



Exploring Gender Differences in Motivation and Interest Towards English Language Learning: A Case Study of Islamic Secondary Schools Students in Sidoarjo

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Abstract

This research studies the differences of males' and females' motivation and interest in learning English on 109 first-year students of one Islamic secondary school in Sidoarjo, East Java. It concentrates on four core points, there are intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation, individual and situational interest. By utilizing a descriptive quantitative approach with a descriptive statistical analysis, the findings reveal that the level of motivation of both groups of students is moderate to high average scores 3.4-4.2 on 5-point Likert scale. Females slightly outperformed males in intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, while males scored higher in personal and situational interest. This is consistent with Goal Orientation Theory, which clarifies that student learning motivation differs based on their learning goals (mastery vs. performance), as well as Expectancy-Value Theory, which states that engagement is shaped by the perceived value of English learning and expectations of success. The study recommends learning strategies that balance affective and instrumental aspects, as well as further studies using inferential analysis and longitudinal designs.

Keywords: English Language Learning; Gender Differences; Interest; Motivation; Islamic Secondary Schools.

Introduction

English is increasingly being used as a major lingua franca for communication, making agreements, learning, working, and using technology (Barančicová &

Zerzová, 2015). Improving the English language skills of people's resources can provide substantial advantages for nations to take part in broader possibilities and the international labor market (Poedjiastutie, Akhyar, Hidayati, & Nurul Gasmi, 2018). Within the country, English is taken to be an essential language to learn and is part of the school curriculum to help students cope with global developments (Hidayati, 2017).

One of the countries in Asia is Iran. In Iran, English has been incorporated into school and college curricula, which has attracted the attention of most people for several reasons. First, all of the current technological and scientific resources are mostly written in English, which requires a high level of English proficiency for every user. Second, the rise of the information age and the use of an efficient Internet has made learning English a priority. Third, the acquisition of English allows for easier cultural exchange between nations, which includes the proposal for a dialogue between various peoples (Akbari, 2015).

The discussion of Iran here serves as a comparative perspective, exposing how predominantly Muslim, non-English-speaking countries integrate English into their education systems. It is also instructive to bring on board Indonesia. Indonesia can be compared with the taught example in terms of the social and religious factors, but it has peculiar educational challenges. This also indicates the importance of teaching English in Islamic schools. The motivational evidence cannot be doubted.

A brief visit to Iran provides an interesting comparison: like Indonesia, Iran is a Muslim dominated country with an English system of education. There are also some cultural and curriculum problems in Indonesia and Iran. This highlights the importance of motivation as a concept that needs to be understood by the Islamic schools in Indonesia. Beyond that, curriculum policy in Indonesia has changed several times (Setiawan & Suwandi, 2022). In the seven decades since independence, Indonesia has made eleven changes to the secondary school curriculum, even though the curriculum has always existed and been implemented, 1947, 1964, 1968, 1973, 1975, 1984, 1994, 1997, 2004, 2006, and 2013.

However, these curricula have fallen short in increasing the English proficiency of the population (Poedjiastutie et al., 2018). In 2017, the English Proficiency Index (EPI) determined that the level of English proficiency in Indonesia is relatively low compared to other Asian countries. A total of 80 countries were evaluated, with Indonesia ranking 39th, below Singapore, Malaysia, and Vietnam. According to this ranking, Indonesia is considered to have a relatively low proficiency in English compared to Asian countries including Vietnam and Thailand (Poedjiastutie et al., 2018).

In secondary school, many of the students still struggle to acquire their English proficiency because they often face problems such as a lack of practical experience in using the language, a lack of confidence, and varying levels of interest and motivation in learning it (Romero, Cortezano, Manaig, Yazon, & Tesoro, 2023).

Motivation and interest are seen as the most important factors among the various factors that can influence how students learn English (Technological University, Sagaing, Myanmar & Win, 2018). Motivation is understood as “the process that initiates and maintains some kind of purpose-directed activity.” It addresses the following concerns: motivation is seen as a process; it focuses on goals; and it relates to both the initiation and continuation of goal-directed activity (Cook & Artino, 2016).

Motivation is the inner drive that pushes someone to take action to pursue personal or academic goals (Lamb, Csizér, Henry, & Ryan, 2019). This reflects how much effort students are able to put into their studies. Generally, motivation can be derived from the inside, such as enjoying the process of learning, or it may be coming from the outside, such as being encouraged by rewards or pressure (Ryan, 1999). Motivation can be practically divided into two main forms: intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation (Naz, Shah, & Qayum, 2020).

Intrinsic motivation is linked to the inner drive behind behavior, namely desire or passion. In fact, a person who is intrinsically motivated does something because of their natural interest in it, in order to reach self-esteem and satisfaction (Ali, Tatlah, & Saeed, 2011). Intrinsic motivation is defined as doing a certain job, or action, or other activities for one's self-fulfillment instead of for the purpose of gaining recognition from others (Xie, Debacker, & Ferguson, 2006). In contrast, extrinsic motivation stems out of factors like the expectations and pressure of family, the educational environment and teachers, and responsibilities at work (Naz et al., 2020).

A person who is extrinsically motivated occurs when they participate in a particular activity with the goal of achieving a desired outcome, which may include receiving gifts, praise, or avoiding certain consequences (Schunk, Pintrich, & Meece, 2014). Extrinsic motivation is highlighted by external factors including good marks, gifts, a bright and promising career, parents' consent, and acknowledgement from other individuals (Naz et al., 2020). Interest is described as “a character-like preference for activities, the circumstances in which they occur, or the results related to the favorable activity” that leads individuals to specific circumstances and facilitates purposeful behaviors inside the circumstances (Su & Rounds, 2015).

On the other hand, the terminology “interest” may represent two different experiences (although they often occur simultaneously): A temporary exposure to an object that captivates you, and a more long-lasting feeling that the item is delightful and deserve further exploration (Harackiewicz, Smith, & Priniski, 2016). It may be preferred that interest helps them keep learning for a long time. Various theorists outlined the existence of interest in two fields: individual interest, which represents a long-lasting tendency to return to a specific activity over time, and situational interest, which describes engagement that occurs in a certain situation (Harackiewicz, Barron, Tauer, Carter, & Elliot, 2000).

Motivation and interest, however, do not operate independently. Demographic

and sociocultural factors are often key determinants, with gender being one of the most influential. Gender differences influence students' views on English language learning tasks, their motivation, and their participation in English-related activities. To illustrate, the male and female students are likely to have varying learning orientations, emotional reactions, and kinds of stimuli that prompt their interests towards learning.

The ability to correlate gender and motivation and interest is very important particularly in the sphere of education where cultural and religious norms play a great role. This view allows us to see the complexity of the learning environment that is determined by profound and complicated factors. The past study has pointed out how important motivation and interest are to achieving real success in language learning. When these important motivators are lacking, students frequently struggle to maintain their dedication, which delays their development and results in less positive outcomes anytime they try to learn grammar, vocabulary, and conversational skills.

Essentially, these factors increase the motivation required to overcome obstacles and make the process more pleasurable and fulfilling (Fadlalla, 2017). Despite this, not much research has looked at how some of the elements vary by gender, especially when it comes to Islamic secondary education. Students' learning practices, attitudes, and involvement may be influenced by their gender, which is influenced by societal and cultural values (Butler, 1999; Gambier & Van Doorslaer, 2010).

Indeed, to research, male students have various kinds of interest and attitude toward English, while female students regularly demonstrate higher levels of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (Meece, Glienke, & Burg, 2006; Boggiano, Main, & Katz, 1991). A small number of studies have concentrated on Islamic secondary schools, despite the fact that several have looked at motivation and interest in both genders. Learners' attitudes toward English may be influenced by religion and cultural values in many ways.

Islamic schools combine general education with moral and religious instruction in a unique way. Student motivation may be greatly impacted by this integration. The possible influence of interest and motivation on gender provides us with important information for making English language instruction more useful and approachable for a larger group of people. The study intends to investigate the differences in male and female students' motivation and interest in learning English at an Islamic high school in Sidoarjo in order to close this gap.

It focuses on four main areas: situational interest, individual interest, extrinsic incentive, and intrinsic motivation. The central query driving this research is: how do male and female students differ in their motivation and interest in learning English in the context of Islamic secondary schools?

Method

This study employed a quantitative survey approach with the goal of determining how gender influences students' motivation and excitement for learning English. The study group consisted of all 109 first-year students 42 boys and 67 girls from a single Islamic high school in Sidoarjo, East Java, Indonesia. Complete representation was ensured by including every student in the target group in the study through the use of total sampling. There is no chance of selection bias because the unequal distribution of boys and girls merely represents the institution's actual enrollment numbers.

Between the ages of 15 and 16, these individuals were just starting their secondary education in Islam and met the requirements for early high school curricula by having beginner to lower intermediate English proficiency. An online survey with 20 items on a five-point Likert scale (1 being strongly disagree and 5 being strongly agree) was used to collect the data. This questionnaire was adapted from Schiefele's (1991) Interest Inventory and Gardner's (1985) Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB), with some minor contextual changes for the Islamic educational context (Gardner, 1985; Schiefele, 1991). Four distinct constructs are measured by this questionnaire:

- Intrinsic Motivation (Items 1–5): Personal enjoyment and fulfillment in learning English.
- Extrinsic Motivation (Items 6-10): An external reward like scores or approval (Deci & Ryan, 2000).
- Individual Interest (11-15): Long-term individual interest in English language activities.
- Situational Interest (16-20): Temporary interest provoked by the context or activities in the classroom (Hidi & Renninger, 2006).

Two English education lecturers and one English teacher have evaluated this instrument to ascertain its face validity and content validity. To determine its reliability, a pilot study involving 25 pupils from an alternative Islamic school was conducted. With a Cronbach's alpha score of 0.87, the instruments we employed are clearly reliable and consistent with one another. This type of reliability gives us trust in the data we gathered because it indicates that the measurements are consistent. All things considered, it's a clear indication that the sensors are measuring what they should without being tainted by a lot of unrelated noise (George & Mallery, 2016). Students had one day to return the survey, which was made available on Google Forms in the class WhatsApp group. As needed by ethical research standards, the students' and their English teachers' informed consent was obtained, and their participation was entirely voluntary (L. Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2002).

Data analysis was performed using Microsoft Excel. Descriptive statistical analysis was accomplished by (1) calculating the frequency and percentage of responses for each item, (2) converting categorical responses into numerical

values, (3) calculating the mean score for each construct, and (4) comparing the mean scores between males and females to identify patterns and differences based on gender. The study was purely descriptive. In order to furnish additional proof of the observed gender differences, post-hoc independent t-tests (with Welch's correction if needed) and effect size estimates (Cohen's d) were applied. The purpose of this additional analysis was to decide whether the observed mean differences were statistically significant and to give a practical estimate of their magnitude. The sample size (N = 109) was found to be adequate according to Cohen's power analysis guidelines, which recommend at minimum 102 participants are needed to reveal a moderate effect size (d = 0.5) with 0.80 power at $\alpha = 0.05$ (J. Cohen, 2016).

A descriptive quantitative approach was chosen because it is capable of accurately presenting large amounts of data through clear numerical indicators, as well as allowing direct comparisons between levels of motivation and interest based on gender (Ary, Jacobs, Irvine, & Walker, 2019). Nonetheless, this study admits that it has limitations due to being conducted in an Islamic school, which probably limits the generalization of the findings to a broader educational context. It is recommended that future studies utilize several schools or mixed-method designs to acquire deeper insights into gender-based motivation patterns among English language learners.

Results

In addition to descriptive statistics, an independent sample t-test was conducted to determine whether the observed gender differences in motivation and interest were statistically significant. Tables 1–5 present descriptive results for each dimension and an overall summary, while the t-test results show that all mean differences are not statistically significant (all $p > 0.05$). The effect sizes are small (Cohen's $d < 0.2$), indicating negligible practical differences. Detailed results are presented below.

Intrinsic Motivation of Male and Female Students in English Language Learning

The findings of the quantitative descriptive analysis of the level of motivation and interest in learning English surrounded by secondary school students in Islamic secondary school Sidoarjo based on gender are presented in this section. The analysis was conducted using descriptive statistics, which calculated the mean, standard deviation (SD), minimum value (Min), and maximum value (Max) for each category: Intrinsic Motivation, Extrinsic Motivation, Individual Interest, and Situational Interest. The following explanation is presented in four main sections according to category, each accompanied by tables and interpretive descriptions.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistic of Intrinsic Motivation in Male dan Female Students

Gender	Mean	Standard Deviation (SD)	Minimum	Maximum	Number of Respondents
Female	4.04	0.71	1.00	5.00	67
Male	3.96	0.71	2.33	5.00	42

The average score on the Intrinsic Motivation dimension was relatively high (≥ 4) in both gender groups, indicating that students generally enjoy learning English because of internal satisfaction and curiosity. Female students obtained slightly higher scores ($M = 4.04, SD = 0.71$) over male students ($M = 3.96, SD = 0.71$), with an average difference of 0.08, indicating an insignificant effect size (Cohen's $d \approx 0.11$). This evidence indicates that both have strong intrinsic motivation, even though the difference between them is not statistically significant.

The male and female groups have almost the same amount of intrinsic drive, as further supported by the independent samples t-test results, which indicate that the difference is not statistically significant ($t(107) = 0.57, p = 0.568, 95\% CI [-0.20, 0.36]$). However, among female students, the lowest score was 1.00, which was below the (2.33) minimum for males, suggesting a handful of girls had pretty low internal drive to learn. In any case, the majority of the female participants showed a high level of intrinsic motivation, as seen by their average score of about 4.00. Conversely, both boys and girls achieved the highest score of 5.00, indicating that many children truly like the process and find learning English to be a great thrill.

In terms of interpretation, this small difference in the averages could be interpreted as indicating that girls typically enjoy learning more, driven by internal motivations such as a sense of fulfillment, pride in their achievements, or simply a sincere love for English. On the opposite end of the absence of statistical significance suggests that gender has no bearing on pupils' internal motivation in Islamic high schools.

Extrinsic Motivation of Male and Female Students in English Language Learning

The analysis of Extrinsic Motivation dimensions is illustrated in the following table.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistic of Extrinsic Motivation in Male dan Female Students

Gender	Mean	Standard Deviation (SD)	Minimum	Maximum	Number of Respondents
Female	3.99	0.57	2.00	5.00	67
Male	3.89	0.62	2.43	5.00	42

Interestingly, the extrinsic drive of both boys and girls was high, and it focused on the external rewards of the form of high grades, teacher recognition, and preparation for future opportunity. Their means were almost 4.0 and this

shows the real effect of external rewards and validation on the process of learning the English language. Girls scored marginally higher with a mean score of 3.99 and a standard deviation of 0.57 showing that they are more apt to support the push they have been given by outside forces towards similar types of goals. The scores of men, on the contrary, were more fluctuated (mean of 3.89, standard deviation of 0.62) indicating that they do not view the practical value of learning English in the same way.

Practically, the difference in means is insignificant (0.10), although the independent t-test results did not reveal a statistically significant difference in means of the average scores between the girls and boys ($t(107) = 0.85, p = 0.401, 95\% \text{ CI } [-0.14, 0.33]$). To put it another way, despite the small difference in the numbers, male and female students show about the same level of extrinsic motivation for studying English.

Studies demonstrate that students of both sexes are significantly impacted by outside factors such as social expectations, academic success, and social acceptance. Boys have a greater diversity of perspectives when it comes to recognizing such external incentives and recognitions, whereas girls tend to have a more consistent view of why learning English is important for real-life applications. The absence of statistically significant differences further supports the idea that extrinsic motivation is formed more by situational and institutional factors than by gender itself in the context of this Islamic secondary school.

Individual Interest of Male and Female Students in English Language Learning

In terms of Individual Interest, the average score for men was slightly higher than that for women. This can be seen in the table below.

Table 3. Descriptive Statistic of Individual Interest in Male dan Female Students

Gender	Mean	Standard Deviation (SD)	Minimum	Maximum	Number of Respondents
Female	3.43	0.70	1.20	5.00	67
Male	3.56	0.74	2.60	5.00	42

Male students responded with slightly higher personal interest ($M = 3.56, SD = 0.74$) than their female counterparts ($M = 3.43, SD = 0.70$). A difference of 0.13 points (Cohen's $d \approx -0.18$) indicates a small effect, suggesting that males tend to be more personally involved in English-related activities such as reading texts, listening to music, or watching movies in English. Nonetheless, the outcome of the independent sample t-test indicates that the difference is not significant ($t(107) = -0.91, p = 0.365, 95\% \text{ CI} = -0.41 \text{ } 0.15$), which proves that the small difference in the mean scores are not significant.

The personal excitement toward English was very low among several female students, and their minimum score of 1.20 points was bigger, which meant that the

group is more diverse. It could be that they have had disparate experiences in the learning the language or they have had less exposure to the language. Generally, it seems that the level of personal interests in English among men is more constant, and the interest of females is more diversified, as it depends on their local conditions and their personal experience in life.

According to the research, a person's level of interest in learning English is not consistently influenced by their gender. Rather, factors including their level of exposure to English-language content, whether they have opportunities for enjoyable and engaging learning, and their own motivation appear to be far more important. Additionally, the lack of significant variations in the statistics supports the notion that men and women can develop quite comparable degrees of personal passion for learning the language if they are given the same learning chances and setups.

Situational Interest of Male and Female Students in English Language Learning

The situational interest dimension also demonstrates a positive tendency in this table.

Table 4. Descriptive Statistic of Situational Interest in Male dan Female Students

Gender	Mean	Standard Deviation (SD)	Minimum	Maximum	Number of Respondents
Female	3.51	0.75	1.00	5.00	67
Male	3.60	0.76	2.50	5.00	42

In general, the situational interest level of male students was slightly greater than that of female students (mean of 3.60 with a standard deviation of 0.76 against mean of 3.51 with a standard deviation of 0.75). Their mean difference was 0.09, and a minor effect size is indicated by a Cohen's *d* value of about -0.12. Furthermore, the virtually comparable standard deviations of 0.75 for both groups indicate a pretty uniform spread in their involvement in the classroom.

In the opposite direction, the results of the independent samples *t*-test, which have a 95% confidence interval of [-0.39, 0.21], $t(107) = -0.60$, and $p = .547$, show that the observed disparity is not statistically significant. This simply indicates that the apparent difference between boys and girls is most likely the result of pure chance rather than anything genuine. Furthermore, the ratings of the female group ranged more widely from 1.00 to 5.00, indicating a greater range of students, some of whom were extremely enthusiastic about class material while others hardly displayed any interest at all.

In real-world situations, the little average difference indicates that pupils' situational interest is hardly influenced by gender. This attention appears to be mostly motivated by the classroom environment and student interactions rather than gender. This means that if there are engaging lectures, entertaining resources, and a friendly classroom atmosphere, both boys and girls can become

equally interested in studying English. Furthermore, the lack of significant statistical differences suggests that education design and delivery, rather than gender variables, are the primary determinants of situational interest.

Compilation of Gender Differences in Various Dimensions

Table 5. Descriptive and Inferential Summary of Gender Differences Across Motivation and Interest Dimensions

Dimensions	Female (M, SD)	Male (M, SD)	Mean Differences	Cohen's d	t(107)	p-value	Interpretation
Intrinsic Motivation	4.04 (0.71)	3.96 (0.71)	+0.08	0.11	0.72	.472	Not significant (F slightly higher)
Extrinsic Motivation	3.99 (0.57)	3.89 (0.62)	+0.10	0.16	0.85	.401	Not significant (F slightly higher)
Individual Interest	3.43 (0.70)	3.56 (0.74)	-0.13	0.18	-0.91	.365	Not significant (M slightly higher)
Situational Interest	3.51 (0.75)	3.60 (0.76)	-0.09	0.12	-0.60	.547	Not significant (F slightly higher)

The descriptive statistics for the four main categories of interest and motivation are broken down in Table 5. Overall, male students had significantly higher averages for situational and individual interest, while female students scored slightly higher for intrinsic and extrinsic drive. When paired with Cohen's d values below 0.20, the mean differences, which varied from 0.08 to 0.13, indicate extremely tiny impact sizes. Furthermore, no statistically significant gaps were found in the inferential statistics (all $p > 0.05$), indicating that gender has no bearing on students' motivation or interest in learning English. This argues the idea that gender-based differences are more descriptive rather than substantive. Finally, the optimistic expectations and the involvement of both boys and girls are highly equal, in most cases, which indicates that neither gender, but rather the environmental and personal factors play a larger role.

In theory, these trends are consistent with Goal Orientation Theory that

assumes that, in too many cases, girls tend to pursue the objectives of mastery since they view education as a tool of self-development and inner satisfaction. Boys, in turn, seem to be more observant of the surrounding and activities that they are engaged in and this is in line with Interest Theory. This implies that their interaction can be instigated by such factors as fun activities in classrooms or during competitive conditions. Furthermore, the findings support Expectancy Theory by demonstrating that children's motivation and excitement stem from their perception of their chances of success and their level of task value factors that transcend gender. It is wiser to see these as broad trends rather than sharp divisions because of the small impact sizes and the lack of noticeable variances.

In essence, while some gender-related trends are evident in the data, they do not, in fact, represent statistically significant differences. This shows that both male and female students in Islamic secondary schools have similar motivational orientations in learning English. Future research could expand on this by involving larger and more diverse samples or by using mixed methods to explore the qualitative explanations behind these subtle patterns (Pallant, 2020).

Results of Independent-Samples t-Test by Gender

Table 6. Results of Independent-Samples t-Test by Gender

Dimensions	t(df)	p-value	Mean Differences	95% CI for Diff.	Cohen's d	Interpretation
Intrinsic Motivation	0.57 (107)	.568	+0.08	[-0.20, 0.36]	0.11	Not significant
Extrinsic Motivation	0.85 (107)	.401	+0.10	[-0.14, 0.33]	0.17	Not significant
Individual Interest	-0.91 (107)	.365	-0.13	[-0.41, 0.15]	-0.18	Not significant
Situational Interest	-0.60 (107)	.547	-0.09	[-0.39, 0.21]	-0.12	Not significant

Table 6 displays the results of the independent sample t-test conducted to determine whether there are significant differences between male and female students in terms of motivation and interest as measured. As can be seen in the table, no comparisons based on gender produced statistically significant results (all $p > 0.05$). The mean differences between dimensions are small, ranging from -0.13 to +0.10, and the corresponding 95% confidence intervals all include zero, further confirming the absence of a meaningful gender effect.

For intrinsic motivation, the difference between female students ($M = 4.04$) and male students ($M = 3.96$) was very small, $t(107) = 0.57$, $p = 0.568$, 95% CI [-0.20, 0.36], with a very small effect size (Cohen's $d = 0.11$). Similarly, extrinsic motivation did not show a statistically significant difference, $t(107) = 0.85$, $p = 0.401$, 95% CI [-0.14, 0.33], $d = 0.17$, indicating that both genders are equally

motivated by external incentives such as grades or recognition. In the meantime, individual interest also turned out to be not significant, $t(107) = -0.91$, $p = 0.365$, 95% CI [-0.41, 0.15], $d = -0.18$, showing that male and female students had comparable levels of personal interest in activities related to English.

The general tendency of non-significant p-values and small effect sizes is a strong indication that gender does not affect the motivation and interest of students in Islamic secondary schools significantly. This means that educationally speaking, boys and girls will react to such issues as the classroom set up, teaching methods, and inspiring influences in virtually the same ways. These findings coincide with the Expectancy-Value Theory, on the one hand, which states that the level of hard work and engagement of students depends on the anticipated success and the degree to which they themselves value the school activity, and the Goal Orientation Theory, which sees the importance of learning goals and personal perceptions of their own competence as more important, than gender.

Overall, Table 6's results indicate that the gender disparities we saw were not statistically significant, but rather more surface-level. This illustrates why, in order to boost motivation and interest in learning English, we should focus on creating a positive learning atmosphere, carefully organizing tasks, and taking into account each student's individual goals rather than making assumptions based on gender.

Discussion

Intrinsic Motivation of Male and Female Students in English Language Learning

Students of each gender exhibit a generally good tendency when looking at the average scores for intrinsic drive in this data, with girls outperforming boys by a small margin at 4.04 versus 3.96. This slight variation indicates that the majority of students are feeling well about learning English, including enjoying themselves, taking on challenges, and finding fulfillment, even though a few girls reported very low levels. These findings align with earlier study that indicated female students' motivation to learn foreign languages is more flexible and emotionally invested (Oga-Baldwin & Fryer, 2020; Meece & Holt, 1993). In a similar vein, Deci and Ryan's theory that intrinsic motivation keeps pupils motivated and concentrated (Ryan, 1999) was supported by Naz and colleagues' (2020) findings that girls generally perform better than boys in language-related issues. Surprisingly, our study only summarized the findings and did not look into the potential causes of these tendencies, such as teacher biases or cultural expectations. Therefore, even though girls appeared to acquire English more frequently, this should be seen as a correlation rather than a direct causation. Researchers may later use statistical analysis or in-depth conversations with students to better understand these issues.

Extrinsic Motivation of Male and Female Students in English Language Learning

Both groups have quite high averages considering the extrinsic motivation statistics, with boys averaging 3.89 and girls averaging 3.99 and the results of girls having a lower standard deviation. This trend is the indication of pragmatic motivators, like the need to achieve high grades, future job opportunities, or be recognized by the educators as a significant contributor, especially among female students. It aligns with the definition of extrinsic motivation offered by Schunk, Pintrich and Meece (2014) according to which the involvement into an activity is driven by such practical factors as rewards or recognition (Schunk et al., 2014). But we should be careful in ascribing homogeneity to the ratings of the females. It does not imply that all people are equally motivated; however, it demonstrates that the statistical dispersion is smaller, or standard deviation is lesser. This explicitness helps us to avoid making unnecessary generalizations and preserve the factuality of our statistical inferences (Field, 2024).

According to Goal Orientation Theory, boys tend to be more performance-oriented, i.e. willing to compete with others and accept external praise but girls tend to use the mastery approach, i.e. willing to develop themselves and their learning (Ames, 1992; Dweck and Leggett, 1988). Similarly, according to Expectancy-Value Theory, motivation is fueled by an individual's personal value for the activity (value) and their belief in their chances of success (expectancy) (Eccles & Wigfield, 2002). Female students' persistent trend of stronger intrinsic and extrinsic motivation may be due to their increased sense of task value, particularly when they view English as a means of establishing global connections and a springboard for professional achievement.

Individual Interest of Male and Female Students in English Language Learning

In the field of personal interest, the study's male participants scored slightly higher on average (3.56) and had a better lowest score (2.60%) than the female participants (1.20%). This suggests that most of the male participants are really excited about English-related activities, such dancing to music, viewing movies in one sitting, or playing video games. However, it's important to keep in mind that our poll did not particularly examine their media consumption. Consequently, projecting the difference to media consumption is simply a hypothesis that has to be researched further through discussions or a mixture of research methods. Although we did not specifically ask about it in the questionnaires, this opinion also hinges on the idea that the more one gets immersed in the English-language media, the more they will be interested. Therefore, it should be considered as a possible incentive, which is evidenced by previous studies that claimed that a lifetime affection towards the language can be developed due to the constant exposure to the relevant English-language media (Hidi and Renninger, 2006; Hajar Mat Zin et al., 2023)

It is imperative to note the way through which a gender difference in media access and recreational activities can have contributed to these results. Taking into

account the male students they are freer to dive into the world of online resources, but female students could be restrained by their family or social responsibilities that could interrupt their personal time (Subekti and Sinaga, 2024). With this consideration, future research should include accurate approaches on how to measure the media exposure to enable firm evidence supporting this theory.

Situational Interest of Male and Female Students in English Language Learning

Although men tended to score slightly higher on average ($M = 3.60$) and even had a higher floor with their lowest scores ($Min = 2.50$), the study demonstrated that situational interest remained rather constant across genders. On the flip side, the girls showed a wider spread in their results ($Min = 1.00$ to $Max = 5.00$), which points to more ups and downs in how engaged they got depending on what was happening in the classroom. As suggested by Hagenauer, Lazarides, and Järvenoja (2024), situational interest arises from temporary but powerful triggers such as uniqueness, challenge, or engaging teaching activities that can temporarily increase focus and emotional engagement (Hagenauer, Lazarides, & Järvenoja, 2024).

Learning designs that trigger situational interest, which include project-based assignments, authentic materials, or culturally relevant content, have been shown to increase student engagement in the classroom (Guo & Fryer, 2025). However, because this study uses descriptive data, such explanations remain speculative and do not prove a causal relationship between learning activities and situational interest (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). In addition, the composition of participants (63% female, 37% male) should be admitted as a methodological limitation. Gender imbalance may slightly affect the overall average towards a female bias. To determine whether these gender disparities hold true in a broader and more diverse context, more study with a balanced sample is required.

These discoveries are consistent with Goal Orientation Theory, which distinguishes between performance-oriented and mastery-oriented goals (Ames, 1992; Dweck & Leggett, 1988). Female students' slightly higher levels of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation may indicate that they are more inclined toward a mastery approach, which places more of a focus on learning advancement and skill development. Nonetheless, the fact that male students are slightly more attentive could possibly signify that they are performance oriented, which is often triggered by the prevailing circumstances or activities.

Then, the results of this paper are consistent with the Expectancy-Value Theory which assumes that motivation of learners depends on the perception of their chances of success and the importance of the activities they involve (Eccles and Wigfield, 2002). Apparently, such factors as a healthy school atmosphere, support of instructors, practical work that had real sense is more significant than gender solely since boys and girls showed rather similar scores in terms of motivation and interest. In general, these findings allow concluding that motivation

to learn a language is not an inherent trait of a male or female, but a context-specific and dynamic process.

Conclusion

The paper will discuss 109 students in a high school based in the Islamic world in Sidoarjo, Indonesia to determine the influence of gender on their enthusiasm and motivation to learn English. Based on a descriptive approach, the findings suggest that although there was a slight difference in favor of boys in the personal curiosity and the interest created by specific events, girls usually had a slight more external stimulus and internal motivation to learn the language. These differences, all said and done, imply that there are some very small differences in this context which are brought out more by the instructional strategies and the immediate environment rather than as a result of gender alone.

Suggestions and Recommendations

Based on these results, the teachers are to support the students with a balanced motivation which would help to develop both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation of students and their learning as a whole. With the help of interactive and real-life-based assignments, teachers may arrange interesting and pleasant English classes. In some cases, interactive projects, technology-enhanced instruction and culturally relevant materials may attract the attention of the students to some situation and keep them attentive in the long run. Teachers, especially in Islamic schools, should consider using cultural and ethical values in their teaching of English because this would help in enhancing the general growth of the students as well as their grades.

In order to find out properly whether the observed tendencies can be maintained under more detailed scrutiny, it is recommended that further studies should not rely on descriptive but employ such statistical tools as t-tests or ANOVA. Such student interviews or seeing them in the classroom would be more revealing of the cultural and mental influences affecting their enthusiasm, so including different techniques would be a good idea. Increasing the number of samples of more Islamic or state-run schools will give more applicability to the findings and it will be possible to make insightful comparisons. Moreover, considering such factors as their mastery of the English language, how the teachers provide feedback, or what financial situation their family is may assist in explaining the gender differences in their motivations.

In the long term, offering the particular data on the condition of Islamic school gives an area that is yet to be exhausted in motivation research a deeper insight into the role of gender in the language instruction. The findings provide sufficient evidence that motivational strategies based on the principles of true inclusivity, the rejection of old age gender stereotypes, and the provision of equal opportunity to all students to excel in English classes are required.

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Appendices

Questionnaire Items Based on AMTB and Schiefele (1991)

Section 1: Intrinsic Motivation

1. Learning English always lights me up with this genuine joy and a deep sense of satisfaction.
2. I see learning English as a fun but challenging test that really makes my brain work hard.
3. I experience satisfaction whenever I can comprehend English texts or conversations.
4. I feel confident when speaking English in front of my classmates.
5. I am genuinely motivated to keep improving my English proficiency.

Section 2: Extrinsic Motivation

1. I study English to achieve satisfying grades in my classes.
2. I believe that being proficient in English will support my future career opportunities.
3. I learn English to fulfill my teachers' or parents' expectations.
4. I study English because it is a compulsory subject.
5. I am learning English to communicate with people from other countries.

Section 3: Individual Interest

1. I like reading English texts or watching English videos in my free time.
2. I enjoy listening to English songs or watching English movies.
3. I often look for extra English learning materials on my own.
4. I am interested in writing short stories or essays in English.
5. I like practicing speaking English outside of class.

Section 4: Situational Interest

1. I enjoy English lessons when the teacher uses interesting activities.
2. Group activities make English class more engaging for me.
3. I pay more attention when the topics are related to my life.
4. I get excited when the teacher uses games or videos in class.
5. I enjoy English lessons when my classmates are actively participating.