

Intrinsic Motivation in English Language Learning: Impacts on Student Autonomy, Competence and Relatedness

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Abstract

This study assessed the level of intrinsic motivation in terms of autonomy, competence, and relatedness toward the academic performance in English of the students of Ayungon National High School (ANHS). Data gathered were analyzed using weighted mean, percentage, mean, spearman rank-order, and chi-square test. Results revealed that most of the student respondents are 14 and are represented by female students and verbal learners. There is also no relationship between their profile and intrinsic motivation. In the students' intrinsic motivation for autonomy, all the indicators were frequently true with weighted means from 3.54 to 4.03. In terms of competence, all the indicators are also frequently true, with weighted means from 3.69 to 4.08. In terms of relatedness, almost all the indicators are frequently true with weighted means of 3.75 to 3.88, except for one, which is sometimes true with a weighted mean of 3.34. The mean of the students' academic performance based on their grades is 81.78, with a verbal description of satisfactory and a standard deviation of 5.30. On the relationship between the intrinsic motivation of the students and their academic performance in English, a significant relationship exists in terms of competence ($p < .000$) and relatedness ($p < .000$), while there is no significant relationship between students' sense of autonomy and academic performance in English ($p = 0.133$). This study therefore recommends that the Learning Strategies Guide be implemented for the students to be intrinsically motivated in learning the English language.

Keywords: intrinsic motivation, autonomy, competence, relatedness, academic performance in English

Introduction

Motivation is not just a factor in language learning; it is the very bedrock upon which success is built. It ignites the drive to set ambitious goals, fuels the dedication needed for rigorous study, and empowers learners to conquer challenges. As Seven (2020) emphasizes, motivation is a profoundly significant and effective force in acquiring a new language. Without this essential impetus, students are far less likely to fully engage or perform at their peak capacity, leading to critical gaps in comprehension. Over time, these knowledge deficits can severely hinder future academic performance in any subject, as Silva (2019) highlights.

In the teaching and learning process which happens in the classroom, motivation helps students to focus their attention on a key goal or outcome. In doing so, they avoid distractions and are therefore able to maintain their attention during longer periods of time. Students who are intrinsically motivated display goal-orientated behaviors, take initiative, show resilience, harness their curiosity, care for and respect their studies and tasks, and are also equipped to orchestrate their own learning journey (Hawthorne, 2021).

Intrinsic motivation is the motivation which comes from within an individual in which a person is motivated by the enjoyment of the learning process itself or by a desire to make themselves feel better (Harmer, 2001). Lai (2011) on the other hand, states that intrinsic motivation is animated by personal enjoyment, interest, or pleasure. Maslow (1970) as cited in Brown (2000), also states that once the learners are internally motivated, they will strive for self-esteem and fulfillment. In the DepEd Order No. 018 series of 2021, it is stated that according to Cameron et al., (2001), Stakeholders highly value formal recognition program because it promotes positive reinforcement in learners' performance and behavior and influences their intrinsic motivation during low-interest and high-interest tasks. The goal is for the academic performance of students to improve specifically in English. With that, students truly need to

have intrinsic motivation. The Department of Education aims to deliver high quality education to the students for them to truly learn in all aspects, for students tend to learn effectively if they are intrinsically motivated. Meanwhile, research indicates that learners' intrinsic motivation declines developmentally and may lead to decreased academic achievement. Therefore, language learners require intrinsic motivation for learning (Shan, 2020). Research on intrinsic motivation also provides evidence for the notion of a good language learner. The literature indicates that intrinsic motivation is an essential factor in language learning because it provides internal impetus to learn a language (Dörnyei, 2005).

Intrinsic motivation makes students enjoy the learning process, look for strategies, and solve problems when facing challenges since the desire comes from their inner interest and their own goals. Activities that promote automaticity help foster intrinsic motivation arising from self-esteem, self-control, and self-regulation (Franco & Ortega, 2024). In light with that, this study aimed to assess the level of intrinsic motivation that students have toward their academic performance in English on autonomy, competence and relatedness where a Language Learning Strategies Guide is designed based on the results.

Literature Review

There are several definitions when it comes to the word: "motivation". One of those is that motivation is derived from the word "motive" which means anything that encourages a person to act or to do something (Purwanto, 2011). Dimiyati and Mudjiono (1994) stated that motivation is a mental encouragement that moves and leads human behavior. Meanwhile, for Brown (1994), motivation is something that can, like self-esteem, be global, situational, or task oriented. Motivation is also some kind of internal drive which pushes someone to do things to achieve something (Harmer, 2007). Motivation also refers to "the reasons behind an underlying behavior" (Guay et al., 2010) and is "the attribute that moves us to do or not to do something". This means that the individuals are interested to learn what they want to learn or learn the things that they must know about and do the things that must be done or what they want to do depending on their interests, because of the motivation that they have which serves as a drive for them to keep going (Gredler et al., 2004).

Moreover, motivation can be considered as the overall driving force in students which lead to learning activities (Sardiman, 2012). Hikmat (2009) says that it is the impetus or stimulus given to a person to have the will to act. Brophy (2004) also defined it as a theoretical concept that is used to explain the beginning, direction, force, and existence of goal-oriented behavior.

Furthermore, Ainley, M. & Ainley, J. (2011) explained that it is an attribute that instigates movements, energy, direction, the reason for our behavior and "what" and "why" we do something. The nature of motivation to learn is an encouragement to students who are learning to hold a change of behavior. Students' motivation in the learning process can be seen from their behavior in learning such as students who have high motivation to learn, diligently work on the task, resiliently face the adversity, show interest in a variety of problems, prefer to work independently, and they do not get bored in doing the task based on their learning styles (Hamzah, 2011).

Not everyone learns the same way. Educators and others who present information to learners can enhance the effectiveness of instructional activities by incorporating strategies that appeal to students across all types of learning styles (White, 2020). There are different learning styles. Here is an overview of the different learning styles: Visual - Visual learners retain knowledge best by what they see, and retain more knowledge from the use of charts, graphs and spreadsheets than from oral lectures or other more auditory teaching aids. Auditory - gain the most knowledge from what they hear. Lectures and discussion methods can be effective with people who prefer to learn this way. Teaching Strategies that involve the use of music or other forms of sound can also be beneficial to auditory learners. Physical - Physical learners tend to retain knowledge the best when they learn through hands-on activities and when they move around while learning. Verbal - Verbal learners tend to learn best using words, including via reading, writing and speaking. They tend to learn well when provided with opportunities to discuss, explain, present, or write about information they are learning. Logical/Mathematical Learning Style - People with logical/mathematical learning style tend to learn best through finding patterns or otherwise organizing information into logical structures. Social Learners - Learns most effectively when they have opportunities to collaborate and engage with others as they are learning.

Solitary - Prefers to learn individually and learns most effectively through visual, auditory, physical, verbal, or logical approaches to acquiring new information (White, 2020).

Intrinsic motivation is defined as the motivation to engage in behavior because of the inherent satisfaction of the activity rather than the desire for a reward or specific outcome (Cherry, 2023). Li (2022) mentions that intrinsic motivation is an inner drive that propels a person to pursue an activity, because the action itself is enjoyable. Intrinsically motivated activities are the ones for which there is no apparent reward except the activity itself (Deci, 1975).

Meanwhile, Brown (1994) defined intrinsic motivation as activities that one does without expecting any apparent reward except for the activity itself. Intrinsic motivation stems from the student's needs, wants, or desires. Intrinsic motivation is important because it refers to the desire to fulfill a task that leads individuals to feel a sense of personal enjoyment and control when taking part in the task. When the motivations of individuals are self-determined, they become more involved in activities and make efforts to reach challenging goals (Deci & Ryan, 1985). In addition, intrinsically motivated activities are not a means to an end. They are the ends themselves; the motivation to perform an activity is for the experience of the activity itself and not for the gain of future rewards (Deci, 1980). Intrinsic motivation is engaging in an activity because it is enjoyable and satisfying to do. They believe that intrinsic motivation is based on instinctive needs for competence and self-determination (Deci & Ryan, 2000).

Furthermore, intrinsically motivated learners are more likely to continue their studies and simply participate in an activity for the pleasure of learning the language (Wu, 2003). Apart from this, learners of the English language are more likely to be intrinsically motivated to perform better in terms of writing skills if their teacher allows them to write about a topic of their selection or interest. This result implies that for students to improve in writing, they must boost their intrinsic motivation by writing about topics of choice/interest (Alzubi & Nazim, 2024).

Meanwhile, students who have intrinsic motivation are inclined to stay with intricate and complicated problems and gain knowledge from their slips and mistakes (Walker et al., 2006). Besides, intrinsic motivation is essential and fundamental for the integration process through which elements of one's accessible internal awareness and knowledge are assimilated or mixed with new knowledge. In this research, the researcher will analyze the intrinsic motivation. To come to the point, intrinsic motivation refers to motivation to do an activity itself. In fact, the individuals who are intrinsically motivated do and practice the activities and works because they feel that those activities are enjoyable. Intrinsic motivation refers to behaviors done that are inherently interesting and enjoyable (Deci & Ryan, 2000). For example, when people are intrinsically motivated, they play, explore, and engage in activities for the inherent fun, challenge, and excitement of doing so. Self-determination theory (SDT) (Deci & Ryan, 2000) explains human motivation by focusing on the importance of human internal resources for development and behavior regulation. In this theory, humans are assumed to have active, endogenous tendencies toward psychological growth and integration. On the other hand, although "intrinsic motivation is not the only form of motivation", it is "pervasive and important" (Deci & Ryan, 2000).

Deci & Ryan (2002) also examined three categories of motivation that affect achievement, wherein one of those is Intrinsic motivation. In this type of motivation, if the factors that direct the individual to a certain behavior comes from his own inner world, in a manner that is independent of the drives outside of the individual, this is intrinsic motivation. The main sources of intrinsic motivation are the interest, curiosity and needs of the individual. Actions which are performed through intrinsic motivation, and which originate from these sources are inherently rewarding for the individual, thus no additional motive or punishment is needed. In this case, the individual is expected to display behaviors such as volunteerism, willingness and making a choice (Deci & Ryan, 2000).

According to Deci, and Ryan (2016) Intrinsic motivation directs an individual to participate in academic activities only to experience the fun, challenging and uniqueness without any external pressure or compulsion rather than expecting external rewards, gifts or under any compulsion or pressure. Intrinsic motivation spreads positivity and makes the gained knowledge sustain for a long time (Gopalan, et al., 2017). Furthermore, Intrinsic motivation has been defined as (a) participation in an activity purely out of curiosity, that is, from a need to know more about something (Deci, 1975; Gottfried, 1983; Woolfolk, 1990); (b) the desire to engage in an activity purely for the sake of participating in and completing a task (Bates, 1979; Deci et al., 1991); and (c) the desire to contribute (Mills, 1991).

Moreover, intrinsic motivation has been measured by (a) the ability of the learner to persist with the task assigned; (b) the amount of time spent by the student on tackling the task (Brophy, 1983; Gottfried, 1983); (c) the innate curiosity to learn; (d) the feeling of efficacy related to an activity Gottfried (1983); (e) the desire to select an activity Brophy (1983); and (f) a combination of all these variables (Deci, 1975; Deci & Ryan, 1985). A student who is intrinsically motivated will persist with the assigned task, even though it may be difficult (Gottfried, 1983; Schunk, 1990) and will not need any type of reward or incentive to initiate or complete a task (Beck, 1978; Deci, 1975; Woolfolk, 1990). Students with a high level of intrinsic motivation sometimes become so focused on and absorbed in an activity that they lose track of time and completely ignore other tasks (Ormrod, 2003). Traditionally, educators consider intrinsic motivation to be more desirable and to result in better learning outcomes (Deci et al., 1999).

One of the most widely cited contemporary theories of intrinsic motivation is Self-Determination Theory, developed by Edward Deci and Richard Ryan. In their self-determination theory, Professors Richard Ryan and Edward Deci propose that human motivation can be approached in the same way that the motivation of any self-determined can be approached, and they see that certain elements motivate human beings in all contexts: (1) autonomy, (2) competence, and (3) relatedness. Intrinsic motivation develops out of the support of these needs. When people feel competent, autonomous, and self-determined, they will freely seek what interests them (Deci & Ryan, 2000).

Intrinsic motivation is a desire which comes from within an individual, to try to achieve the goal. When the learners have intrinsic motivation, they will show their attitude in the classroom such as they want to learn English because they like and enjoy learning it. According to Harmer (2007), a person is motivated by the enjoyment of the learning process itself or by the desire to make themselves feel better. People do certain activities because it gives them pleasure and develops a particular skill based on their internal desire. Intrinsically motivated students are bound to do much better in classroom activities, because they are willing and eager to learn new things. Their learning experience is more meaningful, and they go deeper into the subject to fully understand it. Intrinsic motivation energizes and sustains activities through the spontaneous satisfactions inherent in effective volitional action (Deci et al., 1999).

As a motivational orientation, intrinsic motivation refers to learners' attitudes toward "the language, their learning aims and goals, their emotions, their ambitions and so on" (Daskalovska et al., 2012). People with intrinsic motivation exhibit inherent interest and enjoyment (Ryan & Deci, 2000) and participate in an activity "for its own self-sustaining pleasurable rewards of enjoyment, interest, challenge, or skill and knowledge development" (Ushioda, 2008). Furthermore, (Lee et al., 2010) proposed that elements of intrinsic motivation include feeling enthusiasm for involvement in tasks, "experiencing adventure and novelty, striving for excellence in one's work, trying to understand something and wishing to improve, and goal direction". They point out that with intrinsic motivation, the learners become passionate when it comes to learning and in doing the tasks, while seeking to excel in accomplishing the tasks. With this type of motivation, the learners also strive to understand what they are learning more, aiming to be better individuals. According to Gardner (1985) and Karagöl (2008), intrinsic motivation plays a more critical role in learning. Intrinsic motivation is positively associated with "high-quality learning and creativity" (Deci & Ryan, 2000).

Then 'interest' is identified as one of the major elements of intrinsic motivation, which is defined as a positive response to stimuli for which learners' curiosity is aroused and sustained. Students are considered motivated if they become productively engaged in learning tasks provided in the classroom and sustain that engagement without further encouragement or direction (Crookes & Schmidt, 1991). Moreover, Deci and Ryan (1985) believe that intrinsic motivation is founded upon innate needs for competence and self-determination. They hypothesize that when people are free to choose to perform an activity, they will seek interesting situations where they can rise to the challenges that the activity presents. By striving to meet these challenges, learners develop a sense of competence in their abilities. Ryan and Deci (2000) posit that no single phenomenon reflects the positive potential of human nature as much as intrinsic motivation, which is defined as the inherent tendency to seek out novelty and challenges, to extend and exercise one's capacities, to explore, and to learn. Developmentalists acknowledge that from time of birth, children, in their earliest and healthiest states, are active, inquisitive, curious, and playful, even in the absence of rewards. The whole construct of intrinsic motivation describes this natural inclination toward assimilation, mastery, spontaneous interest, and exploration that is so essential to cognitive and social development and that represents a principal source of enjoyment throughout life (Csikszentmihalyi & Rathunde, 1993; Ryan & Deci, 2000).

Furthermore, Harmer (2001) points out that intrinsic motivation is that which comes from within the individual in which a person might be motivated by the enjoyment of the learning process itself or by a desire to make themselves feel better. Intrinsic motivation is animated by personal enjoyment, interest, or pleasure. Thus, the intrinsic motivation in English language learning is about the enjoyment of language learning itself. With intrinsic motivation, a language learner is encouraged to do a task or engage in a classroom activity purely because of enjoyment or fun (Lai, 2011). Meanwhile, Self-determination theory suggests that people are motivated to grow and change by three innate and universal psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Cherry, 2024).

Autonomy is the idea that we are in control of our own life and can make our own choices and set our own goals. Feeling in control helps us feel more committed, passionate, interested, and satisfied with what we do (Ventures, 2023). In Autonomy, people need to feel in control of their own behaviors and goals. This sense of being able to take direct action that will result in real change plays a major part in helping people feel self-determined (Cherry, 2024). According to Ryan and Deci (2017), autonomy is also supported by attempting to grasp and acknowledge the person's wishes, preferences, and perspectives, conveying understanding of their point of view, providing a rationale for engaging in a behavior, and providing choice in how to behave. Autonomy is also the strongest predictor of intrinsic motivation, which is defined as the self-endorsement of actions, or the sense of self-determination over behaviors (Ryan & Deci, 2008).

Meanwhile, Ryan & Deci (2017) have shown that autonomy is an important determinant of intrinsic motivation; students are more likely to be intrinsically motivated when they feel empowered to make decisions in the pursuit of their goals and interests. Autonomy is also a basic psychological need, satisfaction of which may lead to enhanced intrinsic motivation and related beneficial outcomes. Among these universal human needs, autonomy is one of the strongest predictors of intrinsic motivation, which is defined as the self-endorsement of actions, or the sense of self-determination over behaviors (Deci & Ryan, 2008).

The need for autonomy concerns people's universal urge to be causal agents, to experience volition, to act in accordance with their integrated sense of self such as with their interests and values, and to endorse their actions at the highest level of reflective capacity (De Charms, 1968). To be autonomous does not mean to be independent of others, but rather it means to feel a sense of willingness and choice when acting, whether the actions are independently initiated or are in response to a request from significant others (Chirkov et al., 2003). Autonomy is also about the need to feel ownership of one's behavior (Liu et al., 2014; Wang et al., 2017).

Competence is about feeling effective in our environment and that we have the skills needed for success—and that there is a possibility to learn and master new skills. Gaining mastery over challenges and taking in new experiences is how we develop a sense of self (Ventures, 2023). In competence, people need to gain mastery of tasks and learn different skills. When people feel that they have the skills needed for success, they are more likely to take that will help them achieve their goals (Cherry, 2024). Ryan and Deci (2017) also pointed out that competence is supported by providing the person with optimal challenges and opportunities (specific goals that are challenging enough, but not overwhelming), encouraging their sense of initiation, providing structure (for example, evidence-based recommendations) to mobilize and organize behavior and providing relevant feedback.

Competence refers to having the feeling of being capable of meeting the demands of the environment and facing daily challenges. Such need can be fulfilled by the experiences of enacting and achieving desired goals and having effective outcomes (Hui, & Tsang, 2012). In many ways, competence is the heart of motivation; students are much more likely to engage in a task when they feel like they can do the work (Bandura, 1997). The need for competence concerns people's inherent desire to be effective in dealing with the environment (White, 1959). Competence also refers to the need to produce desired outcomes and to experience mastery (Liu et al., 2014; Wang et al., 2017).

Relatedness is about the sense of belonging or attachment to other people. It is a feeling that matters. This is a two-way street—we foster relatedness by connecting with others and they foster it by connecting with us (Ventures, 2023). Ryan and Deci (2017) also highlighted that relatedness is supported when others are involved and show interest in the person's activities, are emphatic in responding to their feelings and convey that the person is significant, cared for, and loved.

The need for *relatedness* refers to building a sense of community with others that comes with the experience of close and warm relationships characterized by mutual care and concern (Baumeister and Leary, 1995; Deci and Ryan, 2002). Relatedness is about the need to achieve a sense of closeness, connectedness, and belongingness with others. The satisfaction of the need for relatedness will provide emotional security for further exploration. Feelings of closeness to significant others such as parents and teachers will facilitate the process of internalization of values, social norms, and practice. Hence, socioemotional relatedness is pertinent to internalization and the subsequent motivation and self-regulation to engage in tasks demanded by others (Hui, & Tsang, 2012).

The need for relatedness concerns the universal propensity to interact with, be connected to, and experience caring for other people (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). When students feel cared for within the learning community, they are more likely to engage in learning. It is specifically about the students' perception of how they fit in the environment (Walton & Brady, 2017). Relatedness also refers to the need to feel connected to others in every human being (Liu et al., 2014; Wang et al., 2017).

The term "English" is derived from *Anglisc*, the speech of the Angles—one of the three Germanic tribes that invaded England during the fifth century. The English language is the primary language of several countries, including Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and many of its former colonies, and the United States, and the second language in a number of multilingual countries, including India, Singapore, and the Philippines.

It is an official language in several African countries as well, such as Liberia, Nigeria, and South Africa, but is spoken worldwide in more than 100. It's learned around the world by children in school as a foreign language and often becomes a common denominator between people of different nationalities when they meet while traveling, doing business, or in other contexts.

According to Christine Kenneally in her book "The First Word," "Today there are about 6,000 languages in the world, and half of the world's population speaks only 10 of them. English is the single most dominant of these 10. British colonialism initiated the spread of English across the globe; it has been spoken nearly everywhere and has become even more prevalent since World War II, with the global reach of American power." The influence of the English language has also spread globally through American pop culture, music, movies, advertising, and TV shows (Nordquist, 2024).

English Language Learning refers to the process of developing higher-level reading and writing skills in academic English, especially for English language learners who may take several years to achieve proficiency in English writing and reading (Liu & Xu, 2025).

Moreover, Oxford (2003) states that the earlier the children learn foreign language, the easier for them to master the language. On the other hand, O'Brien (2006) states that more people learn English today because English plays an important role in human's life. In addition, Richards (2015), said that learning English is essential in today's generation for it can be used in adapting to global communication, literature, media, and work in the present and future.

There are two dimensions to foreign language learning: inside and outside the classroom. In today's world, the Internet, the media, and the use of English face-to-face and through social networks provide more opportunities for meaningful and authentic language use than what is available inside the classroom (Richards, 2010).

Age describes how old a person is at a particular point in time. It is defined as the measure of the time elapsed from date of live birth to a specific point in time. Typically conceptualized as a fixed characteristic or objective unit signifying the length of time for which someone has lived or something has existed. Age is considered a universal phenomenon which includes the characteristics of an individual's biological and social life (Sanghi, 2022).

Motivation and learning are affected by age. The effects of age on motivation and learning have been explored in various contexts. In the context of second language acquisition, it was found that factors such as motivation and language exposure play a more important role in achieving successful second language competence (Stefansson, 2013).

Sex refers to the classification, generally as male or female, according to the reproductive organs and functions that derive from the chromosomal complement (Mazure, 2021). Sex is also about the biological and physiological characteristics that define humans as female or male. These sets of biological characteristics are not mutually exclusive, as there are individuals who possess both, but these characteristics tend to differentiate humans as females or males. It also refers to the different biological and physiological characteristics of males and females, such as reproductive organs, chromosomes, hormones, etc. Sex is usually assigned at birth (there are examples when it is assigned later, when sex characteristics do not clearly indicate the sex of the baby, for example in the case of 'intersex' people) (Schneider et al., 2024).

Academic performance is the extent to which a student, teacher or institution has attained their short or long-term educational goals. Completion of educational benchmarks such as secondary school diplomas and bachelor's degrees represent academic achievement. It is commonly measured through examinations or continuous assessments but there is no general agreement on how it is best evaluated or which aspects are most important—procedural knowledge such as skills or declarative knowledge such as facts. Furthermore, there are inconclusive results over which individual factors successfully predict academic performance, elements such as test anxiety, environment, motivation, and emotions require consideration when developing models of school achievement (Plucker, 2024).

Methodology

Research Design

The quantitative design was used in this study to find out the Intrinsic Motivation in English Language Learning: Impacts on Student Autonomy, Competence and Relatedness. The statistical data needed for this research were gathered and carefully analyzed, which led to the results. The quantitative data that were gathered were the profile of the students such as their age, sex, and their learning styles. The respondents of the study answered the survey questionnaires that were distributed to them where the researcher gathered the data needed for the study.

Research Method

The study followed the descriptive-survey method wherein the self-assessment questionnaires were used. The questionnaires were given to the respondents for the collection of data needed for this research. Descriptive-survey design was appropriate in this research since this design determined the Intrinsic Motivation in English Language Learning: Impacts on Student Autonomy, Competence and Relatedness.

Sampling Method

The sampling method that was used in this study was Simple Random Sampling. Simple random sampling is a type of probability sampling in which the researcher randomly selected a subset of participants from a population. Each member of the population had an equal chance of being selected. Data was then collected from as large a percentage as possible of this random subset. Simple Random Sampling was used in this study for the entire population of Grade 9 students of Ayungon National High School was too large. To determine the number of respondents for the study, Slovin's formula was utilized.

Research Environment

This study was conducted in Ayungon National High School which is one of the schools under the Division of Negros Oriental of the Department of Education, and is one of the secondary schools particularly, of Ayungon I District. The respondents gave their responses through survey questionnaires.

Research Respondents

The respondents of this study were the Grade 9 Junior High School students of Ayungon National High School. The tool for the data gathering procedure was given to them. To determine the number of respondents of the study, Slovin's formula was used, for Simple Random Sampling was utilized in this study.

Research Instrument

The research instrument used in this study was a revised, adapted survey questionnaire that was pilot tested and validated. Cronbach's Alpha is also used, wherein the result is 0.70. With that, the items are reliable. Several questions

were manifested in the questionnaire, asking the respondents to indicate the needed data that were gathered, which included their age, sex, and learning styles. These were found in the First Part of the questionnaire. The second part of the questionnaire, on the other hand, contained questions to determine the intrinsic motivation of the respondents, which gave a significant impact when it came to Intrinsic Motivation in English Language on Student Autonomy, Competence, and Relatedness. A Likert Scale was used for the second part of the questionnaire.

Data Gathering Procedure

Prior to the data gathering procedure, the researcher asked for permission to the Master Teacher who is the head of the English Department of the School. After the approval, the researcher then asked for permission from the Principal of Ayungon National High School and the first endorsement was given which was forwarded to the District I office that led to the second endorsement. It was then forwarded to the Division Office, and the third endorsement was granted. After the approval, the data gathering procedure was done.

Close-ended Survey Questionnaires were given to the respondents during one of their classes for the researcher to gather the data needed for the study. The Survey Questionnaire makes use of the rating scale. The researcher administered the survey questionnaires to the respondents for the data to be gathered for it still needed to be carefully analyzed and interpreted to come up with valid results. During the administration of the questionnaire, the researcher emphasized that she is referring to the way the student respondents learn the English language. After the administration of the survey questionnaires to the students, the researcher gathered the data.

Statistical Treatment of Data

The statistical tools used in this study in analyzing and interpreting the data collected by the researcher are Slovin's Formula, Weighted Mean, Percentage and Mean, as well as Spearman Rank-Order Correlation.

Ethical Standards

The study was conducted according to the ethical standards, rules and regulations that must be followed in conducting the study and what needs to be considered most especially when it comes to the school.

Informed Consent

The researcher asked for consent to the respondents and the people involved to conduct the study through written consents where they were informed about the purpose of conducting the study, their rights such as the right for data privacy where the needed data that were gathered for the study were only used for the study conducted alone with their permission to be used in the study, confidentiality, data protection, potential risks and benefits.

Confidentiality

The data were kept private and confidential. Writing the names of the respondents on the survey questionnaires is optional. The data gathered was also in a secure place.

Data Protection

The researcher did the necessary things that must be done for the data that were gathered to be truly protected. The data were placed in a secure place that is not accessible to anyone.

Potential Risks

There were no potential risks involved in conducting this study. The respondents had the right to give the needed data through questionnaires or not to do so. They chose to identify if they prefer to, or not.

Benefits

There were no benefits attached when conducting the study however since the study was about the Intrinsic Motivation in English Language on Student Autonomy, Competence and Relatedness, the results of the study can aid the School Administrators, English Language teachers, students and parents as the ones mentioned in the significance of the study, and the entire community.

Results

This study was conducted to aid the students for their academic performance in English to improve while employing strategies based on Intrinsic Motivation. One hundred fifty-three (153) student-respondents were used in the study, and these respondents were identified using Simple Random Sampling. This study, aimed to determine intrinsic motivation's influence on Ayungon National High School's student respondents' academic performance in English. More specifically, this study investigated the profile of students in terms of their age, sex; and learning style as well as their academic performance in English based on their grades in English.

On the level of intrinsic motivation of the students, the researcher sought survey-based answers. On the other hand, the significant relationship between the students' profile and intrinsic motivation as well as the significant correlation between the intrinsic motivation of the students and their academic performance in English were computed and interpreted statistically. Moreover, the results of the study are used to produce a language learning strategies guide.

To provide answers to the sub-problems above, the researcher utilized a revised adapted survey questionnaires that were pilot tested and validated regarding intrinsic motivation based on autonomy, competence, and relatedness which are the constructs of Self-Determination Theory, developed by Edward Deci and Richard Ryan (1985) to identify the intrinsic motivation of the students based on those constructs.

Meanwhile, the descriptive - survey method of research was used in this study to find out the Intrinsic Motivation's Influence on Student's academic performance in English and to assess whether significant relationship exist between their profile and intrinsic motivation and if their intrinsic motivation also has a significant effect on the students' academic performance in English.

Based on the data gathered, classified, tabulated, computed, and interpreted, the following findings were drawn. This study examined the intrinsic motivation of 153 Grade 9 students at Ayungon National High School and its relationship to their academic performance in English. Most respondents were 14 years old (71.24%) and female (55.56%), with verbal learners being the most common learning style (24.18%).

The findings indicated no statistically significant relationship between student profile variables (age, sex, learning style) and any of the three components of intrinsic motivation (autonomy, competence, relatedness).

However, students generally demonstrated favorable levels of intrinsic motivation across all three components. In terms of autonomy, they frequently engaged in self-directed learning behaviors like choosing learning approaches, using supplementary materials, and engaging with English media outside of class. For competence, students often reported improving their English, mastering the language for future opportunities, feeling satisfied with challenging activities, and experiencing confidence and accomplishment when speaking English. In relatedness, students enjoyed interacting in English, felt connected through the language and culture, and desired fluent English for meaningful relationships.

Academically, the students' mean performance in English was 81.78, described as "Satisfactory." Crucially, a significant relationship was found between students' intrinsic motivation in terms of competence and relatedness, and their academic performance in English. This suggests that higher levels of competence and relatedness behaviors are linked to better English grades. Conversely, no significant relationship was observed between autonomy and academic performance.

Discussion

Out of 153 student respondents, 25 or 16.34% of them are 13 years old while 109 or 71.24% of them are 14 years old. On the other hand, 16 or 10.46% out of 153 are 15 years old. Lastly, 3 or 1.96% of them are 16 years old and above. Clearly, students who are 14 years old dominated the student population of Ayungon National High School.

Another inherent moderating variable is the students' sex. Table 2 above indicates the sex of the population of student respondents. Results show that out of 153 students, 68 or 44.44% of them are Male. On the other hand, out of 153 students, 85 or 55.56% of them are Female. It is apparent that Female students dominated the student population in Ayungon National High School.

The third inherent variable from the students respondents is their learning style. Table 3 above shows the results. Out of 153 students, 36 or 23.53% of them are Visual learners while 11 or 7.19% are Auditory learners. Meanwhile, 37 or 24.18% out of 153 students are Verbal learners while 13 or 8.50% are Physical learners. Moreover, 3 or 1.96% out of 153 students are logical learners while 26 or 16.99% are Social Learners. Lastly, 27 or 17.65% are solitary learners. The table above clearly indicates that students who are Verbal learners dominate.

For autonomy, the p-values for age ($p = 0.244$), sex ($p = 0.284$), and learning style ($p = 0.108$) all exceed the significance level of 0.05. This leads to the decision failing to reject the null hypothesis, indicating that there is no significant relationship between these variables and students' sense of autonomy. A study by Onturk and Yildiz (2020) examined an association between examinees' age and their motivation levels found no significant difference in students' motivation. A study by Davidovitch & Dorot (2023) also found no gender effects in learners' motivation and that there is no statistically significant difference between men's and women's motivation for learning. Meanwhile, the result of the study of Moneva, et al., (2020) show that there is no significant association between students' learning styles and self-motivation.

Similarly, in the case of competence, age ($p = 0.086$), sex ($p = 0.866$), and learning style ($p = 0.442$) also show no significant relationships. This means that competence levels among students appear to be independent of their age, gender, or learning preferences. Results reveal that age did not significantly affect the intrinsic motivation of the students (Momanyi, et al., 2015). A study by Chung and Chang (2016) found no gender effects on motivation for learning.

These researchers examined the association between gender and motivation in the context of learning a digital game and found no significance in the gender differences in game performance levels. The researchers believed that when learners are interested in a game, their motivation is naturally higher, irrespective of their gender (Davidovitch & Dorot, 2023). Study revealed that there is no significant association between student motivation and learning styles (Shih & Gamon, 2001).

In terms of relatedness, the findings again show no significant relationships with age ($p = 0.170$), sex ($p = 0.795$), or learning style ($p = 0.433$). All p-values are well above 0.05 level, indicating that these demographics and learning variables do not have an impact on how students feel connected or related to others in their learning environment. The results of the study show that there is no significant difference between the motivation of learners and their age (Onturk & Yildiz, 2020). The research of Maza, et al., (2025) on the other hand, revealed that intrinsic motivation was not influenced by gender. The results of the study of Topu, (2023) also pointed out that there are no significant differences between categories of each learning style dimension in terms of motivation and perception.

Overall, the data suggest that students' intrinsic motivation—whether measured through autonomy, competence, or relatedness—is not significantly influenced by their age, sex, or preferred learning style. This implies that intrinsic motivation may be shaped more by other internal or environmental factors rather than these specific demographic attributes. In the study of Momanyi, et al., (2015), it was found that age had no significant effect on academic motivation. Academic intrinsic motivation (AIM) is enjoyment of school learning, and performance of activities for their own sake, in which pleasure is inherent in the activity itself (Gottfried, 2019). Akram and Ghani (2013) studied gender differences in motivation for English language studies and found no statistically significant difference between genders in their approach to or motivation for learning. The study of Ahmad & Andini, (2024) also found no significant effect between learning styles and learning concentration.

In the level of intrinsic motivation of the students in terms of Autonomy, all of the indicators were *frequently true* with Weighted Means ranging from 3.54 – 4.03. All those indicators refer to the students' intrinsic motivation on autonomy for having choices that allow students to feel empowered that they have control or ownership over their own learning (McCombs, 2025). Holec (1981) also defines learner autonomy as follows: “to take charge of one's own learning is to have, and to hold, the responsibility for all the decisions concerning the objectives, the contents and progressions, methods and techniques to be used, monitoring the procedure of acquisition, and its evaluation. Benson (2001) on the other hand, states that on autonomy, the learner directs his/her metacognitive and cognitive processes which also requires taking decisions on the content to be learned.

For the level of intrinsic motivation of the students in terms of Competency, all of the indicators were also *frequently true* with weighted means from of 3.69 to 4.08. All those indicators are about intrinsic motivation on students' competence for according to Gardner and Lambert (1972), learners are motivated to learn when they think of themselves as competent persons, deal with materials arranged to their level, see goal in their activities, see their studies as significant, are given difficult work, live in a safe environment, have the chance to express psychological needs for success, recognition, and acceptance, think that the learning is for them and not for their teachers, work with interesting materials, have opportunity to make decisions and feel responsibility for participating, and experience more success than failure.

In the level of intrinsic motivation of the students in terms of Relatedness, it can be manifested that the five (5) or almost all of the indicators were frequently true with weighted means ranging from 3.75 to 3.88. While one of the indicators was sometimes true with a weighted mean of 3.34. Those indicators refer to the students' intrinsic motivation on relatedness for they express belonging and the sharing of experiences using the language (Hutman, et al., 2012). People's desires are also fulfilled when they clearly express their ideas and opinions with others. With that, they need to learn communication skills to fulfill their ambitions, desires, and goals which include relating with others (Rao, 2019).

Out of 153 student respondents, 21 or 13.73% of them have a rating of 90%-100% with a Verbal Description of Outstanding. While 24 or 15.68% of them have a grade of 85%-89% or Very Satisfactory. 37 or 24.18% out of 153 student respondents have grades which ranges from 80%-84% with a Verbal Description of Satisfactory. Lastly, out of 153 student respondents, 71 or 46.41% of them have a rating of 75%-79% or Fairly Satisfactory. The mean of the English language learning of the students based on their grades in English is 81.78 with a verbal description of Satisfactory and a Standard Deviation of 5.30.

Using Spearman's Rank Order Correlation, the data reflect that there is no significant relationship between students' sense of autonomy and academic performance in English ($p = 0.133$). This means that changes in the autonomy behaviors of the students are not associated with the shifts in their Academic Performance in English. These findings are consistent with Soliman & Gorospe's (2024) assertion that learner autonomy in the academic performance in English does not affect English language proficiency based on the results of their study which shows that there is no significant relationship between the level of learner autonomy in Academic Performance in English of junior high school students of Ayungon National High School and their English language proficiency ($r=0.103$, $p=0.211$).

A significant relationship exists between the students' intrinsic motivation in terms of competence ($p<.000$) and their academic performance in English. This finding signifies that students who manifest better competence behaviors tend to acquire better academic performance in English. The results obtained were similar with the study of Merdekawati, R., et. al. (2023) where it is revealed that the conclusion for competence factor was most of the students can be said to be competent when they feel able to meet the challenges in their academic performance in English as shown in their answers from the questionnaire given to them.

A significant relationship exists as well between the students' intrinsic motivation in terms of relatedness ($p<.000$) and their academic performance in English. The conclusion for relatedness factor was most of the students felt the psychological sense of being with others, whether they are fellow students or teachers in learning activity. This concept of relatedness includes feeling connected and taking participation in learning activities, like asking questions if they do not understand the material or just a feeling to look good in front of their peers.

Conclusion

Based on the findings from the study on Grade 9 students at Ayungon National High School, several key conclusions can be drawn regarding their intrinsic motivation in English language learning and its relationship to academic performance.

Firstly, the demographic profile of the student respondents—including their age, sex, and learning style—does not significantly influence their intrinsic motivation in terms of autonomy, competence, or relatedness. This suggests that

intrinsic motivation for English learning is not inherently tied to these basic personal characteristics among the studied population.

Secondly, the Grade 9 students generally exhibit high levels of intrinsic motivation in English language learning across all three dimensions. Their motivation is frequently observed in behaviors reflecting: choosing a learning approach that keeps them motivated to learn English outside class, deciding to use additional materials and electronic devices for learning English outside class, choosing to engage in outside class activities related to language learning, choosing to watch movies and listen to songs in English, and choosing to note down interesting words or expressions in English (autonomy); improving themselves when they study the English language, mastering the English language for future opportunities, feeling satisfied when they complete challenging activities in English, enjoying the high feeling while they speak English, feeling skilled and confident when speaking English, and feeling a strong sense of accomplishment when they speak English (competence); and enjoying interacting with people using the English language, learning the language to feel more connected to people and culture, studying English because they enjoy the connection they feel when they hear English spoken by native speakers, feeling excited when they can share something they have learned with others, and wanting to speak English fluently to build meaningful relationships with English speakers (relatedness).

Thirdly, while the overall academic performance in English for these students is "Satisfactory," the study identifies a crucial link between specific intrinsic motivation factors and academic outcomes. There is a significant positive relationship between students' intrinsic motivation in terms of competence and relatedness, and their academic performance in English. This implies that students who feel more skilled and confident in their English abilities and who feel more connected to others through the English language tend to achieve better grades in English.

Finally, in contrast to competence and relatedness, the study concludes that students' sense of autonomy in English learning does not have a significant relationship with their academic performance. This suggests that while students may frequently choose to engage in self-directed learning activities, these autonomous behaviors, by themselves, do not directly correlate with their English grades in this specific context.

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