



EFL STUDENTS' ATTITUDES AND MOTIVATION TOWARDS ENGLISH: EVIDENCE FROM AN INDONESIAN ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY

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Abstract

Motivation plays an important role in shaping students' engagement with English, particularly in higher education where learners encounter diverse academic, professional, and social demands. This study examined EFL students' attitudes and motivation towards English in an Indonesian Islamic higher education context. Using a descriptive quantitative survey design, data were collected from 155 English Department students enrolled in the second, fourth, and sixth semesters at a State Islamic University in Indonesia. The instrument was an adapted version of Gardner's Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB), comprising 32 items measured on a four-point Likert scale. Descriptive statistics were used to identify students' overall motivational profile, attitudes and motivational orientations towards English, and external sources of motivation. The findings showed a generally positive but moderate level of motivation ($M = 2.91$). Students particularly demonstrated strong enjoyment of English, achievement aspirations, and perceptions of its usefulness for employment, technological development, and future goals. Among external sources, parental motivation was strongest ($M = 2.99$), followed by environmental/social motivation ($M = 2.84$) and teacher-related motivation ($M = 2.78$). The findings highlight the multidimensional and socially situated nature of EFL motivation in Indonesian Islamic higher education.

Keywords: *Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB); attitude; EFL students; English language learning; Indonesian Islamic higher education; motivation*

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INTRODUCTION

As English plays an increasingly important role in higher education (Altbach, 2016; Naka & Spahija, 2022), professional development (Ahamed, 2025; Akther, 2022), international communication (Pennycook, 2017; Rao, 2019b, 2019a), and access to knowledge (Kurniawan, 2024; Rao, 2019b, 2019a), understanding students' motivation to learn and use the language has become an important educational concern. In Indonesian Islamic higher education, English is learned alongside disciplinary, religious, and professional subjects (Kusuma, 2023; Muluk et al., 2019; Wahyudi, 2012), creating a distinctive context for language learning. Motivation, however, extends beyond students' general liking of English; it encompasses their attitudes towards the language (Gardner, 1988a; Getie, 2020), willingness to invest effort (Penk & Richter, 2017), purposes for learning (Cook & Artino Jr, 2016), and perceptions of the social and educational conditions surrounding learning (Eccles & Wigfield, 2020). Gardner's socio-educational model conceptualises attitudes and motivation as important individual-difference variables that shape learners' active involvement and participation in language learning contexts (Gardner, 1988a), while the Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB) (Gardner, 2004) provides a systematic means of examining these dimensions.

Motivation is particularly relevant in higher education as it may influence students' persistence, participation, and willingness to engage with English beyond compulsory classroom activities. Students may value English for diverse reasons, including personal interest (Mahyudi, 2019; Ulfa & Bania, 2019), future employment (Alharbi, 2022; Daqiq et al., 2024), communication with its native speakers (Getie, 2020), or expectations from significant others (Dörnyei & Al-Hoorie, 2017). Accordingly, positive attitudes towards English do not necessarily imply sustained effort or engagement. Gardner's framework highlights the relationship between attitudes,

motivational intensity, and orientations (Gardner et al., 1979), while subsequent research (Alharbi, 2022; Daqiq et al., 2024; Dörnyei & Al-Hoorie, 2017; Getie, 2020; Mahyudi, 2019; Ulfa & Bania, 2019) have demonstrated that different motivational orientations may support language learning under appropriate conditions. In Indonesian Islamic higher education, empirical studies have similarly identified motivation as a relevant factor in students' English learning (Angraeni et al., 2024; Masruddin & Al Hamdany, 2023; Nurwati & Gusnawaty, 2025), including in relation to language-learning environments and academic outcomes. Examining both the level and nature of students' motivation is therefore necessary for understanding their engagement with English.

Motivation is best conceptualised as a multidimensional construct rather than a single continuum or a simple intrinsic–extrinsic dichotomy. Gardner's (2004) framework encompasses attitudes towards the learning situation, motivational intensity, orientations, and broader attitudinal dispositions. Accordingly, students' engagement is shaped not only by their willingness to learn but also by the social and educational contexts in which learning occurs. Teachers, parents, and learning environments can influence students' perceptions of the value and attainability of English through instructional support, expectations, encouragement, interaction, and access to learning opportunities. Examining these dimensions collectively therefore provides a more comprehensive understanding of students' motivational conditions.

Nevertheless, students' motivation may vary according to their academic backgrounds, previous learning experiences, exposure to English, perceived needs, and opportunities to use the language (Dörnyei, 1998; Hromova, 2019; Saito et al., 2018; Senjahari et al., 2021). Broadly characterising students as simply motivated or unmotivated may consequently obscure meaningful differences in their attitudes, orientations, and sources of motivation. Previous research has generally reported positive attitudes and motivation among Indonesian Islamic university students (Farah, 2020; Masruddin & Al Hamdany, 2023; Ningtiyas & Rahmawati, 2024; Sulalah et al., 2026; Zulfikar et al., 2019), but findings from particular programmes or institutions cannot necessarily be generalised across different educational settings. Moreover, favourable attitudes may coexist with limited willingness to invest effort or restricted opportunities for meaningful language use. A multidimensional assessment is therefore needed to identify how different aspects of motivation are distributed within a particular student population.

Previous research provides a substantial foundation for examining these dimensions. Gardner's (1988b) socio-educational model established a social-psychological account of the role of attitudes and motivation in second-language learning, while the AMTB (Gardner, 2004) was developed to operationalise these constructs. Subsequent validation research (Al-Mubireek, 2020; Jodai et al., 2013; Peix Font, 2018; Zehner, 2026) identified broader dimensions involving integrativeness, attitudes towards the learning situation, language anxiety, and motivation. Indonesian studies (Hardianti & Murtafi'ah, 2022; Jannah & Sahiruddin, 2020; Widiarsih & Kuswandono, 2024) have extended this work by examining English-learning motivation among higher education students, including those in Islamic universities, as well as differences across online and face-to-face learning contexts (Janah & Cahyono, 2022). More recent research has explored relationships among motivation, language environment, educational background, and English learning outcomes (Fatimah et al., 2025; Nurwati & Gusnawaty, 2025; Rintaningrum et al., 2017; Senjahari et al., 2021), alongside the linguistic, cultural, and pedagogical conditions associated with English-medium instruction. Although these studies have enriched understanding of motivation in Indonesian Islamic higher education, many have focused on relationships among variables, comparisons between learning contexts, or particular instructional arrangements rather than on comprehensive descriptive profiling.

This leaves a need for a detailed account of how students' attitudes, motivational orientations, and external sources of motivation are configured within Indonesian Islamic higher education. Existing studies (Farah, 2020; Hardianti & Murtafi'ah, 2022; Jannah & Sahiruddin, 2020; Masruddin & Al Hamdany, 2023; Widiarsih & Kuswandono, 2024) may indicate generally positive motivation while providing less insight into variation across specific motivational dimensions. In particular, the combined contribution of teachers, parents, and the learning environment has received comparatively limited descriptive attention as part of an integrated motivational profile. Mapping these dimensions can complement learner-centred perspectives by showing how students' motivation is accompanied and potentially sustained by their immediate social and educational contexts. Such a profile can also provide a useful empirical baseline for subsequent comparative, explanatory, or intervention-based research.

The present study addresses this gap by examining the motivation of EFL learners in Indonesian Islamic higher education through an adapted version of Gardner's AMTB. Rather than testing causal relationships or the effectiveness of a particular intervention, it seeks to establish a descriptive profile of students' motivational conditions. This study aims to identify and describe the motivation level of EFL learners in Indonesian Islamic higher education through three related objectives. First, it identifies the overall profile of students' attitudes and motivation toward English. Second, it examines students' attitudes and motivational orientations toward learning and using English, thereby distinguishing general positivity from the particular reasons and orientations underlying engagement. Third, it explores external sources of students' motivation, particularly those associated with teachers, parents, and the learning environment. By pursuing these objectives, the study seeks to provide a multidimensional description of students' motivational conditions rather than a simplified classification of motivated and

unmotivated learners. In addition, such profiling is important as a clear understanding of existing motivational patterns provides a necessary foundation for interpreting and addressing students' learning needs.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a descriptive quantitative survey design (Bloomfield & Fisher, 2019) to examine EFL students' attitudes and motivation towards learning English. This design was appropriate as the study was intended to describe students' overall motivational profile, motivational orientations, and external sources of motivation rather than examine causal relationships. The population consisted of 515 EFL students enrolled in the second, fourth, and sixth semesters in the English Department at one of State Islamic Universities in Indonesia. Students in the eighth semester were excluded as they had completed most of their classroom-based English courses and therefore had less regular exposure to English instruction. A stratified sampling technique was used to ensure that students from each semester were represented in the sample (Singh & Masuku, 2014). The researcher selected 30% of the total population: 55 students from the second semester, 55 from the fourth semester, and 45 from the sixth semester.

A questionnaire adapted from Gardner's (2004) AMTB was employed as the primary data collection instrument because it provides an established framework for assessing learners' attitudes and motivation towards second or foreign language learning. The questionnaire used a four-point Likert scale with response options ranging from *strongly agree* to *strongly disagree*. The adapted instrument comprised 32 items, which were translated into Bahasa Indonesia to facilitate participants' comprehension and support accurate responses (see Appendix). Items 1-17 assessed attitudes and motivation towards English, items 18-22 addressed teacher-related sources of external motivation, items 23-28 examined parental motivation, and items 29-32 focused on environmental and social sources of motivation. The instrument included both positively and negatively worded items. Positively worded items were scored from 4 (*strongly agree*) to 1 (*strongly disagree*), whereas negatively worded items were reverse-coded to ensure that higher scores consistently indicated more favourable attitudes or stronger motivation. Accordingly, 11 negatively worded items (Items 3, 5, 9, 12, 14, 18, 19, 21, 22, 26, and 32) were reverse-coded prior to statistical analysis. The resulting mean scores were subsequently classified into three interpretive categories, as presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Interpretation of Mean Scores

Mean Range	Interpretation
3,01 - 4,00	High degree of Motivation
2,01 - 3,00	Moderate degree of Motivation
1,00 - 2,00	Low degree of Motivation

Before completing the questionnaire, participants were informed about the purpose of the study and the voluntary nature of their participation. They were also informed that their responses would be used only for research purposes. No names or student identification numbers were collected, and participants' responses were treated confidentially. The findings were reported in aggregate form so that individual participants could not be identified. Participants were free to decline participation without any academic consequences. These procedures were followed to protect participants' privacy, confidentiality, and autonomy.

The questionnaires were distributed directly to the selected 155 students after their teaching and learning activities. The researcher provided instructions on how to respond to the items. Students were encouraged to read each statement carefully and select the response honestly based on their experiences, opinions, and feelings towards English. The researcher remained present during the administration to clarify any respondents' questions. The collected data were analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, and mean scores, were then calculated to describe students' responses. Mean scores were used to determine the overall level of students' motivation and the level of motivation reflected in the different dimensions of the questionnaire. The results were interpreted using the three categories presented in Table 1. Frequencies and percentages were also used to identify response patterns for individual items.

FINDINGS

Overall Profile of Students' Attitudes and Motivation

The findings indicate that the 155 English-major students generally demonstrated a moderately positive profile of attitudes and motivation towards English. After reverse coding the negatively worded items, the overall mean across the 32 items was 2.91 on a four-point Likert scale. This suggests that the respondents tended to express positive attitudes towards English and were generally motivated to learn and use the language, although their responses were not uniformly strong across all aspects of English learning.

The relatively positive profile is reflected in several items receiving high mean scores. The highest mean was found for the statement *"With my English proficiency, I can help my neighbours or friends when they have difficulty learning English"* ($M = 3.47$), followed by *"My parents are proud of me when my English scores are very good"* ($M = 3.43$), *"I really enjoy learning English"* ($M = 3.41$), and *"I want to get an A in every English lesson"* ($M = 3.37$). These responses suggest that the students not only viewed English positively but also associated English proficiency with academic achievement, social usefulness, and recognition from significant others. At the same time, the results reveal several areas of ambivalence. For example, although students generally enjoyed learning English, 58.7% agreed or strongly agreed that English was a difficult subject (Item 3). Similarly, 66.4% agreed or strongly agreed that they completed English assignments because they were afraid of receiving a low grade (Item 17). These findings suggest that students' motivation was not exclusively internally driven; external academic pressures and the perceived difficulty of English also appeared to shape their learning behaviour.

Overall, therefore, the students' responses portray learners who were positively oriented towards English but whose motivation incorporated multiple dimensions. Their attitudes were associated with enjoyment and willingness to use English, while their motivation was also connected with grades, future goals, parental expectations, and the perceived usefulness of English.

Students' Attitudes and Motivation toward English

The first group of items (Items 1-17) provides an overview of students' attitudes towards English and their motivation to learn and use the language. Following reverse coding of the negatively worded statements, this group obtained an average mean of 2.93, indicating a generally positive orientation towards English. The strongest evidence of positive attitudes concerns students' enjoyment of English. Nearly all respondents expressed a favourable attitude towards learning English: 95.5% agreed or strongly agreed that they really enjoyed learning English (Item 1). Students also demonstrate a strong achievement orientation, with 90.3% agreeing or strongly agreeing that they wanted to obtain an A in every English lesson (Item 7). In addition, 92.3% considered English learning important because it would be useful for obtaining a good job (Item 8). These findings indicate that both enjoyment of learning and instrumental considerations contributed to students' motivation.

The students also demonstrated a positive orientation towards the practical and future-oriented value of English. For example, 94.8% agreed or strongly agreed that mastering English could help them keep up with technological developments (Item 15, $M = 3.28$), while 76.8% agreed or strongly agreed that learning English would help them achieve their future goals (Item 16, $M = 2.97$). These responses indicate that English was perceived not merely as an academic subject but also as a resource for future personal and professional development. The findings concerning students' willingness to communicate in English were somewhat less pronounced. Although 84.5% agreed or strongly agreed that they were interested when their lecturer asked them to have an English conversation (Item 2, $M = 3.02$), the mean for *"I like speaking English"* was slightly lower ($M = 2.92$). Similarly, 58.8% agreed or strongly agreed that they liked speaking English when communicating with teachers and classmates (Item 13, $M = 2.63$). This suggests that positive attitudes towards English did not necessarily translate equally into strong enthusiasm for every form of English use, particularly interpersonal communication.

The responses to negatively worded items further support the generally favourable profile. Most students rejected the statement that English learning materials were boring (Item 5, $M = 2.05$), did not agree that they would not feel sad when their English examination results were poor (Item 9, $M = 2.26$), and disagreed with the statement that they did not like reviewing English lessons at home (Item 14, $M = 2.21$). These patterns suggest that students cared about their English performance and were willing to engage with English beyond immediate classroom activities. Nevertheless, some evidence points to challenges in students' attitudes and motivation. More than half of the respondents perceived English as a difficult subject, and a considerable proportion reported completing assignments because they feared receiving low grades. Furthermore, students' responses to the statement concerning modernity were relatively moderate (Item 6, $M = 2.83$). Taken together, these findings indicate that students' positive attitudes coexisted with perceptions of difficulty and a degree of extrinsic academic pressure.

External Sources of Motivation

The findings also demonstrate that students' motivation was influenced by several external sources, particularly teachers, parents, and the broader learning environment. After reverse coding where appropriate, the teacher-related items (Items 18-22) produced a mean of 2.78, the parental items (Items 23-28) a mean of 2.99, and the environmental/social items (Items 29-32) a mean of 2.84. Among these three sources, parents appeared to constitute the strongest external source of motivation, followed by the learning environment and teachers.

Teacher-related motivation

Students generally perceived their English lecturers positively. The statement *"My English lecturer uses dynamic and interesting teaching methods"* obtained a mean of 2.94, with 79.4% of students agreeing or strongly

agreeing. Similarly, 72.9% agreed or strongly agreed that their English lecturer was always cheerful when teaching (Item 19, $M = 2.86$). After reverse coding, the statement concerning lecturer monotony also indicated a generally favourable perception (Item 18, $M = 2.39$; reverse-coded $M = 2.61$).

However, teacher-related motivation was not uniformly strong. The statement concerning rewards, grades, or praise (Item 21) obtained a mean of 2.68, with 58.0% of students agreeing or strongly agreeing that they expected a reward when their lecturer asked them to practise what they had been instructed to do. This finding indicates that reinforcement from the lecturer may contribute to students' engagement, although it does not appear to be the dominant source of motivation.

Interestingly, students also reported relatively low levels of anxiety in the classroom. The original mean for *"I get nervous and anxious in the classroom when learning English"* was 2.19, which, after reverse coding, indicates a relatively favourable condition. Thus, although external reinforcement was present, the classroom environment did not appear to generate particularly strong negative emotional responses.

Parental motivation

Parental influence produced the highest mean among the three external sources ($M = 2.99$). The strongest parental influence was reflected in the statement *"My parents are proud of me when my English scores are very good"* ($M = 3.43$), with 96.1% of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing. Similarly, 86.4% agreed or strongly agreed that their parents wanted them to be able to speak English (Item 24, $M = 3.20$). More than three-quarters of the students also reported that their parents asked them to take an English course (Item 27, $M = 3.01$).

The results further suggest that parental encouragement was more prominent than material or behavioural rewards. Although 58.0% of students agreed or strongly agreed that their parents bought English books for them (Item 23, $M = 2.70$), only 56.1% reported that their parents rewarded them when their English scores were good (Item 28, $M = 2.53$). After reverse coding, the response to *"My parents do not care about my English scores"* also indicated that students generally perceived their parents as caring about their English achievement (Item 25, original $M = 1.96$; reverse-coded $M = 3.04$). These findings suggest that parental influence operated primarily through expectations, pride, encouragement, and concern for achievement, rather than through direct material rewards alone.

Environmental and social motivation

The environmental/social dimension obtained a mean of 2.84. Students generally reported participation in English-related social activities and expressed confidence in using English. For example, 61.3% agreed or strongly agreed that they participated in an English learning group at college (Item 29, $M = 2.66$), while 63.9% agreed or strongly agreed that they were confident in their English proficiency when interacting with people around them (Item 30, $M = 2.74$).

The most positive response in this group was found in Item 32. Almost all respondents (96.8%) agreed or strongly agreed that their English proficiency enabled them to help neighbours or friends who experienced difficulties learning English ($*M = 3.47$). This finding suggests that students perceived English proficiency as having a social function and as enabling them to contribute to others.

Nevertheless, English was not consistently preferred in all social contexts. For example, 54.2% agreed or strongly agreed that they preferred using Indonesian rather than English on social media (Item 31, $M = 2.50$). This indicates that although students generally recognised the usefulness of English and felt confident in their proficiency, Indonesian remained the preferred language in some informal digital contexts.

Taken together, the findings show that students' motivation was shaped by a combination of internal orientations and external influences. While enjoyment, future goals, achievement aspirations, and perceived usefulness contributed substantially to students' positive orientation towards English, external factors, particularly parental expectations and support, also played an important role. Teachers contributed through classroom practices, emotional support, and reinforcement, whereas the broader social environment provided opportunities for participation, confidence building, and helping others through English. The findings therefore suggest that students' attitudes and motivation towards English are best understood as multidimensional rather than attributable to a single motivational source.

DISCUSSION

Overall Profile of Students' Attitudes and Motivation

The findings indicate that the students had a generally positive but moderate orientation towards English, as reflected in the overall mean of 2.91. This suggests that English was broadly valued and that students were willing to engage with it, but their motivation had not reached a consistently high level across all dimensions. The coexistence of high scores for enjoyment, achievement aspirations, perceived usefulness, and social usefulness with moderate responses to some learning and communication-related items indicates that students' motivation was multidimensional. In other words, being positively disposed towards English did not necessarily mean that students experienced equally strong motivation in every aspect of learning and using the language. This finding challenges a simple distinction between motivated and unmotivated learners and instead points to variation in the strength and sources of motivation.

This overall pattern is broadly consistent with previous research. Farah (2020), Masruddin and Al Hamdany (2023), Ningtiyas and Rahmawati (2024), and Zulfikar et al. (2019) similarly reported favourable attitudes and motivation towards English among Indonesian university students. The findings also accord with Ulfa and Bania (2019), who found that Indonesian EFL students possessed diverse reasons for learning English. However, the moderate level found in the present study provides a more nuanced picture than a general conclusion that students are simply highly motivated. One possible explanation is that the respondents were English-major students who had already selected English as their field of study. Their academic choice may have contributed to their positive orientation, while their continuing exposure to English may also have made them more aware of its difficulty. Saito et al. (2018) demonstrate that motivation, learning experience, emotions, and perceptions of language development are interconnected, suggesting that positive attitudes can coexist with challenges in actual language learning.

The findings can also be interpreted through Gardner's (1988a, 1988b, 2004) socio-educational perspective, which conceptualizes that attitudes and motivation are related but distinguishable dimensions of language learning. Students might enjoy English, value its usefulness, aspire to high grades, and experience English as difficult at the same time. This supports Gardner's argument that motivation should not be reduced to a single psychological disposition. The findings simultaneously suggest that the AMTB framework may require contextual adaptation when applied to contemporary Indonesian Islamic higher education. The students' responses show the importance of instrumental, academic, social, and contextual considerations that may not be adequately captured if motivation is interpreted primarily through traditional integrative orientations. This observation is compatible with Dörnyei and Al-Hoorie's (2017) argument that motivational constructs need to account for learners' diverse reasons for engaging with languages in contexts where English functions as a global language rather than simply as a language associated with a particular target-language community.

Students' Attitudes and Motivation toward English

The first dimension produced a mean of 2.93, indicating a generally positive orientation towards English. Particularly noteworthy were the very high levels of enjoyment, achievement aspiration, perceived employment value, and perceived usefulness for keeping up with technological developments. The finding that 95.5% of students reported enjoying English is especially significant because enjoyment represents a positive affective orientation towards learning. Likewise, the strong desire to obtain high grades indicates that students were achievement-oriented, while the perceived relationship between English and employment suggests that students also possessed strong instrumental reasons for learning the language. The findings are in line with previous research highlighting the diverse bases of EFL motivation. Ulfa and Bania (2019) found that Indonesian EFL students were motivated by interest as well as other motivational factors, while Alharbi (2022) and Daqiq et al. (2024) highlighted the perceived value of English proficiency for employment and future career opportunities. Getie (2020) similarly showed that students' attitudes towards English are influenced by multiple factors.

Nevertheless, the findings also reveal an important tension. Students reported high enjoyment of English, but their willingness to speak was comparatively lower, with only 58.8% enjoying English communication with teachers and classmates. More than half also perceived English as difficult, while 66.4% completed assignments partly because they feared low grades. Thus, positive attitudes did not always translate into equally strong behavioural motivation. As Penk and Richter (2017) note, motivation involves willingness to invest effort, which cannot necessarily be inferred from favourable attitudes alone. Similarly, Cook and Artino Jr. (2016) emphasise that motivation involves different processes underlying engagement, persistence, and goal-directed behaviour. Several contextual factors may explain this discrepancy. Students may enjoy English as a subject while still feeling less confident using it communicatively. The perceived difficulty of English may be particularly relevant to productive skills, where learners must demonstrate their proficiency publicly. Classroom interaction can also generate concerns about making mistakes or being evaluated by peers and lecturers. Although the present study did not directly measure speaking anxiety, the comparatively lower enthusiasm for speaking suggests that positive attitudes towards English do not automatically eliminate barriers to oral participation. The finding is also compatible with Janah and Cahyono (2022) and Senjahari et al. (2021), who demonstrate the importance of learning contexts and environments in shaping students' motivation. These findings theoretically support a multidimensional understanding of motivation within Gardner's framework. Students' motivation reflected

enjoyment, achievement orientation, perceived usefulness, future goals, and willingness to use English rather than a single disposition. The findings also highlight the need to distinguish positive attitudes from actual engagement, particularly in the Indonesian EFL context, where opportunities for authentic English communication may be limited. This supports broader perspectives that conceptualise motivation as situated within learners' social and educational environments (Eccles & Wigfield, 2020).

External Sources of Motivation

The findings demonstrate that students' motivation was shaped by external social and educational influences. Among the three sources examined, parental motivation recorded the highest mean ($M = 2.99$), followed by the environmental/social dimension ($M = 2.84$) and teacher-related motivation ($M = 2.78$). Parental influence was particularly evident in the finding that 96.1% of students agreed or strongly agreed that their parents were proud when their English scores were good, while 86.4% reported that their parents wanted them to speak English. The prominence of parental influence is consistent with Gardner's (1988b) socio-educational perspective, which situates language learning within a broader social context, and with Dörnyei and Al-Hoorie (2017), who emphasise the role of social influences in language motivation. In this regard, parental expectations may remain influential because students' achievement is closely linked to family aspirations. The stronger response to parental pride than rewards suggests that emotional recognition may matter more than material incentives.

In term of teacher-related findings, students generally perceived their lecturers positively, particularly regarding dynamic teaching methods and positive classroom demeanour. However, the lower mean for teacher-related motivation compared with parental motivation does not necessarily indicate a limited role for teachers; rather, their influence may be mediated through the quality of students' learning experiences. This interpretation is consistent with Senjahari et al. (2021), who found that learning objectives and environments influence students' motivation, and Janah and Cahyono (2022) and Umam et al. (2023) who highlighted the importance of motivational conditions in Indonesian EFL higher education.

The environmental/social dimension also produced a moderate mean ($M = 2.84$). Students demonstrated some participation in English-learning groups and generally expressed confidence in their English proficiency. Notably, the statement that English proficiency enabled students to help friends or neighbours who experienced difficulties learning English received a high mean ($M = 3.47$). This finding extends motivation beyond academic and career goals, suggesting that students also viewed English as a social resource. However, their preference for Indonesian on social media indicates that English use remains context-dependent which reflects the dominance of Indonesian in everyday communication.

These findings support Gardner's (1988b) socio-educational model by demonstrating that students' motivational conditions are embedded in their social and educational contexts. However, the differences among parents, teachers, and the learning environment indicate that social influence should not be treated as a homogeneous construct. Parents appear to influence motivation through expectations and recognition, teachers through pedagogy and classroom interaction, and the environment through opportunities for participation and language use. The findings therefore support a more differentiated understanding of the social dimension of EFL motivation.

CONCLUSION

This study found that EFL students in an Indonesian Islamic higher education context were positively oriented towards English, although their overall motivation remained moderate. Their motivational profile reflected affective, achievement-oriented, instrumental, and social dimensions rather than a simple motivated–unmotivated distinction. Three conclusions can be drawn. First, students generally valued and enjoyed English for its academic, professional, and future benefits, although this did not always translate into strong communicative engagement. Second, motivation was socially embedded, with parents emerging as the strongest external influence, followed by teachers and the learning environment. Third, English motivation was contextually situated, reflecting the interplay of personal aspirations, academic expectations, and social influences.

The findings theoretically support a multidimensional and socially situated view of language-learning motivation. They also suggest that Gardner's (2004) AMTB remains useful for motivational profiling but may benefit from contextual adaptation to contemporary EFL settings. Future research could employ larger, multi-institutional samples and examine how motivational dimensions relate to English proficiency and learning behaviour. Practically, lecturers should build on students' positive attitudes by connecting English learning with their academic disciplines, career aspirations, technological interests, and authentic communication needs. Supportive, low-risk opportunities for oral interaction should be provided to translate positive attitudes into active language use. Institutions can further support motivation through English clubs, peer-learning activities, and opportunities for English use beyond the classroom, while parents may contribute through encouragement and recognition rather than performance-based rewards.

AI DECLARATION

During the preparation of this manuscript, the authors used ChatGPT solely to assist with language editing and refinement to improve clarity, coherence, and readability. The authors critically reviewed and revised all AI-assisted outputs and independently verified the content. The authors assume full responsibility for the accuracy, originality, interpretation, and overall integrity of the manuscript.

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APPENDIX: Results of the EFL Attitudes and Motivation Questionnaire Adapted from Gardner's (2004) Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB)

No.	Item	4 (Strongly Agree)	3 (Agree)	2 (Disagree)	1 (Strongly Disagree)	Mean
1	I really enjoy learning English.	71 (45.8%)	77 (49.7%)	7 (4.5%)	0 (0%)	3.41
2	I am interested when my lecturer asks me to have an English conversation.	29 (18.7%)	102 (65.8%)	22 (14.2%)	2 (1.3%)	3.02
3	English is a difficult subject.	9 (5.8%)	82 (52.9%)	52 (33.5%)	12 (7.7%)	2.43
4	I enjoy the activities in my English class much more than those in my other classes.	17 (11.0%)	84 (54.2%)	51 (32.9%)	3 (1.9%)	2.74
5	I think English learning materials are very boring.	25 (16.1%)	106 (68.4%)	15 (9.7%)	9 (5.8%)	2.05
6	In my opinion, being able to speak English reflects modernity.	28 (18.1%)	76 (49.0%)	47 (30.3%)	4 (2.6%)	2.83
7	I want to get an A in every English lesson.	74 (47.7%)	66 (42.6%)	13 (8.4%)	2 (1.3%)	3.37
8	Studying English is important because it will be useful for getting a good job.	61 (39.4%)	82 (52.9%)	10 (6.5%)	2 (1.3%)	3.30
9	I do not feel sad if my English exam results are poor.	28 (18.1%)	71 (45.8%)	44 (28.4%)	12 (7.7%)	2.26
10	I like speaking English.	21 (13.5%)	104 (67.1%)	27 (17.4%)	3 (1.9%)	2.92
11	I prefer listening to Western pop music to listening to Indonesian pop music.	40 (25.8%)	63 (40.6%)	47 (30.3%)	5 (3.2%)	2.89
12	I do not like to use English when I use social media.	18 (11.6%)	93 (60.0%)	36 (23.2%)	8 (5.2%)	2.22
13	I like to speak English when communicating with my teachers and classmates.	10 (6.5%)	81 (52.3%)	61 (39.4%)	3 (1.9%)	2.63
14	I do not like to review my English lessons at home.	14 (9.0%)	100 (64.5%)	35 (22.6%)	6 (3.9%)	2.21
15	By mastering English, I can keep up with technological developments.	53 (34.2%)	94 (60.6%)	6 (3.9%)	2 (1.3%)	3.28
16	Learning English will help me achieve my future goals.	37 (23.9%)	82 (52.9%)	30 (19.4%)	6 (3.9%)	2.97
17	I do my English assignments because I am afraid of receiving a low grade.	14 (9.0%)	89 (57.4%)	43 (27.7%)	9 (5.8%)	2.70
18	My English lecturer is monotonous.	6 (3.9%)	90 (58.1%)	52 (33.5%)	7 (4.5%)	2.39
19	My English lecturer is always cheerful when teaching.	24 (15.5%)	89 (57.4%)	39 (25.2%)	3 (1.9%)	2.86
20	I get nervous and anxious in the classroom when learning English.	21 (13.5%)	90 (58.1%)	37 (23.9%)	7 (4.5%)	2.19
21	I also expect a reward (a grade or praise) when my lecturer asks me to practise what I have been instructed to do.	23 (14.8%)	67 (43.2%)	58 (37.4%)	7 (4.5%)	2.68
22	My English lecturer uses dynamic and interesting teaching methods.	24 (15.5%)	99 (63.9%)	31 (20.0%)	1 (0.6%)	2.94
23	My parents buy English books for me.	25 (16.1%)	65 (41.9%)	59 (38.1%)	6 (3.9%)	2.70
24	My parents want me to be able to speak English.	56 (36.1%)	78 (50.3%)	17 (11.0%)	4 (2.6%)	3.20
25	My parents do not care about my English scores.	46 (29.7%)	79 (51.0%)	20 (12.9%)	10 (6.5%)	1.96
26	My parents are proud of me when my English scores are very good.	73 (47.1%)	76 (49.0%)	5 (3.2%)	1 (0.6%)	3.43
27	My parents ask me to take an English course.	43 (27.7%)	76 (49.0%)	31 (20.0%)	5 (3.2%)	3.01
28	My parents rewarded me when my English scores were good.	13 (8.4%)	74 (47.7%)	50 (32.3%)	18 (11.6%)	2.53
29	I participate in an English learning group at my college.	11 (7.1%)	84 (54.2%)	56 (36.1%)	4 (2.6%)	2.66
30	I am confident in my English proficiency when I interact with people around me.	20 (12.9%)	79 (51.0%)	51 (32.9%)	5 (3.2%)	2.74
31	When I use social media, I prefer to use Indonesian rather than English.	12 (7.7%)	72 (46.5%)	53 (34.2%)	18 (11.6%)	2.50

32	With my English proficiency, I can help my neighbours or friends when they have difficulty learning English.	78 (50.3%)	72 (46.5%)	5 (3.2%)	0 (0%)	3.47
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