

## **THE DIFFERENCES AMONG BOARDING SCHOOL AND NON-BOARDING SCHOOL STUDENTS' MOTIVATION IN EFL LEARNING**

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### ***ABSTRACT***

This study aimed to compare the motivation in learning English between boarding and non-boarding school students. It was focus on two types of motivation, namely intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation. This study was qualitative in nature with data collection techniques in the form of Likert scale questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. The participants consisted of 30 students, 15 boarding school students and 15 non-boarding school students respectively at the junior high school level. The finding showed that boarding school students tended to have higher levels of intrinsic motivation, especially in terms of interest and enjoyment in learning English. In contrast, non-boarding school students were more influenced by extrinsic factors such as encouragement from parents and teachers. Furthermore, boarding students felt the boarding environment supported discipline and learning focus, while non-boarding students felt more influence from family and home environment. Thus, different learning environments between boarding and non-boarding schools had an influence on the tendency of students' types of learning motivation in English; boarding students were more driven by intrinsic motivation, while non-boarding students were more affected by extrinsic factors.

**Keywords:** Motivation, EFL Learning, Boarding School, Non-Boarding School, Laerning Environment

### **1. Introduction**

English, as an international language, is widely spoken, read, and understood throughout the world. It serves not only as a global means of communication but also as a key component in international education, technology, and professional development (Getie, 2020). In countries where English is taught as a Foreign Language (EFL), learners often have limited access to natural English-speaking environments, which reduces their engagement and hinders the development of communicative competence (Zhang et al., 2023). As a result, motivation has become a critical factor in determining the success of English language acquisition.

Motivation plays a central role in the learning process, particularly in language education, as it influences how much effort students invest, how long they persist, and how effectively they reach their learning goals. In the context of EFL, motivation is shaped by a variety of internal and

external factors. Internally, students may be driven by interest, enjoyment, or a sense of personal achievement. Externally, they may be influenced by academic grades, parental expectations, or future career aspirations (Nevisi et al., 2022; Ryan & Deci, 2020). Recognizing the importance of these elements, Wang et al. (2022) emphasized the need to examine how different learning conditions affect students' motivation in order to improve English teaching practices.

One major factor that influences motivation is the learning environment, which encompasses psychological, social, cultural, and physical aspects (Rusticus et al., 2023). Elements such as classroom atmosphere, peer interaction, and teacher support play a significant role in fostering positive attitudes and academic engagement (Getie, 2020; Ye, 2024). A well-structured and emotionally supportive environment helps students stay focused and increases their intrinsic motivation to learn. The presence or absence of such conditions may significantly influence students' persistence in acquiring a foreign language.

An important dimension of learning environment is the distinction between boarding and non-boarding school settings. Boarding schools provide an integrated academic and residential environment where students live, study, and interact in a structured daily routine. Previous research suggested that these settings foster consistent learning habits, stronger teacher-student relationships, and higher levels of academic engagement (Martin et al., 2021; Zhong, 2024). On the other hand, non-boarding students return home after school, maintaining daily contact with their families. This can provide emotional support, greater time flexibility, and a sense of autonomy in learning (Liu et al., 2024; Li et al., 2023). Each school model presents distinct advantages that may shape students' learning motivation in different ways.

Although many studies have explored motivation in EFL learning, few have directly compared the experiences of boarding and non-boarding students who study under the same academic program but live in different environments. This has created a research gap, particularly in understanding how structural differences in students' daily lives interact with internal motivational factors. Most existing research tends to examine either the school type or motivational aspects in isolation, without considering how both elements function together in a shared educational context.

This study aimed to address this gap by investigating the types of motivation both intrinsic and extrinsic among boarding and non-boarding junior high school students in learning English. The research was conducted at a school that integrates both student types within the same academic setting, allowing for a fair comparison of how their living environments influence learning motivation. Specifically, this study examined what motivates these students to learn English, and how psychological, social, cultural, and physical aspects of their environment shape their engagement and attitudes.

By exploring these questions, this research contributes to the theoretical understanding of how school environments affect EFL motivation and offers practical implications for educators and policymakers. The findings are expected to inform future improvements in language learning strategies, especially in educational institutions that accommodate boarding and non-boarding systems.

## **2. Methodology**

This section described the procedures used to conduct the research, including the research design, participants, instruments, data collection procedures, and data analysis techniques.

### **2.1 Research Design**

This research employed a qualitative case study design to explore differences in motivation between boarding and non-boarding students in learning English. The case study approach allowed the researcher to investigate the phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context (Lester et al., 2020). Data were collected through questionnaires and semi-structured interviews to gain a comprehensive understanding of both intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors influencing students' engagement in English learning. The study particularly focused on how the psychological, social, cultural, and physical dimensions of the school environment shaped students' motivation.

### **2.2 Participants**

The participants in this study were eighth-grade students (equivalent to second grade of junior high school) at SMP Negeri Unggul Sigli, consisting of two categories: boarding and non-boarding students. The total sample included 30 students, comprising 15 boarding students and 15 non-boarding students.

The participants were selected using purposive sampling, based on criteria such as grade level and willingness to participate in the study. The number of students in each category was equalized to allow for a balanced comparison between the two groups.

The decision to focus on eighth-grade students was based on the consideration that they had already gained experience in learning English since the seventh grade, and were therefore considered more capable of reflecting on their learning motivation.

### **2.3 Research Instruments**

Two research instruments were used: a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews.

#### **Questionnaire**

The questionnaire was designed to measure students' motivation based on intrinsic and extrinsic factors. It consisted of 30 closed-ended items based on motivation theory and adapted to the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning. Responses were measured using a five-

point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). This instrument aimed to gather quantitative data that reflected the general tendencies of students' learning motivation.

### 2.3 Interview

The interview was conducted in a semi-structured format and included 10 guided questions focusing on students' experiences, opinions, and perceptions of their learning environments. The interviews explored how factors such as peer support, teacher interaction, family involvement, school facilities, and daily routines influenced students' motivation to learn English. Each interview was recorded (with consent), transcribed, and thematically analyzed.

### 2.4 Data Collection Procedure

The data collection process was carried out in two stages:

1. **Questionnaire Distribution:** The researcher distributed printed questionnaires to the selected participants at SMPN Unggul Sigli. Students were asked to respond based on their actual experiences and feelings about learning English. Their responses were categorized and tabulated for statistical analysis.
2. **Conducting Interviews:** Interview sessions were scheduled with participants who had agreed to take part. The researcher ensured that participants understood the purpose of the interview and obtained verbal consent. Interviews were conducted in a quiet setting, recorded, and aimed at gathering qualitative insights that complemented the questionnaire data.

### 2.5 Data Analysis

#### Thematic Analysis (Interview Data)

Interview data were analyzed using the six phases of thematic analysis as proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006):

1. **Familiarizing with the Data:** This phase involved transcribing the data and immersing oneself in it to identify initial ideas.
2. **Generating Initial Codes:** Data segments were labeled with concise codes that captured their essence.
3. **Searching for Themes:** Codes were sorted and grouped into potential themes.
4. **Reviewing Themes:** The researcher checked if themes worked in relation to the coded extracts and the entire data set.
5. **Defining and Naming Themes:** Emerging patterns were refined and clearly defined.
6. **Producing the Report:** The final report synthesized all findings and included illustrative quotes.

These steps helped identify main themes such as peer support, teacher guidance, discipline routines, physical conditions, and emotional factors influencing students' intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.

## 2.6 Descriptive Statistical Analysis (Questionnaire Data)

Questionnaire data were analyzed using descriptive statistical methods, focusing on the distribution of responses for each Likert-scale item. For each item, the number of responses per category (from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree) was counted and converted into percentages. These percentages were then used to identify trends in students' motivational responses. This analysis provided a comparative overview of the motivational characteristics between boarding and non-boarding students.

## 3. Result and Discussion

In this chapter, the findings of the study were presented and discussed. The findings compared the English learning motivation of boarding and non-boarding students, categorized into extrinsic and intrinsic motivation, based on questionnaire data and supported by interview responses.

### 3.1 Findings

This study involved 30 participants, consisting of 15 boarding and 15 non-boarding students, who were selected purposively based on their living environment and involvement in English learning. Data collection was conducted using a 30-item Likert-scale questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. The questionnaire focused on two main categories: extrinsic (15 items) and intrinsic motivation (15 items).

#### 3.1.1 Extrinsic Motivation

Extrinsic motivation referred to external influences such as parental encouragement, school rewards, or peer pressure.

##### Influence Parents and Teachers

The findings showed that parental influence, such as promises of rewards for good grades or parental expectations, was not the main factor in motivating either group of students. Boarding students were less influenced by parental expectations, possibly because of their limited daily interactions, while non-boarding students showed slightly greater but still non-dominant influence. Similarly, praise from teachers or parents did not serve as a strong motivator for either group, with boarding students showing lower dependence on these external factors. Differences appeared in academic rewards and reminders from teachers.

Non-boarding students were more responsive to additional grades and teacher encouragement, whereas boarding students tended to remain neutral, indicating that such external factors had less impact on them. Overall, non-boarding students were more influenced by teacher encouragement and academic rewards, while boarding students demonstrated greater independence with lower reliance on parental or teacher influence.

### Academic Rewards and Grades

The findings showed that academic rewards, such as school recognition and incentives, played a greater role in motivating boarding students compared to non-boarding students. Boarding students were more consistently motivated by rewards and opportunities to participate in school activities such as performances or presentations, reflecting the influence of a structured school environment.

In contrast, non-boarding students were more driven by academic obligations, such as the perception that English was a compulsory subject, which functioned as their main source of motivation. Competition was not a major motivational factor for either group, although boarding students showed slightly more interest compared to non-boarding students. Overall, boarding students were more motivated by rewards, grades, and school activities, while non-boarding students were more driven by the academic obligations attached to learning English.

### Environment and Social Pressure

The findings showed that environmental and social factors influenced students' learning motivation in different ways. Boarding students were more positively influenced by peer collaboration, peer appreciation, and the use of school facilities that created a supportive learning atmosphere. Group study sessions and English-related activities also contributed, although many students remained neutral toward extracurricular activities. Importantly, fear of punishment was not a motivational factor, especially among boarding students who generally felt safer in their learning environment.

Non-boarding students also benefited from structured sessions and teacher support, but their responses were more varied. They showed lower consistency in motivation from peers or extracurricular activities, and a small number still reported experiencing pressure or fear in learning. Overall, environmental and social support played a positive role, although not a dominant factor in motivating students. Boarding students tended to be more consistently motivated by peer influence and school facilities, while non-boarding students showed more varied reactions, reflecting differences in daily routines and levels of exposure to the school environment.

### 3.1.2 Intrinsic Motivation

Intrinsic motivation came from the students' internal drive, such as interest, enjoyment, and personal desire to master English.

#### Interest in Learning English

The findings showed that both boarding and non-boarding students had a positive interest in learning English, although at different levels. Boarding students tended to enjoy the learning process more, showed greater enthusiasm in exploring English films, music, or books, and were



more active in trying to use it in daily life. They also displayed stronger curiosity outside school hours and a greater global awareness of the importance of English.

Meanwhile, non-boarding students also demonstrated positive interest, particularly in cultural aspects and structured activities, but their responses were more cautious and less intense. They were relatively less likely to show strong agreement regarding the active use of English in daily life or engagement with English-language media. Overall, although both groups considered English enjoyable and useful, boarding students demonstrated more consistent, active, and deeper interest, which was likely influenced by their more structured and immersive learning environment.

### Feeling Happy While Learning

The findings showed that both boarding and non-boarding students experienced positive emotions when learning English. Boarding students consistently showed stronger feelings of enjoyment and satisfaction, particularly when completing tasks, answering questions correctly, and facing challenges that supported self-development. The higher percentage of Strongly Agree responses reflected greater enthusiasm and confidence in the learning process.

Non-boarding students also reported positive feelings, such as enjoyment in completing assignments and learning new vocabulary, but their responses were more varied and less intense. The higher number of Neutral responses and lower percentage of Strongly Agree indicated a more moderate level of happiness compared to boarding students. Overall, both groups enjoyed learning English, but boarding students expressed deeper and more consistent happiness. This was likely influenced by their immersive learning environment and structured routines, which strengthened their confidence and sense of achievement.

### Personal Desire to be Proficient

The findings showed that both groups had the willingness to study English independently, felt pride in their achievements, and built confidence in using the language. However, boarding students consistently demonstrated stronger intrinsic motivation. They were more willing to study without being told, felt prouder when understanding English conversations, and had higher confidence when speaking or writing. In addition, most boarding students were very proud of their English skill development, which reflected greater awareness of personal achievement.

Non-boarding students also showed positive attitudes, but their responses were more moderate, with higher Neutral percentages and lower Strongly Agree responses. This indicated that although they valued English learning, their initiative, confidence, and pride were not as strong as those of boarding students. Overall, boarding students had higher personal motivation to master English. Their stronger emotional connection to progress and confidence in using English reflected a deeper level of intrinsic motivation compared to non-boarding students.

This section presents the findings from interviews with boarding and non-boarding school students regarding how learning environments influence their motivation in learning English. The analysis is organized into four main aspects: psychological, social, cultural, and physical.

#### Psychological Aspect

Both boarding and non-boarding students generally felt happy and enthusiastic when learning English. Boarding students were driven by personal goals such as studying abroad, while non-boarding students found motivation through teacher support and learning enjoyment. During assignments or exams, some students felt nervous or pressured but were still motivated by the challenge and the desire to achieve good grades. Pressure and structure helped them focus their learning.

#### Social Aspect

Support from teachers, friends, and family played a key role in boosting motivation. Boarding students received encouragement from teachers and often studied together, which enhanced enthusiasm and understanding. Friends helped and motivated one another. Family members, especially parents, also supported learning by helping with homework or encouraging participation in competitions. Similarly, non-boarding students gained motivation from social interactions at school and home, although they more frequently studied alone.

#### Cultural Aspect

School culture, such as English clubs and language rules, positively influenced student motivation. Boarding schools provided structured language use environments, including specific rules and occasional incentives for using English. These settings encouraged regular practice. Non-boarding schools offered English clubs and extra classes that helped students enjoy learning more. However, English usage outside class was not strongly enforced.

#### Physical Aspect

Learning facilities and classroom conditions impacted students' motivation. The use of multimedia tools such as projectors and English videos increased engagement and interest. Visual aids in books also helped understanding. However, noisy classrooms particularly due to disruptive peers sometimes reduced focus. Despite this, most students remained enthusiastic about learning English.

Overall, learning environments significantly influenced students' English learning motivation, with different emphases in boarding and non-boarding contexts. Psychological and social factors were particularly strong motivators, while cultural and physical conditions provided essential support for sustained enthusiasm.



## Discussion

The findings revealed clear differences in English learning motivation between boarding and non-boarding students. Boarding students tended to be more intrinsically motivated, as indicated by their neutral or negative responses to statements related to external factors such as parental encouragement, rewards, or praise. This suggests that their motivation was more internally driven. These findings align with Zhong et al. (2024), who argue that in boarding environments, student motivation is shaped not only by external influences but also by personal initiative, school education, and family background.

In contrast, non-boarding students showed a stronger tendency toward extrinsic motivation. They were more influenced by factors such as parental support, grades, and academic rewards. The data showed that most non-boarding students agreed that grades were a key reason for learning English, while boarding students considered grades important but not as the sole driver.

The social environment also shaped students' motivation differently. Boarding students benefited from a supportive learning community through daily peer interaction, teacher support, and collaborative learning. As Li et al. (2023) noted, boarding students had more opportunities to engage socially outside formal class hours, fostering emotional closeness and peer support. Conversely, non-boarding students often studied independently, which sometimes led to boredom and reduced engagement, despite continued support from family and teachers.

Interview responses also highlighted that boarding students showed higher confidence and enthusiasm, supported by school rules and routines that encouraged the daily use of English. Non-boarding students demonstrated strong enthusiasm as well, but some expressed lower confidence due to limited English exposure outside of class.

In terms of learning culture, the structured environment in boarding schools played a significant role. Boarding students were more accustomed to using English as part of school regulations, which positively impacted their task management, persistence, and engagement (Martin et al., 2021). In contrast, non-boarding students primarily used English within classroom settings, which limited their opportunities for authentic language use.

Regarding physical learning conditions, both groups found that visual media, such as videos and pictures, increased their interest in learning. While classroom distractions like noise were reported by both groups, these did not appear to significantly diminish motivation.

Overall, boarding students' motivation was predominantly shaped by internal factors and supported by a structured, collaborative environment. Meanwhile, non-boarding students relied more on external encouragement, though they still showed a positive attitude towards learning when provided with supportive conditions.

## 4. Conclusion and Suggestions

### Conclusion

This study found that boarding students tended to have higher intrinsic motivation in learning English. They were motivated by personal interest, enjoyment of the learning process, and a desire to improve their English proficiency. In contrast, non-boarding students were more influenced by extrinsic factors such as academic grades, parental expectations, and rewards. The boarding school environment provided stronger support for English learning through structured routines, peer collaboration, and language-use policies, which fostered confidence and persistence. Meanwhile, non-boarding students benefited from family support and teacher encouragement but showed more varied responses, reflecting their greater dependence on external factors.

Overall, these findings suggested that different school environments shaped students' types of motivation in distinct ways: boarding students were more consistently driven by intrinsic factors, while non-boarding students relied more on extrinsic influences.

#### Suggestions:

1. For teachers: Boarding school teachers should continue to strengthen intrinsic motivation by providing engaging activities, meaningful challenges, and opportunities for self-expression in English. For non-boarding students, teachers could provide more positive reinforcement and structured feedback to balance their reliance on extrinsic factors.
2. For schools: Boarding schools should maintain supportive routines and peer-based activities, while non-boarding schools could create more immersive learning opportunities, such as English clubs, competitions, or digital media use.
3. For parents: Parents of non-boarding students are encouraged to support their children's English learning at home through exposure to English media and consistent encouragement, while parents of boarding students may maintain motivation by recognizing and appreciating their achievements.
4. For future researchers: Further studies may expand the participant pool or apply a mixed-methods design to examine the relationship between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation more comprehensively across different school types and cultural contexts.

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