

Learning Motivation in Economically Disadvantaged Contexts: A Case Study from an Indonesian Islamic School

Motivasi Belajar dalam Konteks Keterbatasan Ekonomi: Studi Kasus di Sekolah Islam Indonesia

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Abstract:

This study investigates strategies used to sustain learning motivation among students from economically disadvantaged families in an Indonesian Islamic school. The research is based on the assumption that learning motivation is not solely determined by socioeconomic status but is shaped by pedagogical, spiritual, and social educational environments. A qualitative case study approach was employed. Data were collected through participant observation, semi-structured interviews with teachers, students, parents, and school administrators, as well as document analysis. The data were analyzed using Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña's interactive model involving data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing. The findings reveal that students' learning motivation is maintained through five integrated strategies: varied instructional methods, integration of religious values, reward and punishment mechanisms, teacher creativity and innovation, and school-parent collaboration. These strategies collectively form a motivational ecosystem that enhances students' engagement, discipline, and persistence despite economic constraints. The study concludes that learning motivation in disadvantaged contexts is socially constructed through continuous interaction between teachers, school culture, and family support. This study contributes to motivation theory by emphasizing the role of religious and ecological dimensions in sustaining student engagement in Islamic education settings.

Keyword: *learning motivation, socioeconomic disadvantage, teacher strategies, educational ecosystem*

Abstrak:

Penelitian ini mengkaji strategi dalam mempertahankan motivasi belajar siswa dari keluarga dengan keterbatasan ekonomi pada sebuah sekolah Islam di Indonesia. Penelitian ini berangkat dari asumsi bahwa motivasi belajar tidak semata-mata ditentukan oleh kondisi sosial ekonomi, tetapi juga dibentuk oleh lingkungan pedagogis, spiritual, dan sosial dalam proses pendidikan. Pendekatan yang digunakan adalah studi kasus kualitatif. Data dikumpulkan melalui observasi partisipatif, wawancara semi-terstruktur dengan guru, siswa, orang tua, dan pihak sekolah, serta studi dokumentasi. Analisis data dilakukan menggunakan model interaktif Miles, Huberman, dan Saldaña yang meliputi kondensasi data, penyajian data, serta penarikan kesimpulan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa motivasi belajar siswa dipertahankan melalui lima strategi utama, yaitu variasi metode pembelajaran, integrasi nilai-nilai religius, penerapan reward dan punishment, kreativitas guru dalam pembelajaran, serta kolaborasi antara sekolah dan orang tua. Kelima strategi tersebut membentuk sebuah ekosistem motivasi yang saling terintegrasi dalam meningkatkan keterlibatan, kedisiplinan, dan ketekunan belajar siswa meskipun berada dalam keterbatasan ekonomi. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa motivasi belajar merupakan konstruksi sosial yang terbentuk melalui interaksi berkelanjutan antara guru, budaya sekolah, dan dukungan keluarga. Studi ini berkontribusi pada pengembangan teori motivasi dengan menekankan pentingnya dimensi religius dan ekologis dalam konteks pendidikan Islam.

Kata Kunci: motivasi belajar, keterbatasan ekonomi, strategi guru, ekosistem pendidikan

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PENDAHULUAN

Education has long been recognized as one of the most effective instruments for promoting social mobility, reducing poverty, and fostering sustainable human development. Nevertheless, educational inequality remains a persistent global challenge, particularly among students from economically disadvantaged families. Financial hardship frequently limits access to quality learning resources, digital technology, transportation, and supportive educational environments, thereby reducing students' opportunities to participate actively in learning. Socioeconomic status has therefore consistently been identified as an important determinant of students' academic participation, persistence, and achievement. However, recent educational research suggests that economic hardship does not inevitably lead to poor educational outcomes because supportive school environments, positive teacher–student relationships, and adaptive educational practices may function as protective factors that strengthen students' academic resilience (OECD, 2023; Ryan & Deci, 2020).

Learning motivation constitutes one of the strongest psychological predictors of academic success because it stimulates learners to initiate, sustain, and regulate learning activities. Contemporary educational psychology conceptualizes motivation as a multidimensional construct involving intrinsic aspirations, extrinsic encouragement, self-efficacy, goal orientation, and perceptions of competence. According to Self-Determination Theory (SDT), learners develop stronger intrinsic motivation when their psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness are adequately supported by their educational environment (Ryan & Deci, 2020). Consequently, learning motivation should not merely be understood as an individual attribute but rather as the result of continuous interaction between personal characteristics and contextual educational experiences. This perspective has become increasingly influential in explaining why students facing similar socioeconomic conditions often demonstrate substantially different levels of academic engagement and persistence.

Although numerous studies have confirmed that socioeconomic disadvantage negatively affects students' educational participation, recent empirical findings indicate that the relationship between poverty and learning motivation is considerably more complex than previously assumed. Students from low-income families frequently experience inadequate learning facilities, financial insecurity, parental employment instability, and additional household responsibilities that potentially reduce their academic engagement. Nevertheless, many students continue to demonstrate high levels of perseverance, discipline, and commitment toward learning despite prolonged economic hardship. Such evidence suggests that socioeconomic conditions alone cannot adequately explain differences in students' learning motivation. Instead, teacher support, family encouragement, school climate, and institutional culture frequently operate as compensatory mechanisms that sustain students' motivation

despite material limitations. Recent systematic reviews similarly conclude that supportive educational practices significantly reduce the adverse effects of socioeconomic disparities on learning outcomes.

Within Islamic educational institutions, learning motivation is cultivated not only through instructional activities but also through moral formation, spiritual guidance, and value-oriented educational relationships. Islamic education emphasizes that learning is simultaneously an intellectual, ethical, and religious responsibility. Therefore, teachers are expected to function not merely as classroom instructors but also as mentors, counselors, role models, and motivators who nurture students' perseverance, responsibility, sincerity, and optimism. This multidimensional educational role distinguishes Islamic schooling from many conventional educational settings by integrating cognitive achievement with character formation and spiritual development. Recent studies demonstrate that religious values, teacher exemplification, and emotionally supportive interactions substantially contribute to strengthening students' intrinsic motivation and psychological resilience, particularly among learners experiencing socioeconomic disadvantage.

Previous studies concerning learning motivation generally fall into three major categories. The first examines psychological determinants, including self-efficacy, intrinsic motivation, academic aspirations, and learner autonomy. The second investigates socioeconomic variables such as parental income, educational resources, and family background as predictors of students' motivation and academic achievement. The third focuses on pedagogical variables, including instructional strategies, classroom management, teacher professionalism, learning media, and educational technology as mechanisms for improving learning motivation. Within Islamic educational research, scholars have predominantly explored the contribution of teachers in enhancing students' motivation through religious instruction, exemplary conduct, and value internalization. Interactive learning, value-based pedagogy, and religious mentoring have consistently been identified as effective approaches for increasing students'.

Despite these important contributions, several conceptual and empirical gaps remain unresolved. First, previous studies predominantly position socioeconomic status as an explanatory variable that predicts differences in students' motivation, while paying relatively little attention to understanding why many economically disadvantaged students continue to demonstrate strong learning motivation. Second, research conducted in Islamic educational settings generally emphasizes the instructional role of teachers without sufficiently explaining how motivational support is socially and spiritually constructed through everyday educational interactions. Third, limited empirical evidence explains how schools serving economically disadvantaged communities develop educational environments capable of sustaining students'

motivation through integrated pedagogical, emotional, and spiritual support. Consequently, the educational mechanisms that enable economically disadvantaged students to remain academically resilient within Islamic schools remain insufficiently understood.

The Indonesian educational context provides an important setting for addressing this research gap. Numerous Islamic schools are located in rural communities where a substantial proportion of students come from families whose livelihoods depend on seasonal agriculture, informal employment, or migrant labor. Although these socioeconomic conditions potentially hinder students' educational opportunities, many Islamic schools continue to demonstrate relatively stable student attendance, active classroom participation, and strong commitment to religious and academic activities. Such conditions indicate that educational resilience may emerge not primarily from students' economic resources but from supportive educational ecosystems developed within schools. Understanding these educational practices is therefore essential for developing more inclusive educational policies and pedagogical interventions capable of reducing educational inequality.

Responding to these gaps, this study adopts a different analytical perspective by positioning learning motivation as a socially constructed educational phenomenon rather than merely an individual psychological attribute. Instead of investigating whether economic hardship decreases students' motivation, this study explores how educational strategies implemented within an Indonesian Islamic school contribute to maintaining and strengthening learning motivation among students from economically disadvantaged families. More specifically, the research examines how teachers develop pedagogical, emotional, spiritual, and relational support that enables students to sustain academic engagement despite financial hardship. This perspective integrates educational psychology, Islamic educational values, and educational resilience into a unified analytical framework capable of explaining motivation as the outcome of continuous interaction between learners and their educational environment.

The novelty of this study lies in shifting the analytical focus from the traditional discussion concerning the formal role of Islamic Religious Education teachers toward a broader examination of educational strategies that sustain learning motivation in economically disadvantaged contexts. Rather than conceptualizing teachers solely as instructional agents, this research positions them as central actors within a holistic motivational ecosystem encompassing pedagogical guidance, emotional encouragement, spiritual mentoring, and value-based educational relationships. This perspective extends previous studies by demonstrating that learning motivation among economically disadvantaged students is not determined exclusively by socioeconomic status but is dynamically constructed through supportive educational practices embedded within Islamic schooling. Accordingly, this study aims to investigate the educational strategies employed to maintain and enhance the learning

motivation of students from economically disadvantaged families in an Indonesian Islamic school, thereby contributing to broader discussions on educational resilience, motivation theory, and educational practices.

METODE PENELITIAN

This study employed a qualitative approach using a case study design to explore the strategies implemented by teachers in sustaining and enhancing students' learning motivation despite economic disadvantage. A qualitative case study was considered appropriate because it enables an in-depth understanding of educational practices within their natural setting and allows researchers to examine complex social phenomena from the perspectives of the participants (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Yin, 2018). Rather than seeking statistical generalization, this study aimed to generate a contextual understanding of how motivational strategies are developed and implemented in an Islamic school serving students from economically disadvantaged families.

The research was conducted at SMKS Al-Ulum, Bunten Barat Village, Ketapang District, Sampang Regency, East Java, Indonesia. The school was selected purposively because most of its students come from low-income households whose parents work as agricultural laborers, daily wage workers, or migrant workers. Despite these socioeconomic limitations, students consistently demonstrate high attendance, active classroom participation, and strong engagement in religious and extracurricular activities. This unique educational context provides an appropriate setting for examining strategies that sustain learning motivation under conditions of economic hardship.

The researcher served as the primary research instrument throughout the study, consistent with qualitative inquiry (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Field engagement began with preliminary observations, followed by establishing rapport with the school principal, teachers, students, and parents to facilitate access and build trust. During data collection, the researcher acted as a participant observer by attending classroom learning activities, observing teacher-student interactions, conducting interviews, and documenting educational practices related to learning motivation.

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, non-participant observations, and document analysis. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the school principal, Islamic education teachers, homeroom teachers, students from economically disadvantaged families, and parents. The interviews explored participants' experiences and perceptions regarding the strategies employed by teachers to maintain students' learning motivation despite financial constraints. Classroom observations focused on teachers' instructional practices, motivational support, student participation, classroom interactions, and religious activities that potentially contributed to students' academic engagement. Documentary evidence included

school profiles, attendance records, students' academic reports, lesson plans, religious activity records, and photographs that supported the interpretation of observational and interview data.

Data analysis followed the interactive model proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014), consisting of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. During data condensation, interview transcripts, observation notes, and documentary evidence were systematically organized, coded, and categorized according to the research objectives. Subsequently, the data were displayed in thematic matrices and descriptive narratives to facilitate pattern identification and comparison across different data sources. Finally, conclusions were developed through an iterative process of interpretation and continuously verified against the collected evidence to ensure consistency and credibility.

The trustworthiness of the findings was established using Lincoln and Guba's (1985) criteria, including credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Credibility was enhanced through source triangulation by comparing information obtained from teachers, students, parents, and school administrators, as well as method triangulation involving interviews, observations, and document analysis. Prolonged engagement in the field and continuous verification of emerging interpretations further strengthened the validity of the findings. Collectively, these procedures ensured that the identified strategies accurately reflected the educational practices implemented to sustain students' learning motivation within economically disadvantaged contexts.

HASIL

Varied Learning Methods as a Strategy to Sustain Students' Learning Motivation

The findings indicate that one of the primary strategies employed by the teacher to maintain students' learning motivation despite economic hardship is the implementation of varied, simple, and contextual learning methods. Rather than relying exclusively on conventional lecturing, the teacher combines short lectures, small-group discussions, and practical learning activities that are closely related to students' daily experiences. This strategy is designed to reduce classroom boredom while enabling students with limited educational resources to participate actively in learning.

The teacher explained that lecturing is only used to introduce essential concepts before students are encouraged to discuss and practice the learning materials.

"In teaching Islamic Religious Education, I usually combine short lectures, small-group discussions, and direct practice. The lecture is only intended to provide basic understanding, and afterward students discuss the topic together, especially when studying Islamic morals and social interactions." (Hamdi, Interview, December 1, 2025)

According to the teacher, practical learning activities are intentionally prioritized because students understand religious values more easily when they are directly connected to

everyday life.

"I frequently ask students to practice proper greetings, respectful communication, prayer, and appropriate attitudes toward teachers and friends so that they do not merely understand the theory but become accustomed to practicing these values." (Hamdi, Interview, December 1, 2025)

The teacher further emphasized that this instructional strategy is particularly appropriate because it does not require sophisticated learning facilities or expensive educational media.

"These methods fit our students' condition because they do not require expensive equipment. Through practical examples taken from everyday life, students understand the lesson much more easily." (Hamdi, Interview, December 1, 2025)

Students also acknowledged that the learning atmosphere created by the teacher encouraged them to become more confident in expressing their ideas. One student stated:

"Sometimes the teacher explains the lesson, but sometimes he simply invites us to talk and discuss. At first I was afraid to speak, but he always appreciated our opinions, so gradually I became more confident." (Naila, Interview, December 3, 2025). Another student similarly explained:

"Our teacher does not only explain the material. We often discuss and practice it together, so the class is enjoyable and we don't get bored easily." (Hayyul Qomariyah, Interview, December 3, 2025)

These interview findings were consistently supported by classroom observations. During several classroom sessions, students actively participated in discussions, willingly expressed their opinions, and enthusiastically engaged in practical activities. Classroom attendance also remained relatively stable, suggesting that students perceived Islamic Religious Education lessons as meaningful and relevant to their daily lives (Observation O-01).

Document analysis further confirmed that lesson plans (RPP), syllabi, and instructional documents explicitly incorporated varied teaching methods, demonstrating that instructional variation was deliberately planned as part of the teacher's motivational strategy (Documentation D-01).

Overall, these findings suggest that instructional variation functions not only as a pedagogical technique but also as a motivational mechanism that encourages economically disadvantaged students to remain actively engaged in classroom learning.

Religious Values as an Internal Source of Learning Motivation

Beyond instructional strategies, the study found that the integration of religious values constituted another important strategy for strengthening students' motivation to learn. Rather than presenting religious teachings solely as academic content, the PAI teacher continuously connected Islamic values with students' everyday experiences, enabling them to perceive learning as both an educational obligation and an act of worship. The teacher explained:

"Religious values are not only taught through classroom materials. Every morning students begin with prayers and the recitation of Asmaul Husna, and I always connect the lesson with the real situations they experience." (Hamdi, Interview, December 1, 2025)

He further emphasized that religious education should transform students' behavior rather than remain theoretical knowledge.

"I always relate every lesson to students' daily attitudes and behavior so that Islamic values are practiced, not merely understood." (Hamdi, Interview, December 1, 2025)

According to the teacher, one of the central messages consistently conveyed to students is that seeking knowledge represents an act of worship.

"I always remind students that seeking knowledge is part of worship. Therefore, studying is not only a school obligation but also a religious responsibility." (Hamdi, Interview, December 1, 2025)

The teacher observed that this approach gradually strengthened students' discipline, attendance, and commitment to learning.

"Students become more motivated because they realize that learning is meaningful not only for obtaining grades but also for preparing their future and fulfilling their religious obligations." (Hamdi, Interview, December 1, 2025)

The principal confirmed that religious values constitute an integral part of the school's educational culture.

"Religious values are embedded in our school culture, not only in classroom instruction. Daily prayers, Duha prayer, and congregational Dhuhur prayer are institutional routines supported by the school." (Bagus Adi Putranto, Interview, December 4, 2025)

Field observations likewise demonstrated that students consistently participated in Duha prayer, congregational prayer, collective supplications, and short religious reflections before classroom activities (Observation O-02). Institutional schedules and documentation of religious activities further verified that these programs were systematically organized and continuously implemented throughout the academic year (Documentation D-02).

Collectively, these findings indicate that religious values function as an intrinsic motivational resource, enabling students to perceive education as spiritually meaningful despite their socioeconomic limitations. To facilitate a comprehensive understanding of the findings, the major strategies identified from interviews, observations, and documentary evidence are synthesized in Table 1. The table summarizes the core themes, supporting empirical evidence, and their educational implications, thereby providing an integrated overview of how learning motivation is sustained among students from economically disadvantaged families.

Table 1. Synthesis of Findings on Strategies for Enhancing Learning Motivation among Economically Disadvantaged Students

THEME	EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE	EDUCATIONAL MEANING
VARIED LEARNING METHODS	The teacher combines short lectures, small-group discussions, and practical activities adapted to students' daily lives.	Learning becomes more engaging, contextual, and accessible despite limited learning resources.
INTEGRATION OF RELIGIOUS VALUES	Learning is reinforced through daily prayers, Asmaul Husna recitation, and connecting Islamic teachings with real-life experiences.	Students perceive learning as an act of worship, strengthening intrinsic motivation.
EDUCATIONAL REWARD AND PUNISHMENT	Rewards are provided through praise and appreciation, while punishment emphasizes guidance rather than sanctions.	Positive reinforcement enhances students' confidence, discipline, and persistence.
TEACHER CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION	Teachers utilize simulations, role-playing, simple learning media, and flexible instructional approaches.	Creative pedagogy compensates for limited educational facilities and maintains student engagement.
SCHOOL-PARENT COLLABORATION	Teachers maintain continuous communication with parents, while the school provides financial assistance and flexible policies.	A supportive educational ecosystem strengthens students' motivation and learning continuity.

As presented in Table 1, the findings indicate that learning motivation is not sustained through a single instructional strategy but through the interaction of multiple educational practices. These strategies include pedagogical variation, the integration of religious values, constructive reinforcement, teacher creativity, and collaboration between the school and families. Collectively, these practices create a supportive learning environment that enables students to maintain their motivation despite economic limitations.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that students' learning motivation in economically disadvantaged contexts is sustained through an interconnected system of pedagogical, religious, and socio-environmental strategies implemented by teachers, schools, and families. These findings provide the basis for further interpretation in the following discussion section.

PEMBAHASAN

The findings of this study indicate that students' learning motivation in economically disadvantaged contexts is not merely determined by financial limitations, but is dynamically constructed through a combination of pedagogical strategies, religious value integration, teacher creativity, and institutional–familial support systems. In other words, economic hardship does not function as a deterministic barrier to students' motivation; rather, its impact is mediated by the quality of educational interactions and the surrounding learning ecosystem. These findings suggest that motivation in this context should be understood as a socially and culturally embedded phenomenon that emerges from continuous interaction between teachers, students, school culture, and family involvement. Therefore, the role of the teacher—particularly in Islamic educational settings—extends beyond instructional delivery to include motivational, moral, and emotional guidance that collectively sustains students' engagement in learning despite socioeconomic constraints.

Varied Learning Methods and Student Motivation

The use of varied learning methods—such as short lectures, group discussions, and direct practical activities—plays a significant role in sustaining students' learning motivation in economically disadvantaged contexts. From a theoretical perspective, this finding can be explained through constructivist learning theory, which emphasizes that students learn more effectively when they actively construct knowledge through meaningful experiences rather than passively receiving information. In this study, the teacher's decision to simplify explanations and integrate discussion and practice allows students to connect abstract concepts of Islamic education with their everyday experiences, thereby increasing relevance and comprehension. This approach is particularly important for students with limited learning resources, as it compensates for material constraints by maximizing cognitive engagement in the classroom. Consequently, learning becomes more accessible, less monotonous, and more participatory, which ultimately strengthens students' intrinsic motivation to engage in the learning process.

Religious Value Integration as an Intrinsic Source of Motivation

The integration of religious values into the learning process emerges as a crucial factor in strengthening students' intrinsic motivation. This finding can be interpreted through the lens of Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan), which posits that intrinsic motivation is enhanced when learning activities are perceived as meaningful and aligned with learners' internal values. In the present study, the consistent practice of linking academic content with religious meanings—such as framing learning as an act of worship and incorporating daily prayers and moral reflections—enables students to perceive education not merely as an academic obligation, but as a spiritual responsibility. This value-based framing transforms learning into a purposeful activity that transcends external rewards such as grades or achievements. As a result, students

develop a deeper sense of commitment, discipline, and emotional attachment to learning, which is particularly significant in contexts where economic hardship might otherwise diminish academic engagement.

Reward and Punishment as Educational Reinforcement

The implementation of reward and punishment strategies functions as an external reinforcement mechanism that contributes to sustaining students' learning motivation. From a behaviorist perspective, particularly Skinner's operant conditioning theory, behavior can be strengthened through positive reinforcement and weakened through corrective feedback. In this study, the teacher's use of verbal praise, appreciation, and small rewards serves to reinforce desirable learning behaviors, while mild and educative forms of punishment, such as guidance and reminders, are used to correct inappropriate behavior without creating psychological pressure. This balanced approach is particularly relevant for students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, as it fosters a supportive rather than punitive learning environment. The findings suggest that when reinforcement is applied in an educative and empathetic manner, students tend to feel valued and recognized, which in turn enhances their confidence, classroom participation, and willingness to persist in learning activities.

Teacher Creativity and Instructional Adaptation

Teacher creativity and instructional adaptation emerge as important factors in maintaining students' learning motivation under conditions of limited educational resources. This finding aligns with the concept of adaptive teaching, which emphasizes the teacher's ability to modify instructional strategies in response to students' needs, contextual constraints, and classroom realities. In this study, the teacher's use of role-playing, simulations, and contextual learning activities demonstrates how abstract concepts in Islamic education can be transformed into concrete, experience-based learning. Such creativity becomes particularly significant in economically disadvantaged settings, where access to advanced learning media is limited. By utilizing simple, locally available resources and integrating them into meaningful learning experiences, the teacher is able to maintain students' engagement and curiosity. This indicates that pedagogical innovation does not necessarily depend on sophisticated technology, but rather on the teacher's ability to design relevant, meaningful, and student-centered learning experiences.

School-Parent Collaboration and Learning Ecosystem Support

The collaboration between schools and parents represents a critical dimension in sustaining students' learning motivation within economically disadvantaged contexts. This finding can be understood through Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory, which emphasizes that students' development is shaped by the interaction of multiple environmental systems, including family and school. In this study, continuous communication between teachers

and parents, along with institutional support such as financial assistance and flexible school policies, creates a supportive learning ecosystem that helps students remain engaged in education despite economic constraints. Parental involvement, even in simple forms such as monitoring attendance or maintaining communication with teachers, reinforces students' sense of responsibility and belonging to the educational process. Likewise, school policies that accommodate students' economic conditions reduce psychological pressure and prevent dropout tendencies. Collectively, this synergy between home and school environments strengthens students' emotional security and academic persistence, thereby contributing significantly to the sustainability of their learning motivation

aken together, the findings reveal that students' learning motivation in economically disadvantaged contexts is not sustained by a single dominant factor, but rather by the interaction of multiple interrelated educational strategies that form a coherent motivational ecosystem. Varied instructional methods enhance cognitive engagement, religious value integration strengthens intrinsic motivation, reward and punishment provide behavioral reinforcement, teacher creativity ensures contextual relevance, and school-parent collaboration builds an enabling social environment. These elements do not operate in isolation; instead, they reinforce one another in shaping students' academic resilience. This interconnected pattern indicates that motivation should be conceptualized as an emergent outcome of pedagogical, moral, and ecological processes within the school environment. Consequently, the study highlights that sustainable learning motivation is less about overcoming economic constraints directly and more about constructing a supportive and meaningful educational experience that compensates for such limitations.

This study contributes to the existing body of literature on learning motivation by extending its conceptualization beyond individual psychological factors and situating it within a socio-cultural and value-based educational context. While Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan) emphasizes autonomy, competence, and relatedness as core drivers of intrinsic motivation, the present findings suggest that in Islamic educational settings, these dimensions are also reinforced through religious meaning-making and moral-spiritual framing of learning activities. In addition, the study expands behaviorist perspectives by demonstrating that reinforcement strategies are most effective when implemented within an empathetic and value-oriented pedagogical environment rather than through purely external control. Furthermore, by integrating ecological systems theory (Bronfenbrenner), this research underscores that students' motivation is shaped by the dynamic interaction between classroom practices, school culture, and family involvement. Therefore, the novelty of this study lies in its integrative framework that positions learning motivation as a multidimensional construct emerging from the interplay of pedagogical, spiritual, and environmental factors, particularly within

economically disadvantaged Islamic schooling contexts.

The findings of this study are generally consistent with previous research that emphasizes the significant role of teacher behavior, instructional strategies, and school environment in shaping students' learning motivation. Studies by Uno (2023) and Mulyasa (2020) similarly highlight that teachers function not only as knowledge transmitters but also as motivators and facilitators who influence students' engagement and persistence in learning. In addition, research on socioeconomic factors confirms that economic disadvantage often correlates with lower academic motivation due to limited access to learning resources and increased external pressures. However, the present study extends these findings by demonstrating that such economic constraints do not inevitably lead to low motivation when supported by strong pedagogical, moral, and institutional interventions. Unlike previous studies that tend to treat motivational factors separately, this research shows that motivation is generated through the interaction of multiple dimensions, including religious value integration and school-family collaboration, particularly within the context of Islamic education. This integrative perspective provides a more contextualized understanding of how motivation can be sustained despite structural economic limitations.

The findings of this study offer several important implications for educational practice, particularly in schools serving students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. First, teachers are encouraged to adopt varied and contextually relevant instructional strategies that prioritize student engagement over reliance on conventional lecturing methods. Such an approach can help maintain students' attention and participation even in resource-limited environments. Second, the integration of religious and moral values into daily learning activities should be strengthened, as it has been shown to enhance students' intrinsic motivation by framing learning as a meaningful and purposeful activity. Third, the use of reward and punishment should be implemented in a balanced and educative manner that emphasizes guidance and appreciation rather than control and fear. Fourth, teacher creativity should be continuously developed to ensure that learning remains meaningful despite limited facilities, particularly through the use of simple, locally available resources. Finally, stronger collaboration between schools and parents is essential to create a supportive educational ecosystem that reinforces students' motivation both at school and at home. These implications highlight that improving learning motivation in economically disadvantaged contexts requires a holistic and integrated approach involving teachers, schools, and families.

Based on the findings, this study proposes a conceptual model that illustrates how students' learning motivation is sustained through an interconnected system of pedagogical, spiritual, and ecological factors. In this model, learning motivation is positioned as the central outcome that emerges from the interaction of five key components: varied learning methods,

religious value integration, reward and punishment mechanisms, teacher creativity, and school–parent collaboration. These components are not independent variables but function as mutually reinforcing elements that collectively shape students’ academic engagement. Varied instructional methods and teacher creativity primarily enhance cognitive engagement by making learning more accessible and meaningful, while religious value integration strengthens intrinsic motivation by providing spiritual significance to educational activities. At the same time, reward and punishment serve as behavioral reinforcement mechanisms that support discipline and persistence, whereas collaboration between school and parents ensures continuity of motivation beyond the classroom context. The interplay among these dimensions forms a motivational ecosystem that enables students from economically disadvantaged families to maintain consistent learning engagement despite structural limitations. Thus, the model highlights that motivation is not a static individual trait but a dynamic process shaped by contextual and relational factors within the educational environment.

Figure 1. Conceptual Model of Teacher Strategies in Enhancing Students’ Learning Motivation under Economic Constraints

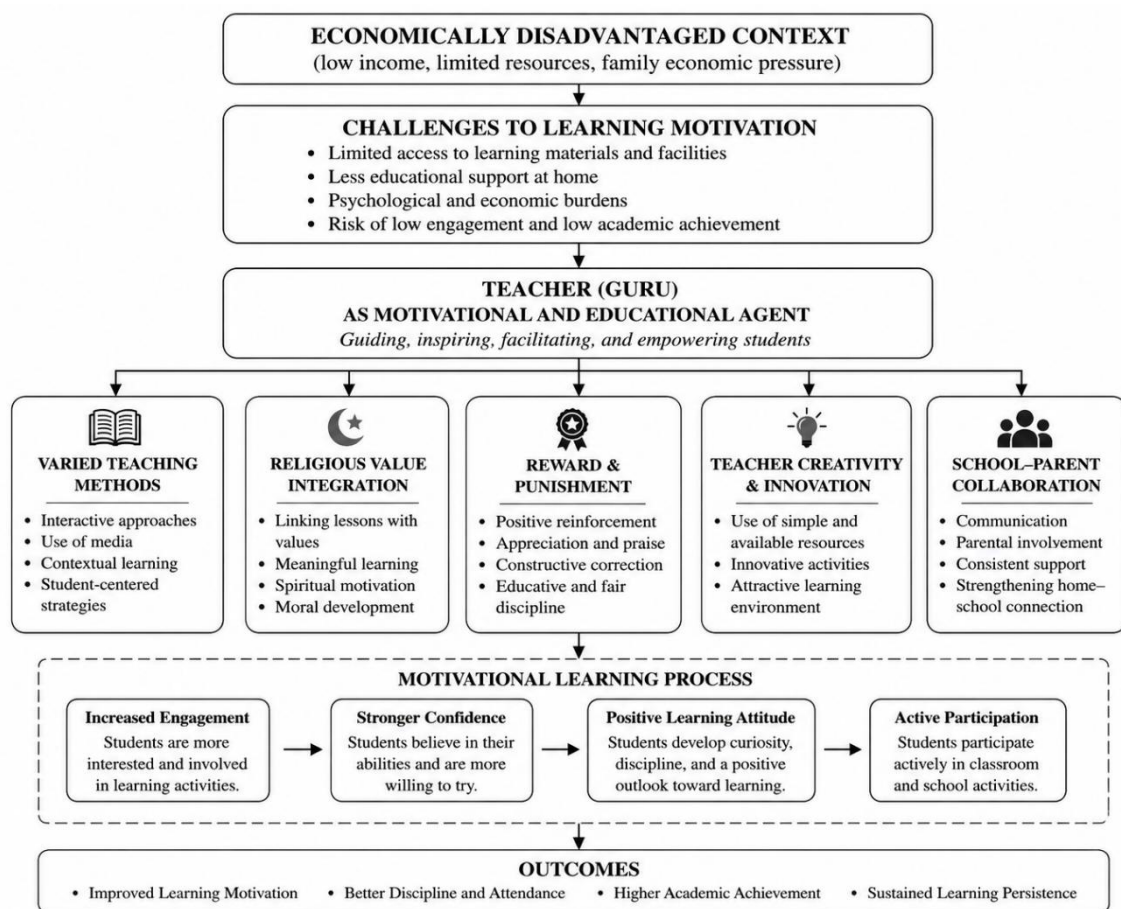


Figure 1 illustrates the conceptual model of how teachers function as key motivational agents in economically disadvantaged learning contexts. Despite students facing financial constraints, learning motivation is strengthened through five integrated strategies: varied

teaching methods, reinforcement of religious values, educational reward and punishment, teacher creativity and innovation, and collaboration between school and parents. These strategies collectively construct a motivational learning environment that enhances student engagement, confidence, and academic participation.

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the research was conducted in a single Islamic school context, which limits the generalizability of the findings to other educational settings with different cultural, institutional, or socioeconomic characteristics. Second, the study primarily relies on qualitative data obtained from interviews, observations, and documentation, which, although rich in depth, may not fully capture the quantitative magnitude of each motivational factor. Third, the focus on teacher-centered strategies may have limited the exploration of students' internal psychological variables in greater detail.

Future research is therefore recommended to expand the scope of investigation by involving multiple schools across different regions to enhance comparative understanding. In addition, mixed-method or quantitative approaches could be employed to measure the relative contribution of each motivational factor more precisely. Further studies may also explore students' psychological constructs, such as self-efficacy and resilience, in greater depth, as well as examine how digital learning environments interact with socio-economic constraints in shaping learning motivation. Such research would provide a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of how motivation can be sustained in diverse educational contexts.

PENUTUP

This study reveals that the learning motivation of students from economically disadvantaged families is not solely determined by economic factors, but is significantly influenced by the strategic role of Islamic Religious Education teachers through pedagogical, spiritual, and social approaches. These roles become important factors in fostering students' awareness, discipline, and internal drive to persist and develop in the learning process. Thus, learning motivation can be understood as the result of the interaction between socio-economic conditions and educational interventions carried out by teachers within the school environment.

The findings imply that strengthening learning motivation should be understood as a collaborative process involving teachers, schools, and parents in building a supportive and sustainable educational ecosystem. However, this study is limited by its single-site context and qualitative approach, which restricts the generalizability of the findings. Therefore, future research is recommended to expand the scope of the study or employ a mixed methods approach to deepen and strengthen the validity of the results.

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