

The Impact of Internal and External Aspects on Students' Interest in Learning English

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ABSTRACT

Students' interest in learning English plays an important role in supporting successful language learning in EFL contexts. However, students' learning interest is influenced by various internal and external factors that may differ across school environments. This study aimed to identify the factors influencing students' interest in learning English and determine the dominant factors across three junior high schools in North Sulawesi: Tondano Adventist School, Manado Prisma School, and SLA Tompaso II. This study employed a descriptive quantitative design. The population consisted of 53 ninth-grade students from the three selected schools, and total sampling was applied to include all students as research participants. Data were collected using a 29-item close-ended questionnaire adapted from Slameto's theory on factors influencing learning interest. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistical analysis and percentage calculations with the assistance of Microsoft Excel and SPSS. The findings revealed that both internal and external factors significantly influenced students' interest in learning English, although their dominance varied across schools. Internal factors, particularly motivation, attention, readiness, and self-confidence, were more dominant in Tondano Adventist School, while external factors such as teaching methods, classroom atmosphere, peer interaction, and environmental support were more influential in Manado Prisma School and SLA Tompaso II. The study also identified a readiness-confidence gap in which students showed interest in learning English but still experienced hesitation during communication activities. In addition, peer interaction emerged as an important source of motivational and social support in sustaining students' engagement in English learning. This result study contributes to a better understanding of how internal and external factors shape students' interest in learning English in different EFL contexts. The study also provides practical insights for teachers and schools in creating supportive learning environments that enhance students' motivation, confidence, and classroom participation.

INTRODUCTION

English has become one of the most important international languages used in communication, education, technology, and global interaction. In Indonesia, English is taught as a foreign language (EFL) and is included as a compulsory subject at the junior high school level. The ability to master English is considered important to help students access broader educational opportunities and improve their competitiveness in the global era. However, the success of English learning is closely related to students' interest in learning the language. Interest in learning refers to a psychological condition characterized by attention, curiosity, enjoyment, and active involvement in the learning process (Hidi & Renninger, 2006). Students who have high interest tend to participate actively, show greater enthusiasm, and achieve better academic performance, whereas students with low interest often become passive and less motivated during classroom activities (Schiefele, 2009). In the Indonesian EFL context, differences in students' interest in learning English can still be observed in classroom participation, confidence in

using English, and willingness to engage in learning activities (Richards, 2015). This condition indicates that students' interest remains an important issue in English language learning in Indonesia.

Students' interest in learning English is influenced by various interconnected factors originating from both internal and external aspects. In Indonesian EFL classrooms, students' learning interest is often shaped by motivation, self-confidence, classroom atmosphere, teaching methods, family support, and peer interaction. According to Deci and Ryan (2000), students' interest is closely associated with intrinsic and extrinsic motivation that encourage learners to participate actively in learning activities. According to Abdullah (2024) also explains that psychological conditions and environmental influences significantly affect students' engagement and learning behavior. In addition, previous studies in Indonesian educational contexts reveal that supportive teachers, interactive classroom activities, and positive social environments can enhance students' enthusiasm and participation in learning English, while monotonous teaching methods and limited support may reduce students' motivation and engagement (Slavin et al, 2025). Therefore, understanding the factors influencing students' interest is important to improve the effectiveness of English learning in Indonesian schools.

Internal factors refer to factors that originate from within the students themselves and directly influence their readiness and willingness to learn. These factors generally include physical and psychological aspects that shape students' learning behavior (Abdullah et al, 2024). Physical factors involve students' health conditions, physical readiness, and fatigue levels, which may affect concentration and classroom participation. Students with good physical conditions tend to participate more actively and maintain better focus during learning activities. Meanwhile, psychological factors include motivation, attention, intelligence, self-confidence, readiness, and emotional condition. Among these factors, motivation plays a central role in encouraging students to engage actively and persist in learning tasks (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Intelligence also contributes to students' ability to understand language materials and solve learning problems effectively. Furthermore, self-confidence influences students' willingness to communicate and participate in English learning activities. Therefore, internal factors become essential determinants in shaping students' interest in learning English.

External factors are influences that come from the environment surrounding students and affect their learning experiences. These factors include family background, school environment, teaching practices, and peer interaction (Slavin et al, 2025). Family support plays an important role in developing students' learning interest through encouragement, guidance, and the provision of learning facilities. Students who receive positive support from their families are more likely to develop positive attitudes toward learning. In addition, the school environment and teachers' instructional strategies also strongly influence students' interest in learning English. Teachers are not only responsible for delivering learning materials but also for creating engaging and supportive classroom environments. According to Li et al. (2022) positive teacher-student interaction and interactive teaching methods can improve students' motivation and classroom engagement. Peer interaction also contributes significantly to students' learning interest, especially during adolescence when students are strongly influenced by their social relationships. Positive peer relationships can encourage collaborative learning and increase students' enthusiasm, while negative peer influence may reduce students' participation and motivation in learning activities.

Based on the researchers' initial observations conducted in three junior high schools, differences in students' interest in learning English were clearly identified. In several classrooms, students appeared enthusiastic and actively participated during English lessons, particularly when teachers used interactive teaching methods such as group discussions, games, and question-and-answer activities. Students were more willing to respond to teachers' questions and collaborate with their peers during classroom tasks. However, in other classrooms, many students appeared passive, lacked confidence, and showed limited participation during English learning activities. Some students were reluctant to speak English and tended to remain silent during classroom interaction. The observations also showed that classroom atmosphere, teaching strategies, peer interaction, and students' self-confidence influenced students' enthusiasm in learning English. In addition, differences in learning support from teachers and peers contributed to variations in students' participation across schools. These conditions indicate that both internal and external factors play important roles in shaping students' interest in learning English in different school environments. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the impact of internal and external aspects on students' interest in learning English among junior high school students.

Several previous studies have discussed factors influencing students' interest and engagement in learning English from different perspectives. Maru and Pajow (2019) in their study entitled *Emotional, Behavioral and Cognitive Engagement in Language Learning: The Experience of the Successful Learners* found that emotional, behavioral, and cognitive engagement significantly contribute to

successful language acquisition. Similarly, Rahmawati et al. (2025) Through their study research on The Students' Anxiety in Learning English as a Foreign Language in Senior High School revealed that anxiety negatively affects students' confidence, participation, and academic performance. Another study conducted by Istiqia et al. (2022) at MAN 1 Sambas showed that external factors, particularly school-related factors, were more dominant in influencing students' interest in learning English. In addition, according to Pratiwi et al. (2022) research about students' speaking anxiety among junior high school students found that limited vocabulary and lack of preparation caused anxiety, which influenced students' learning outcomes. Furthermore, peer support was also identified as an important factor influencing students' motivation to study, as positive peer interaction can enhance students' engagement and willingness to participate in learning activities. Teacher-related factors were also emphasized in previous studies. For example, a study on teachers' efforts to develop students' interest, motivation, and self-confidence found that teaching strategies such as group work, rewards, and games successfully improved students' interest in learning English.

Other studies according to Islamiati (2022) also highlighted the important role of both internal and external factors in shaping students' interest in learning English. Research conducted at SMP Al Irsyad Al Islamiyyah Purwokerto revealed that internal factors were more dominant than external factors in influencing students' interest in learning English. Similarly, according to Arsa (2025) the study at MTs Al-Ma'arif 2 Sorong found that motivation became the most influential internal factor, supported by parental encouragement as an external factor. Another qualitative study conducted by Rasyidah et al. (2025) at MA Al Munawwaroh Rambah Hilir reported that motivation, English skills, and learning environment significantly affected students' learning interest. In addition, Sherylna and Adnan (2025), a study conducted at MAN 2 Kota Padang showed that peer interaction significantly influenced students' interest in learning English. Although these previous studies have provided valuable insights regarding factors affecting students' interest, most of them focused only on specific factors, such as anxiety, peer interaction, or teacher strategies, and were conducted within single-school contexts. Therefore, there is still limited research investigating both internal and external factors simultaneously across different school environments, especially among Indonesian junior high school students.

Although previous studies have discussed factors influencing students' interest in learning English, several research gaps can still be identified. Most previous studies focused only on specific factors, such as anxiety, motivation, peer interaction, or teacher strategies, without comprehensively examining both internal and external factors simultaneously. In addition, many of these studies were conducted in single-school settings, which limited the understanding of how different school environments may influence students' interest in learning English. Some studies emphasized only psychological aspects, while others focused mainly on environmental influences without comparing the dominance of each factor. Furthermore, limited research has explored the interaction between internal and external factors among junior high school students in Indonesian EFL contexts. Therefore, this study seeks to fill these gaps by investigating both internal and external factors affecting students' interest in learning English across different junior high school environments and identifying the dominant factors influencing students' learning interest.

Based on these considerations, this study aims to investigate the internal and external factors influencing students' interest in learning English among junior high school students. Specifically, this study seeks to identify the factors affecting students' interest and determine which factors are the most dominant in shaping students' learning interest across different school contexts. The findings of this study are expected to contribute theoretically by enriching the literature related to students' interest in EFL learning, particularly in Indonesian junior high school contexts. Practically, this study is expected to provide valuable insights for teachers, schools, and educators in designing more effective learning strategies, creating supportive classroom environments, and improving students' motivation and participation in learning English.

METHOD

The study was conducted at Tondano Adventist School, Manado Prisma School, and North Sulawesi Adventist School during the academic year 2025–2026. These schools were selected because they represented different educational environments and learning characteristics. Preliminary observations also showed differences in students' participation, motivation, and confidence during English learning activities among the three schools. Therefore, the researchers considered these schools appropriate for examining the influence of internal and external factors on students' interest in learning English.

The population of this study consisted of all ninth-grade students from the three schools, totaling 53 students, including 18 students from Tondano Adventist School, 8 students from Manado Prisma School, and 27 students from North Sulawesi Adventist School. This study employed a total sampling technique in which all members of the population were included as research participants. According to Creswell and Creswell (2017), total sampling is suitable when the population size is relatively small because it allows researchers to obtain comprehensive data from the entire population.

The instrument used in this study was a questionnaire adapted and modified from Slameto's (2010) theory regarding factors influencing learning interest. The questionnaire was constructed based on two major dimensions, namely internal and external factors. Internal factors included attention, readiness, motivation, intelligence, and self-confidence, while external factors consisted of family support, teacher influence, school environment, and peer interaction. The questionnaire consisted of 29 close-ended statements, including 15 items related to internal factors and 14 items related to external factors. A four-point Likert scale consisting always, often, sometimes, and never was used to measure students' responses (Likert, and Murphy 1993). Before distribution, the questionnaire items were reviewed and revised to ensure clarity, relevance, and content validity.

The data were collected through direct offline distribution of questionnaires during classroom sessions in each school. Students were given explanations regarding the purpose of the study and instructions on how to answer the questionnaire properly. The researchers ensured that all participants completed the questionnaire independently and honestly based on their learning experiences. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistical analysis with the assistance of Microsoft Excel and SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences). Microsoft Excel was used to organize and tabulate the data, while SPSS was employed to calculate and analyze the data systematically and accurately. Percentage analysis was used to identify patterns and determine the dominant factors influencing students' interest in learning English (Fraenke and Wallen, 1990). The responses were calculated using the formula:

$$P = \frac{F}{n} \times 100\%$$

where P represents the percentage, F refers to the frequency of responses, and N indicates the total number of respondents. The results were then interpreted to describe the contribution of each factor and identify the most dominant influences on students' interest in learning English across the three schools.

FINDINGS

The data were collected primarily through a questionnaire focusing on the factors that influence students' interest in learning English among grade nine students at Tondano Adventist School. The questionnaire was selected as the main research instrument because it was considered effective in gathering the required data. It consisted of 29 items related to factors influencing students' interest in learning English. All 18 students who received the questionnaire completed and returned it. The results show that students' interest in learning English is influenced by two main factors.

The Factor Influencing Students' Interest In Learning English at Tondano Adventist School

This section presents the data obtained from the questionnaire to identify the factors influencing students' interest in learning English. The questionnaire was developed based on Slameto's theory concerning factors affecting learning interest, which are categorized into internal and external factors. Internal factors included physical and non-physical aspects such as attention, readiness, and intelligence, while external factors consisted of family environment, school-related aspects including teachers and facilities, and peer influence. Prior to data collection, the instrument underwent a validation process involving English language lecturers to ensure its validity and reliability. After the validation process was completed, the final questionnaire consisted of 29 close-ended items designed to measure and determine the percentage contribution of each factor influencing students' interest in learning English. The findings of the study are presented in the following section.

Internal Factor

The results of this study show that internal factors play a significant role in influencing students' interest in learning English. These factors include both physical and non-physical aspects, such as attention, readiness, and intelligence. The distribution of responses related to internal factors is presented in the following table.

Table 1. Frequency of Internal Factor

Item number	Always (4)	Often (3)	Sometimes (2)	Never (1)	Total
1	13	4	1	0	18
2	10	3	2	3	18
3	13	0	5	0	18
4	11	6	1	0	18
5	8	4	4	2	18
6	6	6	4	2	18
7	11	2	5	0	18
8	7	3	4	4	18
9	6	4	5	3	18
10	8	5	3	2	18
11	4	3	8	3	18
12	7	3	6	2	18
13	10	4	4	0	18
14	10	4	4	0	18
15	6	6	5	1	18
TOTAL	130	57	61	22	270
%	48.15%	21.11%	22.59%	8.15%	100%

The table above displays the frequency of each item related to internal factors. These items include both physical and psychological aspects as sub-indicators. Furthermore, the psychological aspect is divided into intelligence, readiness, and attention. Each sub-indicator consists of three to four statements. The percentage distribution of each sub-indicator and aspect of the internal factors is presented below.

1. Physical Factor

This section describes the results related to physical factors, including students' health, fatigue, and sensory readiness, which may influence their interest in learning English.

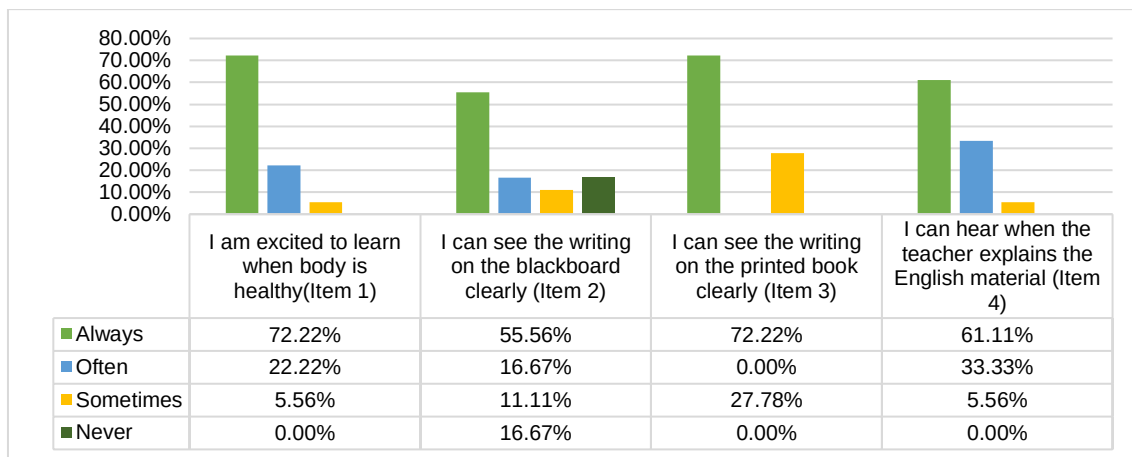


Figure 1. The Percentage of Physical Factor

Based on the percentage chart, the findings indicate that most students showed positive responses toward the physical readiness indicators. A majority of students (72.22%) reported feeling more enthusiastic to learn when in good physical condition, suggesting that health contributes to learning interest. In addition, most students reported no significant visual or auditory barriers during classroom learning. Approximately 55.56% of students stated that they could clearly see the writing on the blackboard, while 72.22% reported being able to read printed materials clearly. Furthermore, 61.11% of students indicated that they could clearly hear the teacher's explanation during the learning process. Overall, these findings suggest that students generally possess adequate physical and sensory readiness to participate effectively in English learning activities.

2. Psychological Factors

The second sub-indicator influencing internal factors related to students' interest in learning English is the non-physical factor, which consists of several aspects, namely attention, readiness, and intelligence.

a. Attention

This sub-section presents the findings related to students' attention, which refers to their level of focus and concentration during the English learning process.

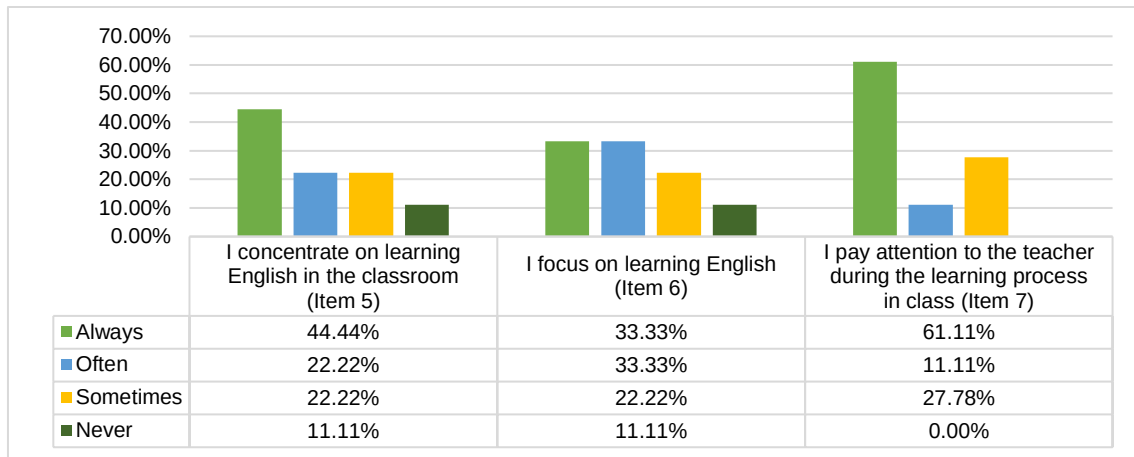


Figure 2. The Percentage of Attention

Based on the percentage chart, the findings for items 5 to 7 indicate students' attention and concentration during English learning. Most students demonstrated positive engagement in classroom activities, particularly in paying attention to the teacher during instruction, with 61.11% selecting "always." In addition, 44.44% of students reported consistently concentrating during English lessons. However, students' focus levels appeared relatively moderate, as equal percentages (33.33%) selected "always" and "often" for maintaining focus in learning English. Overall, these findings suggest that most students show adequate attention and engagement during the English learning process, although some students still experience difficulties in maintaining consistent concentration and focus.

b. Readiness

This sub-section describes the results concerning students' readiness, which reflects their preparedness, willingness, and mental condition to engage in learning English.

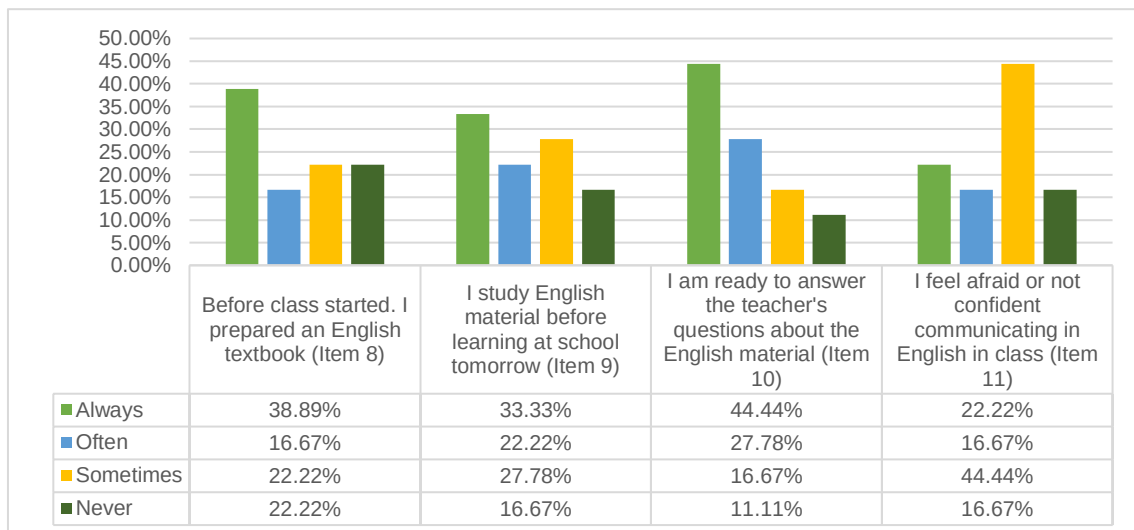


Figure 3. The Percentage of Readiness

Based on the chart, the findings for items 8 to 11 describe students' readiness in learning English. The results show that many students demonstrate adequate preparation before classroom learning, particularly in preparing textbooks and responding to the teacher's questions. Approximately 38.89% of students consistently prepared English textbooks before class, while 44.44% reported being ready to answer questions during classroom activities. However, students' readiness in reviewing English materials before class appeared relatively varied, indicating that not all students consistently study

independently prior to instruction. In addition, a considerable number of students still experienced anxiety and lack of confidence when communicating in English, with 44.44% reporting that they sometimes feel afraid or unconfident during classroom interaction. Overall, the findings suggest that although students generally show moderate readiness in English learning, emotional barriers such as communication anxiety remain evident among many learners.

c. Intelligence

This sub-section explains the findings related to students' intelligence, which involves their cognitive ability to understand, process, and respond to English learning materials.

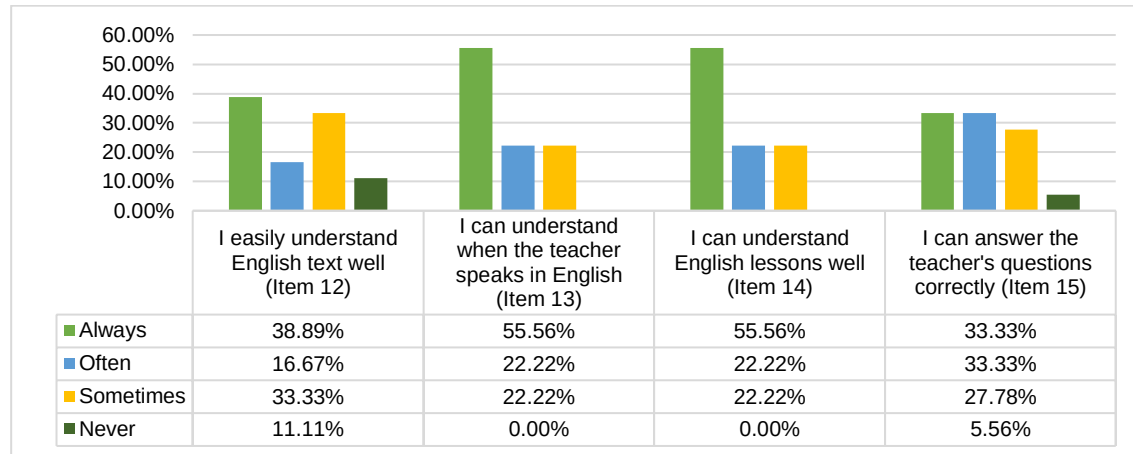


Figure 4. The Percentage of Intelligence

Based on the chart, items 12 to 15 describe students' level of understanding in learning English. Overall, most students demonstrated a relatively good understanding of English lessons, particularly in comprehending the teacher's spoken English and classroom instruction, with 55.56% selecting "always" for both indicators. In addition, many students reported being able to understand English texts and answer the teacher's questions correctly, although some still experienced occasional difficulties in comprehension and response accuracy. These findings suggest that students generally possess adequate cognitive understanding in English learning; however, variations in comprehension and response ability remain evident among several learners.

External Factors

External factors come from sources beyond the student's control, such as family, school factors (teachers, facilities), and peer factors. The frequency of external factor can be seen in the following table:

Table 2. The Frequency of External Factors

Item number	Always (4)	Often (3)	Sometimes (2)	Never (1)	Total
1	5	5	4	4	18
2	11	3	4	0	18
3	4	3	9	2	18
4	10	5	3	0	18
5	6	4	6	2	18
6	8	3	6	1	18
7	6	8	4	0	18
8	10	5	3	0	18
9	7	6	5	0	18
10	6	8	4	0	18
11	11	3	4	0	18
12	10	4	3	1	18
13	9	6	3	0	18
14	4	5	4	5	18
15	107	68	62	15	252
TOTAL	42.46%	26.98%	24.6%	5.95%	100%
%	5	5	4	4	18

The table above presents the frequency distribution of students' responses to each item related to external factors. These factors are classified into three sub-indicators, namely family factors, school factors which encompass teacher-related and facility-related aspects and peer factors. In total, 14 statements were used, with approximately three to four items representing each sub-indicator and its respective aspects. The following section provides the percentage distribution of each indicator and sub-indicator within the external factors.

1. Family

This sub-section presents the findings related to family factors, which refer to the influence of parents, home environment, and family support on students' interest in learning English.

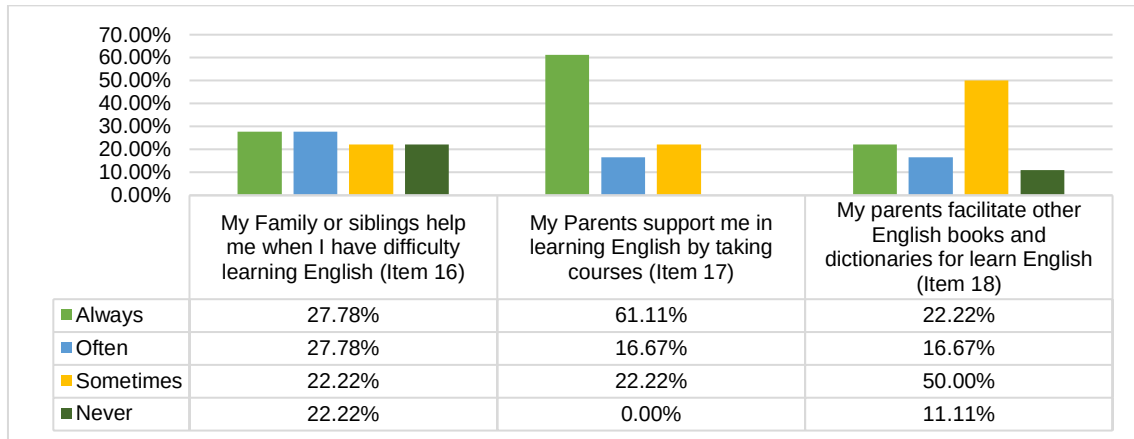


Figure 5. The Percentage of Family Factor

Based on the chart, items 16 to 18 describe the role of family support in students' English learning. Overall, the results indicate that parental and family support varies among students. Most students reported receiving strong parental encouragement, particularly through enrollment in English courses, with 61.11% selecting "always." However, assistance from family members in overcoming learning difficulties and the provision of supporting materials such as books and dictionaries appeared less consistent. Many students reported receiving such support only occasionally. These findings suggest that while parental involvement contributes positively to students' English learning, the level and form of family support differ across learners.

2. School Factors

As a sub-indicator of external factors, the school factor includes two key components: the teacher factor and the facility factor. The percentage distribution of these components is presented as follows:

a. Teacher

This sub-section describes the results concerning teacher factors, including teaching methods, guidance, and classroom interaction that may influence students' interest in learning English.

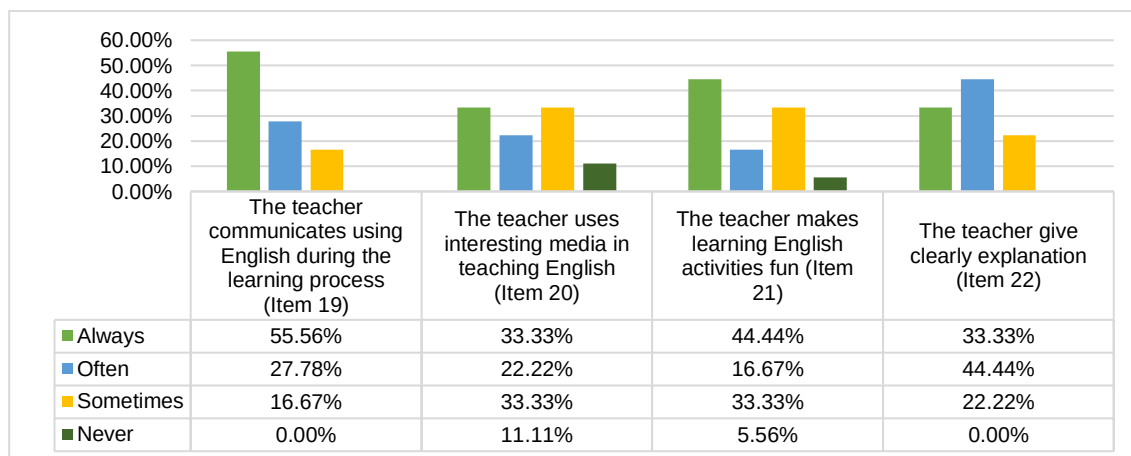


Figure 6. The Percentage of Teacher Factor

Based on the chart, items 19 to 22 describe the role of teachers in supporting students' English learning. Overall, students perceived the teacher's role positively, particularly in using English during classroom instruction and providing clear explanations. More than half of the students (55.56%) reported that the teacher consistently used English in the learning process, while most students also viewed the teacher's explanations as clear and understandable. In addition, many students considered English learning activities enjoyable, although the use of engaging instructional media was perceived as relatively moderate. These findings suggest that teachers contribute positively to students' learning interest through classroom communication, instructional clarity, and supportive learning activities.

b. Facilities

This sub-section explains the findings related to facilities, which include the availability and adequacy of learning resources and school infrastructure supporting English learning.

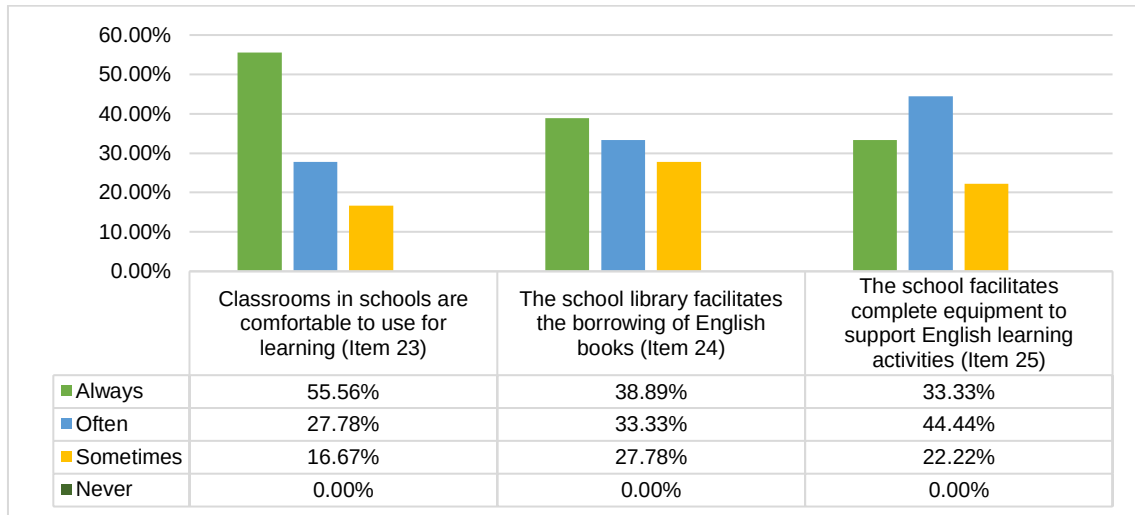


Figure 7. The Percentage of Facilities Factor

Based on the chart, items 23 to 25 indicate that school facilities generally support students' English learning. Most students (55.56%) perceived the classroom as consistently comfortable for learning activities. In addition, 38.89% of students reported that the school library always facilitates borrowing English books, while 44.44% stated that the school often provides adequate facilities to support English learning activities. Overall, these findings suggest that the school environment and facilities contribute positively to students' engagement and interest in learning English.

3. Peer

This sub-section presents the findings related to peer factors, which refer to the influence of classmates and friends on students' interest in learning English.

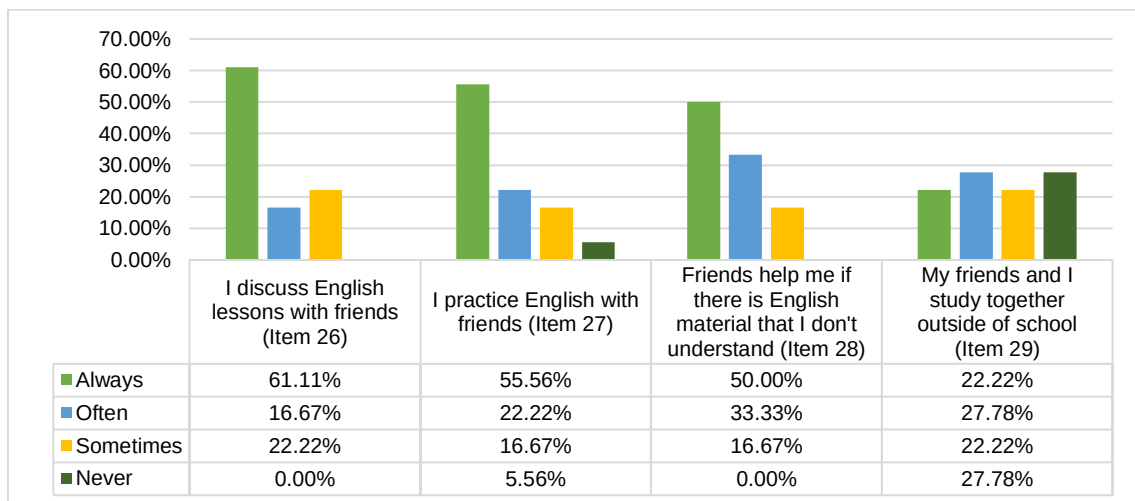


Figure 8. The Percentage of Peer Factor

Based on the chart, items 26 to 29 indicate that peer factors play an important role in supporting students' English learning. Most students reported actively discussing English lessons with friends (61.11%) and regularly practicing English with peers (55.56%). In addition, 50.00% of students stated that their friends always help them when they experience difficulties in understanding English material. However, collaborative learning outside the classroom appeared relatively varied, as only 22.22% of students consistently studied English with friends outside school, while 27.78% reported never doing so. Overall, these findings suggest that peer interaction contributes positively to students' engagement and interest in learning English, particularly during classroom learning activities.

The Dominant Factor Influencing Students' Interest in Learning English at Tondano Adventist School

The factors influencing students' interest in learning English are described based on the responses obtained from the questionnaire administered to the participants. The instrument consisted of 29 items designed to capture relevant data. After the data were collected, they were organized, tabulated, and analyzed to identify the most dominant factors affecting students' interest in learning English, in line with the objectives of the study. The analysis focuses on comparing internal and external factors. The distribution of internal and external factors in percentage form is further presented in the following chart.

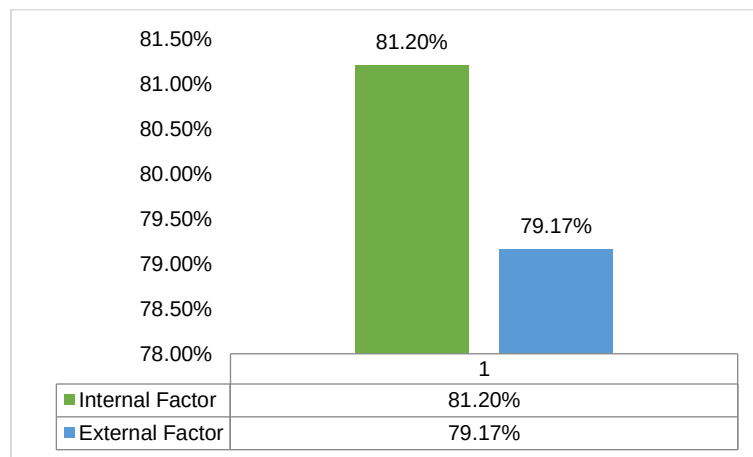


Figure 9. The Percentage of Internal and External Factors

Students' interest in learning English is influenced by both internal and external factors. Based on the findings of this study and the results of data analysis, the total frequency of internal factors is 877, while the total frequency of external factors is 798. In terms of total scores, internal factors reached 1.080, whereas external factors amounted to 1,008. After calculating these values, the percentage of internal factors is 81.20%, while external factors account for 79.17%. These results indicate to second research question that internal factors have a stronger influence compared to external factors. Therefore, it can be concluded that internal factors are more dominant than external factors in influencing students' interest in learning English at Tondano Adventist School.

The Factor Influencing Students' Interest in Learning English at Manado Prisma School

Internal Factors

The results of this study show that internal factors play a significant role in influencing students' interest in learning English. These factors include both physical and non-physical aspects, such as attention, readiness, and intelligence. The distribution of responses related to internal factors is presented in the following table.

Table 3. The Frequency of Internal Factor

Item number	Always (4)	Often (3)	Sometimes (2)	Never (1)	Total
1	6	2	0	0	8
2	6	1	1	0	8
3	7	1	0	0	8
4	6	2	0	0	8
5	2	6	0	0	8

6	4	4	0	0	8
7	3	5	0	0	8
8	6	1	1	0	8
9	0	4	4	0	8
10	2	3	3	0	8
11	1	2	3	2	8
12	3	1	4	0	8
13	4	4	0	0	8
14	2	5	1	0	8
15	0	6	2	0	8
TOTAL	52	47	19	2	120
%	43.33%	39.17%	15.83%	1.67%	100%

The table above displays the frequency of each item related to internal factors. These items include both physical and psychological aspects as sub-indicators. Furthermore, the psychological aspect is divided into intelligence, readiness, and attention. Each sub-indicator consists of three to four statements. The percentage distribution of each sub-indicator and aspect of the internal factors is presented below.

1. Physical Factors

This section describes the results related to physical factors, including students' health, fatigue, and sensory readiness, which may influence their interest in learning English.

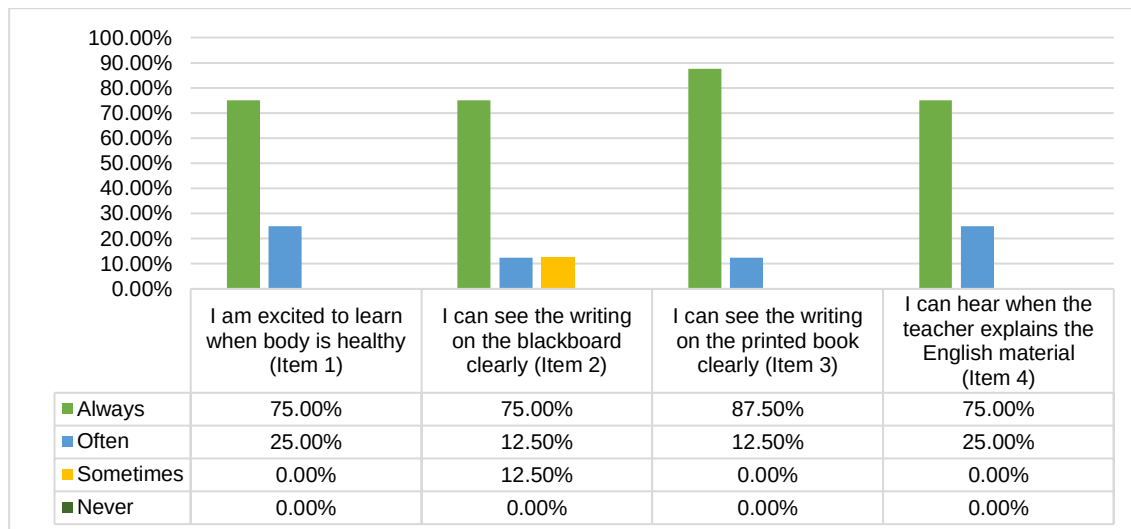


Figure 10. The Percentage of Physical Factor

Based on the chart, the findings for items 1 to 4 indicate that students generally demonstrate strong physical and sensory readiness in learning English. Most students reported feeling enthusiastic to learn when in good physical condition (75.00%). In addition, 75.00% of students stated that they could clearly see the writing on the blackboard, while 87.50% reported being able to read printed materials clearly. Furthermore, 75.00% of students indicated that they could hear the teacher's explanation clearly during the learning process. Overall, these findings suggest that students possess adequate physical and sensory conditions to support effective participation in English learning activities.

2. Psychological Factors

The second sub-indicator influencing internal factors related to students' interest in learning English is the non-physical factor, which consists of several aspects, namely attention, readiness, and intelligence.

a. Attention

This sub-section presents the findings related to students' attention, which refers to their level of focus and concentration during the English learning process.

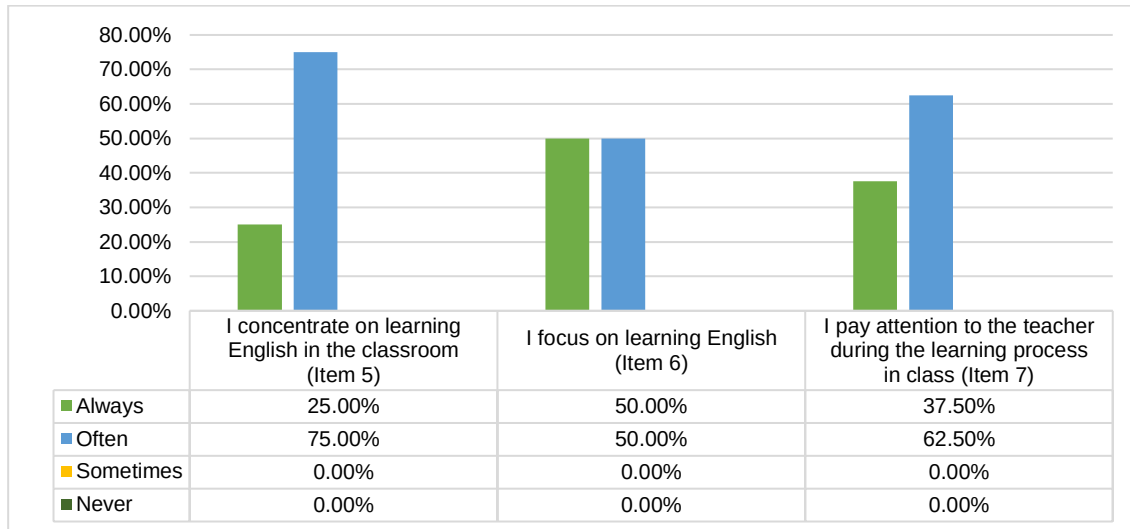


Figure 11. The Percentage of Attention

Based on the chart, items 5 to 7 indicate that students demonstrate positive non-physical readiness, particularly in terms of concentration, focus, and attention during English learning. Most students frequently concentrated on classroom learning activities, with 75.00% selecting “often” for concentration in learning English. In addition, students showed consistently high levels of focus, as 50.00% selected both “always” and “often” for maintaining focus during learning. Furthermore, 62.50% of students reported that they often paid attention to the teacher during classroom instruction. Overall, these findings suggest that students possess strong cognitive engagement and attentiveness in the English learning process.

b. Readiness

This sub-section describes the results concerning students’ readiness, which reflects their preparedness, willingness, and mental condition to engage in learning English.

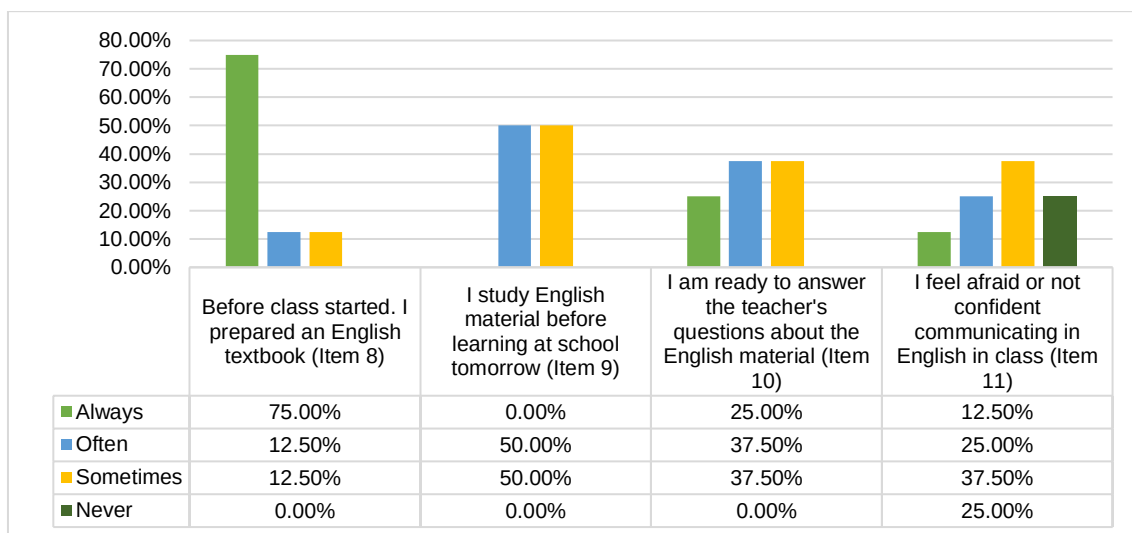


Figure 12. The Percentage of Readiness

Based on the chart, items 8 to 11 describe students’ readiness in learning English at Manado Prisma School. Most students demonstrated positive readiness, particularly in preparing English textbooks before class, with 75.00% selecting “always.” However, preparation through studying English material before class appeared relatively moderate, as 50.00% of students selected both “often” and “sometimes.” In addition, students’ readiness to answer the teacher’s questions varied, with the majority showing moderate levels of preparedness. The findings also reveal that many students still experience occasional anxiety and lack of confidence when communicating in English, as 37.50% selected

“sometimes.” Overall, these results suggest that although students generally demonstrate adequate learning readiness, emotional barriers in English communication remain evident among several learners.

c. Intelligence

This sub-section explains the findings related to students’ intelligence, which involves their cognitive ability to understand, process, and respond to English learning materials.

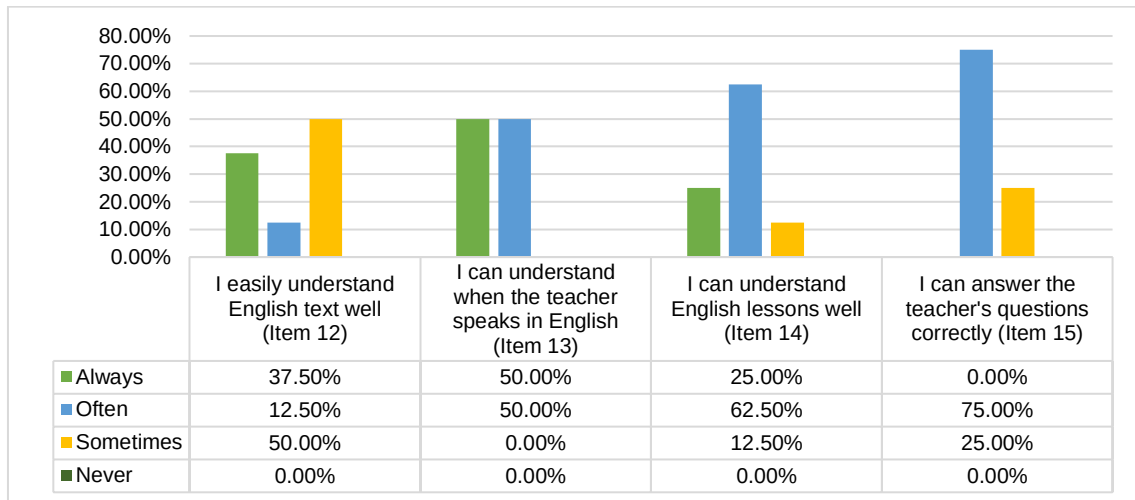


Figure 13. The Percentage of Intelligence

Based on the chart, items 12 to 15 indicate that students generally demonstrate a moderate to good level of understanding in learning English at Manado Prisma School. Most students were able to understand the teacher’s spoken English consistently, with 50.00% selecting both “always” and “often.” In addition, 62.50% of students reported that they often understood English lessons well, while 75.00% indicated that they could often answer the teacher’s questions correctly. However, understanding English texts remained relatively challenging for some students, as 50.00% selected “sometimes” for comprehending English texts easily. Overall, these findings suggest that students possess adequate comprehension in classroom learning, although difficulties in understanding written English materials are still experienced by several learners.

External Factors

External factors come from sources beyond the student's control, such as family, school factors (teachers, facilities), and peer factors. The frequency of external factor can be seen in the following table:

Table 4. The Frequency of Internal Factor

Item number	Always (4)	Often (3)	Sometimes (2)	Never (1)	Total
1	4	2	2	0	8
2	3	4	1	0	8
3	2	5	1	0	8
4	5	3	0	0	8
5	7	1	0	0	8
6	3	3	2	0	8
7	8	0	0	0	8
8	2	6	0	0	8
9	3	2	3	0	8
10	4	4	0	0	8
11	0	8	0	0	8
12	0	5	3	0	8
13	4	3	1	0	8
14	0	3	5	0	8
TOTAL	45	49	18	0	112
%	40.18%	43.75%	16.07%	0.00%	100%

The table above presents the frequency distribution of students' responses to each item related to external factors. These factors are classified into three sub-indicators, namely family factors, school factors which encompass teacher-related and facility-related aspects and peer factors. In total, 14 statements were used, with approximately three to four items representing each sub-indicator and its respective aspects. The following section provides the percentage distribution of each indicator and sub-indicator within the external factors

1. Family Factors

This sub-section presents the findings related to family factors, which refer to the influence of parents, home environment, and family support on students' interest in learning English.

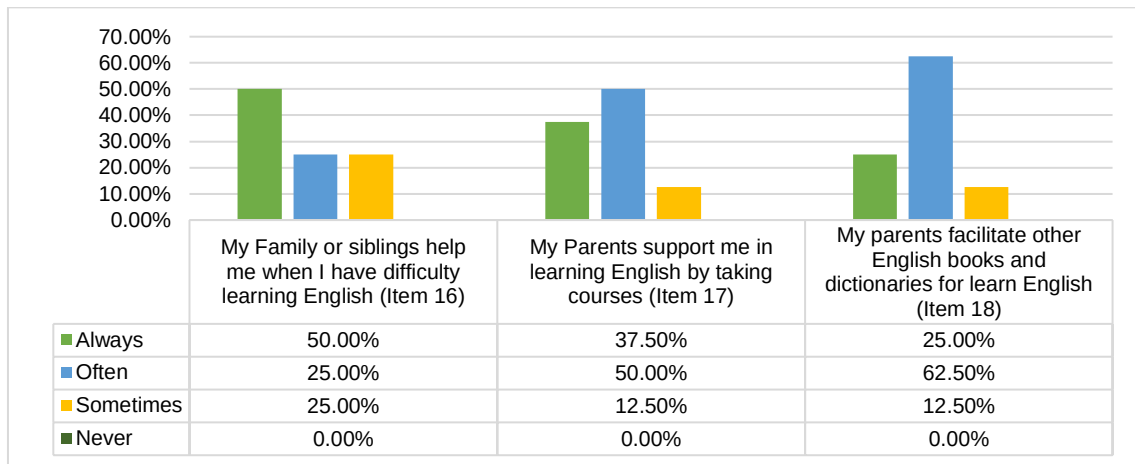


Figure 14. The Percentage of Family Factors

Based on the chart, items 16 to 18 indicate that family support plays a positive role in students' English learning at Manado Prisma School. Most students reported consistently receiving assistance from family members when experiencing difficulties in learning English, with 50.00% selecting "always." In addition, parental support through English courses was relatively strong, as 50.00% of students selected "often." The provision of supporting learning materials was also positively perceived, with 62.50% reporting that parents often provide English books and dictionaries. Overall, these findings suggest that family involvement contributes positively to supporting students' English learning and learning interest.

2) School Factors

As a sub-indicator of external factors, the school factor includes two key components: the teacher factor and the facility factor. The percentage distribution of these components is presented as follows:

a. Teacher

This sub-section describes the results concerning teacher factors, including teaching methods, guidance, and classroom interaction that may influence students' interest in learning English.

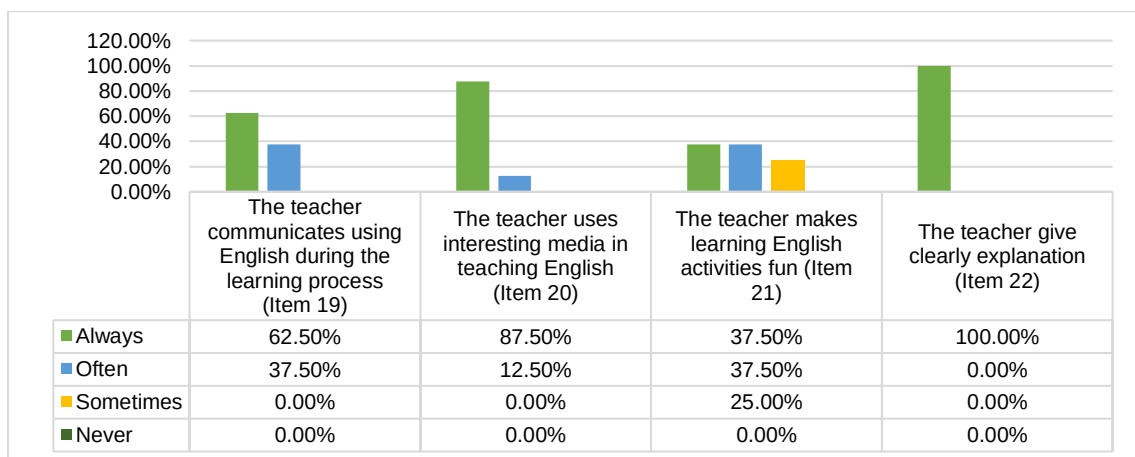


Figure 15. The Percentage of Teacher Factor

Based on the chart, items 19 to 22 indicate that the teacher plays a highly positive role in supporting students' English learning at Manado Prisma School. Most students reported that the teacher consistently used English during classroom instruction, with 62.50% selecting "always." In addition, 87.50% of students stated that the teacher always used interesting instructional media, while all students (100.00%) perceived the teacher's explanations as consistently clear and understandable. Furthermore, most students viewed English learning activities as enjoyable, although the level of engagement varied among learners. Overall, these findings suggest that effective teaching practices, clear instruction, and engaging learning activities contribute positively to students' interest in learning English.

b. Facilities

This sub-section explains the findings related to facilities, which include the availability and adequacy of learning resources and school infrastructure supporting English learning.

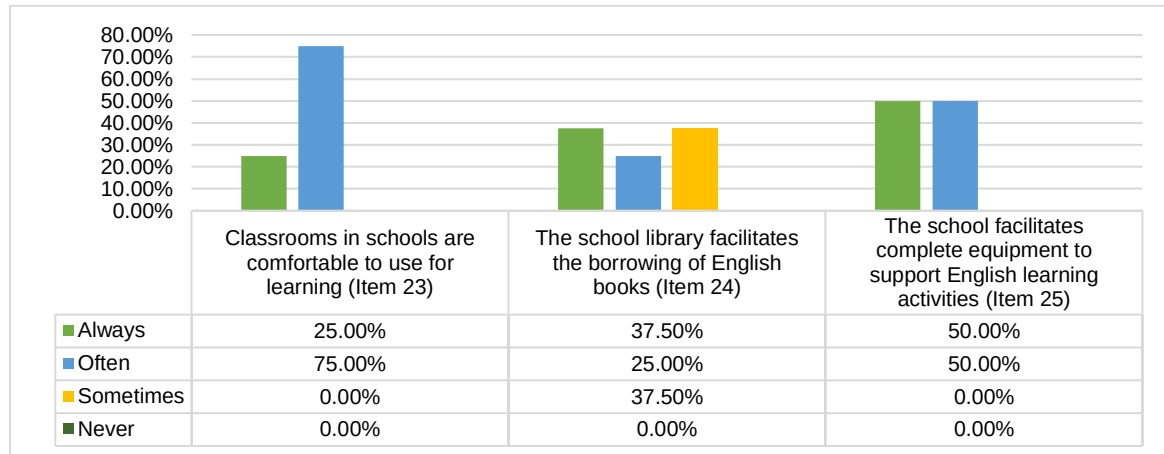


Figure 16. The Percentage of Facilities Factor

Based on the chart, items 23 to 25 indicate that school facilities generally support students' English learning at Manado Prisma School. Most students perceived the classroom as comfortable for learning activities, with 75.00% selecting "often." In addition, access to English books through the school library was viewed positively, although the level of facilitation varied among students. Furthermore, 50.00% of students reported that the school always provides adequate facilities to support English learning activities, while the remaining 50.00% selected "often." Overall, these findings suggest that supportive school facilities and learning environments contribute positively to students' engagement and interest in learning English.

3. Peer

This sub-section presents the findings related to peer factors, which refer to the influence of classmates and friends on students' interest in learning English.

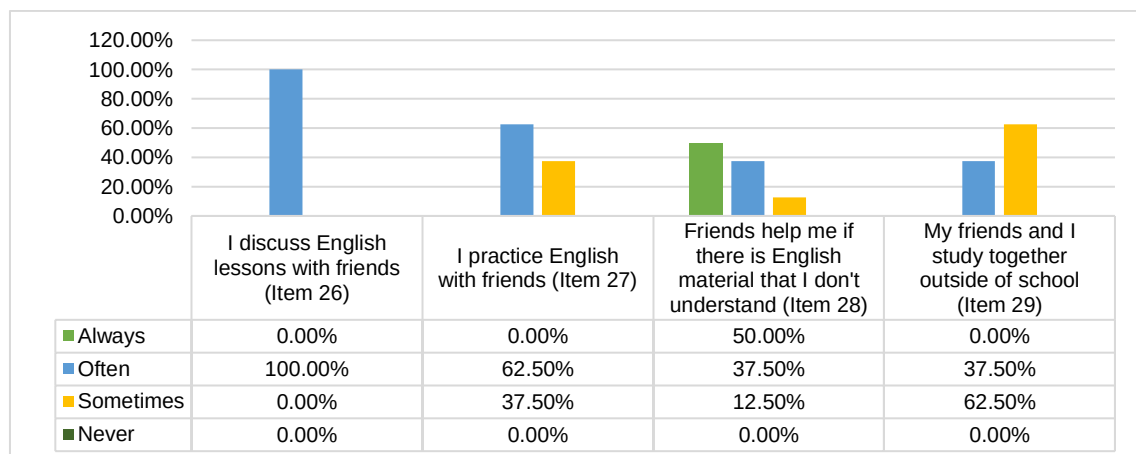


Figure 17. The Percentage of Peer Factor

Based on the chart, items 26 to 29 indicate that peer factors positively support students' English learning at Manado Prisma School. All students (100.00%) reported that they often discuss English lessons with their friends, demonstrating active peer interaction during the learning process. In addition, most students frequently practice English with peers, although not consistently. Peer support was also strongly evident, with 50.00% of students selecting "always" and 37.50% selecting "often" for receiving help from friends when experiencing difficulties in learning English. However, collaborative learning outside the classroom appeared less consistent, as 62.50% of students reported only sometimes studying English with friends outside school. Overall, these findings suggest that peer interaction contributes positively to students' engagement and interest in learning English, particularly within classroom learning contexts.

The Dominant Factor Influencing Students' Interest in Learning English

The factors influencing students' interest in learning English are described based on the responses obtained from the questionnaire administered to the participants. The instrument consisted of 29 items designed to capture relevant data. After the data were collected, they were organized, tabulated, and analyzed to identify the most dominant factors affecting students' interest in learning English, in line with the objectives of the study. The analysis focuses on comparing internal and external factors. The distribution of internal and external factors in percentage form is further presented in the following chart.

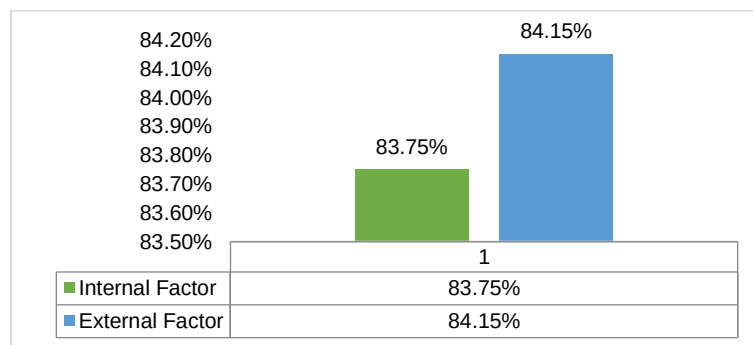


Figure 18. The Percentage of Internal and External Factors

Students' interest in learning English is influenced by both internal and external factors. Based on the findings of this study, the percentage of internal factors is 83.75%, while external factors account for 84.15%. This indicates that the difference between the two is minimal, with external factors showing a slightly higher influence. Therefore, it can be concluded that both internal and external factors contribute almost equally, although external factors appear to be marginally more dominant in influencing students' interest in learning English at Manado Prisma School.

The Factor Influencing Students' Interest in Learning English at SLA Tomposo II

Internal Factors

The results of this study show that internal factors play a significant role in influencing students' interest in learning English. These factors include both physical and non-physical aspects, such as attention, readiness, and intelligence. The distribution of responses related to internal factors is presented in the following table.

Table 5. The Frequency of Internal Factor

Item number	Always (4)	Often (3)	Sometimes (2)	Never (1)	Total
1	15	8	4	0	27
2	16	8	3	0	27
3	24	3	0	0	27
4	13	9	5	0	27
5	11	14	2	0	27
6	11	14	2	0	27
7	16	6	5	0	27
8	18	6	3	0	27
9	1	9	13	4	27
10	5	8	11	3	27

11	1	9	15	2	27
12	7	16	4	0	27
13	6	12	9	0	27
14	5	13	9	0	27
15	4	9	14	0	27
TOTAL	153	144	99	9	405
%	37.78%	35.56%	24.44%	2.22%	100%

The table above displays the frequency of each item related to internal factors. These items include both physical and psychological aspects as sub-indicators. Furthermore, the psychological aspect is divided into intelligence, readiness, and attention. Each sub-indicator consists of three to four statements. The percentage distribution of each sub-indicator and aspect of the internal factors is presented below.

1. Physical Factors

This section describes the results related to physical factors, including students' health, fatigue, and sensory readiness, which may influence their interest in learning English.

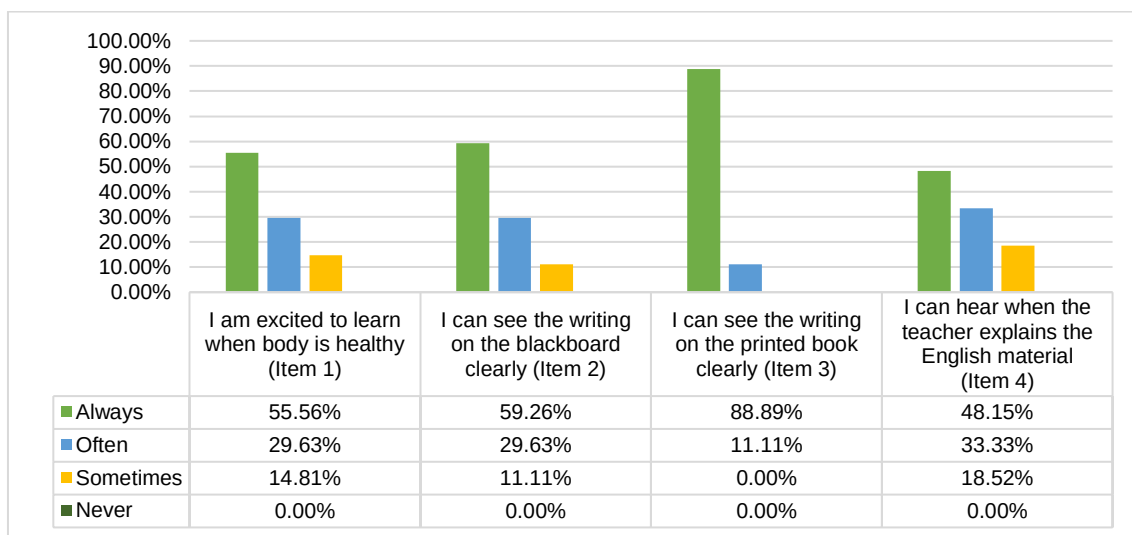


Figure 19. The Percentage of Physical Factor

Based on the chart, items 1 to 4 indicate that students at North Sulawesi Adventist School generally demonstrate positive physical and sensory readiness in learning English. Most students reported feeling enthusiastic to learn when in good physical condition, with 55.56% selecting "always." In addition, 59.26% of students stated that they could clearly see the writing on the blackboard, while 88.89% reported being able to read printed materials clearly. Furthermore, most students indicated that they could hear the teacher's explanations clearly during classroom learning. Overall, these findings suggest that students possess adequate physical and sensory conditions to support effective participation in English learning activities.

2. Psychological Factors

The second sub-indicator influencing internal factors related to students' interest in learning English is the non-physical factor, which consists of several aspects, namely attention, readiness, and intelligence.

1. Attention

This sub-section presents the findings related to students' attention, which refers to their level of focus and concentration during the English learning process.

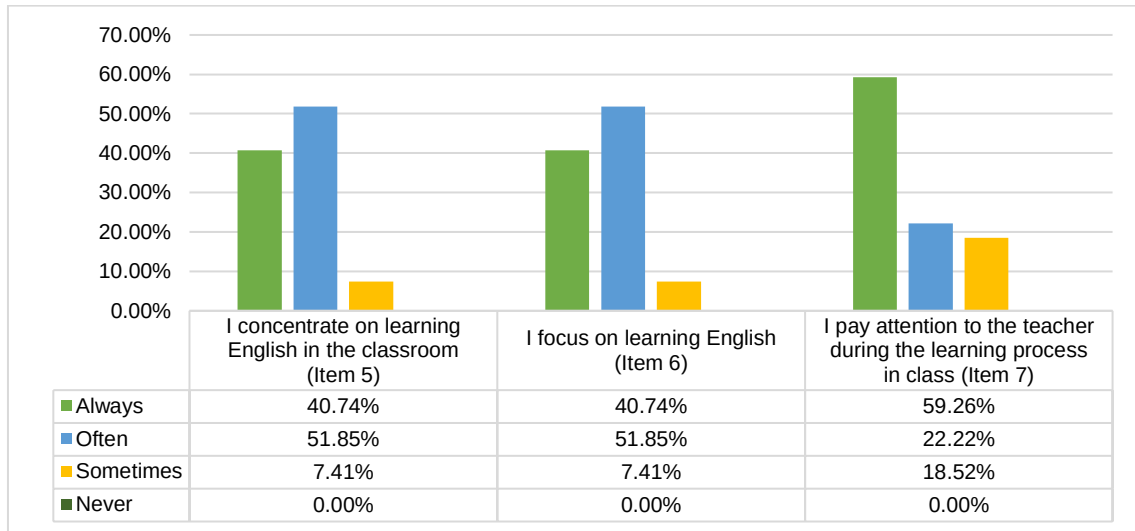


Figure 20. The Percentage of Attention

Based on the chart, items 5 to 7 indicate that students at North Sulawesi Adventist School demonstrate positive non-physical readiness, particularly in terms of concentration, focus, and attention during English learning. Most students frequently concentrated on classroom learning activities, with 51.85% selecting “often” for both concentration and focus in learning English. In addition, 59.26% of students reported that they always paid attention to the teacher during classroom instruction. Overall, these findings suggest that students generally possess good cognitive engagement and attentiveness in the English learning process.

2. Readiness

This sub-section describes the results concerning students’ readiness, which reflects their preparedness, willingness, and mental condition to engage in learning English.

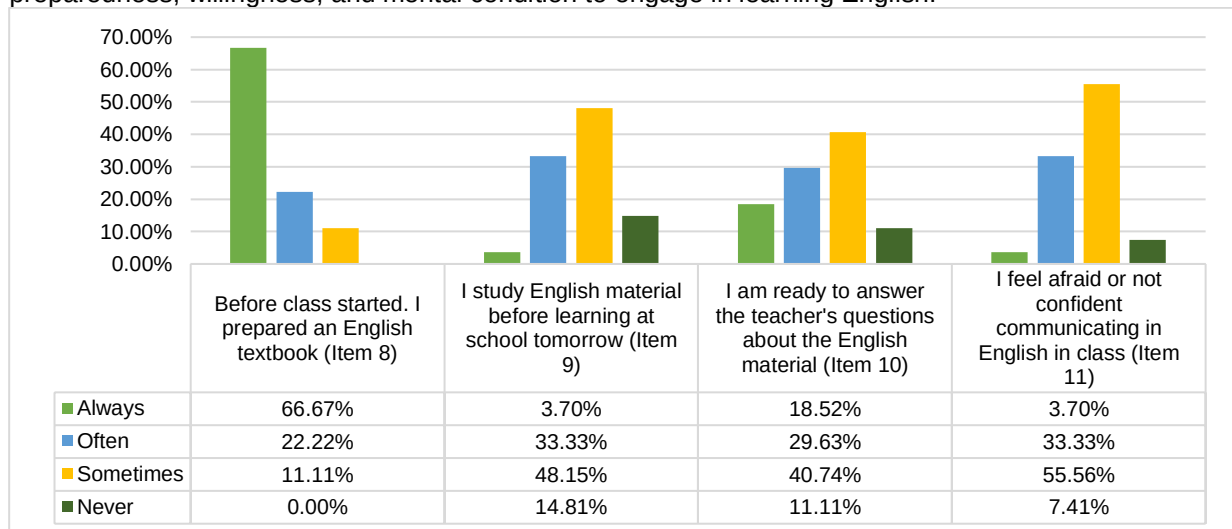


Figure 21. The Percentage of Readiness

Based on the chart, items 8 to 11 describe students’ readiness in learning English at North Sulawesi Adventist School. Most students demonstrated positive readiness in preparing English textbooks before class, with 66.67% selecting “always.” However, preparation through studying English material before attending class appeared relatively inconsistent, as 48.15% of students selected “sometimes.” In addition, students’ readiness to answer the teacher’s questions was generally moderate, with most students reporting only occasional preparedness. The findings also reveal that many students still experience anxiety and lack of confidence when communicating in English, as 55.56% selected “sometimes.” Overall, These results indicate that a majority of students still experience occasional anxiety or lack of confidence when communicating in English.

3. Intelligence

This sub-section explains the findings related to students' intelligence, which involves their cognitive ability to understand, process, and respond to English learning materials.

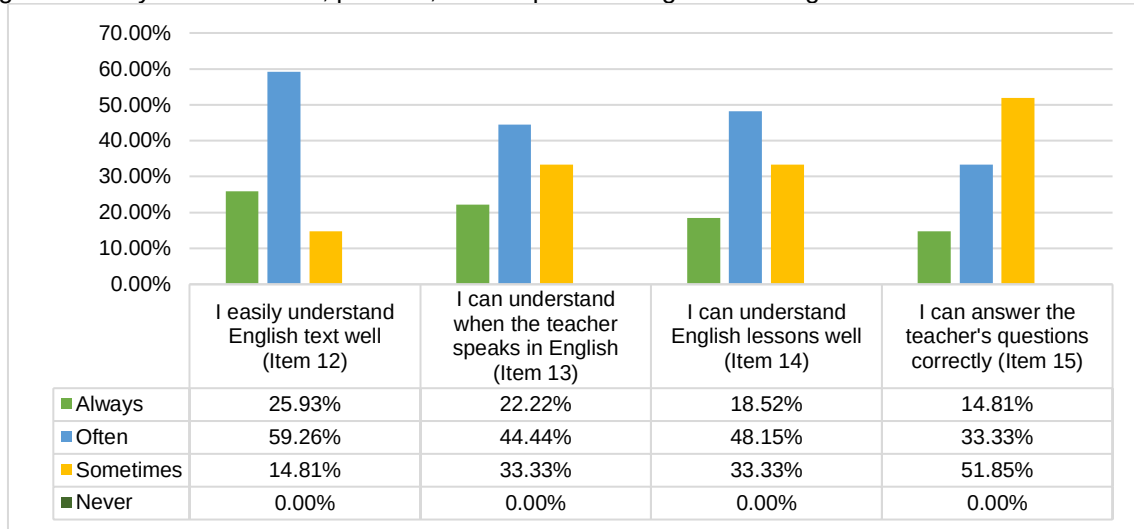


Figure 22. The Percentage of Intelligence

Based on the chart, items 12 to 15 indicate that students at North Sulawesi Adventist School generally demonstrate a moderate level of understanding in learning English. Most students frequently understood English texts, with 59.26% selecting "often," while comprehension of the teacher's spoken English and classroom lessons also appeared relatively positive. However, students' ability to answer the teacher's questions correctly remained moderate, as 51.85% selected "sometimes." Overall, these findings suggest that students possess adequate comprehension in English learning, although consistent understanding and response accuracy are still limited among several learners.

External Factors

External factors come from sources beyond the student's control, such as family, school factors (teachers, facilities), and peer factors. The frequency of external factor can be seen in the following table:

Table 6. The Frequency of Internal Factor

Item number	Always (4)	Often (3)	Sometimes (2)	Never (1)	Total
1	8	6	10	3	27
2	11	9	6	1	27
3	12	2	9	4	27
4	9	10	8	0	27
5	5	11	8	3	27
6	8	10	8	1	27
7	19	6	2	0	27
8	16	4	7	0	27
9	12	9	6	0	27
10	9	12	6	0	27
11	13	7	5	2	27
12	10	9	7	1	27
13	16	7	4	0	27
14	5	4	10	8	27
TOTAL	153	106	96	23	378
%	40.48%	28.04%	25.40%	6.08%	100%
1	8	6	10	3	27

The table above presents the frequency distribution of students' responses to each item related to external factors. These factors are classified into three sub-indicators, namely family factors, school factors which encompass teacher-related and facility-related aspects and peer factors. In total, 14 statements were used, with approximately three to four items representing each sub-indicator and its

respective aspects. The following section provides the percentage distribution of each indicator and sub-indicator within the external factors.

1. Family Factors

This sub-section presents the findings related to family factors, which refer to the influence of parents, home environment, and family support on students' interest in learning English.

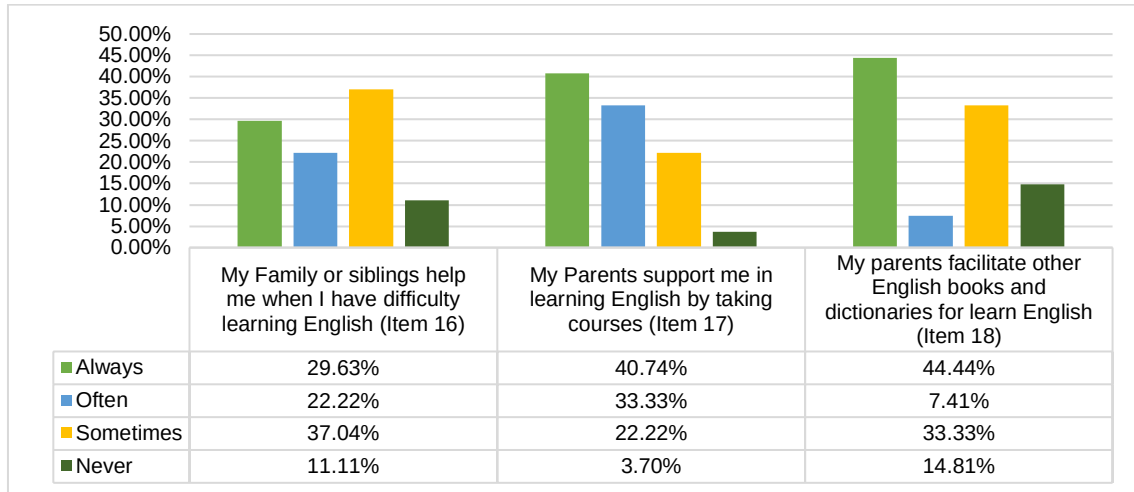


Figure 23. The Percentage of Family Factor

Based on the chart, items 16 to 18 indicate that family support plays a relatively positive role in students' English learning at North Sulawesi Adventist School. Although many students only sometimes received assistance from family members when experiencing difficulties in learning English, parental support through English courses appeared more consistent, with 40.74% selecting "always." In addition, 44.44% of students reported that their parents consistently provided supporting learning materials such as English books and dictionaries. Overall, these findings suggest that parental involvement contributes positively to supporting students' English learning, although direct assistance from family members varies among learners.

2. School Factors

As a sub-indicator of external factors, the school factor includes two key components: the teacher factor and the facility factor. The percentage distribution of these components is presented as follows:

a. Teacher

This sub-section describes the results concerning teacher factors, including teaching methods, guidance, and classroom interaction that may influence students' interest in learning English.

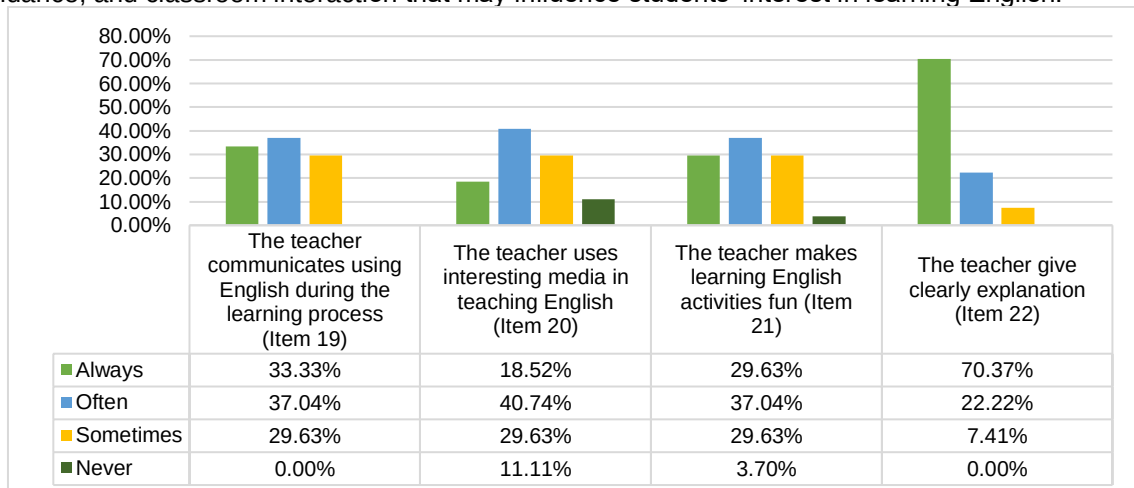


Figure 24. The Percentage of Teacher Factor

Based on the chart, items 19 to 22 indicate that the teacher plays a positive role in supporting students' English learning at Tondano Adventist School. Most students reported that the teacher frequently used English during classroom instruction, although the consistency varied among learners. In addition, the use of interesting instructional media and enjoyable learning activities was generally perceived positively, despite some inconsistency in students' experiences. Furthermore, 70.37% of students stated that the teacher always provided clear explanations during the learning process. Overall, these findings suggest that effective teaching practices, instructional clarity, and engaging classroom activities contribute positively to students' interest in learning English.

b. Facilities

This sub-section explains the findings related to facilities, which include the availability and adequacy of learning resources and school infrastructure supporting English learning.

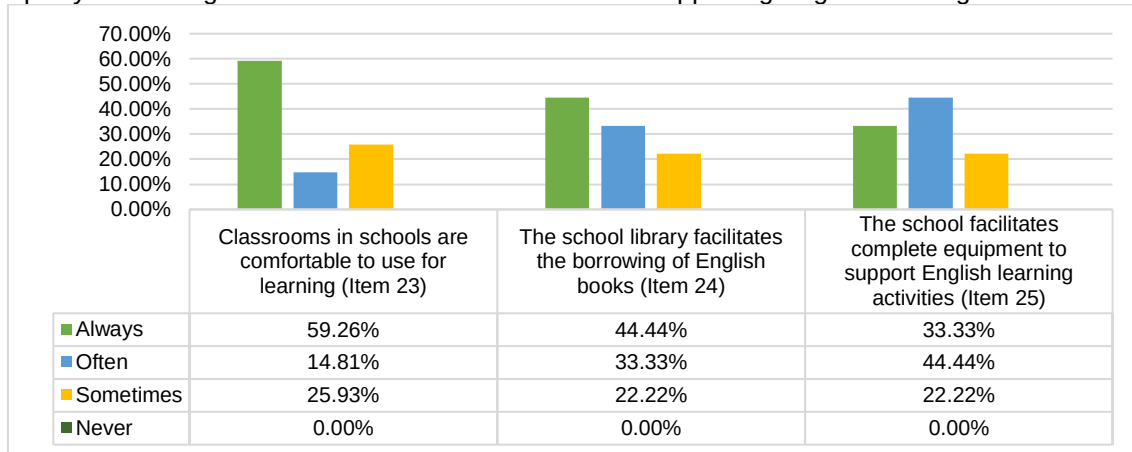


Figure 25. The Percentage of Facilities Factors

Based on the chart, items 23 to 25 indicate that school facilities generally support students' English learning at North Sulawesi Adventist School. Most students perceived the classroom environment as comfortable for learning activities, with 59.26% selecting "always." In addition, the school library was viewed as supportive in facilitating access to English books, while the majority of students also considered the school facilities adequate for supporting English learning activities. Overall, these findings suggest that supportive school facilities and learning environments contribute positively to students' engagement and interest in learning English.

3. Peer

This sub-section presents the findings related to peer factors, which refer to the influence of classmates and friends on students' interest in learning English.

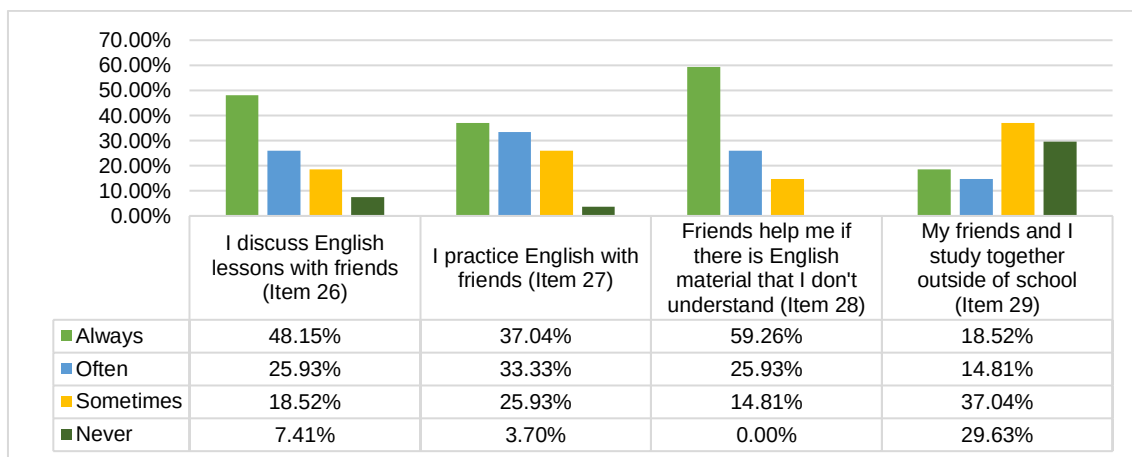


Figure 26. The Percentage of Peer Factor

Based on the chart, items 26 to 29 indicate that peer factors positively support students' English learning at North Sulawesi Adventist School. Most students actively discussed and practiced English with their

peers, although the level of participation varied among learners. In addition, peer support appeared highly significant, with 59.26% of students reporting that their friends always helped them when they experienced difficulties in understanding English material. However, collaborative learning outside the classroom was relatively inconsistent, as many students only sometimes or never studied English with peers outside school. Overall, these findings suggest that peer interaction contributes positively to students' engagement and interest in learning English, particularly within classroom learning activities.

The Dominant Factors Influencing Student's Interest in Learning English

The factors influencing students' interest in learning English are described based on the responses obtained from the questionnaire administered to the participants. The instrument consisted of 29 items designed to capture relevant data. After the data were collected, they were organized, tabulated, and analyzed to identify the most dominant factors affecting students' interest in learning English, in line with the objectives of the study. The analysis focuses on comparing internal and external factors. The distribution of internal and external factors in percentage form is further presented in the following chart.

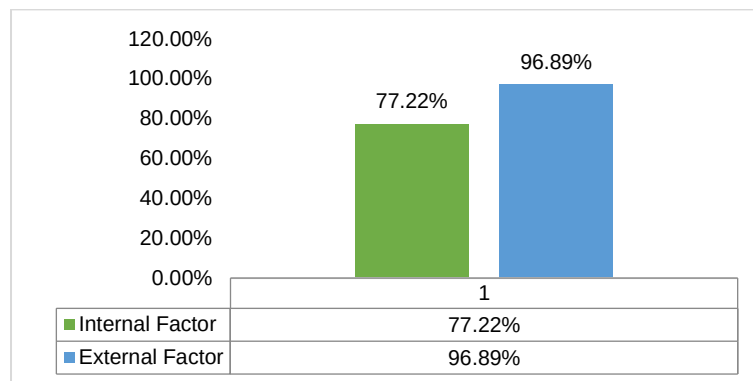


Figure 27. The Percentage of Internal and External Factors

Students' interest in learning English is influenced by both internal and external factors. Based on the findings of this study and the results of data analysis, the total frequency of internal factors is 1.251, while the total frequency of external factors is 1.465. In terms of total scores, internal factors reached 1.620, whereas external factors amounted to 1.512. After calculating these values, the percentage of internal factors 77.22%, while external factors account for 96.89%. These results indicate that external factors have a stronger influence compared to internal factors. Therefore, it can be concluded that external factors are more dominant than internal factors in influencing students' interest in learning English at North Sulawesi Adventist School.

DISCUSSIONS

The present study aimed to investigate the influence of internal and external factors on students' interest in learning English across three junior high schools. The findings revealed that both internal and external factors significantly contribute to students' interest in learning English; however, the dominant factors varied depending on the school context. At Tondano Adventist School, internal factors were found to be more dominant, indicating that students' psychological conditions, such as motivation, attention, readiness, and confidence, play a significant role in shaping learning interest. In contrast, students from Manado Prisma School and SLA Tomposo II were more strongly influenced by external factors, including teaching methods, classroom atmosphere, peer interaction, and environmental support. These findings suggest that students' interest in learning English is context-dependent and develops through the interaction between personal and environmental influences.

The dominance of internal factors at Tondano Adventist School may be interpreted through the perspective of learner engagement. This finding is in line with Maru and Pajow (2019), who found that successful language learning is sustained through emotional, behavioral, and cognitive engagement. Their study emphasized that learners' active involvement and psychological readiness contribute significantly to language acquisition success. Similarly, the present findings indicate that students' attention and readiness should not merely be viewed as psychological variables, but also as forms of engagement that sustain students' participation and interest in language learning.

An important finding of this study concerns students' confidence in communicating in English. The results showed that students' interest and readiness frequently coexist with anxiety and fear of making

mistakes during communication activities. This finding supports Rahmawati et al. (2025), who reported that many Indonesian EFL students experience anxiety related to speaking, fear of negative evaluation, and lack of self-confidence in English classrooms. Their study further revealed that anxiety negatively affects students' classroom participation and academic performance. Similarly, the present study found that psychological readiness may become a barrier that prevents students from transforming passive understanding into active communication. This finding may also be interpreted through Krashen's (1982) Affective Filter Hypothesis, which argues that emotional barriers such as anxiety and low self-confidence can obstruct language acquisition even when instructional input is adequate. Therefore, the present study extends previous findings by identifying a readiness-confidence gap, in which students remain interested in learning English while simultaneously experiencing communication apprehension.

The findings are also consistent with Maru et al. (2022), who investigated speaking anxiety among junior high school students and found that lack of vocabulary, poor preparation, and fear of making mistakes contributed significantly to students' anxiety in speaking English. Their study emphasized the importance of supportive classroom environments and collaborative interaction in reducing students' stress and increasing classroom participation. In the present study, similar conditions were observed, particularly regarding students' hesitation to communicate actively despite having interest in learning English.

Another significant finding relates to the role of peer interaction. The present study indicates that peer factors appear to be more dominant in shaping students' learning interest compared to several previous studies. While earlier studies often emphasized parental encouragement and teacher motivation, the findings from the three schools demonstrate that peers provide the most consistent social support for students. This finding aligns with the study conducted by Sherylna and Adnan (2025), who found that peer interaction significantly influences students' interest in learning English, with peer interaction contributing 20.3% to students' learning interest. Their findings suggest that students who actively interact with peers during learning activities tend to show higher enthusiasm and participation in the classroom. Similarly, the present study found that peer discussion and collaborative interaction helped students maintain interest and engagement during English learning activities.

The findings also support the study by Istiqa et al. (2022), which revealed that external factors such as teachers, learning facilities, school environment, and peer support significantly influence students' interest in learning English. Their study concluded that school-related external factors were more dominant in shaping students' learning interest. In the present research, external factors were similarly dominant in Manado Prisma School and SLA Tompasso II, suggesting that environmental support plays a crucial role in fostering students' enthusiasm for learning English.

Furthermore, the findings may also be explained through Vygotsky's (1978) Sociocultural Theory, which emphasizes that learning occurs through social interaction and collaborative support. In the present study, peer interaction functioned not only as social companionship but also as motivational scaffolding that encouraged students to participate more actively in classroom activities. This result is also supported by the study of Peer Social Support Enhances a Student's Motivation to Engage in Studying, which found that peer social support significantly increased students' motivation to learn, with a contribution rate of 78%. The study highlighted that positive peer relationships enhance students' willingness to participate in learning activities and maintain academic motivation.

Interestingly, the findings of the present study provide a different perspective from Hayati et al., (2025) who suggested that peer interaction may sometimes create social pressure and negatively affect students' learning experiences. In contrast, peer relationships in the present study tended to function as constructive motivators that positively contributed to students' interest and classroom engagement. This finding may indicate a contextual tendency in North Sulawesi EFL classrooms, where collaborative peer relationships support positive learning behavior and participation.

Additionally, the present study identified a readiness gap, particularly at SLA Tompasso II, where only a small percentage of students consistently prepared themselves before class. This finding contrasts with Melati and Sumarni (2025), who reported moderate levels of learner autonomy and self-directed learning among urban EFL students. The present findings suggest that students' interest in this context remains reactive and highly dependent on classroom stimulation rather than intrinsic initiative. This phenomenon may be interpreted through Deci and Ryan's (1985) Self-Determination Theory, which emphasizes the importance of intrinsic motivation and learner autonomy in sustaining long-term engagement in learning activities.

Regarding the second research question, the findings from Tondano Adventist School are consistent with Jamila (2023), who found that internal factors such as motivation, readiness, and self-confidence significantly influence students' interest in learning English. Similarly, Islamiati (2022)

reported that attention, intelligence, readiness, and motivation contribute strongly to students' engagement in English learning. In addition, Arsa (2024) emphasized that motivation is one of the most important determinants of students' learning interest. However, the present findings also demonstrate that external factors may become more dominant depending on the educational setting. This result supports Rasyidah et al. (2025), who highlighted the importance of learning environment and social support in shaping students' interest in English learning.

Overall, the findings confirm that students' interest in learning English is shaped through the dynamic interaction between internal psychological engagement and external environmental support. While internal factors were dominant in one school and external factors in others, the broader pattern indicates that both dimensions operate interdependently. Therefore, this study supports previous research while extending the literature through the identification of the readiness-confidence gap and the significant role of peer-mediated engagement in sustaining students' interest in learning English.

CONCLUSION

This study investigated the impact of internal and external factors on students' interest in learning English across three junior high schools and found that both factors significantly contribute to students' learning interest, although their dominance varies depending on the school context. Internal factors, particularly motivation, attention, readiness, and self-confidence, were more dominant among students at Tondano Adventist School, while external factors such as teaching practices, classroom atmosphere, and peer interaction were more influential at Manado Prisma School and SLA Tompasso II. These findings indicate that students' interest in learning English is shaped through the interaction between psychological readiness and environmental support. The study also revealed a readiness-confidence gap in which students demonstrated interest and readiness to learn English but still experienced hesitation in actively communicating using the language. In addition, peer interaction emerged as an important factor supporting students' motivation and classroom participation, particularly in learning environments where external influences were more dominant. Therefore, the findings suggest that improving students' interest in learning English requires balanced instructional practices that strengthen both students' internal readiness and supportive learning environments.

Despite the contributions of this study, several limitations should be acknowledged. First, the use of a descriptive quantitative design limited the study to describing existing conditions without examining causal relationships among variables. Second, the reliance on self-reported questionnaire data may not fully represent students' actual learning experiences and classroom behavior. Furthermore, the study was conducted within a limited regional context involving only three schools, which may affect the generalizability of the findings to broader educational settings. Therefore, future research is recommended to employ qualitative, experimental, or longitudinal approaches to gain deeper understanding of the factors influencing students' interest in learning English over time. Future studies may also investigate specific variables such as anxiety, learner autonomy, classroom engagement, or peer interaction in wider educational contexts to provide more comprehensive insights into English language learning in EFL environments.

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COMPETING INTERESTS

The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

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