

Gender Differences in Reading Motivation

What was the goal of the study?

The researchers wanted to determine if gender influences reading motivation in adult learners.

Why was the study conducted?

Prior research suggests that if two individuals have similar academic abilities, the individual with greater motivation for learning is likely to outperform the other. Therefore, reading motivation may be uniquely important for reading performance in adult literacy classrooms.

What did the study find?

The researchers found that the relationship between self-efficacy and reading performance was similar for men and women. However, gender differences were observed for the relationship between intrinsic motivation and reading performance with this relationship being stronger for men than for women. The researchers also found that women had higher reading fluency scores, while men had higher decoding scores. When considering participants with lower fluency skills, men had lower intrinsic motivation than women. By contrast, when considering participants with higher fluency skills, there was no gender difference in intrinsic motivation. External factors motivating reading in participants included securing a job or reading to their children. Negative feedback in social settings was another motivational factor.

Who participated in the study?

The participants in this study were 334 women and 189 men, for a total of 523 adult learners.

How was the study conducted?

The researchers used correlations and logistic regression (a statistical method that measures the relationship between variables) to examine the relationships between aspects of reading motivation and performance on reading tests, and to examine the reading and motivation factors that are associated with gender. In addition, interviews were also conducted along with a thematic analysis of the transcripts.

How can people use the results?

The results of this study demonstrate a need for practitioners to support both fluency and intrinsic motivation in the classroom.

Reference

Frijters, J. C., Brown, E., & Greenberg, D. (2019). Gender differences in the reading motivation of adults with low literacy skills. In D. Perin (Ed.), *The Wiley handbook of adult literacy* (pp. 63-87). Wiley-Blackwell..