrinsic motivation appears more dominant. This extrinsic motivation is a push from external factors such as social influence and support from parents, teachers, and peers, as well as the desire to evade punishment and get good grades. This finding is in line with Hendrajaya (2023), which highlights the important role of social support in motivating female students to learn English. Female students are not only driven by personal interests and goals but also strongly influenced by the social environment and external rewards. However, this finding differs from Silvi (2024), which reported that most female students have a dominant integrative motivation, a motivation that stems from the desire to integrate with the culture of native English speakers and as part of the students' personal identity. This difference in findings shows that the motivation to learn English in female students can be influenced by different contexts and learning environments, so regarding different types of motivation is very important to support the success of the learning process.

Observation data shows that 70% of female students' active participation is dominated by extrinsic motivation. Female students tend to be more obedient to class rules, more sensitive to environmental conditions (such as classroom cleanliness), and more motivated by the example of peers who actively speak English. However, the questionnaire data showed almost equal results of 49% intrinsic and 51% extrinsic motivation, indicating that some of them also have an internal motivation for learning, such as the desire to master a foreign language and improve their self-confidence. Unlike the interview findings that emphasized the dominance of extrinsic motivation, this data shows that intrinsic motivation is still present and contributes to the learning process of female students. Moreover, female motivation is highly responsive to external influences, including praise and the desire to avoid punishment as well as the fear of low grades, which significantly affects their passion and consistency in learning English.

Thus, this study concludes that male students' motivation to learn English is dominated by intrinsic motivation, which comes from within the students themselves in the form of curiosity, personal desire, and satisfaction in the learning process. Meanwhile, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation in female students play almost equally important roles, with the strong influence of the social environment as the main driver of extrinsic motivation. The dynamic between these two types of motivation is quite complex and is influenced by students' internal personalities as well as the social conditions around them. This is in line with Brown's (2001) theory that motivation in language learning can be divided into intrinsic motivation—motivation that comes from within students, such as curiosity and personal satisfaction—and extrinsic motivation—motivation from external factors such as rewards, values, and social support. By understanding the differences in gendered English learning motivation profiles between male and female students, educators can design more effective, relevant, and enjoyable learning strategies tailored to the needs of each group. This approach not only impacts academic achievement but also helps foster positive character traits and a sustainable passion for learning among students in English language learning.

CONCLUSION

From the discussion in the previous chapter, it is clear that students in class XI B SMAN 1 Jelimpo have different motivations for learning English based on gender between male and female students. Male students' motivation for learning is more dominated by intrinsic motivation that comes from personal interest and pride in participating in the English learning process. This motivation encourages male students to be more active in participating, take the initiative in independent learning, and remain enthusiastic despite facing difficulties such as memorizing vocabulary.

Meanwhile, female students' motivation to learn shows a balance between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. In addition to being driven by personal goals and desires, female students are greatly influenced by external factors, particularly the social environment, such as support from parents, teachers, and peers. Praise, rewards, and concerns about low grades are important factors that influence learning motivation. This makes female students more responsive to encouragement from their surroundings than male students.

This study shows that understanding the characteristics of learning motivation based on gender is very important for educators. By knowing that male students are more intrinsically motivated, teachers can develop learning strategies that emphasize strengthening students' interests and self-confidence. For female students, an approach that combines intrinsic motivation and social support in a balanced manner will be more effective in increasing their involvement and learning achievement. Thus, the implementation of learning strategies tailored to the motivational needs of each gender group is expected to improve the overall quality of English learning in class XI B at SMAN 1 Jelimpo.

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