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The Relationship between Gender and Learning Motivation and Readiness for Independent Learning among Upper Secondary School Students in Bantul

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ABSTRACT
The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between gender and learning motivation with readiness for independent learning among senior high school students in Bantul. Although students' readiness for independent learning is considered an important factor in supporting successful learning processes, the influence of demographic and internal factors on this readiness remains insufficiently understood. Materials and methods. This study employed a quantitative approach with a correlational research design. Data were collected through questionnaires measuring learning motivation and readiness for independent learning. The participants consisted of 168 tenth-grade students selected from a population of 288 students using simple random sampling. The collected data were analysed using Pearson's correlation test with the assistance of SPSS software. Results. The findings revealed that there was no significant relationship between gender and students' readiness for independent learning. However, a significant relationship was found between learning motivation and readiness for independent learning. Students with higher learning motivation tended to demonstrate greater readiness for independent learning. Conclusions. This study concludes that learning motivation plays an important role in improving students' readiness for independent learning, while gender does not significantly influence such readiness. The findings highlight the importance of strengthening students' learning motivation in order to support and enhance independent learning among secondary school students.

Keywords: gender, learning motivation, readiness for independent learning, senior high school students, quantitative study

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INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is a developmental period characterised by rapid physical, cognitive and emotional changes that influence pupils' behaviour and readiness to learn at school. During early to mid-adolescence, individuals begin to experience a search for self-identity, an increase in abstract thinking skills, and emotional instability, which can impact motivation and engagement in learning (Suryana et al., 2022; Ismatuddiyanah et al., 2023). These changes also make adolescents more sensitive to their social and academic environments, making school support essential to ensure that this development leads to positive learning behaviour (Sapara et al., 2020).

In high school teaching practice, lecture-based methods, group discussions, and cooperative learning are still widely used. However, the success of learning is not determined solely by the methods used by teachers, but also by students' internal readiness to engage with the learning process (Maksum & Hanif, 2025). Students who possess good learning strategies, active engagement and mental readiness tend to achieve more optimal learning outcomes compared to passive students (Azis &

Ma'rufah, 2025; Isnaini et al., 2026). This indicates that students' internal factors play a significant role in the success of the learning process.

One of the internal factors influencing learning success is learning motivation. Learning motivation is an internal drive that encourages students to engage in learning activities, maintain their efforts, and achieve specific academic goals (Utami et al., 2024; Manik et al., 2024). Students with high learning motivation tend to be more diligent, active, and less likely to give up when facing learning difficulties (Zulisa et al., 2025; Kusumaningtyas et al., 2024). Conversely, low learning motivation can lead to a lack of student participation in learning and result in poor learning outcomes (Nyoman et al., 2025).

In addition to learning motivation, learning readiness is also a key factor in supporting the success of the learning process. Learning readiness reflects students' physical, mental, and emotional condition in engaging effectively with the learning process (Suciati et al., 2022). Students with good learning readiness tend to be more focused, active, and better able to understand the material (Langmui et al., 2025). Learning readiness that develops continuously fosters learning autonomy, which is the student's ability to manage and direct their own learning process (Rudiawan et al., 2025). Learning autonomy is a vital competence in modern education, which demands that students be more active and self-reliant.

Learners with a high level of independent learning generally demonstrate responsibility towards tasks, time-management skills, self-confidence, and initiative in seeking out learning resources (Rohmatin & Sudarwanto, 2025). Conversely, low levels of self-directed learning can lead to dependence on teachers, a lack of participation, and difficulties in achieving optimal learning outcomes (Ilmaknun & Ulfah, 2023). Research also indicates that learning motivation has a positive relationship with self-directed learning and students' academic readiness (Sariwana & Mardiah, 2021).

A preliminary study conducted at State Senior High School 2 Bantul revealed that students' learning motivation and readiness for independent learning remain varied. Some students demonstrate high motivation, yet there are still students who lack the will to learn, rarely study at home, give up easily, and lack confidence in participating in lessons. In terms of learning readiness, behaviours such as studying only when there is homework, being less active in class, and failing to prepare before lessons began were also observed. These findings align with research indicating that differences in individual characteristics, including gender, can influence students' motivation and learning behaviour (Lumbantoruan et al., 2024; Rizanty et al., 2025).

Based on the above, further research is required into the factors associated with students' readiness for independent learning. Learning motivation, as an internal psychological factor, and gender, as an individual characteristic, are thought to be related to students' readiness for independent learning. Therefore, this study aims to analyse the relationship between gender and learning motivation and readiness for independent learning among senior secondary school students in Bantul. It is hoped that the research findings will contribute to the development of learning strategies capable of enhancing students' motivation and independence in learning, as well as serving as a basis for educators to create a more effective and conducive learning environment (Bukit et al., 2022).

METHOD

Research Design

This study employs a quantitative approach with a correlational design to investigate the relationship between gender and learning motivation and students' readiness for independent learning. A quantitative approach was chosen because this study utilises numerical data analysed statistically to test the relationships between variables. The independent variables in this study are gender and learning motivation, whilst the dependent variable is readiness for independent learning.

Participants and Sampling Technique

This study was conducted among senior high school students in Bantul, Special Region of Yogyakarta, in July 2024. The study population comprised all Year 10 students in the second semester of the 2023/2024 academic year, totalling 288 students. The research sample comprised 168 students, selected using simple random sampling with a 5% margin of error based on the Slovin formula. This technique was employed to ensure that every member of the population had an equal chance of being selected as a respondent.

Research Instruments

The research data consists of primary and secondary data. Primary data was obtained directly from respondents through the completion of questionnaires on learning motivation and readiness for independent learning, whilst secondary data specifically the number of students was obtained from the school. The instrument used was a closed-ended questionnaire employing a four-point Likert scale, comprising the response options: strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree.

The learning motivation instrument comprises 15 statements covering the aspects of perseverance, interest, independent learning, resilience in the face of difficulties, and self-efficacy. Meanwhile, the independent learning readiness instrument comprises 10 statements covering the aspects of responsibility, initiative, creativity, self-control, and self-confidence. The total scores for each variable were then categorised into high, moderate, and low levels based on descriptive statistical analysis.

Data Collection Procedure

Data collection was carried out by distributing questionnaires to selected respondents. The data obtained then underwent several stages, namely editing, coding, scoring, data entry, and cleaning to ensure that the data analysed was complete and accurate.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted using SPSS software. Univariate analysis was used to describe the characteristics of each variable in terms of mean values, standard deviations and frequency distributions. A normality test was performed using the Kolmogorov–Smirnov test to determine the data distribution. Furthermore, bivariate analysis was conducted using Pearson's correlation test to determine the relationship between gender and learning motivation with students' readiness for independent learning. Relationships between variables were considered significant if the p-value was less than 0.05.

Research Ethics

This study adhered to research ethics principles, including allowing respondents the freedom to participate voluntarily, maintaining the confidentiality of respondents' identities, and ensuring that the data obtained was used solely for research purposes.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Finding

Table 1. Characteristics of Respondents

Age	**Frequency**	**Percent**
14 (Early Adolescence)	9	6%
15–16 (Middle Adolescence)	159	94%
Total	168	100%
Gender	**Frequency**	**Percent**
Male	55	32.7%
Female	113	67.3%
Total	168	100%

As shown in table 1, the majority of respondents were aged 15–16 years (late adolescents), totalling 159 students (94%), whilst 9 students (6%) were aged 14 years (early adolescents). By gender,

female students dominated the sample, numbering 113 (67.3%), whilst male students numbered 55 (32.7%). This indicates that the majority of respondents were in the middle adolescence phase and were predominantly female students.

Table 2. Students' Learning Motivation

Category	Frequency	Percent
High	18	10.7%
Medium	140	83.3%
Low	10	6%
Total	168	100%

As shown in table 2, the majority of students fall into the moderate category of learning motivation, totalling 140 students (83.3%). Meanwhile, 18 students (10.7%) fall into the high category and 10 students (6%) into the low category. These results indicate that, in general, students' levels of learning motivation fall into the moderate category.

Table 3. Students' Readiness for Self-Directed Learning

Category	Frequency	Percent
High	35	20.8%
Medium	108	64.3%
Low	25	14.9%
Total	168	100%

Based on table 3, students' readiness for self-directed learning is dominated by the moderate category, comprising 108 students (64.3%). Furthermore, 35 students (20.8%) fall into the high category, and 25 students (14.9%) into the low category. This indicates that the majority of students possess sufficient readiness for self-directed learning, though there is still room for improvement.

Table 4. Correlation between Gender and Readiness for Self-Directed Learning

Gender	High	%	Medium	%	Low	%	Total	%	P-Value
Male	10	29	37	34	8	32	55	33	
Female	25	71	71	66	17	68	113	67	0,727
Total	35	100	108	100	25	100	168	100	

Based on table 4, the analysis results show that there is no significant relationship between gender and students' readiness for self-directed learning, with a significance value of 0.727 ($p > 0.05$). This indicates that gender differences do not influence the level of students' readiness for self-directed learning.

Table 5. Correlation between Learning Motivation and Readiness for Self-Directed Learning

Learning Motivation	High	%	Medium	%	Low	%	Total	%	P-Value
High	8	22	8	8	2	8	18	12	
Medium	27	88	99	91	14	56	140	83	0,000
Low	0	0	1	1	9	36	10	5	
Total	35	100	108	100	25	100	168	100	

Based on table 5, the analysis results show that there is a significant relationship between learning motivation and readiness for self-directed learning, with a significance value of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$). Students with higher learning motivation tend to have better readiness for self-directed learning compared to students with low learning motivation.

Discussion

The results of the study indicate that there is no significant relationship between gender and students' readiness for independent learning. These findings suggest that readiness for independent learning is not determined by biological factors, but is instead influenced more by psychological and environmental factors. Family support, individual motivation, learning goals, and parental involvement play a crucial role in shaping students' readiness for independent learning, regardless of gender (Shebani et al., 2025). A conducive learning environment can also minimise differences between male and female students, ensuring both have equal opportunities to develop.

The findings of this study align with the research by Putri et al. (2020), which states that there is no significant relationship between gender and readiness for independent learning. Independent learning is a skill that can be developed through learning experiences and environmental support, rather than being determined by innate characteristics such as gender. Furthermore, the implementation of student-centred learning strategies, such as group discussions, collaboration with peers, and metacognitive-based learning, can enhance readiness for independent learning across the board (Bhardwaj et al., 2025).

Although there was no statistically significant relationship, the research findings indicate that the percentage of readiness for independent learning among female students tends to be higher than that of male students. However, this is likely influenced by the higher proportion of female respondents in this study. Therefore, this difference cannot be interpreted as a gender effect, but rather as a variation in sample distribution.

In contrast to the gender variable, the research results indicate that there is a significant relationship between learning motivation and students' readiness for self-directed learning. This suggests that learning motivation is an internal factor that plays a crucial role in encouraging students to organise, direct, and sustain their learning activities independently (Lasaiba et al., 2024). Students with high learning motivation tend to be more responsible, diligent, and capable of overcoming difficulties in the learning process. Learning motivation functions as a driving force that motivates individuals to engage in learning activities and achieve specific academic goals (Xiufei & Baki, 2025).

These findings are supported by the research of Yuniarti et al. (2022), which states that there is a positive correlation between students' learning motivation and their readiness to learn. Students with high learning motivation tend to show greater initiative in learning, are able to plan their learning activities, and evaluate their learning outcomes independently (Ananda & Hayati, 2020). Furthermore, motivation acts as a guide and driver of learning behaviour, enabling students to become more active, enthusiastic, and capable of completing tasks independently (Lidawa et al., 2021).

Readiness for independent learning offers various benefits for students, including improved critical thinking skills, a sense of responsibility towards the learning process, and decision-making abilities. Students with good learning autonomy tend to be more confident in tackling academic challenges and are able to manage the learning process effectively (Oishi, 2020). Therefore, enhancing learning motivation is a key strategy in developing students' readiness for independent learning (Nurmawarni et al., 2022).

Overall, the results of this study confirm that internal factors, such as learning motivation, play a more dominant role in shaping readiness for independent learning than demographic factors such as gender. The implications of this study suggest that teachers need to develop teaching strategies capable of enhancing students' learning motivation, such as the use of interactive teaching methods, the provision of constructive feedback, and the creation of a supportive learning environment. Furthermore, support from the family and school environment is also essential in fostering students' independent learning.

This study has limitations, including a sample size restricted to a single region, meaning the findings cannot yet be widely generalised. Furthermore, this study examined only two variables gender and learning motivation so other factors that may influence readiness for independent learning have not been investigated. Therefore, future research is recommended to involve a broader sample and include other relevant variables to yield more comprehensive results.

CONCLUSIONS

This study concludes that there is no significant relationship between gender and students' readiness for independent learning, indicating that readiness for independent learning is not influenced by demographic factors such as gender. In contrast, learning motivation has a significant relationship with readiness for independent learning, suggesting that learning motivation plays an important role in fostering students' learning independence. Students with higher learning motivation tend to demonstrate better readiness for independent learning. Therefore, efforts to enhance students' learning motivation through appropriate learning strategies, a supportive learning environment, and encouragement from teachers and parents are essential to improve students' readiness for independent learning. Furthermore, future research is recommended to involve broader samples and examine additional factors that may influence students' readiness for independent learning.

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