

# The Impact of Sociocultural Factors on English Language Learning in Language Intensive Programs

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**Abstract**

*This study aims to analyze the influence of sociocultural factors on English language learning at the Santri Intensive Development Institution (LIPs) dormitory of SMP Nurul Jadid, under the auspices of Pondok Pesantren Nurul Jadid, Paiton. The examined factors include cultural identity, socioeconomic status, family and community support, peer influence, educational policies, and global media exposure. A qualitative case study approach was employed, involving 50 students, 10 English teachers, and 15 parents as participants. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, participant observation, open-ended questionnaires, and document analysis. The findings reveal that cultural and Islamic values shape students' attitudes toward English, often creating tension between preserving local identity and learning a foreign language. Socioeconomic status significantly affects students' access to digital learning resources. Support from families, communities, and peers contributes to learning motivation, while contextualized educational policies enhance the effectiveness of English instruction. Exposure to English-language media positively impacts students' language skills and attitudes, although the digital divide remains a major barrier. The study recommends the integration of local and Islamic values into English language learning, improved access to media and learning technologies, and the active involvement of families and communities to support a more holistic and culturally relevant educational experience.*

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**Abstrak**

*Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis pengaruh faktor-faktor sosiokultural terhadap pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris di Asrama Lembaga Intensif Pembinaan Santri (LIPs) SMP Nurul Jadid, yang berada di bawah naungan Pondok Pesantren Nurul Jadid, Paiton. Faktor-faktor yang dikaji mencakup identitas budaya, status sosial ekonomi, dukungan keluarga dan komunitas, pengaruh teman sebaya, kebijakan pendidikan, serta paparan media global. Pendekatan yang digunakan adalah kualitatif dengan desain studi kasus. Partisipan terdiri atas 50 siswa, 10 guru Bahasa Inggris, dan 15 orang tua. Pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui wawancara mendalam, observasi partisipatif, kuesioner terbuka, dan analisis dokumen. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa identitas budaya dan nilai-nilai keislaman memengaruhi sikap siswa terhadap Bahasa Inggris, dengan munculnya ketegangan antara pelestarian nilai lokal dan pembelajaran bahasa asing. Status sosial ekonomi berpengaruh signifikan terhadap akses siswa terhadap sumber belajar berbasis digital. Dukungan dari keluarga, komunitas, dan teman sebaya terbukti mendorong motivasi belajar, sedangkan kebijakan pendidikan yang kontekstual turut memperkuat efektivitas pembelajaran. Paparan terhadap media berbahasa Inggris memberikan dampak positif terhadap kemampuan dan sikap siswa, meskipun kesenjangan akses digital masih menjadi hambatan utama. Penelitian ini merekomendasikan integrasi nilai-nilai lokal dan keislaman dalam pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris, peningkatan akses terhadap media dan teknologi pembelajaran, serta penguatan peran aktif keluarga dan komunitas dalam mendukung proses belajar siswa secara holistik.*

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## INTRODUCTION

English, as an international language, has become an essential component of education systems worldwide, including in Indonesia (Zein, Sukyadi, Hamied, & Lengkanawati, 2020). In the era of globalization and rapid technological advancement, English proficiency is no longer considered an optional skill but a fundamental necessity that affects various aspects of life. In today's increasingly interconnected world, English functions as a global medium of communication, enabling individuals to access opportunities in higher education, the professional sphere, and intercultural exchange (Dauber & Spencer-Oatey, 2023).

In Indonesia, despite the early introduction of English in formal education across various levels, significant challenges persist in the teaching and learning of English. One of the most prominent obstacles is the mismatch between the nationally implemented English curriculum and the sociocultural realities of learners (Barrot, 2023). Factors such as cultural identity, socioeconomic background, and local customs often hinder the optimal acquisition of English as a foreign language (Zhang & Su, 2023).

In response to these challenges, many educational institutions in Indonesia, both general and Islamic boarding school-based, have taken proactive steps to improve English language instruction by adapting to contemporary demands. One such initiative is the Language Intensive Program of SMP Nurul Jadid (LIPs), a dormitory-based language learning program under the auspices of the Nurul Jadid Islamic Boarding School in Paiton, Probolinggo. LIPs serves as an integrative educational environment where English is taught through both formal classroom instruction and informal daily practice. Simultaneously, the program emphasizes religious and character education, aiming to cultivate not only academically competent students but also morally upright individuals grounded in Islamic values.

LIPs offers a compelling context for academic research, particularly due to the diverse backgrounds of its students who come from both urban and rural areas across the archipelago, representing a wide range of socioeconomic strata. This diversity creates a rich sociocultural dynamic within the learning environment. On one hand, it presents pedagogical challenges in addressing varying levels of exposure, linguistic proficiency, and cultural perspectives. On the other hand, it provides valuable opportunities for the development of inclusive and contextually responsive teaching approaches.

Beyond student diversity, English language learning at LIPs is also shaped by other influential external factors. The institutional context, namely, the pesantren (Islamic boarding school) system, plays a crucial role in shaping the learning environment. Rooted in religious traditions and values, this system often demands alignment between secular and spiritual educational goals. This dual focus poses unique challenges in harmonizing English instruction with the lifestyle, routines, and belief systems embedded in the boarding school. Additionally, peer dynamics significantly influence learning outcomes, as students live and interact closely in a communal dormitory setting. Institutional policies, including curriculum design, pedagogical

methods, and resource allocation, further shape the direction and success of English language education at LIPs.

Integrating the national curriculum with Islamic boarding school values and a focus on foreign language acquisition, LIPs offers a comprehensive educational model. However, it is not immune to challenges, particularly those stemming from the sociocultural factors that permeate students' lives both inside and outside the dormitory. Differences in social status, economic conditions, and cultural or religious perspectives inevitably influence how students perceive and engage with English in their daily activities. Understanding how these factors intersect and affect language learning is therefore vital for enhancing the effectiveness of English education within Islamic boarding school settings.

This research aims to explore and analyze how sociocultural factors influence English language learning at the LIPs dormitory of SMP Nurul Jadid. Specifically, it seeks to examine the roles of cultural identity, socioeconomic background, family and community support, peer interaction, institutional policies, and exposure to global media in shaping students' attitudes, motivations, and achievements in learning English. The insights gained are expected to inform the development of a more culturally responsive and contextually appropriate English language curriculum and to contribute to the design of effective pedagogical strategies suited to Islamic boarding school contexts.

The central research question guiding this study is: How do sociocultural factors – such as cultural identity, socioeconomic status, family and community support, peer influence, educational policy, and media exposure affect the process and outcomes of English language learning at the LIPs dormitory of SMP Nurul Jadid? This research also aims to uncover how these factors influence students' engagement, perceptions, and motivation, and to propose actionable recommendations for enhancing the quality and inclusivity of English instruction in similar educational settings.

To achieve these objectives, the study adopts a qualitative approach using a case study design. Data will be collected through in-depth interviews with students, English teachers, and parents; classroom observations; open-ended questionnaires; and document analysis related to curriculum and teaching materials. This methodological framework enables a nuanced and holistic understanding of the interplay between sociocultural factors and language learning within a pesantren-based environment. The data will be analyzed thematically using an interpretive approach to uncover patterns and relationships relevant to the research questions.

In summary, this study seeks to offer a comprehensive analysis of the sociocultural dimensions influencing English language learning at LIPs SMP Nurul Jadid. The findings are expected to shed light on both the challenges and opportunities inherent in this unique educational context and to inform the development of more effective, inclusive, and context-sensitive teaching strategies. Ultimately, it is hoped that this research will contribute to the realization of a more equitable and holistic model of English language education within Indonesia's Islamic boarding school system.

## **.METHOD**

This study adopts a qualitative approach, which is considered the most appropriate for exploring in depth the meanings, perceptions, and lived experiences of students within the Language Intensive Program of SMP Nurul Jadid (LIPs) in their journey of learning English. Unlike quantitative methods that emphasize numerical data, the qualitative approach enables a rich and nuanced understanding of sociocultural dynamics that influence language acquisition, particularly within complex educational settings such as Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*) (Creswell & Poth, 2016; Tisdell, Merriam, & Stuckey-Peyrot, 2025).

To facilitate a comprehensive investigation, this research employs a qualitative case study design. A case study approach allows for an in-depth examination of the real-life context in which the participants operate and helps reveal the interaction of various sociocultural elements affecting English learning (Yin, 2018). It enables the researcher to gain contextual insights into how cultural identity, religious values, socioeconomic background, and peer interactions collectively shape students' attitudes and motivation toward English language acquisition.

The research was conducted at the LIPs dormitory of SMP Nurul Jadid, an Islamic junior high school located in Paiton, Probolinggo, East Java. This institution integrates the national curriculum, Islamic boarding school traditions, and intensive English language learning. The school was selected as a research site due to its diverse student population, who come from different regions and socioeconomic backgrounds, characteristics that offer a rich setting for analyzing sociocultural influences on English learning (Jusmirah, 2020).

Data collection involved multiple qualitative techniques to ensure triangulation and data credibility. These included in-depth interviews with students, English teachers, and parents; classroom observations; open-ended questionnaires; and analysis of curriculum documents and syllabi (Tisdell et al., 2025). This combination of methods allows the researcher to capture both the spoken and observed dimensions of the English learning process within the LIPs environment.

All collected data were analyzed thematically using an interpretive approach, aimed at identifying recurring patterns, meanings, and relationships among the sociocultural factors influencing English learning (Creswell & Poth, 2016). The interpretive lens helps understand participants' perspectives within their religious and cultural contexts, which are central to daily life in the *pesantren* setting (Lin & Hsu, 2013).

This methodological framework provides a holistic, in-depth exploration of the challenges and opportunities involved in English language learning at LIPs, offering practical insights for curriculum designers and educators in similar Islamic boarding school environments in Indonesia (Zein, 2019)

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Result

#### **Cultural Identity and Attitudes Toward English Language Learning**

Based on data gathered through observation, in-depth interviews, and document analysis at LIPs SMP Nurul Jadid, it was found that students' cultural identity has a significant influence on their attitudes toward learning English. Students from urban cultural backgrounds tend to exhibit a more positive attitude toward English compared to those from rural areas. This is mainly because urban students are more accustomed to multicultural environments and perceive English as a crucial tool for accessing global information and personal development. They view English as a component of a worldwide identity that does not necessarily conflict with their local and religious values.

Conversely, students from rural backgrounds often exhibit skepticism and resistance toward the English language. They tend to perceive it as a foreign cultural element that threatens the preservation of local languages, traditional values, and a strong Islamic identity. These concerns are reinforced by the homogeneous and conservative nature of their communities, as well as media narratives that associate Western culture with secularism and moral decline.

Religious identity, particularly Islamic values, also plays a critical role in shaping students' attitudes. In the pesantren (Islamic boarding school) context, English is frequently viewed as a Western product that may contradict Islamic teachings. However, this study found that such negative attitudes can be mitigated through contextual and integrative teaching approaches. Teachers at LIPs SMP Nurul Jadid have successfully integrated English learning with Islamic values by incorporating relevant content, such as texts about prominent Muslim figures and discussions on ethics and da'wah, into their English lessons. This approach has proven effective in transforming students' perceptions and creating a space for reconciliation between their cultural identity and the use of the English language.

#### **Socioeconomic Status and Access to Learning Resources**

The findings reveal that socioeconomic status significantly influences both access to and the quality of English learning resources within the dormitory environment of LIPs SMP Nurul Jadid. Students from middle to upper-income families generally enjoy broader access to supplementary learning facilities such as private tutoring, personal technological devices, and various digital learning media. This advantage accelerates their language acquisition and enhances their linguistic competence. Furthermore, it boosts their self-confidence and willingness to actively use English actively, often positioning them as informal peer mentors in language practice sessions.

In contrast, students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds face limited access to such resources. They tend to rely solely on formal school programs and institutional learning support, which restricts their academic performance and active participation in English learning. This disparity is evident not only in cognitive aspects but also in affective dimensions, such as motivation and self-confidence.

### **Family and Community Support**

The research findings indicate that family and community support plays a significant role in shaping students' English learning experiences at LIPs SMP Nurul Jadid. Empirical evidence reveals that the educational background of parents directly influences students' motivation and access to learning resources. Parents with higher levels of education are generally more proactive in supporting their children, employing strategies such as providing learning materials, enrolling them in additional courses, and participating actively in the learning process. Conversely, students from families with lower educational backgrounds or rural settings often face challenges, including a lack of encouragement and, in some cases, resistance toward English learning due to perceived conflicts with cultural or religious values.

However, qualitative data from observations and interviews suggest that limited family support does not necessarily become an absolute barrier to student progress. The boarding school environment at LIPs, with initiatives such as English Day and language-based communities, serves as a vital catalyst in fostering a positive learning atmosphere. The presence of enthusiastic and proficient peers contributes to a domino effect that motivates others to improve as well. Informal peer teaching has proven effective in boosting students' confidence and enhancing collaborative learning.

### **Peer Influence**

The findings indicate that peer influence plays a significant role in the English learning process within the dormitory environment of LIPs SMP Nurul Jadid. The collective lifestyle practiced in the dorm fosters social interactions among students, which in turn shape attitudes, habits, and daily English language use. Learning communities such as the English Club, speaking groups, and thematic study forums have proven effective in encouraging students to be more open and actively engage in using English, both academically and non-academically. Policies like the regularly implemented "speaking time" contribute to the creation of a language-rich environment. However, the effectiveness of these programs heavily depends on the prevailing social norms among students.

In peer groups with positive norms, students tend to support one another, avoid judgmental attitudes, and cultivate an inclusive learning atmosphere, thereby boosting self-confidence and intrinsic motivation to use English. On the other hand, some groups show resistance to English-speaking policies, particularly when students experience embarrassment, fear of making mistakes, or social pressure from peers who prefer to speak in Indonesian or local dialects. This phenomenon reflects the dynamics of social pressure, which can undermine students' motivation and hinder the development of productive skills such as speaking and writing.

Nonetheless, peer pressure is not always detrimental. In healthy competitive settings, such as speech contests, debates, or English drama performances, students often display strong enthusiasm to practice and perform at their best. These activities foster collaboration, peer learning, and simultaneous improvement in both academic and social competencies.

### **Educational Policy and Instructional System**

Educational policy and instructional systems play a pivotal role in shaping students' attitudes, motivation, and academic achievement in learning English. At the Lembaga Intensif Pembinaan Santri (LIPs) of SMP Nurul Jadid, the strategies implemented for English instruction are deliberately designed to create a supportive academic and cultural learning environment. However, the effectiveness of these policies largely depends on consistent implementation, the competence of educators, and the relevance of teaching methods to students' characteristics.

LIPs adopts a structured language development system that includes daily English usage schedules, weekly activities such as English Meetings, and inter-room competitions like debates, speeches, and storytelling. This structure aims to habituate students to use English in their daily interactions, not merely as classroom content. For instance, on specific days, special policies such as "English Day" or "English Area" are enforced, requiring all interactions to be conducted in English.

Conceptually, this approach aligns with the principle of total immersion, which involves complete exposure to the target language as a strategy to accelerate second language acquisition. However, its implementation in practice often encounters several challenges. One major issue is weak supervision and inconsistent enforcement by mentors and dorm supervisors. Not all staff members share the same level of commitment in monitoring English use outside the classroom, leading to discrepancies in students' discipline in following the policy.

Moreover, the quality of educators significantly influences the success of the instructional system. At SMP Nurul Jadid, teachers apply a range of pedagogical approaches to English teaching. Some adopt communicative methods and project-based learning (PBL), which allow students to engage in real-world activities such as vlogging, performing dramas, or delivering digital presentations. These methods have proven to be more engaging for students, as they connect language learning with meaningful, experiential contexts.

### **Media Exposure and the Impact of Globalization**

The findings of this study indicate that exposure to English-language digital media significantly influences English language acquisition among students at the Intensive Student Development Institution (LIPs) of SMP Nurul Jadid. Digital media such as films, songs, YouTube, educational applications, and online games have created informal learning environments that enrich students' linguistic experiences beyond the classroom. Students with access to digital devices and stable internet connections demonstrate notable improvements in listening skills, vocabulary acquisition, and pronunciation. They also exhibit greater enthusiasm and confidence in actively using English, both in academic settings and daily life. This process reflects the natural language acquisition model as described in Stephen Krashen's second language acquisition theory.

However, disparities exist in the utilization of media as a learning resource due to differences in students' socioeconomic backgrounds. Those from lower-middle-

income families tend to face limitations in accessing technology and the internet, relying more heavily on conventional classroom instruction. Consequently, this leads to gaps in English proficiency, both cognitively and affectively. Furthermore, some students with media access have yet to optimize its use due to limited digital literacy and a lack of awareness regarding the educational value of the content they consume.

## DISCUSSION

### **Cultural Identity and Attitudes towards English**

Cultural identity is a social construct that reflects the values, norms, language, and social practices possessed by an individual or group. In the context of English language learning at LIPs SMP, students' cultural identity plays a significant role in determining the extent to which they accept or reject the foreign language. Research indicates that attitudes towards a second language are strongly influenced by students' perceptions of the relationship between that language and their own identity.

Students from urban backgrounds are typically accustomed to linguistic diversity and multiculturalism (Harris & Han, 2021). They often view English as a tool to broaden their horizons and access global information. In urban environments, English is not only used in schools but also in social interactions, media, and even in religious contexts such as lectures or modern da'wah (Islamic propagation) content (Yusuf, 2025). Therefore, urban students tend to have a positive attitude towards English and consider it an integral part of their global identity, one that does not conflict with their local values.

Conversely, students from rural backgrounds exhibit greater hesitation. English is perceived as a symbol of foreign culture that is not rooted in local and religious values (Ma, Hong, Yoo, & Yang, 2021). Interviews conducted with several students from the interior of Madura revealed concerns that mastering English would distance them from their regional language, local culture, and even Islamic values. This perception is inseparable from the influence of the social and cultural environment in which they were raised, which is often more homogeneous and conservative.

Students' Islamic identity is also a crucial factor. In pesantren (Islamic boarding schools), religion is not merely a personal matter but also the foundation of social and educational life (Huda, 2024). Some students consider English a Western product laden with secular, liberal, and individualistic values. This concern is amplified by media narratives and local communities that associate Western culture with moral decline and the deterioration of character. Consequently, resistance to the use of English arises, particularly in informal communication or worship.

However, this negative attitude is not absolute. Teachers at LIPs SMP have implemented a contextual learning approach that links English with Islamic values. For instance, in reading lessons, students are asked to read texts about world Muslim figures in English. In speaking, discussion topics are oriented towards themes of morality (akhlak), da'wah, and the life of the Prophet Muhammad. This approach aims to

demonstrate that English is not a threat to Islamic identity but can, in fact, be a means to disseminate Islamic values to the international community.

This experience demonstrates that cultural identity is not a rigid entity but is dynamic and negotiable. When students are provided with opportunities to integrate their values into the learning process, they become more open and enthusiastic about learning English. This aligns with the social identity theory proposed by Henri Tajfel, which posits that individuals tend to exhibit a positive attitude towards something if it does not threaten their group identity.

Furthermore, it is important to consider the role of teachers and the school environment in shaping students' perceptions. Teachers who are sensitive to students' cultural backgrounds are capable of creating an inclusive learning environment that respects differences. They can serve as agents of change that bridge local and global values through language learning.

In the context of LIPs, programs such as "English for Da'wah," "Islamic Speech Contest," and "Bilingual Qur'anic Studies" are tangible examples of how English can be adapted to strengthen, rather than weaken, students' cultural and religious identity. These programs not only enhance linguistic skills but also cultivate an awareness that language is a tool, not an ideology.

Moreover, students who are able to reconcile their cultural identity and English proficiency tend to exhibit better academic progress. They do not experience the identity conflict that often acts as an affective barrier in learning. Instead, they view English as a form of cultural capital that can assist them in achieving future success.

Thus, it is crucial for educational institutions, particularly those based on pesantren, to not only focus on the cognitive aspects of language learning but also to consider the affective and sociocultural dimensions. A learning approach that is sensitive to cultural identity will foster a harmonious and inclusive learning atmosphere, enabling students to develop holistically without having to sacrifice their core values (Saihu, 2022).

### **Socioeconomic Status and Access to Learning Resources**

Socioeconomic status plays a critical role in shaping students' educational experiences, particularly in the acquisition of English as a foreign language. At LIPs SMP, students come from a wide range of socioeconomic backgrounds, creating disparities in access to language learning resources. These disparities significantly influence students' motivation, academic performance, and self-confidence in using English.

Students from middle to upper economic classes often enjoy greater access to supplementary learning resources. They are typically able to enroll in private English courses, possess personal digital devices such as smartphones or tablets, and frequently engage with English-language digital content, ranging from videos and educational games to interactive learning apps. This early and consistent exposure accelerates their

vocabulary acquisition, comprehension of grammar and syntax, and development of listening and speaking skills.

Moreover, these students are often more familiar with Western popular culture, where English is prevalent. This cultural exposure reduces psychological barriers to learning the language, making English feel more like a natural part of everyday life than a foreign and intimidating subject. As a result, they often emerge as informal leaders within the dormitory's language learning environment, guiding their peers, initiating conversations in English, and serving as role models in language use.

In contrast, students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds face considerable limitations. Their learning heavily depends on the formal instruction provided by the school and dormitory, as they often lack access to personal devices, stable internet connections, or private tutoring. Their exposure to English is limited to classroom instruction, textbooks, and occasional school-organized programs such as English Camp or English Day. This restricts their opportunity to practice English outside formal learning hours, impeding language development.

Teachers at LIPs SMP have observed that these disparities manifest clearly in the classroom. Students with greater access to resources tend to grasp material more quickly, speak more fluently, and participate more actively in English-related activities. Meanwhile, those with fewer resources are often more passive, hesitant to speak for fear of making mistakes, and feel left behind academically and socially. These differences are not merely academic; they extend to affective dimensions, influencing students' self-esteem and willingness to engage in extracurricular language activities.

Parental influence also plays a significant role. Families with higher socioeconomic status tend to have better educational backgrounds and a more forward-looking view of English as a gateway to global opportunities. They are more willing and able to invest time, money, and emotional support into their children's English learning. In contrast, families from economically disadvantaged backgrounds may lack awareness of English's long-term benefits or the capacity to provide meaningful support.

Despite these challenges, economic hardship is not an insurmountable barrier. Research has shown (Albin & Foley, 2021) that some students from underprivileged backgrounds exhibit remarkable perseverance and intrinsic motivation. These students make full use of available opportunities, participate in dormitory language communities, and even form independent study groups. Their resilience underscores the importance of internal factors such as determination, enthusiasm, and effective learning strategies in achieving language learning success (Wang, 2023).

To reduce the resource gap, the school and dormitory management must adopt strategic and inclusive measures (Altinay, Arslan, & Sharma, 2024). This can include expanding the library's English collection, ensuring equitable internet access, and developing offline-accessible digital modules. In addition, training students and teachers to effectively utilize educational technology is crucial to maximize learning potential across varying economic backgrounds (Hennessy et al., 2022).

Targeted support is also essential for students from low-income families. Initiatives such as peer mentoring by more advanced students, inclusive English Club activities, and scholarships for language programs can significantly level the playing field (Herrera & Lanford, 2024). These strategies not only foster equality in access but also enhance student confidence and encourage healthy academic competition.

Equally important is collaboration among schools, parents, and local communities. The experiences at LIPs underscore how collective involvement can help overcome economic barriers. When stakeholders unite in support of students' English learning, even limited resources can be turned into opportunities for creativity and innovation in pedagogy.

Ultimately, recognizing and addressing the role of socioeconomic status in educational access is key to building a more equitable learning environment. Institutions like LIPs must ensure that all students, regardless of their financial background, have equal opportunities to develop English proficiency, a vital skill for their future academic and professional success (Kanno, 2021).

### **Family and Community Support**

Family and community support play a vital role in shaping students' motivation and attitudes toward English learning (Wan & Gao, 2021). Within the LIPs SMP dormitory context, diverse family backgrounds and social environments contribute significantly to students' success in mastering the language.

Parents with higher education levels often demonstrate a strong awareness of English as a global communication tool and an asset for future careers. These parents typically provide active support through extra lessons, English books, or by directly assisting their children in study routines. Their encouragement fosters a more structured and resource-rich environment for language acquisition.

However, not all families offer the same level of support. Some parents, particularly from rural or limited educational backgrounds, remain skeptical of English learning (Grant & Roberts, 2022). Concerns include fears of cultural erosion or diminished religious values, especially when English is perceived to displace local languages or Arabic, which holds a sacred place in Islamic education. These perceptions can hinder students' emotional readiness to embrace English.

Despite this, familial influence is not the sole determining factor. Many students develop a positive attitude toward English even when home support is limited. The dormitory environment becomes a critical counterbalance. LIPs offers a socially supportive atmosphere through programs like English Camp, English Day, and informal language communities. These activities cultivate peer motivation, shared learning norms, and informal peer teaching, which promote confidence and collaboration.

Emotional support from families also contributes to student resilience. Students who feel emotionally secure are generally more confident in using English, including in daily conversations (Li, 2022). Conversely, those who lack such support may feel withdrawn or self-conscious when attempting to speak a foreign language.

The surrounding local community influences learning outcomes as well. In some interactions with local residents, English is seen as a symbol of higher social standing, thus motivating students. In contrast, conservative communities may resist the visible use of English, creating internal conflict for learners (Burga & Damopolii, 2022).

LIPs mitigates these tensions through strategic school-family partnerships. Parent-teacher meetings, seminars, and forums serve to align parental perceptions with the school's educational goals (Al-Hail, Al-Fagih, & Koç, 2021). When parents understand that English proficiency can coexist with religious and cultural values, their resistance often diminishes. Lessons that integrate Islamic content in English further affirm that language learning is a means of empowering the ummah, not Westernizing it (Wang, 2023).

Community engagement is strengthened by the involvement of alumni or respected community figures who exemplify success in both English proficiency and Islamic identity. Their presence in motivational forums provides students with real-life role models, building broader aspirations and normalizing the use of English within an Islamic framework (Yamamura & Koth, 2023).

Recognizing the diversity of family perspectives, LIPs emphasizes inclusivity and communication. Open dialogue with families helps transform passive or resistant attitudes into active support (McWayne & Mistry, 2022). To complement this, family-based learning modules have been developed to guide parents in supporting English learning at home. These modules include simple interactive tips, praise-based motivation strategies, and Islamic content in English, fostering synergy between language development and religious identity (Millora, 2023).

Ultimately, when family and community elements work in harmony, the English learning process becomes more holistic and effective. Encouragement from both home and environment contributes not only to cognitive growth but also to emotional and social well-being. In the LIPs SMP context, this integrated support system is key to cultivating motivated, confident, and competent English learners (Darling, Cassidy, & Ballard, 2022).

### **Peer Influence**

In the communal setting of LIPs SMP dormitory, peers significantly influence students' motivation, confidence, and consistency in using English. The constant social interaction among students shapes both individual behavior and group norms related to language use.

Active learning communities, such as English Club, Speaking Group, or informal peer study groups, play a central role in fostering positive habits. Students involved in these groups tend to be more willing to use English regularly in both academic and casual settings. Programs like "speaking time," which require students to use English at designated hours, further reinforce these habits. However, the success of such policies heavily depends on peer group support and the social norms formed within them.

Positive peer norms, such as mentoring by more proficient students, create inclusive and non-judgmental environments that reduce anxiety and build confidence.

These peer mentors act as facilitators, encouraging less confident students to participate without fear of embarrassment (Marshall & and Greene, 2021). In contrast, negative peer pressure can inhibit language use. Students may avoid speaking English to blend in with peers who view English as intimidating, elitist, or unnecessary (Moradi & Chen, 2022). This resistance often stems from fear of making mistakes or being judged.

Peer pressure can suppress even capable students who fear being seen as showing off (Chapman, Rose, Hull, & Mandy, 2022). To counter this, the dormitory encourages healthy competition through English Speech Contests, Debates, and other events, which motivate students to improve through collaboration and mutual feedback (Tesfaw & Wondimuneh, 2024).

Informal leaders within peer groups also wield significant influence. These individuals are respected not only for their academic skills but also for their social charisma, often setting the tone for language use. When they model consistent English usage, peers are more likely to follow (Badura, Galvin, & Lee, 2022). Emotional bonds among peers further strengthen this effect; students who feel accepted and supported are more willing to take linguistic risks and grow from their mistakes (Zhi & Wang, 2023).

Collaborative, project-based learning, such as making video blogs, roleplays, or presentations, provides real-life contexts for functional English use. These group activities support social learning while strengthening language retention (Khalilova, 2023). Informal settings, such as watching English movies or chatting during free time, also create enjoyable, low-pressure environments for practice (Iwuanyanwu et al., 2024).

However, managing peer dynamics requires active intervention. Teachers and dorm caregivers must identify groups that resist English use or become socially exclusive. Through group discussions, reflection sessions, and regular check-ins, staff can support a more inclusive and participatory language culture (Bali & Holilah, 2021; Covelli, 2024).

Ultimately, peers serve as key motivators, facilitators, and evaluators in students' English learning journey. When nurtured properly, peer dynamics contribute to a collaborative, confident, and self-sustaining English-speaking culture. For this reason, sustained guidance and relationship-building are essential to ensure peer influence remains positive and aligned with the school's holistic language education goals (Aithal & Aithal, 2023).

### **Educational Policies and Teaching System**

Educational policies and teaching systems play a pivotal role in shaping students' motivation, attitudes, and achievements in English language learning. At SMP Nurul Jadid's Santri Intensive Development Institution (LIPs), the English learning strategy is designed to create an academically and culturally conducive environment. Core components include structured programs such as daily English usage schedules, weekly English meetings, and inter-dorm competitions like debates, speeches, and storytelling. Policies like "English Day" or designated "English Areas" reflect the concept of total language immersion (Brown & Lee, 2025).

However, challenges persist in implementation. Inconsistency in supervision, particularly among mentors and dormitory staff, undermines policy enforcement. The effectiveness of these initiatives also hinges on teacher quality. While some adopt communicative and project-based methods, such as creating vlogs or performing drama, others still rely heavily on grammar-translation approaches (Vireak & Bunrosy, 2024). The latter often limits students' confidence and fluency in speaking.

Assessment systems at LIPs are gradually improving through the inclusion of speaking tests, role-play, and presentations. Yet, inconsistent rubrics and evaluation standards remain an issue. Although teacher and mentor training is available, its limited frequency hampers professional development. More regular and targeted training is essential to align teaching with current pedagogical trends and student needs, particularly those of Generation Z.

A key feature of the LIPs approach is the integration of Islamic values into English lessons. Students deliver speeches on Islamic figures, write about moral values, or discuss education in Islam, promoting character development alongside language proficiency (Qoyyimah & Agustawan, 2023).

LIPs also supports language learning through multimedia rooms, digital libraries, and online resources. However, access and usage vary based on students' digital literacy. Extracurriculars like English Camp and competitions provide further avenues for skill development in more dynamic and collaborative settings.

Despite these strengths, gaps remain between policy and practice. Flagship programs are often unsustainable due to limited resources and coordination challenges among stakeholders (Ahmed, Wahab, Othman, & Balasubramanian, 2025). Furthermore, student voices are seldom involved in policy evaluation. Involving students through forums or surveys can ensure that programs are more responsive and aligned with learners' actual needs (Valdez, 2015).

### **Media Exposure and the Impact of Globalization**

In the era of globalization, English-language media play a crucial role in second language acquisition, especially for students at institutions like LIPs SMP Nurul Jadid. Media such as movies, music, YouTube, online games, and educational apps provide informal yet impactful environments for learning English (Sockett, 2023).

Students from middle to upper socioeconomic backgrounds, who have greater access to digital devices, benefit significantly from this exposure. Activities like watching subtitled English movies help them grasp pronunciation, idioms, and real-life usage faster (Maulida & Warni, 2024). YouTube also offers engaging content, such as grammar tutorials and storytelling channels, which boost confidence and foster natural language acquisition, as per Krashen's theory.

However, access disparities remain. Students with limited resources or digital literacy often rely solely on classroom instruction and textbooks, leading to unequal language development. Some students also misuse media purely for entertainment, missing its educational potential (Afzal, Khan, Daud, Ahmad, & Butt, 2023; Reddy, Chaudhary, & Hussein, 2023).

Media exposure also influences students' perceptions. English is increasingly seen not just as a subject but as a gateway to global opportunities, such as studying abroad, becoming a content creator, or working internationally (B. Beribe, 2023). However, unfiltered media consumption can lead to excessive admiration of Western culture and a gradual detachment from local or Islamic values.

To mitigate this, LIPs SMP has adopted selective strategies in digital media usage. Teachers recommend values-aligned content, assign digital projects (e.g., creating Islamic-themed English vlogs), and encourage students to become not only consumers but also creators of educational media. These efforts help students see English as a medium for da'wah and positive expression.

Social media is utilized to showcase student work, for instance, class Instagram accounts post student-made videos or quotes in English (Ahmad, Jameel, & Raewf, 2021). Digital platforms like WhatsApp and Google Classroom are used to provide feedback and resources. Furthermore, digital literacy training is integrated to help students evaluate content critically and avoid harmful media. Another challenge is media overuse, which can lead to distraction from academic responsibilities. Hence, supervision from dormitory staff and time management guidance are crucial (Reinhardt, 2022).

## **CONCLUSION**

The study on Cultural Identity and Attitudes towards English among students at the LIPs dormitory of SMP reveals that English language mastery and attitudes are shaped by a variety of interconnected factors, both internal and external. From the perspective of cultural identity, students' geographical and religious backgrounds influence their openness to English learning. While many students view English as a gateway to global opportunities, there remains an underlying tension where English is also perceived as a potential threat to local and Islamic values.

Socioeconomic status plays a significant role in shaping access to learning resources. Students from more affluent families benefit from private tutoring, ownership of digital devices, and stable internet access, which facilitate independent and more advanced English learning.

Family and community support emerge as influential drivers of student motivation. When parents hold positive and open-minded views toward English, students tend to receive stronger encouragement and support. Conversely, restrictive or skeptical attitudes can hinder students' curiosity and engagement outside formal instruction.

The dormitory environment also plays a dual role. On one hand, peer groups that foster language use can create collaborative and immersive learning situations. On the other hand, social pressure from less confident or disengaged peers may discourage active participation among otherwise capable students.

Institutional efforts through structured language programs at LIPs show promise, especially when supported by communicative and contextual teaching

methods. However, inconsistency in implementation and variability in teaching quality continue to challenge the overall effectiveness of these initiatives.

Media exposure and globalization are increasingly shaping students' language development. Students who frequently engage with English-language media often develop stronger listening and speaking abilities, as well as more positive attitudes. However, disparities in digital access and literacy present real challenges, and the adoption of foreign cultural values without critical filtering may gradually displace local and religious traditions.

In conclusion, the success of English language learning at LIPs is not solely dependent on teaching practices but is deeply influenced by the dynamic interplay between students' identities, motivations, socio-digital environments, and institutional support. A holistic approach that respects cultural identity while embracing global competencies is essential for fostering effective and meaningful language acquisition.

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