



Beyond the classroom: The relationship between family environment and students' motivation to learn English at SMPN 2 Pariaman

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Abstract:

This study examines the relationship between family environment and students' motivation to learn English at SMPN 2 Pariaman. Although students receive similar classroom instruction, their levels of motivation vary considerably, indicating that factors beyond the classroom may influence their engagement in English learning. This research aims to determine whether and to what extent aspects of the family environment are associated with students' intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. The study employed a correlational case study design involving 186 ninth-grade students. Data were collected using the Family Environment Scale and the Student Motivational State Questionnaire and were analyzed using Spearman's rho correlation to identify the strength and direction of the relationships. The findings reveal a statistically significant relationship between family environment and students' motivation to learn English. Among the family environment dimensions, Independence demonstrated the strongest association with intrinsic motivation. Meanwhile, extrinsic motivation was most strongly related to Moral-Religious Emphasis, followed by Intellectual-Cultural Orientation and Organization. Overall, students from supportive, value-oriented, and well-structured family environments tended to show higher levels of motivation. These findings highlight the important role of family context in EFL learning and suggest the need for stronger collaboration between families and schools to foster students' motivation.

Keywords:

Family environment, learning motivation, EFL, parental involvement, English learning.

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1. INTRODUCTION AND LITERATURE REVIEW

English has become a key determinant of academic and professional competitiveness in the global era. As a global lingua franca used across international communication, technology, and education, mastering English has become an essential skill for students in many countries, including Indonesia. In the national curriculum, English is positioned as a compulsory subject across school levels, highlighting the expectation that students develop adequate proficiency to engage in academic and professional contexts. Nevertheless, despite receiving similar instruction in the classroom, students often demonstrate different levels of

engagement and willingness to learn. This inconsistency invites questions regarding factors beyond formal teaching that may influence students' learning motivation.

In addition to its role in education, English proficiency is increasingly associated with access to global information, digital communication, and future employment opportunities. Students who possess adequate English skills tend to have broader opportunities to participate in academic exchange, higher education, and international professional environments. In the Indonesian context, English is also closely linked with technological literacy, as much online information, educational content, and digital resources are predominantly available in English. Consequently, students' motivation to learn English becomes increasingly important not only for academic achievement but also for their long-term social and professional mobility.

Motivation is widely acknowledged as a central component in second language acquisition. It does not only determines whether learners start learning a language but also the intensity and persistence of their effort. Gardner and Lambert (1972) emphasized that motivation may even surpass language aptitude in predicting success, as highly motivated learners often persist despite difficulties. Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011) further argued that motivation influences the amount of energy a learner dedicates to learning activities and how long they maintain that commitment. Together, these perspectives demonstrate that motivation is not merely complementary to learning but rather the psychological engine that drives sustained language development. Motivation, however, is dynamic and can be shaped by multiple internal and external influences. Deci and Ryan (2000) defined intrinsic motivation as learners' voluntary engagement in learning because they find it meaningful or enjoyable, whereas extrinsic motivation stems from external encouragement or pressure, such as grades or rewards. Although both forms contribute to learning, sustained motivation often requires a supportive environment that nurtures students' confidence, autonomy, and interest. This means that motivation does not emerge in a vacuum; rather, it develops within the learner's psychological and social environment.

In EFL contexts such as Indonesia, maintaining learning motivation may be more challenging because students have limited opportunities to use English outside the classroom. Unlike learners in English-speaking environments, Indonesian students generally encounter English only during formal instructional hours. This limited exposure may reduce students' confidence and willingness to communicate in English. Therefore, external reinforcement from the surrounding environment, particularly from family members, becomes essential in sustaining learners' enthusiasm and persistence in language learning.

Among external influences, the family environment plays a particularly crucial role. Friedman (2010) defines family as two or more individuals related by blood, marriage, or adoption who live together and fulfill social and cultural roles. Beyond this structural definition, Xiao et al. (2009) broadened the concept of family environment by including not only the physical and economic conditions of the home but also interpersonal relationships, behavioral patterns, and emotional dynamics that shape children's development. Similarly, Pomerantz et al. (2007) emphasized that the quality of emotional support and parent-child relationships forms the foundation of a nurturing family environment.

As the closest and most enduring social context in a student's life, the family shapes behaviors, values, self-concept, and academic engagement long before formal schooling begins. Moos and Moos (2009) further conceptualized the family environment as a system of interpersonal relationships, personal growth orientation, and structural organization that can either facilitate or hinder student development. Emotional support, autonomy encouragement, discipline, communication patterns, and access to learning resources are

among the key dimensions that may influence students' motivation. In the context of foreign language learning, where challenges such as anxiety, limited exposure, and low confidence are common, the role of the family becomes even more significant.

Recent findings in EFL education reinforce this association. Zhao et al. (2023) reported that family support contributes to students' self-regulation and willingness to persist in language learning. Parenting styles influence students' intrinsic motivation, with emotionally supportive and autonomy-oriented parents fostering higher motivation (Kim & Lim, 2022). In Indonesia, Taufan et al. (2024) found that students with active family encouragement through praise, learning materials, or home exposure to English demonstrated stronger motivation than those lacking such support. Similarly, Aisy and Wahyudi (2024) revealed that lack of interest in English among students was linked to minimal parental support and low home exposure. These studies collectively highlight that family engagement, whether positive or negative, shapes the development of learning motivation.

International perspectives show similar patterns. Research by Khajavy et al. (2024) in the Iranian EFL context found that family encouragement, availability of learning resources, and emotional communication contribute to students' academic growth orientation and confidence in using English. Meanwhile, Alshammari (2024) in Saudi Arabia documented that insufficient family support, particularly in rural settings limits English learning due to lack of awareness, materials, and exposure at home. Although these findings highlight the relevance of family in shaping motivation, they also suggest that the extent of family influence may vary depending on socioeconomic background, parental beliefs, and cultural expectations.

A preliminary observation conducted by the researcher during the pre-service teaching practicum at SMPN 2 (a junior high school) in Pariaman revealed clear variations in students' motivation to learn English. Some students actively participated in classroom activities and consistently completed assignments, while others showed limited engagement, hesitation, or disinterest. Since classroom instruction, learning materials, and teaching techniques were the same for all students, the discrepancy suggested the involvement of external factors. Informal classroom discussions indicated that students' backgrounds differed, some received encouragement and exposure to English at home, while others lacked such support due to financial constraints, parents' limited English proficiency, or low awareness of the importance of English.

In the sociocultural context of SMPN 2 Pariaman, most students come from a Minangkabau ethnic background, where the Minang language is predominantly used in daily communication. Research on multilingual development suggests that the interaction among multiple linguistic systems influences learners' metalinguistic awareness and language production processes (Jessner, 2018). When metalinguistic control is still developing, learners may demonstrate receptive understanding yet experience difficulty in oral production due to the cognitive complexity of managing multiple languages.

Within this context, families who encourage the use of Indonesian in academic discussions or provide exposure to English through media and learning materials may help students strengthen cross-linguistic connections and bridge the gap between comprehension and production. Conversely, when daily communication remains exclusively in the local language and English exposure is minimal outside school, students may have fewer opportunities to develop confidence and productive competence in the target language. Thus, the interaction between ethnic-cultural background, home language practices, and family support may contribute meaningfully to students' motivation and willingness to learn English.

This research adopts Bronfenbrenner's Bioecological Model of Human Development (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006) to frame the family environment as a microsystem that directly shapes children through sustained interactions. Emotional warmth, communication, parental expectations, and home routines may contribute to the fulfillment of learners' psychological needs, which in turn determine their intrinsic and extrinsic motivation toward English learning. When family and school expectations are aligned, students are more likely to develop a positive and enduring learning orientation.

Junior high school students are considered to be in an important developmental stage characterized by emotional, cognitive, and social changes. During adolescence, learners become increasingly sensitive to external feedback, social acceptance, and emotional support from significant people around them, especially parents and family members. As a result, the home environment may strongly influence students' academic attitudes, self-confidence, and learning behavior. Positive family interactions may encourage students to participate actively in learning activities, while unsupportive home conditions may weaken students' motivation and engagement.

Despite the importance of family, studies focusing on how the family environment relates specifically to junior high school students' motivation to learn English in semi-urban settings in Indonesia remain limited. Most Indonesian research concentrates on parental education levels, socioeconomic status, or parenting style separately, leaving insufficient understanding of how multiple family dimensions simultaneously shape learning motivation (e.g., Deng, 2025; Darma & Apriani, 2024; Fatmawaty et al., 2022). Furthermore, motivation research in Indonesia frequently focuses on classroom-oriented determinants rather than out-of-school influences.

Responding to this gap, the present study investigates the relationship between the family environment and students' motivation to learn English at SMPN 2 Pariaman. The research focuses on intrinsic and extrinsic motivational components while examining family variables such as emotional support, parental involvement, socioeconomic factors, learning resources, and home exposure to English. By analyzing the association between these variables, this study aims to provide evidence on how external non-school factors contribute to students' language learning motivation.

The findings of this study are expected to offer practical value. For teachers, the results may deepen understanding of the non-academic factors affecting motivation, enabling more adaptive instructional strategies. For parents, the research may raise awareness of the importance of support and communication in language learning. For schools and policymakers, the findings may serve as a foundation for family-based interventions and collaboration programs that reinforce motivation beyond the classroom. Overall, strengthening family-school synergy may contribute to higher academic outcomes and improved confidence among EFL learners.

2. METHOD

This study employed a quantitative correlational case study design to examine the relationship between the family environment and students' motivation to learn English within a specific educational context. A correlational approach was used to identify the degree of association between variables as they naturally occur, without manipulation or intervention (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

As a case study, this research focused on a single school setting, namely SMPN 2 Pariaman, to examine this relationship within a clearly defined EFL context. Case study research is

particularly appropriate for investigating contemporary phenomena within their real-life contexts, especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and context are not clearly evident (Yin, 2018). The participants consisted of Grade IX students in the academic year 2025/2026, who had experienced several years of English instruction, allowing them to develop relatively stable perceptions of both their family environment and motivation toward learning English.

Two standardized questionnaires were used to collect the data. The family environment was measured using the Family Environment Scale (FES) developed by Moos and Moos (2009), which covers dimensions such as emotional support, communication patterns, learning supervision, discipline, and availability of learning resources. Students' motivation to learn English was measured using the Student Motivational State Questionnaire from Gardner's (2004) Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB), consisting of 20 items equally divided into intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. All items were assessed using a four-point Likert scale, ranging from "strongly disagree" (1) to "strongly agree" (4), with higher scores indicating stronger family support and higher motivation levels. The instruments were adapted to the Indonesian EFL context, reviewed and validated by an expert in English language education, Dr. Phil. Salam Mairi, S.Pd., M.Sc., to ensure content relevance, clarity, and contextual appropriateness.

Prior to data collection, permission was obtained from the school. The questionnaires were administered during class hours with assistance from the English teacher. Clear instructions were provided to ensure that students completed the questionnaires independently and honestly. The completed questionnaires were collected immediately to maintain data validity and confidentiality.

Data analysis was conducted using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistics were used to summarize the data, including mean, standard deviation, minimum, and maximum values. Instrument reliability was examined using Cronbach's alpha. After assumption testing showed that one variable did not meet the normality criterion, Spearman's rho correlation was applied to determine the strength and significance of the relationship between the family environment and students' motivation to learn English. The level of significance was set at $p < 0.05$.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the results of the study and provides a critical interpretation of the findings based on theoretical perspectives and previous research. The purpose of this section is to demonstrate how the results extend existing knowledge regarding the relationship between the family environment and students' motivation to learn English. The findings are organized into two major components: (1) research results, which include descriptive data, assumption testing, and correlational analysis; and (2) discussion, which interprets and compares the findings with prior studies and relevant motivational theories.

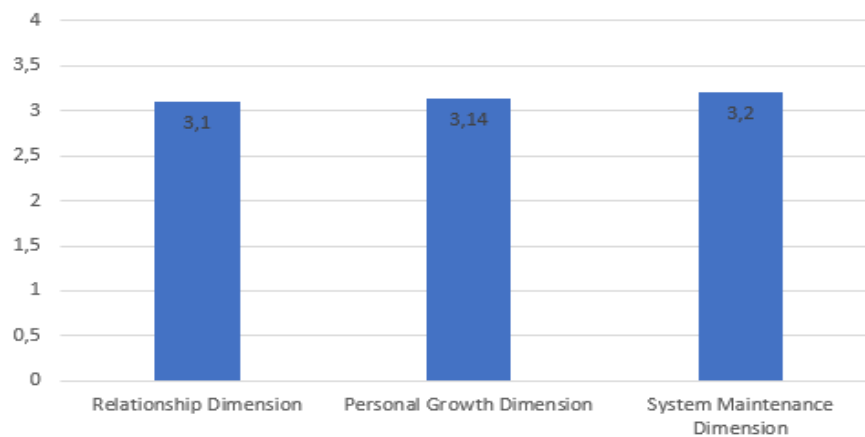
3.1. Research Finding

Data collected from 186 students indicate that the overall perception of the family environment is within the Moderate–High category across all three dimensions: Relationship, Personal Growth, and System Maintenance and Change. Graph 1 summarizes the mean scores for each dimension.

Finding 1: Students' family environment

Descriptive statistics indicated that students generally perceived their family environment positively across all dimensions: Relationship, Personal Growth, and System Maintenance and

Change. The highest mean score was found in the System Maintenance and Change dimension ($M = 3.20$), followed by Personal Growth ($M = 3.14$) and Relationship ($M = 3.10$), all within the Moderate High category. This implies that students view their family atmosphere as supportive in terms of emotional relationships, encouragement for development, and structural organization at home.

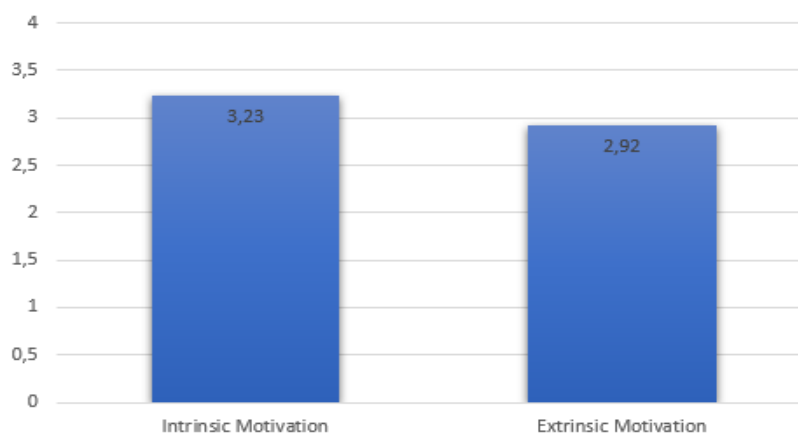


Graphic 1. Mean scores of students' family environment

The results reveal that although variations exist among respondents, most students reported emotionally supportive communication, autonomy encouragement, and well-structured routines at home. These characteristics reflect a functional family setting that may contribute to students' personal and academic well-being.

Finding 2: Students' motivation to learn English

Descriptive findings showed that both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation fell into the Moderate High category, with intrinsic motivation slightly higher ($M = 3.23$) than extrinsic motivation ($M = 2.92$). Students demonstrated interest, enjoyment, and self-driven desire to learn English, while external factors such as parental encouragement, school support, and future goals, also reinforced their effort to study.



Graphic 2. Mean scores of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation

Finding 3: The correlation between family environment and motivation to learn English

Statistical analysis using Spearman's rho showed that the correlation coefficient between Family Environment and Motivation was $r = 0.537$, $p = 0.000$, meaning the relationship is moderate, positive, and significant. This result confirms that students who experience a more favorable family environment tend to show higher motivation to learn English. Thus, the research hypothesis stating that there is a significant relationship between family environment and students' motivation to learn English is accepted.

Table 1. Correlation between family environment and motivation

Variable Pair	r	p	Interpretation
Family Environment & Motivation	0.537	0.000	Moderate, Positive, Significant

This indicates that variation in learning motivation corresponds meaningfully to variation in family conditions.

Finding 4: Correlation between family factors and motivation dimensions

Further analysis was conducted to determine how each family factor influences intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. The strongest correlation with intrinsic motivation was Independence ($r = 0.312$), while the strongest correlation with extrinsic motivation was Moral–Religious Emphasis ($r = 0.530$).

Table 2. Correlation between family factors and motivation dimensions

No	Intrinsic Motivation		Interpretation	Extrinsic Motivation		Interpretation
	Family Factor	r, p		Family Factor	r, p	
1	Independence	$r = 0.312$, $p = 0.000$	Significant, Moderate	Moral-Religious Emphasis	$r = 0.530$, $p = 0.000$	Significant, Strong
2	Control	$r = 0.270$, $p = 0.000$	Significant, Weak	Intellectual-Cultural Orientation	$r = 0.497$, $p = 0.000$	Significant, Moderate–Strong

The results show that autonomy-supportive home interactions promote self-driven motivation, while moral and structural reinforcement tends to foster motivation based on external expectations and goals.

3.2. Discussion

The findings of this study provide an important understanding of how the family environment shapes students' motivation to learn English. The moderate and significant correlation between the family environment and English learning motivation ($r = 0.537$, $p < 0.01$) demonstrates that students who experience supportive, structured, and communicative family settings tend to show higher levels of motivation. This supports the notion that motivation is not

solely an internal psychological construct but is shaped by external social influences, particularly those emerging from the immediate home environment. These findings extend the understanding presented in the introduction by confirming that motivational differences among learners are strongly linked to variations in family dynamics.

The results align with Jeynes (2020), who reported that parental expectations significantly enhanced students' academic performance (effect size = 0.65), demonstrating that parents who monitor, guide, and motivate their children create conditions that foster persistence and commitment. A similar pattern was identified by Al-Qahtani (2016), who found that family members were among the strongest sources of motivation for EFL learners. The consistency across studies indicates that families exert substantial influence on learners' motivational states through encouragement, expectations, and emotional support.

Beyond the overall correlation, this study also contributes new insights by identifying which specific family factors most strongly influence intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. For intrinsic motivation, Independence emerged as the strongest predictor ($r = 0.312$). This underscores the importance of autonomy in cultivating genuine interest and self-directed engagement. The finding is in line with Self-Determination Theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000), which identifies autonomy as a foundational need for fostering intrinsic motivation. It also corresponds with Maulisa and Adani (2025), who reported that parental encouragement, open communication, and opportunities for independent learning increased students' intrinsic motivation in EFL settings. In a similar vein, Hamziyah and Ferdiyanto (2025) observed that families who facilitate the use of English through media exposure or everyday conversation strengthen students' intrinsic interest in learning the language. The present study extends these findings by showing that the effect of autonomy is observable even within a diverse set of family characteristics measured in the Family Environment Scale.

Meanwhile, Moral-Religious Emphasis was the strongest predictor of extrinsic motivation ($r = 0.530$), followed by Intellectual-Cultural Orientation ($r = 0.497$) and Organization ($r = 0.477$). These results highlight that extrinsic motivation in English learning is strongly shaped by value-based guidance, structured routines, and academically oriented family cultures. This pattern is consistent with Amin et al. (2022), who found that students' religious character and sense of discipline were significantly linked to their learning motivation. Similarly, Putri et al. (2024) demonstrated that family emphasis on moral and religious discipline enhanced students' academic motivation through the development of responsibility and obligation. These findings suggest that moral-religious practices serve as external motivators that encourage learners to meet expectations, fulfill obligations, and strive for academic success, which corresponds with Gardner's (2004) instrumental dimension of motivation.

Further evidence from Astuti and Wahyuni (2019) supports the present study's findings, showing that parental discipline and consistent guidance strengthened junior high school students' extrinsic motivation. Additionally, the results are in line with Santra and Panda (2025), who emphasized that emotionally supportive and structured family environments significantly contribute to students' achievement and academic engagement. Collectively, these studies reinforce the interpretation that moral values, intellectual stimulation, and structured routines create strong external motivational forces that encourage students to perform well in English learning.

Overall, the findings of this study advance the understanding of the relationship between family environment and English learning motivation by showing that intrinsic and extrinsic motivation are shaped by different family-based influences. Autonomy-supportive environments foster intrinsic motivation by allowing students to experience enjoyment and

personal interest, while value-driven and structured environments reinforce extrinsic motivation by promoting discipline and achievement-oriented behaviors. This nuanced understanding provides both theoretical and practical implications. Theoretically, it supports and extends Gardner's (2004) framework by demonstrating how specific family practices correspond with different motivational orientations. Practically, the results highlight the need for collaboration between schools and parents to balance autonomy with moral and structural guidance, enabling students to develop both internal and external forms of motivation necessary for sustained English learning success.

4. CONCLUSION

This study investigated the relationship between the family environment and students' motivation to learn English at SMPN 2 Pariaman. The findings revealed a moderate, positive, and statistically significant correlation between the two variables ($r = 0.537$, $p < 0.01$), indicating that students who experience supportive and structured family environments tend to demonstrate stronger motivation to learn English. This confirms that motivation in language learning is not solely determined by internal psychological factors but is also shaped by the social and emotional conditions present within the family.

Further analysis of specific family factors provided deeper insight into how different aspects of the family environment influence intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Independence emerged as the strongest predictor of intrinsic motivation, suggesting that students who are encouraged to make decisions, take responsibility, and express themselves within the family are more likely to develop genuine interest and self-driven engagement in learning English. This finding aligns with Self-Determination Theory, which emphasizes autonomy as a core element of intrinsic motivation.

Conversely, Moral-Religious Emphasis, Intellectual-Cultural Orientation, and Organization were found to be the strongest contributors to extrinsic motivation. These results demonstrate that students from families that emphasize moral values, intellectual engagement, and structured routines are more likely to be driven by external goals such as meeting expectations, achieving high performance, or fulfilling obligations. Such findings are consistent with previous research highlighting the importance of value-based and structured family environments in shaping students' achievement-oriented behaviors.

Overall, the findings offer both theoretical and practical implications. Theoretically, the study enriches the understanding of motivational development by showing how different components of the family environment correspond to intrinsic and extrinsic motivational orientations. Practically, the results underscore the importance of collaboration between schools and parents. Teachers should encourage parents to provide autonomy-supportive environments that strengthen intrinsic motivation while maintaining value-based guidance and structured family practices that sustain students' extrinsic motivation. Schools may also consider involving parents in educational programs that highlight the importance of family communication, moral values, and supportive routines.

In conclusion, fostering a balanced family environment that combines autonomy, moral guidance, and structured support can enhance students' motivation to learn English. This balanced approach is essential for helping students develop both personal interest and purposeful engagement, ultimately contributing to their long-term success in English learning.

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