
The Effect of Academic Motivation on RPL Program Students' English Proficiency Test Score

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Abstract

Currently, higher education is attended by adult learners who are not only study but also work in the industry since the competition in the workplace is getting harder in this globalization era which implicitly requires English proficiency of the workers. Recognition of Prior Learning might be a solution for those adult learners who have been long in the industry to get recognized formally and get a decent education in the higher institution. Those who work while study must have a motivation either intrinsic or extrinsic to pursue higher education. Yet, the need of English is getting higher in the current era. Accordingly, IIK Bhakti Wiyata obliged its students, including RPL Program students to take TOEIC preparation course to prepare them to get the best TOEIC score to compete in the working place. Thus, this study aims to investigate the effect of academic motivation on RPL program students' English proficiency test score. This study employed a descriptive quantitative method using a simple linear regression technique involving 27 RPL program students majoring in Pharmacy. Data obtained from the Academic Motivation Scale and students' TOEIC scores were analyzed with the help of SPSS 22.0. This study found that even though the data were normal and linear, academic motivation had no effect on the students' English proficiency test scores. This might happen because there are way more complex factors that influence academic achievement or academic performance in the results of English proficiency test. Instead, lecturers and stakeholders need to focus more on the process of learning as well as the supportive environment to get the best English proficiency level.

Keywords: Academic Motivation; English Proficiency Test; Adult Learners



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1. Introduction

The demand for education is one of many complicated and rising requirements that have arisen with the times (Putri et al., 2019). Education is a very important human need because it has a duty to prepare better human resources (Mardelina & Muhson, 2017). The need for education is getting more attention, especially in the world of higher education. From lifelong education, where learning is viewed as a collective entity and a governmental duty, to lifetime learning, where learning is viewed as an individual entity and a personal duty, there has been a paradigm change (Barros, 2012). This explains why higher education currently not only attended by students, but also workers. Various things make some people who have a job to continue studying at university even though they have gotten a job. There are not a few various educational institutes or universities that provide lecture programs and facilitate workers who also want to pursue higher education. This condition shows that actually learning knows no age (Mardelina & Muhson, 2017).

After completing high school, commonly some people continue their education to tertiary institutions. This is done for various reasons, ranging from aspirations to be able to pursue and obtain degrees in higher education, to deepen knowledge, to as a place for self-development (Remenick, L., & Bergman, 2020). In practice, even though most students study full time, some of them continue their study while working. Generally, full time study is undertaken by students who are still relatively young and have fresh graduated from high school. Meanwhile, students who study while working generally have a more mature age range. There are various factors that lead them to study while working, starting from the lack of financial conditions conducive to carrying out full-time studies, job demands, to the urge to gain experience and work network (Lusi, 2021).

There are various reasons leading students to go to college while working. These reasons are generally related to finances to demands from work. some students decide to go to college while working in hopes of meeting their financial needs in the coursework process. Not a few of them study while working because of the demands of work. For example, students have worked in certain fields but need a higher diploma (e.g., a bachelor's degree) if they want to get career advancement. Students who are studying while working are generally no longer young or are not of the same age as most of their friends at the same lecture level. The age that is no longer young and the various demands of lectures and work can certainly affect the

lecture process. Adequate academic motivation is needed to meet academic demands and complete their studies (Remenick, L., & Bergman, 2020).

Students who go to lectures while working have several advantages, especially those related to increased income, independence, and work experience which can help them during the studies. Furthermore, given the fact that they have been in a working field, accordingly they have many competencies that needs to be recognized in the form of formal education. Nevertheless, there are things that have a negative impact on students who carry out lecture activities while working, such as having to carry out a heavier role than students who are not working. Besides studying on campus, working students are also burdened with various responsibilities to be able to complete the demands that exist at work (Felix, T., Marpaung, W., & El Akmal, 2019). Moreover, life in college also requires students to be able to become mature learners in order to complete various complex tasks, from understanding and mastering scientific literature to consulting with lectures to ask various topics and lecture assignments (Arjanggi, R., & Kusumaningsih, 2016). Previous studies show that studying while working raises various difficulties such as managing time, completing work assignments and lectures simultaneously, to managing concentration and focus in work and study (Lusi, 2021). Thus, as we have seen, each of lifetime educations and lifelong learning's approaches to defining an adult education definition is distinct and well-founded, particularly in terms of how intentionality or mission are assigned. In other words, each of these models calls for the acceptance of particular underlying notions that suggest quite various methods (Barros, 2012).

The problems adult learners encountered during the study might have a solution in the form of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Program. Since decades, the European Union, as well as other nations in Europe and beyond, including Australia since 1992, has valued recognition of past learning as a crucial policy area and concept (Andersson et al., 2013; Garnett & Cavaye, 2015). Particularly in secondary adult education and higher education, including vocational education and training, RPL can serve as the basis for entrance, the acceptance of credits, or the awarding of advanced standing (Andersson et al., 2013). The method of recognizing past learning facilitate lifelong learning and occurs when already-acquired learning outcomes such as formal learning for recognized awards, informal learning through experience, and non-formal learning for uncertified yet planned learning like uncertified workshops and seminars are officially valued (Baumeler et al., 2023). Knowledge and abilities acquired through life's unforeseen experiences and frequently as a result of the learning needs of job (both paid and unpaid) are included in the category of learning from experience. When something is described as having "prior" learning, it refers to knowledge

that was acquired before beginning a course of study to get a degree (Garnett & Cavaye, 2015).

In Indonesia, RPL is implemented by various higher institutions which study program accredited A (excellent) or B (Very Good) and has produced graduates, and must go through the stages of registration, assessment, and recognition of credits. The definition of Recognition of Past Learning, hereinafter abbreviated as RPL in the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia Number 41 of 2021, illustrates that the government is trying to reduce dropout rates from school/college for various reasons or causes. Nevertheless, not just anyone can take part in this program because it has been determined by quite strict requirements such as at least graduating from high school or other forms of the equivalent, having non-formal, informal education, and/or work experience relevant to the program. study at the university that will be pursued (Nasir, 2022) This ministerial regulation relates to increasing affordability and ensuring access to higher education as previously mandated in Law Number 20 of 2003 and Law Number 12 of 2012. Sadly, similar to what happened in the UK, RPL has long been employed in higher and vocational education in Indonesia, yet it may still be underutilized (Garnett & Cavaye, 2015).

Although national RPL rules, professional organizations, and the characteristics of the relevant labor markets influence RPL practices in higher education institutions, each school that offers the RPL program also develops its own organizational policies. This might be either promoting or hindering the RPL program itself. Additionally, guiding variables include the knowledge domain of the study program and the responsible people's pedagogic agency, which is molded by their pedagogical beliefs and personal attitudes. Accordingly, academics concur that RPL should be viewed as a specialized educational practice that provides tools for negotiating access to new learning possibilities across varied contexts, according to a prior comparative study focused on the viability of RPL that was done in South African higher education institutions (Cooper & Harris, 2013). This supports the argument made by Garnett & Cavaye (2015) that applying RPL is beneficial not only for individual development but organisational development as well. Therefore, several higher education institutions in Indonesia, such as STIP Jakarta, Bali State Polytechnic, and the Bhakti Wiyata Kediri Institute of Health Sciences, which implement the RPL program, develop learning systems designed to equalize or strengthen Indonesia's National Qualifications Framework in the RPL program (Bagiastuti et al., 2020; Simatupang et al., 2017)

As one of higher education in Kediri that provides lecture programs for workers is the Institut Ilmu Kesehatan Bhakti Wiyata. Institut Ilmu Kesehatan Bhakti Wiyata provides a Recognition of Prior Learning (*Rekognisi Pembelajaran Lampau*, abbreviated as RPL) program for students who have long graduated from high school and currently working. In 2022/2023 Academic Year, various majors were offered for the RPL program such as pharmacy, public health, nursing, traditional Chinese medicine, and others. The Chancellor

of IIK Bhakti Wiyata Kediri has regulated through Rector Regulation Number 51/R/KP.1.8/V/2022 that all IIK Bhakti Wiyata students are required to take the TOEIC test to support the competency of their graduates in the world of work. To take the TOEIC test, students are required to enroll to 2 semester language preparation course to prepare them to get the best TOEIC score. This regulation also applies to those RPL students with an adjustment that they are only obliged to take 1 semester of TOEIC Preparation course only considering their short term period of study Even though it is only for a semester, evertheless, studying while working is a challenge for individuals who are undergoing it. Students who study while working must overcome a variety of obstacles, including as time management, self-adjustment, and motivation to study again in order to be mature learners (Lusi, 2021). Moreover, workers today need to comprehend intricate processes, be capable of solving problems, have a basic understanding of computers, and become fluent in professional English (Fernandez et al., 2017).

In order to be able to achieve good learning outcomes, besides preparatioun course, various things are needed, one of which is motivation. A thesis conducted by Budiono(2018) found that learning group (in the form of preparation course) might be able to improve student learning motivation for most of the students of the RPL program are old. In other words, one of motivation's many roles is to prod someone into action or serve as the engine behind all future endeavors. The direction of activity toward the objectives to be attained is also determined by motivation. The second motivational function is to pick and decide which course of action to pursue in order to accomplish the desired objectives while avoiding course of action that will not help one reach these goals (Sardiman, 2018).

Motivation is seen as the basic reason a person displays a certain behavior. Another definition of motivation is a condition that animates, guides, and sustains conduct. This motivates someone to move, aim in a particular direction, and continue working hard (Nuraini et al., 2020). Motivation is an aspect that needs to be maintained and improved by students in order to achieve optimal learning outcomes (Nuraini et al., 2020). It is possible to draw the conclusion that academic motivation is a driving force that comes from both within and outside of students, encouraging passion and inner strength to carry out lecture activities, based on the knowledge of motivation from many experts mentioned above.

Student motivation can appear independently or conditioned. Independently, students can be motivated to engage in learning of their own choice of will. In contrast, student motivation that arises from conditioning is generally driven by feelings of shame and feelings of guilt. This conditioning can also be stimulated by external pressures such as expectations, rewards, and punishments. Therefore, learning programs that stimulate student motivation need to be developed (Vanthournout et al., 2012). Academic motivation is an internal factor that becomes the driving force for students to continue learning (Darmawan et al., 2017). Motivation can also encourage students to be able to learn and understand learning goals and

be able to actualize themselves (Purnawarma, 2019). Previous studies indicate that academic motivation influences learning outcomes. The higher the learning motivation, the individual will mobilize the energy they have to study the material to improve their learning outcomes (Khotimah et al., 2021).

There are various factors that influence learning outcomes. Internal factors become one of the important factors in achieving student learning outcomes. One internal aspect that might influence student learning results is internal motivation. Physiological and psychological variables make up the two categories of internal factors. Physiological factors are the physical condition of the students themselves. A healthy physique tends to make students motivated and able to take part in lecture activities. Meanwhile, psychological factors include anxiety, motivation, interests, attitudes, and talents. It is also mentioned that one of the psychological elements that promotes learning outcomes is motivation (Khotimah et al., 2021). In the case of adult learners, psychological condition might play an important role in their study for a previous study conducted by Natalansyah et al., (2020) concluded that most of RPL students' tend to have high stress level along with their high blood sugar level during their study. Meanwhile, external influences are those that affect and may enhance student learning outcomes and are independent of an individual. External factors include the social environment and instrumental factors. The social environment is the social environment in society, family and school while the non-social environment is the natural and instrumental factors (Khotimah et al., 2021).

According to other sources, 12 variables affect students' learning results. According to Suardi (2015), there are twelve aspects to consider: aptitude, age, gender, motivation, learning maturity, security, and emotional factors including sentiments and self-confidence. Students' knowledge of the material being taught is one of the cognitive markers. Cognitive achievement or student knowledge of learning is observed from the final exam results (Khotimah et al., 2021). In the process of learning English, learning outcomes can be seen from students' English Proficiency Test score, such as TOEFL, IELTS, or TOEIC score. IIK Bhakti Wiyata has been using TOEIC as a credible proficiency test for their students since 2018 to measure English competency of their graduates, including those from RPL Program. To ensure their students getting the best score they could in TOEIC, IIK Bhakti Wiyata has prepared the English course to prepare them to take the test as well.

Since the students or participants have various obligations both as workers and as students, motivation also an important factor in the academic process as well as in the learning process including in a one semester of TOEIC Preparation Course held by Language Center of Institut Ilmu Kesehatan Bhakti Wiyata for RPL students. The role of motivation is as a driving force for learning activities and outcomes (Nurmala, D. A., Tripalupi, L. E., & Suharsono, 2014). Someone who is motivated to learn in a certain time to achieve learning objectives realizes and understands his or her goals and is stimulated to learn (Suciani, D., & Safitri, 2014). Both

intrinsic and extrinsic motivation are involved in the motivation for learning. Extrinsic motivation is the tendency to be motivated by rewards and penalties from the outside world. Intrinsic motivation, however, is fueled by internal incentives (Wuryaningrum, R., Bektiarso, S., & Suyitno, 2020). Teachers have a crucial role in boosting student motivation. For students, it is crucial to provide a welcoming and suitable learning atmosphere. Teachers can deliver their instruction to meet the requirements of each student by understanding the variations in student motivation (Idzhar, 2016).

In general, there are two types of motivation, namely intrinsic and extrinsic. Intrinsic motivation is drive that originates from within an individual. When someone is motivated internally, they will actively complete a task without the aid of outside stimuli. Intrinsic motivation is required for all classroom activities, but it is especially important for independent study. Extrinsic motivation, on the other hand, is drive that originates from outside of a person. Extrinsic motivation in the context of lectures, for instance, is lecturers encouraging students to become more interested in learning and involved in the lectures (Parnawi, 2019). Intrinsic motivation tends to be more durable than extrinsic motivation (Sugiyanto et al., 2020). The development of intrinsic motivation is based on four characteristics, namely the urge to set goals, curiosity, challenge, and effort. Setting goals is the cornerstone of intrinsic motivation. Meanwhile, the propensity to want to learn and master something is called curiosity, and a challenge is a chance to do something in line with one's capabilities. At last, effort is the time and effort expended to achieve something.

Learning something out of their expertise, English, is an absolute challenge for RPL students. Thus, a preparation course naturally needed. Yet, it raises a question whether a simplified TOEIC preparation course, where other students need to take two semesters but RPL students only take one, can be helpful for them to get the best TOEIC score. Based on prior explanation, it can be concluded that academic motivation might influence the learning outcome of the TOEIC preparation course since individuals with high academic motivation tend to be able to achieve satisfactory learning outcomes. By knowing the impact of academic motivation on learning outcomes, it is expected that the institution can design a better English course for the students, especially those RPL students. Therefore, researchers conducted a study on the effect of academic motivation on student learning outcomes on students in the RPL (Recognition of Prior Learning) Program. Accordingly, this study attempted to answer the following research question: "does academic motivation affect RPL Program Students' English Proficiency Score?".

2. Method

This study involved 27 research subjects consisting of students of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Program for 3-Year Diploma in Pharmacy students. Students enrolled in the RPL program of 3-Year Diploma in Pharmacy were involved in this study for in the

2022/2023 academic year, this study program has the most students compared to other study programs which only have one or two students. Research sample of this study is a population sample, where all existing populations were used as research subjects or samples. Data were collected using the Academic Motivation Scale adapted in Indonesian language (Natalya, 2018) to measure academic motivation and TOEIC to measure English Proficiency Test/ English learning outcomes. The adapted Academic Motivation Scale and participant consent form were designed in the form of GoogleForm and were distributed to the respondents in February 2023 after the respondents taking their TOEIC test. Meanwhile, the TOEIC test was done remotely by ITC Jakarta since the respondents were worked in various places. Data obtained were analyzed assisted by the Microsoft Excel program and Statistical Product and Service Solution (SPSS) 22.0 for Windows. The analysis was performed using descriptive analysis and simple linear regression analysis techniques. Regression analysis aims to examine the influence of one variable on another. Using one dependent variable and one independent variable, a simple regression analysis was performed in this study (Sujarweni & Endrayanto, 2012). This analysis was done to determine the condition (rise and fall) of the dependent variable (learning outcomes) when the independent variable (academic motivation) as a predictor is manipulated (the score is increased and decreased).

3. Findings and Discussion

Before being used, the psychological scale used to measure academic motivation in this study was tested its reliability. The following is the result of reliability analysis on the academic motivations scale.

Table 1. Academic Motivation Scale Reliability Test Results

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Description
Academic Motivation	0.927	Reliable

Table 1 presents the results of the reliability analysis of the academic motivation scale of 0.927 (>0.7). In other words, the academic motivation scale is classified as reliable to be used in this study.

Next, to ensure that there are no errors in taking the sample, an assumption test was carried out which includes ensuring that the sample was taken randomly, the data were normally distributed, and there was a linear correlation between the independent variable and the dependent variable. The results of the assumption test suggest that there was no error in sampling. This has been proven by the research sample which met the random criteria for the subjects had the same opportunity to become research subjects to meet the random

assumptions and the results of the normality test showed that both variables were normal as described in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Normality Test Results

Variable	K-SZ	Sig (P)	Status
Academic Motivation	0.596	0.869	Normal

Table 2 presents the academic motivation variable in this study which were normally distributed. Then, an assumption test was carried out in the form of a linearity test as follows.

Table 3. Linearity Test Results

Variable	Academic Motivation
TOEIC Score	0.353
Description	Linier

Table 3 presents the Deviation from Linearity value of 0.353 (>0.05), indicating that the data were linear. In other words, there was a linear correlation between the dependent variable and the independent variable in this study. The results of the description test show that in general, the subjects of this study had a low level of academic motivation.

Table 4. Test Description

Variable	Hypothetical			Empirical		
	Minimal	Maximum	Mean	Minimal	Maximum	Mean
Academic Motivation	15	90	52.5	61	87	74

Table 4 shows that in general, the level of academic motivation of research subjects tends to be lacking. This can be seen from the empirical mean score, which was lower than the hypothetical mean. Therefore, the average research subject had less academic motivation. Then, a simple regression analysis was carried out shown in the following table.

Table 5. Linearity Test Results

Variable	Hypothetical	Empirical
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	Minimal	Maximum	Mean	Minimal	Maximum	Mean
Academic Motivation	15	90	52.5	61	87	74

Table 5 shows that academic motivation had no effect on scores ($F=1.794$, $p>0.05$). This indicates that the major hypothesis which suggests there is an effect of academic motivation on learning outcomes was rejected.

In IIK Bhakti Wiyata Kediri, lecturers do not have to give face-to-face lecture to increase student motivation. Instead with the use of computers and the internet, lecturers and students may get knowledge or educational resources from a variety of virtual world sources. Furthermore, modern technology makes it possible for lecturers and students to find, explore, evaluate, and communicate knowledge quickly and effectively (Hadriana, 2019). According to prior study (Rachmawati et al., 2023), virtual learning (using the VFC model) enhances students' creativity, autonomy, and responsibility to have a self-learning process that inspired them to learn English. In other words, because it is advantageous, online learning makes the teaching and learning process more successful.

In this study, motivation, especially academic motivation was assumed to affect the results of students' score of English proficiency test for motivation has a big role during their study. According to Lestari (2020), motivation is an attempt to support a person's personality and drive to accomplish the desired goal. Academic motivation is a motivating force that affects participants who are having difficulty achieving their goals in the teaching and learning process (Filgona, J., Sakiyo, J., Gwany, D. M., & Okoronka, 2020). Academic motivation is the urge and determination that can cause someone to want to attain academic success. What a person desires both physically and intellectually is an important component of motivation, which is an attempt to urge an action (Lee, J., & Martin, 2017). According to Winata, R. and Friantini (2019), academic motivation is what pushes students to participate in lectures. In any activity a person engages in, including academic work, professional work, and other activities, academic motivation is considered as a determining factor (Arulmoly, C., & Branavan, 2017). A driven individual will has the fortitude to pursue success and steer clear of disappointment in his life (Marisa, 2019). In other terms, motivation is the act of achieving objectives.

However, it turns out that the hypothesis of the study that motivation affect the results of student English proficiency test score where in this study was measured using TOEIC LR test, was rejected. Even though the academic motivation variable had a normally distributed distribution and the results were linear (0.353 (>0.05)), statistical analysis shows that academic motivation had no impact on student English proficiency test scores ($F=1.794$, $p>0.05$). According to Adara et al. (2022), the use of technology as part of technology

integration into language courses increases learners' motivation and reduces demotivation. In fact, technology does play a role in student motivation. However, teachers should not be concerned about students' varying levels of academic motivation when they were encouraged to use language (Rahayu, 2021) particularly when it had little bearing on students' academic success. In other words, students' achievement in form of score of the test cannot reflect students' motivation nor students' interest in using the language for there are various factors might influence the results of the score.

The motivation of students for their academic work can be influenced by a variety of circumstances. A recent study found that there are at least five factors, including the lecturer's presence, attitude, the Montessori materials, the classroom environment, and the influence of peers, that have an impact on students' motivating situations (Batubara et al., 2020). However, there are a number of other elements that may have an impact on students' achievement in addition to their academic motivation. One factor that was proven to have affect both academic motivation and academic achievement was learning environment. A positive learning atmosphere will produce competent students (Batubara et al., 2020). Yet, there are a lot of different factors besides group of friends or community as well as classroom and school environment that may influence students' academic performance such as individual background, housing environment, mental health and constant migration (Johanson, 2021). Various factors inside and outside school were proven affecting academic achievement or students' ability while at school besides motivation such as parenting style, students' characteristics, level of internet effectiveness, teacher effectiveness, and students career choices. In this study, various variables might be considered to be influencing the results. First, since the test was done remotely using a certain program installed on students' personal laptop and monitored through Zoom Meeting using students' personal handphone, students' low literacy in technology might affect their TOEIC score. Budiono (2018) suggests that a socialization to RPL students regarding anything academic related done through website (computer) requires a socialization since RPL students are mostly those older people who are not a native user of this advanced technology. Even though a socialization has been done before the test via Zoom Meeting by Language Center of IIK Bhakti Wiyata Kediri, a personal guide is still needed during the process of the test for they may feel at lost even though they had been guided remotely. Furthermore, where they come from might influence their TOEIC score as well. Those who come from big city absolutely have more privilege in terms of not only access on the internet, but also on the education and the use of the language itself compared to those RPL students who live in remote area.

4. Conclusion

To conclude, there academic motivation had no effect on the results of students' English proficiency test. Previous studies mainly mentioned that academic motivation is affected by various factors such as learning environment (classroom and school conditions), teaching

materials, and friends. Those factors may as well influence the results of academic achievement, but the result of this study proves that academic motivation does not affect students' academic achievement. There are way more complex factors that influence academic achievement or academic performance especially in the results of English proficiency test such as individual background, student characteristic, housing environment, parenting style, mental health, group of friends or community, level of internet effectiveness, teacher effectiveness, and students career choice. Therefore, future studies are expected to investigate further to those possible factors.

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