



An analysis of educational facilities and students' motivation in studying English at IAIN Palopo

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Abstract

Between the availability and quality of educational facilities and students' motivation in studying English at IAIN Palopo, this study is grounded in the premise that educational infrastructure significantly influences students' engagement, satisfaction, and learning outcomes, particularly in foreign language acquisition. As English plays an essential role in global communication and academic advancement, ensuring a supportive learning environment is vital. This study employed a quantitative descriptive approach, utilizing observations and questionnaires to collect data from third-semester students and lecturers in the English Education Study Program at IAIN Palopo. A total of 30 students participated in the study. The instruments used included structured questionnaires distributed via Google Forms and direct observations of educational facilities on campus. The findings reveal that most educational and material facilities such as libraries, language laboratories, Wi-Fi access, and e-learning platforms are categorized as "very worthy" and significantly contribute to students' motivation. However, some facilities like multimedia classrooms, smart classroom tools, and computer labs were deemed "not ready," indicating areas for improvement. The results of the questionnaire also suggest that while a majority of students agree that available facilities enhance their motivation to learn English, a considerable portion rarely utilize them due to limited access or awareness. The study concludes that although IAIN Palopo has made notable progress in providing supportive infrastructure for English learning, further enhancement and promotion of facility use are necessary. The research highlights the importance of not only providing modern educational resources but also fostering a culture of active utilization to maximize their impact on students' academic motivation and performance.

Keywords

Educational facilities, student motivation, English learning, infrastructure

Introduction

In the era of globalization, English has emerged as a pivotal tool for international communication, academic mobility, and career development. Within this context, higher education institutions in Indonesia, including IAIN Palopo, are striving to enhance English proficiency among students to meet global standards. However, despite curriculum efforts and teacher readiness, social observations show that many students at IAIN Palopo still face challenges in maintaining motivation and engagement when learning English. These challenges are often linked to the quality and availability of educational facilities that support the language learning process.

Empirical evidence from campus life also shows disparities in how students access and utilize facilities such as language labs, multimedia classrooms, and digital platforms. While certain groups of students demonstrate high motivation due to their exposure to supportive infrastructure, others struggle due to limited access, inadequate facilities, or a lack of familiarity with available resources. This situation raises concerns about equity and effectiveness in English education at IAIN Palopo, suggesting that social conditions within the learning environment significantly influence students' academic behavior and motivation.

From a theoretical standpoint, educational infrastructure plays a crucial role in shaping the quality of the learning experience. According to Nunan (2020), the learning environment including both physical and digital spaces can either facilitate or hinder language acquisition. Supporting this, Harmer (2021) emphasized that motivated learners thrive in environments that are technologically enriched, interactive, and adaptable to different learning styles. Moreover, studies by Dörnyei (2020) on motivational psychology in second language learning show that external stimuli such as adequate facilities, teacher feedback, and access to modern tools strongly correlate with students' intrinsic motivation.

Research conducted globally has consistently highlighted a positive relationship between institutional support and students' performance in language learning. For example, a study by Alqahtani and Al-Gahtani (2022) in Saudi universities demonstrated that well-equipped English labs, accessible Wi-Fi, and interactive multimedia significantly enhanced learners' motivation and achievement. Similarly, in the Southeast Asian context, Nguyen (2021) found that underutilized or outdated educational facilities could demotivate students, even when the institutional intention was to support language learning. These findings underscore the importance of both infrastructure provision and its strategic use in enhancing learning outcomes.

Given this context, the present study aims to investigate the relationship between educational facilities and students' motivation in studying English at IAIN Palopo. Specifically, the research seeks to assess the readiness, quality, and use of educational resources and how these elements contribute to or hinder students' enthusiasm, engagement, and persistence in English learning.

This research is important because it addresses a practical gap in higher education: the mismatch between the availability of infrastructure and students' actual learning experiences. By identifying which facilities most effectively support language learning and uncovering barriers to their usage, the study provides valuable input for institutional development. It also supports efforts to align educational policies with student needs, particularly in the domain of English language acquisition which remains central to academic and professional success.

Theoretically, this study is grounded in the Motivational Theory of Learning as proposed by Dörnyei (2020), which explains how external environments influence the internal drive to learn a second language. According to this theory, motivation is not a static trait but a dynamic process influenced by context, learner beliefs, and institutional support. The theory emphasizes the "learning situation" component, where classroom environment, available tools, and learning support systems play a direct role in shaping students' willingness to invest effort in language tasks.

In addition, this study adopts the Ecological Systems Theory by Bronfenbrenner (reinterpreted in educational contexts by Darling-Hammond, 2021), which views educational outcomes as the result of interactions between individuals and their environments. In this framework, facilities such as computer labs, Wi-Fi networks, and e-learning platforms are part of the microsystem that directly impacts students' motivation and performance. Understanding how these environmental factors contribute to English learning is essential to improving institutional support systems.

Lastly, the study draws on Constructivist Learning Theory, which posits that learners construct knowledge actively based on the resources and interactions provided by their environment. When educational facilities are designed to support interaction, exploration, and engagement, they become crucial tools in the construction of meaningful language experiences. Thus, the availability and usability of facilities at IAIN Palopo are not merely technical concerns but pedagogical determinants of learning quality and motivation.

Method

This study employs a quantitative descriptive research design, which aims to systematically describe and analyze the relationship between educational facilities and students' motivation in learning English. The design is appropriate for investigating measurable data regarding students' perceptions and the availability of educational infrastructure, allowing the researcher to draw generalizable insights from the target population. The use of a non-experimental survey approach enables the researcher to examine existing conditions without manipulating variables.

Research Setting and Participants

The research was conducted at IAIN Palopo, specifically within the English Education Study Program of the Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training. The participants consisted of 30 third-semester students who were selected through purposive sampling.

This sampling technique was chosen based on the criteria that the selected students had experience using the available educational facilities and had already enrolled in multiple English-related courses. Additionally, several lecturers in the English Department were involved to provide contextual insights on the use and management of educational resources.

Research Instruments

Two main instruments were used for data collection:

1. Structured Questionnaire

The questionnaire was designed to measure students' perceptions of the availability, quality, and utilization of educational facilities as well as their motivation in studying English. The instrument included Likert-scale items ranging from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree." The questionnaire was divided into two parts: (1) indicators of educational facilities (libraries, language laboratories, multimedia classrooms, smart classrooms, computer labs, e-learning platforms, Wi-Fi access), and (2) indicators of students' learning motivation (interest, engagement, persistence, self-efficacy, and goal orientation). The questionnaire was distributed via Google Forms for ease of access and data processing.

2. Observation Checklist

A non-participant observation checklist was used to assess the physical condition and availability of educational facilities on campus. Observations were carried out in locations such as the library, language laboratory, smart classrooms, and e-learning support areas. Each item in the checklist evaluated the readiness, accessibility, and functionality of the facilities.

Data Collection Procedures

Data collection was conducted in two phases. In the first phase, the researcher conducted direct observations to assess the condition of educational facilities. Observational notes and checklist data were recorded systematically. In the second phase, the researcher distributed online questionnaires to the selected students using Google Forms. Prior to distribution, the instrument was validated by two expert lecturers in educational research to ensure clarity and relevance. Students were informed of the purpose of the research and assured of their anonymity and the confidentiality of their responses.

Data Analysis Techniques

The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques. The responses from the questionnaire were compiled, coded, and analyzed using Microsoft Excel and SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) software. The analysis focused on calculating the mean, percentage, and frequency distributions for each indicator. For observational data, a rating scale was applied to classify the status of facilities (e.g., very

worthy, worthy, not ready). The interpretation of the findings was guided by comparison between students' motivation levels and the quality/readiness of each facility category.

To strengthen validity, the researcher conducted triangulation by comparing the results of the questionnaire and the observational data. In addition, an inter-item reliability test (Cronbach's Alpha) was performed on the motivation scale in the questionnaire to ensure internal consistency.

Results

This section presents the findings of the study on the availability and readiness of educational facilities and their influence on students' motivation to study English at IAIN Palopo. Data were collected through questionnaires and direct observations and are presented below in descriptive form, supported by tables and analysis.

Condition and Readiness of Educational Facilities

Observational data revealed that certain key educational facilities at IAIN Palopo—such as the main library, language laboratory, Wi-Fi access, and the e-learning platform—are categorized as “very worthy” in terms of availability, accessibility, and functionality. These facilities are adequately maintained, regularly used, and contribute positively to the learning atmosphere, especially in English-related courses.

Conversely, facilities such as the multimedia classrooms, smart classroom tools, and computer laboratories were assessed as “not ready”. These areas suffer from either a lack of equipment, insufficient maintenance, or outdated technology, limiting their effectiveness in supporting digital and interactive learning experiences.

Table 1. Assessment of Educational Facilities at IAIN Palopo

No	Educational Facility	Observational Status	Classification
1	Main Library	Fully functional	Very Worthy
2	Language Laboratory	Well-equipped	Very Worthy
3	Campus Wi-Fi	Stable and accessible	Very Worthy
4	E-learning Platform (e.g., LMS)	Regularly used	Very Worthy
5	Multimedia Classrooms	Incomplete equipment	Not Ready
6	Smart Classroom Tools	Underdeveloped	Not Ready
7	Computer Laboratory	Poor maintenance	Not Ready

These results suggest that although IAIN Palopo has invested in essential infrastructure for language learning, several areas require attention to align fully with the demands of 21st-century education.

Students' Motivation and Utilization of Facilities

The analysis of student questionnaire responses revealed that the majority of students agree that educational facilities have a positive impact on their motivation to study

English. Approximately 76.7% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that access to facilities such as the language lab, Wi-Fi, and digital learning platforms enhances their interest, persistence, and enjoyment in learning English.

However, a notable percentage of students 43.3%, reported that they rarely use these facilities. The primary reasons cited include limited access, lack of scheduling clarity, and unawareness of facility functions. This gap indicates a need not only for improving infrastructure but also for promoting and managing its use more effectively.

Table 2. Students' Perception and Utilization of Educational Facilities

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Facilities support my motivation to learn English	36.7%	40%	13.3%	6.7%	3.3%
I frequently use the library/lab/e-learning tools to support my studies	20%	26.7%	10%	30%	13.3%
I am fully aware of the facilities available on campus	16.7%	26.7%	23.3%	23.3%	10%
I think the existing facilities are easy to access and schedule	13.3%	23.3%	30%	20%	13.3%

These findings show a discrepancy between the positive perceptions of facility usefulness and the actual levels of utilization. Although the infrastructure may be available and perceived as valuable, its impact is limited by student access, communication, and awareness issues.

Interpretation and Summary of Key Findings

The results affirm the hypothesis that educational facilities play a critical role in influencing students' motivation in language learning. The physical presence of high-quality facilities correlates with enhanced student attitudes toward English learning. However, the study also highlights that the mere availability of infrastructure is not sufficient; its use must be actively encouraged, scheduled, and supported.

The findings suggest that institutional strategies should focus not only on facility provision but also on increasing student access, training, and visibility of these resources. Promotional campaigns, faculty support, and guided usage may help address the underutilization problem and further boost students' motivation and achievement in English learning.

Discussion

The findings of this study reveal that several core educational facilities at IAIN Palopo such as the library, language laboratories, Wi-Fi networks, and e-learning platforms are categorized as "very worthy" and contribute significantly to students' motivation in

studying English. These facilities provide essential support for independent learning, access to authentic English materials, and digital interaction, all of which are known to improve language acquisition. Their good condition and functionality increase student satisfaction and engagement in the learning process.

However, the data also indicate that not all facilities are equally effective. Multimedia classrooms, smart classroom tools, and computer laboratories are found to be “not ready” in terms of usability. The inadequacy of these facilities limits the opportunities for students to experience technology-enhanced language learning. Despite positive student perceptions about the importance of these resources, limited access, poor maintenance, and insufficient promotion reduce their impact on daily learning experiences.

Moreover, a notable proportion of students rarely utilize the existing facilities, primarily due to lack of awareness or difficulty in accessing them. This underutilization represents a critical gap between resource provision and actual learning engagement. It suggests that institutional efforts must not only focus on providing facilities but also on ensuring that students are informed, trained, and encouraged to integrate these tools into their learning routines.

These findings are consistent with Dörnyei’s Motivational Theory in second language acquisition, which posits that environmental support plays a key role in maintaining students’ motivation. Dörnyei emphasizes that motivation is not static; it evolves based on learners’ experiences and interactions with their surroundings. In the context of IAIN Palopo, educational facilities act as external motivational stimuli that can either sustain or diminish students’ enthusiasm in learning English.

The results also resonate with Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological Systems Theory, especially the microsystem level, which includes the immediate environment where students interact. The availability of quality learning spaces and technological tools serves as part of the educational microsystem that can positively or negatively affect learning behavior and achievement. The theory affirms that a conducive environment is essential in shaping learners’ experiences and outcomes.

In addition, prior empirical studies reinforce the significance of infrastructure in language learning motivation. Alqahtani and Al-Gahtani (2022) found that the presence of modern language labs and strong internet connectivity in Saudi universities enhanced students’ motivation and performance in English. Similarly, Nguyen (2021) demonstrated that outdated or inaccessible learning environments in Southeast Asian institutions hinder students’ active engagement, even when the curriculum and instruction are of good quality.

These theories and previous studies validate the notion that external learning conditions are instrumental in supporting intrinsic student motivation, particularly in the context of English language education. The results of this research align well with Dörnyei’s framework, as the presence of effective and accessible facilities correlates with students’ increased interest, persistence, and self-confidence in learning English. The same model

also explains why students who lack access or awareness of these tools may feel less motivated and disconnected.

Bronfenbrenner's ecological model also supports the argument that educational institutions must pay attention to the "learning environment" as a direct influencer of learner development. The fact that students at IAIN Palopo reported limited facility usage despite positive perceptions suggests that while the microsystem components exist, their accessibility and utilization are not yet fully integrated into the students' learning ecosystem. This reinforces the importance of institutional alignment between infrastructure, policy, and learner support.

The findings of this study hold significant implications for institutional policy and educational planning at IAIN Palopo. First, there is a clear need to upgrade underdeveloped facilities, such as multimedia classrooms and smart learning tools, to provide a more comprehensive, interactive, and modern English learning environment. Enhancing these facilities will not only support better instructional practices but also improve students' digital literacy and engagement.

Second, the results suggest that institutional strategies must go beyond physical provision of resources. Awareness campaigns, student orientation programs, and faculty engagement are crucial in increasing students' knowledge and usage of available facilities. Encouraging a culture of active facility utilization will help bridge the gap between infrastructure investment and educational outcomes, particularly in motivating students toward higher achievement in English.

This study, while revealing important insights, is limited by its sample size and scope. The research involved only 30 third-semester students in one study program at IAIN Palopo, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other faculties or institutions. Additionally, the study relied primarily on self-reported data through questionnaires and observation, which may be subject to response bias or incomplete perceptions. Future studies should consider involving larger samples, employing interviews or focus groups, and comparing different academic programs to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the relationship between educational facilities and language learning motivation.

Conclusion

This study concludes that the availability and quality of educational facilities at IAIN Palopo play a crucial role in enhancing students' motivation to study English, particularly through well-maintained resources such as the library, language laboratory, Wi-Fi, and e-learning platforms. However, the research also reveals a significant gap between infrastructure provision and its actual utilization by students, mainly due to limited access and lack of awareness. The novelty of this research lies in its identification of the dual challenge faced by educational institutions not only to invest in and provide modern learning facilities but also to ensure their effective integration into students' learning experiences. By combining observational and student perception data, the study offers a comprehensive perspective on how educational infrastructure can function as both a

motivator and a barrier in language learning, thereby highlighting the importance of strategic facility management and student engagement in maximizing learning outcomes.

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