



Students' Attitude and Motivation towards Arabic Language

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Abstract: This survey research was carried out to determine the students' level of attitude and motivation towards Arabic language learning, as well as to determine the difference in their attitude and motivation based in their demography. Approximately 288 students of IAIN Salatiga have participated in this survey. A questionnaire was administered to the students to collect the data from the. The questionnaire is four-point likert scale that consist of 21 items. The data was then analyzed using Winstep from Rasch Model and IBS SPSS. The result showed that most students (65%) have moderate level of motivation and attitude towards Arabic language learning. The female students have higher motivation as compared to the male students; therefore, teachers should encourage the male students and help them in the Arabic courses.

A. INTRODUCTION

Motivation is said to be the main factor that can be used to predict the success or failure of any difficult activities such as leaning second or foreign language¹. Motivation leads people to keep on working, accomplishing tasks, and realizing goals in their life. The success of any action is dependent on the extent to which people' effort to reach their goal, along with their desire to do so. Generally, people refer to this psychological factor -the impulse that generates the action-as motivation.²

According to Gardner (1985), motivation is defined as the extent to which the individual works or strives to learn the language because of a desire to learn the

¹Mitra Alizadeh, "The Impact of Motivation on English Language Learning," International Journal of Research in English Education Vol. 1, No. 1 (2016)

²Abbas, P.H., Lai Mei Leong., and Narjes Banou Sabouri, "A Study on the Role of Motivation in Foreign Language Learning and Teaching," International Journal of Modern Education and Computer Science, 4(7), 9-16 (2012)

language and the satisfaction experienced in this activity. Therefore, it can be said that a motivated learner is the one who is always eager to learn the target language, willing to put more effort on the learning activities and willing to sustain the learning activities.

Motivation provides learners with an aim and direction to follow. Meaning that they will find strategy to improve their language skill so that they can reach their goal in learning foreign language. Therefore, motivation has a key role in language learning. Due to the lack of enough motivation, learners may find some difficulties during the language learning process³.

Many studies have been carried out to learn more about students' motivation and attitude towards language learning. Gardner was one of the first researchers in second language acquisition (SLA) who focus on students' motivation⁴. He explained that students' attitude and motivation are related to the students' achievement in language learning and language acquisition⁵. The same result was obtained by Ushida that students' motivation was correlated with their learning behaviour indices and their learning outcomes.⁶

Therefore, it is important for the language teachers or lecturers to conduct study on investigating students' attitude and motivation during the second or foreign language as it is said to plays an important role in the successful of their language learning. This study was aimed to measure students' level of attitude and motivation in learning Arabic language among students of IAIN Salatiga. Arabic language has become the core course that all students of IAIN Salatiga should pass the minimum score of Arabic course before graduation. Besides, this study was also aimed at

³Mitra Alizadeh, "The Impact of Motivation on English Language Learning," *International Journal of Research in English Education* Vol. 1, No. 1 (2016)

⁴Elizabeth Root, *Motivation and Learning Strategies in a Foreign Language Setting: Motivation And Learning Strategies In A Foreign Language Setting*. (1999).

⁵R.C. Gardner, "Attitudes and Motivation: Their Role in Second-Language Acquisition," *TESOL Quarterly* Vol. 2, No. 3 (1968)

⁶EikoUshida, "The Role of Students' Attitudes and Motivation in Second Language Learning in Online Language Courses," *CALICO Journal* Vol. 23, No. 1 (2005).

determining students' differences in their attitude and motivation based on their demography and determining the correlation between students' attitude and motivation in learning Arabic language.

Many researchers have developed the model of students' attitude and motivation based on their studies, for example like Gardner and Dornyei. Gardner has developed a model that focused on students' attitude and motivation and a scale to measure it. Many researchers have adapted his model including Kazeem⁷. It is explained that students attitude and motivation can be measured using these four aspects:

1. Integrativeness

It reflects someone's inclination to interact or identify with the L2 community. For instance like the interaction of learners with native speakers of the target language. Some students assumed that learning Arabic would help them communicate fluently with moslems from all over the world, since Islam and Arabic language have are interrelated⁸.

2. Attitudes towards the Learning Situation

It means the individual's evaluation of the language teacher and the L2 course. Teachers are said to have role in affecting students' attitude and motivation as well⁹. Teachers become one of the extrinsic factors in students' success in language learning. Therefore, teachers should be able to help students' to have meaningful Arabic courses.

⁷K. O. Ajape., Arifin Mamat., Ismail Sheikh Ahmad., and IsmaielHassanein Ahmad, "Students' Motivation and Attitude towards the Learning of Arabic Language: A Case Study at Selected Nigerian Universities," *IJUM Journal of Educational Studies* Vol. 3, No. 1 (2015)

⁸Syarifah and Sumar, "MotivasiSiswaTerhadapPembelajaran Bahasa Arab dan Inggris di Madrasah Aliyah se-ProvinsiKepulauan Bangka Belitung," *Scientia: Jurnal Hasil Penelitian* Vol. 4. No. 1 (2019)

⁹Ahmad Fatoni, "Peran MotivasiBelajar Bahasa Arab TerhadapAktivitasPembelajaran: StudiKasusMahasiswa PBA Universitas Muhammadiyah Malang," *El-Tsaqafah* Vol 18, No. 2 (2019)

3. Motivation

It is defined as the L2 learners' desire to learn the target language, the effort invested and the attitude towards learning. Research on students' motivation have been carried out and it was found that motivation plays a very crucial role determining students' success in language learning¹⁰. Highly motivated students would find a way to face the difficulties in learning second or foreign language. They will ask their teachers or peers.

4. Instrumentality

It refers to more functional reasons for learning the language. People learn foreign language because it will help them to get a job in their future, or because it will help them to improve their performance in their career.

Motivation in learning is known as a psychological condition that encourages students to learn with pleasure and sincerity¹¹. Therefore, exploring students' motivation in learning is highly demanded so that the lecturers will be able to plan their classroom activities to help students experience meaningful learning. By experiencing meaningful learning and having high motivation and attitude towards language learning, students will likely become more successful in mastering the target language.

In fact, a study has revealed that some students are not so well-motivated to learn Arabic language¹². Therefore, it is an urgent to explore more about their motivation and attitude before planning the teaching and learning strategies.

¹⁰Al-Hazemi, "Lexical Attrition of Some Arabic Speakers of English as a Foreign Language: A Study of Word Loss," *The Internet TESL Journal* Vol. 6, No. 12 (2000)

¹¹Yusrina Q. S., Yuyun Nailufar., Raja Nor Safinas R. H., and Bustami Usman, "University Students' Motivation in Learning Arabic and English as Foreign Languages in Aceh," *Langkawi: Journal of the Association for Arabic and English*, Vol. 6, No. 2 (2020)

¹²K. O. Ajape., Arifin Mamat., Ismail Sheikh Ahmad., and Ismaiel Hassanein Ahmad, "Students' Motivation and Attitude towards the Learning of Arabic Language: A Case Study at Selected Nigerian Universities," *IIUM Journal of Educational Studies* Vol. 3, No. 1 (2015)

B. METHOD

The research design used in this study was survey research that involved around 288 undergraduate students from five faculties in IAIN Salatiga. The survey research design was used to describe the students' perspectives, it also involves large samples, and the research findings can be used to generalize one phenomena in a big community or group. Chua Yan Piaw¹³ also explained that this research design is used to view and describe the views and opinions of people on certain issues, it can be conducted on large samples, and the results also can be generalised accurately and effectively to the populations.

The data was collected through distributing questionnaire with 21 items to the participants. The questionnaire was adapted from Gardner's Attitude and Motivation Test Battery in 1985 that has been assessed by Kazeem their study¹⁴. This questionnaire consisted of four aspects to measure students attitude and motivation towards Arabic language learning, they are integrativeness, attitudes, motivation and instrumentality. A five point likert scale, that range from 1 to 4, is employed with the following categories: strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree.

The summary statistic of the instrument showed the result below:

Table 1. Summary Statistics of Attitude and Motivation Test Battery

	Mean	SD	Strata	Reliability	Cronbach's Alpha Value
Person	-1.65	.90	1.90	.78	.85
Item	.12	1.35	11.41	.99	

Table above described that the mean was -1.65, which was lower than the logit score 0.0, meaning that the students' attitude and motivation were lower than the level

¹³Chua Yan Piaw, *Mastering Research Methods* (Mcgraw-Hill Education, 2016).

¹⁴K. O. Ajape., Arifin Mamat., Ismail Sheikh Ahmad., and IsmaielHassanein Ahmad, "Students' Motivation and Attitude towards the Learning of Arabic Language: A Case Study at Selected Nigerian Universities," *IIUM Journal of Educational Studies* Vol. 3, No. 1 (2015)

of instrument difficulty. The Cronbach's alpha .85 showed that the interaction between person and items in the instrument were very good¹⁵.

The table also showed the person strata (2.86) was categorised as fair while the item strata (15.5) was categorised as excellent. The bigger the strata the better because it can identify various groups of respondents and items¹⁶. The person strata, which can be assumed as 3, can be used to divide the participants level of attitude and motivation into three categories, they are high, moderate and low.

The collected that was then analysed using Winstep from Rasch Model and IBS SPSS. Winstep was used to determine the level of students attitude and motivation towards Arabic language learning, while the IBM SPSS was employed to determine the difference level of their attitude and motivation based on their demographic background, such as gender and their experience in learning Arabic.

C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This section presented the data collected from the respondents as well as the findings obtained from the analysis of these data sets. This section firstly described the respondents' demography such as gender and their experience in learning Arabic. Followed by the result of analysis of students' attitude and motivation in learning Arabic language.

The participants of this study were approximately 288 students of IAIN Salatiga. The following table described their demographics:

Table 2. Students' Demography

Demographic		N	%
Gender	Male	86	30%
	Female	202	70%

¹⁵Bambang Sumintono., and Wahyu Widhiarso, AplikasiPemodelan Rasch Pada Assessment Pendidikan (Trim Komunikata, 2015)

¹⁶Ibid.

The table showed that more than half of the respondents (70%) were female students, while the male students were only 30% of the total respondents. It also described that most of the participants (79%) have experienced in learning Arabic before they attended IAIN Salatiga, while the others have not experienced in learning Arabic before. This might happen because Arabic language has been taught in many institutions in Indonesia whether formal or non-formal institutions, especially in Islamic institution, such as *pondokpesantren*, Islamic High School, etc¹⁷.

This personal information of the respondents will be used to determine the difference in their speaking anxiety according to it.

Students' Attitude and Motivation towards Arabic Language Learning

The translated version of AMTB were administered to 288 students of IAIN Salatiga. The data was then analyzed using Rasch Model to get logit score and the Wright Person and Item Map. The logit score (-1.62) and the standard deviation (1.15) was used to divide the students into three levels of attitude and motivation towards Arabic language learning. Those students with logit score higher than -.47 were categorized as students with high motivated students, and those with logit score that fall between -2.77 to -.47 were categorized as having moderate level of motivation in learning Arabic, while those students with logit score less than -2.27 were low motivated students when dealing with Arabic courses.

Table 3. Students' Level of Attitude and Motivation in Learning Arabic

Logit Score	Number of Students	Percentage	Level
>-.47	26	9%	High
-2.27 to -.47	187	65%	Moderate
<-2.27	75	26%	Low

¹⁷SauriSofyan, "Sejarah Perkembangan Bahasa Arab dan Lembaga Islam di Indonesia," *INSANCINTA* Vol. 5, No. 1 (2020)

Table above described the categorization of students' attitude and motivation in learning Arabic language, as it is a core course that should be taken by all students in Islamic Universities in Indonesia. It was shown that more than half of the students (65%) were having moderate level of attitude and motivation, indicating that the some of the students enjoy the Arabic course because the lecturers were easy to get along with, as stated in item number 9 "Many of my Arabic teachers are approachable". Some of them were eager or motivated to learn Arabic language because it is one of the foreign languages in Indonesia. They perceived that other people would respect them more when they master foreign language, including Arabic language, as they agreed more on item number 20.

This finding was in line with the findings of the research conducted by Yusuf¹⁸. They found that most students had moderate level of motivation. The students stated that learning Arabic is important to make them knowledgeable and skillful in foreign language. It can be seen that students' motivation in learning Arabic might come from the students themselves and the teachers. As the result found in this study, it was known that students become motivated because the lecturers were easy to get along with. And the result of other study showed that students' motivation to be more skillful in foreign language has motivated them to learn Arabic.

Then followed by 26% of them who have low motivation in learning Arabic language. They agreed more on the items that stated "If it were up to me whether or not to take Arabic, I would drop it". Only 9% of the students who were highly motivated in learning Arabic language. They agreed on *items* "Studying Arabic can be important to me because I think it will someday be useful in getting a good job". Meaning that they learn Arabic because they perceived that mastering Arabic language might help them get a job in their future. As Wahab stated that one of the aims in learning Arabic in

¹⁸Yusrina Q. S., Yuyun Nailufar., Raja Nor Safinas R. H., and Bustami Usman, "University Students' Motivation in Learning Arabic and English as Foreign Languages in Aceh," *Langkawi: Journal of the Association for Arabic and English*, Vol. 6, No. 2 (2020)

Indonesia is for professional purposes, such as looking for a job that require them to master Arabic language.¹⁹

The spread of students' level of attitude and motivation can be seen from this Person Wright Map:

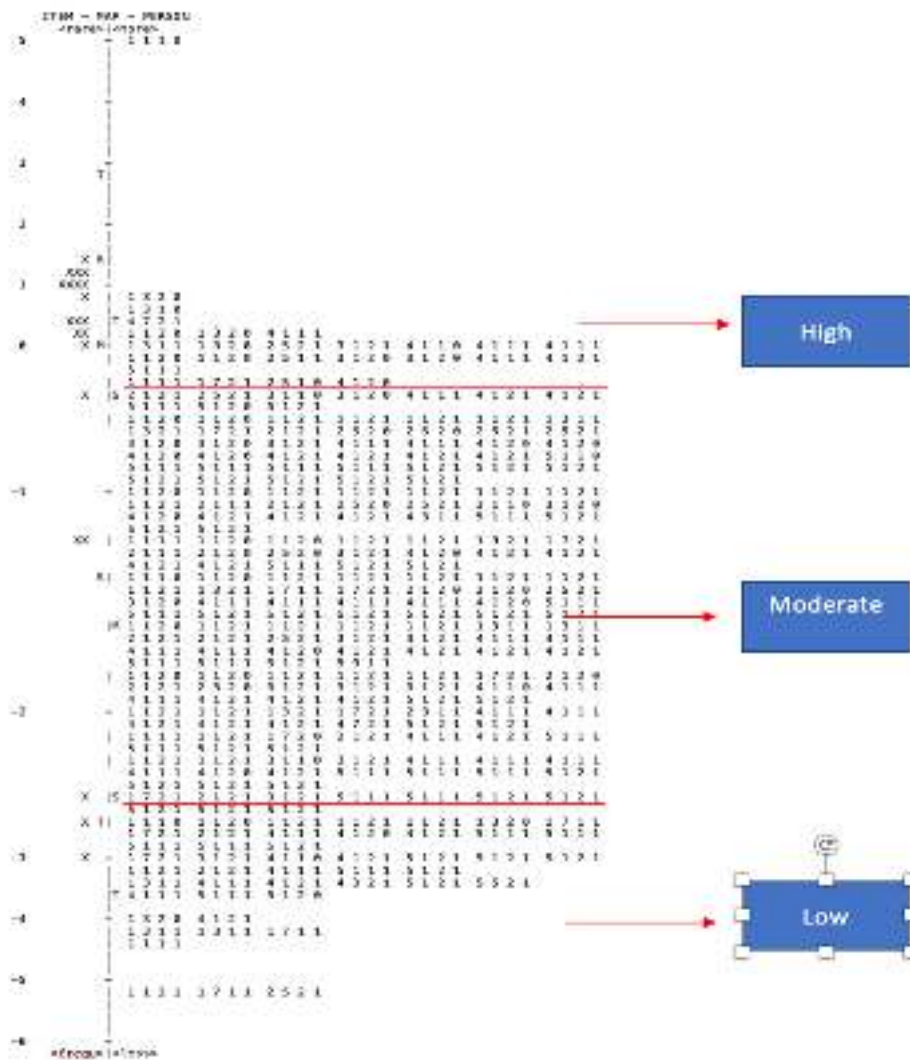


Figure 1. Person Wright Map

¹⁹Muhbib Abdul Wahab, "Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab di Era Postmode," Arabiyat Vol. 2, No. 1 (2015)

The figure above illustrated the spread of participants of this study based on their logit score. The higher their position the higher their motivation in learning Arabic language. On the other hand, the lower they were, the lower their motivation²⁰. For instance, student number 1320 who is female student that had not learned Arabic language before she attended IAIN Salatiga. She has high logit measure (.81) meaning that she was highly motivated students in learning Arabic language although she has never learned Arabic before. She agreed almost on all items that represented the good attitude and motivation towards learning Arabic such as item number 14 which stated "Studying Arabic can be important for me only because I'll need it for my future career", which means that she perceived that Arabic language is important for her future career therefore she was motivated to learn Arabic and has good attitude towards learning Arabic. She also found that learning Arabic is joyful and the lecturers are competent in teaching Arabic courses as stated in item number 17 and 7 respectively.

On the other hand, student number 1121, 1711 and 2521 were students with lowest logit score among the participants. Student number 2521 is female students who have learned Arabic before attending courses in IAIN Salatiga. The Wright Map showed that she has low motivation in learning Arabic. She was actually alright when people know that she learns Arabic in university (item number 8), but she would drop the course if she was allowed to (item number 10).

Ajape et al., also found that students were not so well-motivated to learn Arabic language.²¹ Students should be motivated because motivation in learning is regarded as one of the most important factors in educational success in general. Dornyei added that it is the responsibility of the teachers or lecturers to motivate their students²². Language teachers or lecturers who found that their students were still having moderate or low

²⁰W.J. Boone., J. R. Staver., and M. S. Yale, *Rasch Analysis in the Human Sciences* (Springer, 2014)

²¹K. O. Ajape., Arifin Mamat., Ismail Sheikh Ahmad., and IsmaielHassanein Ahmad, "Students' Motivation and Attitude towards the Learning of Arabic Language: A Case Study at Selected Nigerian Universities," *IIUM Journal of Educational Studies* Vol. 3, No. 1 (2015)

²²Zoltan Dornyei, "Motivation in Second and Foreign Language Learning," *Language Teaching* Vol. 31, No. 3 (1998)

level of motivation in learning target language or having little interest in it must stimulate and sustain motivation within themselves so that they will be able to motivate their students²³.

Many classroom activities can be arranged in order to motivate students and make them interested in learning Arabic, such as doing group work. It is a good strategy to promote intrinsic motivation in the foreign language classroom because students not only have fun while learning but they can also feel that they can freely communicate with their peers without being assessed directly by the teachers²⁴.

The Difference of Students Attitude and Motivation Based on Demographic Background

The information about participants' personal background were collected in order to determine any difference of the students' level of attitude and motivation based on their personal information. Both independent sample t-test and one-way ANOVA test are performed to analyse the data.

Table 4. Independent Sample T-Test of Students' Attitude based on Gender

Group	N	M	SD	t	df	Sig.
Male	86	1.87	.43	-1.99	286	>.05
Female	202	1.83	.33			

The table 4 above showed that there is significant difference in students' attitude towards learning Arabic between male and female students ($p > .05$). Meaning that both male and female students have the same perceptions towards Arabic courses and their teachers or lecturers.

The finding from this study contradicted the findings from other studies. For instance, the result obtained by Getiew ho found that female students' demonstrated

²³Addisu Sewbihon Getie, "Factors Affecting the Attitudes of Students towards Learning English as a Foreign Language," *Cogent Education*, Vol. 7, No. 1 (2020).

²⁴Ollero Ramirez, N, "The Influence of Motivation in the Foreign Language Learning Process," *Fòrum De Recerca*, 19 (2017).

the more positive attitude than the male students when it comes to Arabic courses²⁵. Therefore, teachers should put more effort to help and motivate the male students so that they would change their attitude towards Arabic courses.

Table 5. Independent Sample T-Test of Students' Motivation based on Gender

Group	N	M	SD	t	df	Sig.
Male	86	2.63	.52	-2	286	<.05
Female	202	2.75	.41			

In contrast with the findings from students' attitude, their motivation in learning Arabic was significantly difference between male and female students ($p < .05$). The mean score of female students was higher than the male students, 2.75 and 2.63 respectively. Meaning that female students were more motivated compared to the male students. This finding was in line with what Getie and found in his study that the female students have higher motivation in learning foreign language.²⁶

Teachers or lecturers should be able to motivate their students to develop their interest in learning foreign languages, such as Arabic. Therefore, teachers should be prepared with some motivational strategies²⁷. She added that having a good relationship with the students is also essential to keep them motivated. For that reason, during her teaching period she has always showed a positive attitude and a positive relationship with the students, not only academically but also personally.

As Hazemi emphasized that learners with strong desire to learn a language or those with high motivation can obtain high level of competence in the target language²⁸. Therefore, teachers or lecturers, who were classified as one of the extrinsic factors for students' motivation, should show positive attitude and motivation in teaching Arabic

²⁵Addisu Sewbihon Getie, "Factors Affecting the Attitudes of Students towards Learning English as a Foreign Language," *Cogent Education*, Vol. 7, No. 1 (2020).

²⁶Ibid.

²⁷Noemi Ollero Ramírez, "The Influence of Motivation in the Foreign Language Learning Process," *Fòrum De Recerca*, Vol. 19 (2017).

²⁸Al-Hazemi, "Lexical Attrition of Some Arabic Speakers of English as a Foreign Language: A Study of Word Loss," *The Internet TESL Journal* Vol. 6, No. 12 (2000)

courses so that the students would also develop their interest in learning Arabic. Teachers are suggested to prepare classroom activities that may help students to be more active in class. Teachers should put more attention to the male students and help them if they face some difficulties during the learning process so that they can promote their motivation in learning Arabic.

The Correlation between Students' Attitude and Motivation

A correlation analysis was carried out using Pearson correlation to explore the relationship between four factors of students' attitude and motivation. As shown in the table below, all of the factors have significant and positive correlation.

Table 6. Correlation between Students' Integrativeness, Attitude,, Motivation and Instrumental Orientation

	Integrativeness	Instrumental	Attitude
Instrumental	.662	1	.671
	.000		.000
	288		288
Attitude	.676	.671	1
	.000	.000	
	288	288	
Motivation	.172	.124	.197
	.000	.035	.001
	288	288	288

It is shown that the four aspects of students' attitude and motivation according to Gardner were correlated each other. For instance, students' attitude and motivation have significant and positive correlation ($r = .197$, $p < .05$). It means that the better the students' attitude towards their Arabic course teachers or lecturers, the higher their motivation towards Arabic language learning. Teachers or lecturers should make the learning process joyful and meaningful, besides they also have to be more friendly and improve their language competency so that the students would be more interested to learn Arabic. Teachers or lecturers are proven to be influential in affecting students'

motivation and attitude that can make learning process less anxious²⁹ and their skills in motivating their students should also be seen as central to teaching effectiveness and students' success in language learning³⁰.

Students' motivation and attitudes play an important role in their learning. Ushida also found some evidence that motivated students studied regularly and productively in order to take every opportunity to improve their language skills.³¹ They could also control their own learning during the outbreak of Covid-19 pandemic that resulted in shifting learning process into online.

The finding of this study was different from what Kazeem et al. found that students' motivation and students' attitude as well as students' integrative orientation and motivation were correlated negatively which means that the more the students' were exposed to the native speakers, the lower their motivation to learn Arabic.³² They might feel less confident to practice speaking using Arabic in front of the natives.

Thus, by investigating the attitude and motivation of students of IAIN Salatiga towards learning Arabic, as it is a core course for all students of Islamic State University, lecturers will get a new insight about how their attitude and motivation are, and then lecturers will be able to plan teaching strategy as well as design the classroom activities that can boost students' motivation.

D. CONCLUSION

Motivation and attitudes play an important role in the students' achievement in foreign language learning. The findings of this study showed that most of the students

²⁹Al-Hazemi, "Lexical Attrition of Some Arabic Speakers of English as a Foreign Language: A Study of Word Loss," *The Internet TESL Journal* Vol. 6, No. 12 (2000)

³⁰Zoltan Dornyei, *Motivational Strategies in the Language Classroom* (Cambridge, 2001)

³¹Eiko Ushida, "The Role of Students' Attitudes and Motivation in Second Language Learning in Online Language Courses," *CALICO Journal* Vol. 23, No. 1 (2005)

³²K. O. Ajape., Arifin Mamat., Ismail Sheikh Ahmad., and Ismaiel Hassanein Ahmad, "Students' Motivation and Attitude towards the Learning of Arabic Language: A Case Study at Selected Nigerian Universities," *IJUM Journal of Educational Studies* Vol. 3, No. 1 (2015)

of IAIN Salatiga experience have the moderate level of attitude and motivation towards learning Arabic language. It means that some students still find challenges in learning Arabic that may decrease their motivation and attitude towards Arabic courses. This study also indicated that male students have lower motivation than the female students, therefore teachers or lecturers should be able to help them improve their motivation by designing meaningful classroom activities and by being more friendly to the students so that they will feel enjoy in learning Arabic.

Further analysis still needs to be carried out in order to investigate more about students' experience in classroom activities during Arabic courses. Lecturers can ask for the students to write down their experience in their daily journal so that the lecturers can analyze it and make evaluation based on it. This is deemed to be important as well because knowing their motivation and attitude is not enough to help the students achieve their goal in language learning.

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