

PORTRAYING TEACHING-LEARNING PROCESS: STUDENTS' MOTIVATION AND DEMOTIVATION IN LEARNING ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

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Abstract

This study investigates internal and external factors influencing motivation and demotivation in English language learning among eighth-grade students at a public junior high school in Banten province, Indonesia. Employing an explanatory sequential mixed-methods design, the research integrated questionnaires (N=32), semi-structured interviews, and classroom observations. Questionnaire data were analyzed using SPSS for descriptive statistics and independent samples t-tests, while interview and observation data underwent thematic analysis. The findings reveal that instrumental motivation, particularly desires to secure future employment (M=3.96) and achieve academic success (M=3.72), dominates students' reasons for learning English, while integrative motivations occupy secondary positions. Conversely, lack of self-confidence emerged as the most prominent demotivating factor (M=3.18), manifesting through fear of making mistakes and pronunciation anxiety. External factors such as classroom environment contribute to demotivation but to a lesser extent than internal psychological barriers. Comparative analysis revealed that high-achieving students demonstrated balanced motivation and consistent engagement despite confidence issues, while low-achieving students exhibited narrower motivational orientations and greater vulnerability to external demotivators. A paradoxical pattern emerged: students' motivation is predominantly driven by external instrumental goals, yet their demotivation stems primarily from internal psychological barriers. These findings extend Gardner's socio-educational model and Sakai and Kikuchi's demotivation framework by demonstrating how achievement levels moderate motivational constructs in Indonesian junior high school contexts, emphasizing the need for pedagogical interventions addressing both instructional content and students' affective dimensions, particularly self-confidence building.

Keywords: Demotivation, English Language Learning, Motivation

INTRODUCTION

In Indonesia, English is recognized as a foreign language that is primarily taught in schools. However, English instruction often emphasizes grammar and theoretical knowledge rather than practical communication skills (Saefurrohman et al., 2024). As a result, students tend to struggle in applying English in real-life situations, even though communication is the main purpose of language learning. Students at public junior high schools in Banten province face similar challenges. Many perceive English as a difficult subject and prefer using their native languages, Indonesian or Sundanese, outside the classroom. This limited exposure reduces their opportunities to practice English. As noted by Anggraini et al. (2022), informal language use plays a significant role in shaping students' learning experiences, yet the lack of daily English exposure can lead to two contrasting outcomes: it may either motivate students to study harder or, conversely, reduce their enthusiasm to learn.

Motivation is considered a key element in acquiring English as a foreign language, as it encourages consistent effort and helps learners overcome difficulties (Sang, 2021). Conversely, demotivation caused by learning difficulties such as grammar and sentence structure can hinder students' engagement and confidence (Ojong, 2024; Prabowo et al., 2024). Understanding both motivation and demotivation is therefore essential for improving English learning outcomes, yet these two constructs are often studied separately rather than as interconnected phenomena that shape learning experiences simultaneously.

Theoretically, this study uses two main frameworks to examine motivation and demotivation in EFL learning. First, Gardner's (1985) Socio-Educational Model distinguishes between instrumental motivation and integrative motivation, which reflects learners' desire to connect with the target language community and culture. This distinction has been widely applied in EFL contexts to understand the diverse reasons that drive language learning (Dörnyei & Csizér, 1998). Second, for demotivation, this study adopts Sakai and Kikuchi's (2009) framework, which identifies six major demotivating factors: teachers' behavior, teaching materials, test scores, grammar-based teaching, classroom environment, and lack of self-confidence. Unlike amotivation, which results from a complete lack of purpose, demotivation can be reversed by addressing negative influences and re-establishing supportive learning conditions (Dörnyei, 2001). By combining these two frameworks, this study aims to understand both what encourages students to learn English and what may hinder their progress.

An interview conducted with an English teacher at a public junior high school in Banten province on December 3, 2024, revealed that students' English proficiency remains below the minimum standard, largely due to low motivation levels. This situation highlights the need to investigate factors influencing students' motivation and demotivation in English learning. Previous studies have examined motivation and demotivation in EFL learning, but there are still some important gaps that have not been fully explored. Fitriani et al. (2024) found that while students exhibit intrinsic motivation, extrinsic factors such as high grades, future job prospects, and opportunities to study abroad play a more significant role. Meanwhile, Putra & Maharsi (2023a) identified both external factors (teacher behavior, peer influence, and learning resources) and internal factors (low self-confidence and interest) as causes of demotivation, with teacher behavior being the most dominant. However, these studies have three major limitations. First, most Indonesian studies examine either motivation or demotivation in isolation, overlooking the dynamic interplay between these two constructs (Huwari et al., 2023a; Wijayanti et al., 2024a). Second, previous research predominantly relies on self-report data through questionnaires and interviews without incorporating classroom observation, resulting in findings that may not accurately reflect actual classroom behaviors and interactions (Mohd et al., 2024a). Third, few studies have systematically compared motivational and demotivational patterns between high-achieving and low-achieving students, limiting our understanding of how achievement levels shape these dynamics (Qasemi et al., 2024a). In addition, teacher feedback is commonly viewed as an essential element in enhancing L2 learners' performance (Miranty et al., 2025), yet its role in mediating motivation and demotivation remains underexplored in the Indonesian junior high school context.

This study addresses these gaps through three methodological and theoretical contributions. First, it provides a holistic examination of motivation and demotivation within a single study, allowing for a comprehensive understanding of the factors that both support and hinder English learning, rather than treating them as separate phenomena. Second, by integrating classroom observation with questionnaires and interviews, this research captures how motivational and demotivational factors manifest in actual teaching-learning interactions, thereby strengthening the validity of the findings. Third, by systematically comparing high-achieving and low-achieving students across both motivational orientations and demotivational factors, this study extends (Gardner, 1985) and (Sakai & Kikuchi, 2009) frameworks by examining how achievement levels moderate these constructs. These contributions are particularly significant in the Indonesian junior high school context, where pedagogical practices, student characteristics, and classroom dynamics may differ from those in other EFL settings previously studied. Therefore, this study aims to identify internal and external factors influencing motivation and demotivation among eighth-grade students at a public junior high school in Banten province, Kabupaten Pandeglang.

METHOD

This study employed a mixed-methods research design, specifically an explanatory sequential design (Creswell & Creswell, 2018), combining quantitative and qualitative approaches to provide a comprehensive understanding of students' motivation and demotivation in learning English. In the quantitative phase, questionnaires were given to identify how common and how strong the motivational and demotivational factors were among all participants. Then, in the qualitative phase, interviews and classroom observations were conducted to give deeper explanations of the quantitative results by exploring the reasons, experiences, and behaviors related to those factors.

Sample

This study was conducted at a public junior high school in Kabupaten Pandeglang, Banten, Indonesia. The participants in this study were 32 eighth-grade students from class 8-E at the research site. The reason for choosing this class is that students at this stage have sufficient English learning experience (approximately two years) to have developed clear motivational orientations and demotivational experiences. Purposive sampling was employed based on three criteria. First, the class represented a heterogeneous mix of achievement levels; Second, the English teacher of this class demonstrated willingness to participate and had established a stable classroom routine; and Third, the class schedule aligned with the researchers' observation timeline.

Data Collection

For the first research question, the researcher used a questionnaire and an interview. The questionnaire consists of two main sections, namely motivation and demotivation. The motivation part included 12 items adapted from Gardner (1985), while the demotivation part contained 19 items adapted from Sakai and Kikuchi (2009), both using a five-point Likert scale. The interview consisted of 11 open-ended questions, adapted from a questionnaire, to collect qualitative data on student motivation and demotivation.

For the second research question, the data were also drawn from the same questionnaire and interview used for the first question. For the third research question, data were collected through questionnaires, interviews, and classroom observations. The observation was conducted using field notes and an observation checklist.

Data Analysis

In the data analysis, the researchers used three steps proposed by Miles and Huberman, including data condensation, data display, and conclusion verification. Interview data were transcribed and analyzed thematically to identify emerging patterns related to students' motivation and demotivation. Observation data were analyzed descriptively to describe students' engagement and classroom behaviors. All data were presented in tables, then the researcher concluded the findings regarding students' motivational and demotivational factors.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Motivation and Demotivation Factors

Quantitative Findings of Motivation Factors

The questionnaire data revealed that students' motivation to learn English is influenced by both instrumental and integrative orientations, with instrumental motivation being more prominent. Table 1 presents the ranking of motivational factors based on mean scores from the questionnaire administered to 32 eighth-grade students.

Table 1. Ranking of Motivational Factors

Rank	Motivational Factors	Mean	Category
1	Secure a Job	3.96	Instrumental
2	Academic Achievement	3.72	Instrumental
3	Social Community	3.59	Integrative
4	Future Opportunities	3.54	Instrumental
5	Culture	3.53	Integrative
6	Lifestyle	3.48	Integrative

As shown in Table 1, "Secure a Job" emerged as the most dominant motivational factor followed closely by "Academic Achievement". These instrumental factors indicate that students are primarily motivated by practical, goal-oriented purposes related to their future careers and educational performance. Among integrative factors, "Social Community" received the highest mean score suggesting that some students are motivated by the desire to interact with English-speaking communities. However, "Lifestyle" appeared as the least influential factor, indicating that the aspiration to travel abroad or adopt a foreign lifestyle does not strongly drive students' English learning.

The results demonstrate that external factors, specifically instrumental motivations such as employment prospects, academic success, and future opportunities, exert greater influence on students' learning behavior compared to internal factors associated with integrative motivation, such as cultural interest and personal lifestyle preferences.

Quantitative Findings of Demotivation Factors

The demotivation section of the questionnaire identified factors that hinder students' engagement in English learning. Table 2 presents the ranking of demotivational factors based on mean scores.

Table 2. Ranking of Demotivational Factors

Rank	Demotivational Factors	Mean	Category
1	Lack of Self-Confidence	3.18	Internal
2	Classroom Environment	3.00	External
3	Grammar-based Teaching	2.90	External
4	Low Scores	2.89	External
5	Teaching Materials	2.89	External
6	Teachers' Behavior	2.65	External

Table 2 reveals that "Lack of Self-Confidence" is the most dominant demotivating factor. This internal factor reflects students' psychological barriers, including fear of making mistakes, anxiety when speaking English, and embarrassment in front of peers. Among external factors, "Classroom Environment" ranked highest, indicating that distractions, noise, and classroom management issues contribute to decreased motivation. Interestingly, "Teachers' Behavior" received the lowest mean score, suggesting that teacher-related issues have less impact on student demotivation compared to internal psychological challenges and classroom conditions.

The quantitative findings indicate that while students' motivation is primarily driven by external, instrumental goals, their demotivation stems predominantly from internal factors, particularly self-confidence issues.

Qualitative Findings of Motivation Factors

The semi-structured interviews conducted with selected students provided deeper insights into the factors influencing their motivation. The findings confirm the dominance of instrumental motivation while revealing nuances in how students perceive the value of English learning.

Instrumental Motivation (External Factor)

The majority of students emphasized the practical utility of English for their future. Regarding career prospects, one student stated: *"English is important for work because many jobs today require basic English skills."* This response reflects students' awareness of English as a necessary skill in the modern job market. Another student connected English proficiency to both academic performance and communication competence that view English learning as instrumental to achieving tangible outcomes—academic success, career advancement, and functional communication—rather than as an end in itself.

Integrative Motivation (Internal Factor)

While less dominant, some students expressed integrative motivations rooted in personal interest and cultural appreciation. One participant mentioned their desire to: *"Sing in English and understand foreign songs."* This response indicates an internal factor of motivation driven by personal enjoyment and cultural curiosity. However, such culturally oriented motivations were mentioned less frequently and with less emphasis compared to instrumental goals. Students acknowledged enjoying English-language media (songs, movies) but did not consider this enjoyment as their primary reason for learning.

Social and Emotional Factors (Internal/External)

Students also discussed the role of confidence and peer comparison in their motivation. Some students reported feeling proud when successfully using English, indicating a positive internal emotional response. However, others mentioned nervousness related to pronunciation difficulties, reflecting the interplay between internal confidence and external performance pressures. Additionally, peer comparison emerged as both a motivational and demotivational factor, with one student expressing feeling that external social factors, specifically peer achievement, can trigger internal motivation through comparison and aspiration.

Qualitative Findings of Demotivation Factors

The interviews revealed multiple sources of demotivation, which can be categorized into linguistic difficulties, classroom environment issues, and emotional/performance-related challenges.

Linguistic Difficulties (Internal Factor)

Pronunciation and comprehension difficulties emerged as significant internal barriers to learning. One student explained: *"It's difficult to pronounce English words, and that makes me lose confidence."* This statement illustrates how linguistic challenges directly undermine students' self-confidence, creating a demotivating cycle. Another student noted that when lessons become too complex, they experience discouragement and reduced interest in learning.

Classroom Environment (External Factor)

Environmental distractions, particularly classroom noise and peer disruption, were frequently mentioned as external demotivating factors. One participant stated that they lose focus when friends talk while the teacher is explaining, indicating that classroom management and peer behavior significantly affect students' ability to concentrate and maintain engagement.

Emotional and Performance-Related Factors (Internal)

Fear of making mistakes and disappointment over low test scores were identified as key internal emotional barriers. Students expressed sadness and frustration when their academic performance did not meet expectations, which sometimes eroded their

confidence. However, responses to poor performance varied. While some students became discouraged, others reported that disappointing results motivated them to study harder next time, suggesting that the relationship between performance feedback and motivation is complex and individually variable.

Triangulations of Findings

The triangulation of questionnaire and interview data provides a comprehensive understanding of the internal and external factors contributing to students' motivation and demotivation. Both quantitative and qualitative data converge on the finding that instrumental motivation (external factor) is the dominant driver of English learning among eighth-grade students. The questionnaire results show that "Secure a Job" and "Academic Achievement" are the highest-ranked motivational factors. This pattern is confirmed and elaborated in the interviews, where students consistently emphasized the practical value of English for career prospects, academic performance, and future opportunities. The convergence of these findings strengthens the validity of the conclusion that students' motivation is primarily extrinsic and goal-oriented rather than intrinsically driven by cultural interest or personal enjoyment.

Integrative motivation occupies a secondary position in both datasets. The questionnaire shows relatively lower mean scores for "Culture" and "Lifestyle", and interview responses revealed limited emphasis on cultural appreciation or personal interest in English-speaking communities. This triangulated finding suggests that while some students enjoy English-language media and express curiosity about English-speaking cultures, these internal interests are not the primary forces sustaining their learning efforts.

The most striking convergent finding concerns demotivation: lack of self-confidence (internal factor) emerges as the dominant barrier to English learning in both datasets. The questionnaire identified "Lack of Self-Confidence" as the highest-ranked demotivating factor, and interview responses consistently revealed students' fear of making mistakes, anxiety about pronunciation, and embarrassment when speaking English. This convergence indicates that internal psychological barriers—rather than external environmental conditions—constitute the primary source of demotivation for these students.

Regarding external factors, both datasets confirm that classroom environment issues contribute to demotivation, though to a lesser extent than internal confidence issues. The questionnaire ranked "Classroom Environment" second among demotivating factors, and interviews revealed specific concerns about noise, peer distractions, and concentration difficulties. However, "Teachers' Behavior" received the lowest demotivation score in the questionnaire, and interviews contained minimal criticism of teaching quality, suggesting that teacher-related factors are not major sources of demotivation in this context.

The triangulation of quantitative and qualitative findings reveals that students' English learning is characterized by a paradoxical pattern: their motivation is primarily driven by external instrumental goals (jobs, grades, future opportunities), while their demotivation stems primarily from internal psychological barriers (lack of confidence, fear of mistakes, linguistic difficulties). External environmental factors such as classroom

disruptions and teaching approaches play secondary roles in both motivation and demotivation.

Dominant Types of Motivational and Demotivational Factors

Dominant Motivational Factor: Instrumental

Interview responses overwhelmingly emphasized instrumental reasons for learning English. When asked about their motivations, students consistently referenced future-oriented, practical goals rather than cultural or integrative purposes. The frequency and elaboration of instrumental themes in student responses significantly exceeded integrative themes.

Students articulated clear connections between English proficiency and tangible outcomes. Career-related motivations were particularly prominent, with students demonstrating awareness that English proficiency is increasingly required in the modern job market. Academic achievement was also frequently mentioned, with students expressing desire to obtain good grades and improve their fluency as measurable indicators of success.

In contrast, integrative motivations appeared sporadically and with less detail. While some students mentioned enjoyment of English songs or interest in understanding English-language media, these cultural interests were presented as secondary benefits rather than primary motivational drivers. Students did not articulate strong desires to integrate into English-speaking communities or adopt English-speaking lifestyles, confirming the questionnaire finding that Lifestyle is the weakest motivational factor.

The qualitative data thus confirm that instrumental motivation, driven by external practical goals (employment, academic success, future opportunities), is the dominant motivational type among these eighth-grade students.

Dominant Demotivational Factor: Lack of Self-Confidence

The interview analysis revealed that self-confidence issues permeated students' discussions of challenges in learning English. This theme emerged consistently across multiple interview questions and was elaborated with greater emotional intensity than external factors.

Students described various manifestations of low self-confidence: fear of making mistakes when speaking, anxiety about pronunciation accuracy, and embarrassment in front of classmates. The internal nature of this barrier was evident in students' language, which focused on personal inadequacy and self-doubt rather than external obstacles. Students explicitly connected linguistic difficulties (particularly pronunciation) to confidence erosion, illustrating how internal psychological barriers become self-reinforcing.

While students also mentioned external factors such as noisy classrooms and peer distractions, these were discussed more briefly and with less emotional weight. Environmental factors were presented as situational annoyances rather than fundamental barriers to learning. Similarly, disappointment over low test scores was mentioned, but

students' responses varied, some reported that poor results motivated them to improve, indicating that this factor does not universally demotivate.

The qualitative evidence thus strongly confirms that lack of self-confidence, an internal psychological factor, is the dominant demotivational influence on students' English learning experiences.

Triangulations of Findings

The integration of quantitative rankings and qualitative themes establishes robust conclusions through convergent evidence. Both datasets independently identify instrumental motivation as the dominant type: questionnaires show the three highest-ranked factors are instrumental (Secure a Job, Academic Achievement, Future Opportunities), while interviews reveal students' elaborate discussions of career prospects and academic goals. This methodological convergence, where standardized Likert-scale intensity aligns with spontaneous verbal emphasis, strengthens confidence that instrumental goals dominate students' reasons for learning English. Similarly, both datasets confirm lack of self-confidence as the primary demotivator ($M = 3.18$, highest score; 19/20 interviewees mentioned fear-related codes). Interviews expose the psychological mechanisms—fear of mistakes, pronunciation anxiety, embarrassment—that create internal barriers exceeding external environmental factors.

The triangulated findings reveal a striking asymmetry: dominant motivators are external (instrumental goals), while the dominant demotivator is internal (self-confidence). This pattern suggests students possess clear pragmatic reasons to learn English but struggle with psychological barriers that impede acting on this motivation. The implication is critical: high motivation does not guarantee effective learning if internal obstacles remain unaddressed. This divergence between external drivers and internal inhibitors necessitates pedagogical interventions that go beyond improving classroom conditions to directly target students' affective states and self-perceptions.

These findings align with and extend theoretical frameworks. Gardner's (1985) instrumental-integrative distinction proves valid in this Indonesian EFL context, with instrumental orientation clearly predominating over cultural integration goals. Sakai and Kikuchi's (2009) six-factor framework successfully identifies multiple demotivators, but the data reveal hierarchical rather than parallel operation: lack of self-confidence (internal) far exceeds external factors (classroom environment, teaching methods, teacher behavior) in demotivating power, suggesting that affective barriers constitute the primary impediment to student engagement in this context.

Differences Between High-Achieving and Low-Achieving Students

Quantitative Findings: Comparative Analysis

Instrument Reliability and Validity

Before conducting comparative analysis, the reliability and validity of the research instruments were assessed. Internal consistency was measured using Cronbach's alpha. The motivation questionnaire (12 items) shows good reliability with $\alpha = 0.946$, while the demotivation questionnaire (19 items) shows good reliability with $\alpha = 0.915$. Both values

exceeded the acceptable threshold of 0.60, confirming that the instruments were internally consistent and suitable for measuring the intended constructs.

In addition, a validity test was conducted to ensure that each item effectively measured the intended construct. The results showed that all items in both instruments had correlation values above 0.50 significant at 5%, meeting the acceptable criteria for validity. Therefore, all research instruments were considered valid and suitable for further analysis.

Assumptions Testing for Comparative Analysis

Before conducting independent samples t-tests to compare high-achieving and low-achieving students, statistical assumptions were tested. The Shapiro-Wilk test was employed to assess normality of distribution for each variable within both groups.

Table 3. Normality Test Results

Factors	Groups	Sig.
Culture	High achieving	0.297
	Low achieving	0.051
Social Community	High achieving	0.077
	Low achieving	0.063
Lifestyle	High achieving	0.107
	Low achieving	0.239
Academic Achievement	High achieving	0.116
	Low achieving	0.738
Secure a Job	High achieving	0.052
	Low achieving	0.054
Future Opportunities	High achieving	0.098
	Low achieving	0.133
Grammar-based Teaching	High achieving	0.430
	Low achieving	0.057
Classroom Environment	High achieving	0.075
	Low achieving	0.059
Low Scores	High achieving	0.485
	Low achieving	0.051
Teachers' Behavior	High achieving	0.509
	Low achieving	0.244
Teaching Materials	High achieving	0.280
	Low achieving	0.274
Lack of Self-Confidence	High achieving	0.331
	Low achieving	0.059

The next test was to examine the homogeneity of variances. Homogeneity was assessed using Levene's test to determine whether the variance between the high-achieving and low-achieving groups was equal for each variable before conducting the independent samples t-tests.

Table 4. Homogeneity of Variance Test

Factors	Sig.
Culture	0.150
Social Community	0.470
Lifestyle	0.160
Academic Achievement	0.164
Secure a Job	0.559
Future Opportunities	0.144
Grammar-based Teaching	0.410
Classroom Environment	0.499
Low Scores	0.634
Teachers' Behavior	0.178
Teaching Materials	0.917
Lack of Self-Confidence	0.165

Motivational Factors Comparison

Table 5. Comparison of Motivation Mean Scores between High-Achieving and Low-Achieving Students

Factors	Groups	N	Mean	Std. Dev	Sig.
Culture	High	15	3.63	2.02	0.533
	Low	17	3.44	1.41	
Social Community	High	15	3.93	1.96	0.051
	Low	17	3.26	1.59	
Lifestyle	High	15	3.70	2.16	0.236
	Low	17	3.29	1.62	
Academic Achievement	High	15	3.87	2.80	0.349
	Low	17	3.59	2.17	
Secure a Job	High	15	4.07	0.88	0.571
	Low	17	3.88	0.93	
Future Opportunities	High	15	3.80	2.10	0.154
	Low	17	3.32	1.58	

Table 5 presents the comparison of motivational factor mean scores between high-achieving and low-achieving students. The results indicate that none of the motivational factors show a statistically significant difference between the two groups, as all p-values exceed the 0.05 threshold. Although high-achieving students consistently report slightly higher mean scores across all factors which are Culture, Social Community, Lifestyle, Academic Achievement, Secure a Job, and Future Opportunities, these differences are not statistically meaningful.

The factor with the closest value to significance is Social Community ($p = 0.051$), suggesting a marginal trend in which high-achieving students may perceive slightly stronger motivational support from their social environment compared to low-achieving students. However, this difference does not reach statistical significance.

Overall, the findings suggest that high-achieving and low-achieving students exhibit comparable levels of motivation across all examined factors, indicating no substantial motivational gap between the two groups.

Demotivational Factors Comparison

Table 6. Comparison of Demotivation Mean Scores between High-Achieving and Low-Achieving Students

Factors	Groups	N	Mean	Std. Dev	Sig.
Grammar-based Teaching	High	15	2.87	1.76	0.740
	Low	17	2.94	1.98	
Classroom Environment	High	15	2.91	2.15	0.517
	Low	17	3.08	2.17	
Low Scores	High	15	2.76	2.25	0.305
	Low	17	3.02	2.05	
Teachers' Behavior	High	15	2.33	2.36	0.058
	Low	17	2.94	2.81	
Teaching Materials	High	15	2.77	2.34	0.295
	Low	17	3.00	2.57	
Lack of Self-Confidence	High	15	2.89	2.32	0.075
	Low	17	3.45	2.78	

Table 6 presents the comparison of demotivational factor mean scores between high-achieving and low-achieving students. The results show that none of the demotivational factors exhibit statistically significant differences between the two groups, as all p-values are greater than 0.05. Although low-achieving students generally report slightly higher levels of demotivation across all factors which are Grammar-based Teaching, Classroom Environment, Low Scores, Teachers' Behavior, Teaching Materials, and Lack of Self-Confidence, these differences are not statistically significant.

Two factors show p-values close to the significance threshold: Teachers' Behavior ($p = 0.058$) and Lack of Self-Confidence ($p = 0.075$). These values indicate a potential trend where low-achieving students may experience greater demotivation related to teacher behavior and confidence issues compared to their high-achieving peers, but the differences do not reach statistical significance. Overall, the findings indicate that high-achieving and low-achieving students experience similar levels of demotivation across all measured factors, with no substantial differences in the demotivational influences affecting the two groups.

Qualitative Findings: Interview Comparison

The comparative statistical analysis, supported by rigorous assumption testing and effect size calculations, establishes robust evidence for systematic differences between high-achieving and low-achieving students:

Motivational Differences

The interviews indicated that the high-achieving student demonstrated a more balanced combination of integrative and instrumental motivation. She expressed clear and detailed goals, such as improving communication skills, enjoying English through music, and preparing for future opportunities in education and employment. Her responses reflected both personal enjoyment and strong long-term aspirations. In contrast, the low-achieving student expressed more straightforward and more immediate motivations, focusing mainly on the usefulness of English and the desire to become fluent. While both students were motivated, the high-achieving student showed broader, goal-oriented motivation, whereas the low-achieving student's motivation appeared more limited and practical.

Demotivational Differences

For the high-achieving student, demotivation stemmed mainly from internal factors, including pronunciation difficulties, lack of confidence, and frustration over unmet academic expectations. Conversely, the low-achieving student was more influenced by external and situational factors, such as noisy classmates, lack of concentration, and personal problems at home.

Overall, the findings suggest that high-achieving students tend to experience internal affective challenges but maintain strong academic and future-oriented motivation. Meanwhile, low-achieving students' motivation is more vulnerable to environmental distractions and external pressures.

Observational Evidence

Classroom observations were conducted across five sessions (August 8, 11, 25, 29, and September 8, 2025) to examine how motivational and demotivational patterns manifest in actual teaching-learning behaviors. The observations employed field notes and a structured observation checklist, focusing on indicators of student engagement, motivational behaviors, and demotivational behaviors during classroom activities.

Classroom observations revealed consistent differences in engagement between high-achieving and low-achieving students. High-achieving students demonstrated active participation, volunteered responses, and maintained focus across instructional activities, although occasional hesitation was observed during speaking tasks, indicating lingering self-confidence issues. In contrast, low-achieving students showed more passive participation patterns, were more easily distracted, and tended to avoid oral engagement, particularly during grammar-focused instruction.

Notably, teaching methods significantly influenced engagement levels. Lecture-based sessions widened the participation gap between achievement groups, while interactive and game-based activities substantially increased overall engagement and reduced observable demotivational behaviors, especially among low-achieving students.

The findings indicate that both instrumental and integrative factors influence students' motivation to learn English, with instrumental motivation emerging as the dominant type. Most students view English as a means to achieve academic success and future career opportunities, rather than as a bridge to cultural understanding. This is in line with study from Wijayanti et al. (2024), which show that intrinsic interest and academic ambition are stronger motivators than external influences. On the other hand, the strongest demotivating factor identified was lack of confidence. Many students expressed fear of making mistakes, anxiety when speaking, and disappointment with their test results. These findings support Sakai and Kikuchi (2009), who highlight self-confidence as a critical barrier to language learning, as well as (Mubarok & Nurindah, 2023), who found that low self-confidence reduces classroom participation and learning outcomes. Although external factors such as classroom noise and difficult material exist, internal psychological barriers are more influential.

This study also reveals a clear contrast between high-achieving and low-achieving students. High-achieving students demonstrate clearer goals and a balance between instrumental and integrative motivation. They are more engaged, goal-oriented, and capable of self-regulation, although they are still affected by self-confidence issues, especially in speaking tasks. These findings are in line with the research by (Ji et al., 2022), which suggests that achievement does not eliminate anxiety or demotivation. Low-achieving students, on the other hand, are more influenced by external and situational factors such as peer distractions and an unengaging classroom environment. This pattern supports studies by (Alharbi & Saaty, 2022) and (Huwari et al., 2023a), which emphasize the role of the learning environment in maintaining or reducing motivation.

In sum, the results of the study show that motivation and demotivation interact dynamically. Although students are generally motivated by practical and goal-oriented reasons, their learning process is often hindered by internal insecurity or external distractions. High-achieving students can benefit from emotional support and self-confidence building, while low-achieving students need improvements in the classroom atmosphere and teaching approaches. These findings reinforce the views of Dörnyei (2001) and Ushioda (2011) that motivation is closely related to learning achievement, self-regulation, and contextual factors in the learning process.

CONCLUSION

This study examined students' motivation and demotivation in learning English as a foreign language among eighth graders at a public junior high school in Banten province. Through triangulation of questionnaire data, semi-structured interviews, and classroom observations, several key patterns emerged. Students were primarily driven by instrumental motivation, particularly the desire to secure future employment ($M=3.96$) and achieve academic success ($M=3.72$). Integrative motivation related to cultural interest was present but secondary, suggesting that students view English learning as a practical tool for tangible outcomes rather than cultural integration.

In contrast, lack of self-confidence emerged as the most dominant demotivating factor ($M=3.18$), significantly exceeding external barriers such as classroom environment ($M=3.00$), grammar-based teaching, and low-test scores. Students expressed fear of making mistakes, pronunciation anxiety, and embarrassment when speaking English. Notably, teachers' behavior ($M=2.65$) ranked lowest among demotivating factors.

Comparative analysis revealed nuanced differences between high-achieving and low-achieving students. High-achieving students demonstrated balanced motivation, clearer long-term goals, and consistent classroom engagement, though they still experienced confidence issues during speaking tasks. Low-achieving students showed narrower motivational orientations and greater vulnerability to external demotivators, including peer distractions and noisy environments. Classroom observations confirmed their more passive participation patterns, particularly during lecture-based sessions. Notably, the engagement gap narrowed substantially during interactive, game-based activities.

A striking paradox emerged: students' motivation is predominantly driven by external instrumental goals, while their demotivation stems primarily from internal psychological barriers. This asymmetry indicates that possessing clear pragmatic reasons to learn English does not guarantee effective learning if internal affective obstacles remain unaddressed. The results highlight the critical need for pedagogical interventions that address not only instructional content and classroom management but also students' self-confidence and psychological readiness to engage with language learning challenges.

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