

Analysis of Arabic Language Learners' Motivation and Attitudes: an AMTB Study on Final-Semester Students at STAI As-sunnah Deli Serdang

Slamet Riyadi¹⁾, Rozaanah Rozaanah²⁾

^{1,2)} Sekolah Tinggi Agama Islam As-Sunnah Deli Serdang, Indonesia

E-mail: ¹⁾slametriyadi@assunnah.ac.id, ²⁾rozaanah@assunnah.ac.id

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ABSTRACT

Motivation and attitudes in Arabic language learning are critical factors in determining student success, especially for final-year students preparing to become professional Arabic teachers. This study examines these factors using Gardner's Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB) framework in the unique context of the boarding system at STAI As-sunnah Deli Serdang, Indonesia. A sequential explanatory mixed-methods design was employed, combining a quantitative AMTB survey (n=120 students, 66.67% of the population) with in-depth qualitative interviews (n=12). Results revealed high levels of both instrumental motivation (M=4.5, SD=0.55) and integrative motivation (M=4.17, SD=0.68). Religious factors emerged as the strongest influence on instrumental motivation (M=4.7, SD=0.48). Key findings revealed the significant role of the boarding system in shaping positive learning attitudes (M=4.2, SD=0.68) through consistent Arabic language exposure and intensive peer interactions. Factor analysis identified five key influences: boarding environment (0.856), teacher quality (0.789), learning facilities (0.745), peer support (0.723), and curriculum (0.698). The implications of this research emphasize the importance of fostering immersive language environments and leveraging religious contexts in developing positive motivation and attitudes in Arabic language learning. The findings are particularly relevant for Islamic higher education institutions preparing prospective Arabic teachers, providing empirical evidence of the boarding system's effectiveness in enhancing students' Arabic competency. The results extend the application of the AMTB framework in Islamic higher education contexts and offer valuable insights for designing more effective Arabic language learning programs.

Keywords: AMTB, Arabic language learning motivation, learning attitudes, Islamic higher education

INTRODUCTION

The acquisition of Arabic language proficiency remains a critical challenge in Islamic higher education institutions globally. While numerous studies have explored second language acquisition motivations (Boo et al., 2015; Macintyre et al., 2019), the unique context of Arabic language learning within Islamic educational settings presents distinct characteristics that warrant specific investigation. This study examines learner motivation and attitudes in an intensive Arabic language program using Gardner's Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB) framework, focusing on the distinctive boarding school environment of STAI As-sunnah Deli Serdang, Indonesia.

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Recent studies on Arabic language learning motivation have highlighted several key developments. (Selim & Abdalla, 2022) demonstrated how religious motivation significantly influences Arabic language acquisition among non-Arab Muslim students. Similarly, (Alshehri, 2022) longitudinal study of Saudi Students' revealed that immersive environments substantially impact student motivation and proficiency. However, (Alshammari et al., 2024) argued that traditional AMTB frameworks require modification to accurately capture the religious and cultural dimensions of Arabic language learning in Islamic contexts.

The boarding school system (ma'had) in Islamic higher education presents a unique learning environment that has garnered increasing scholarly attention. Recent research by (Riyadi & Rozaanah, 2023b) found that intensive language exposure in boarding environments correlates strongly with improved language acquisition. Additionally, (Amiqoh et al., 2024) comparative study of boarding and non-boarding Islamic institutions demonstrated significant differences in student motivation patterns and learning outcomes.

Despite the recent advances in understanding Arabic language learning motivation, particularly in Islamic educational contexts, there remain several important gaps in the existing literature. First, the application of the well-established Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB) framework has been limited in the specific context of Islamic boarding schools in higher education settings. Second, while the role of religious factors in Arabic learning motivation has been recognized, the complex relationship between religious motivation and language learning attitudes requires further exploration. Third, there is a scarcity of mixed-method studies that integrate both quantitative and qualitative approaches to examine the multifaceted nature of motivation in immersive Arabic learning environments. Finally, the understanding of how boarding systems influence the development and maintenance of language learning motivation over time remains limited.

To address these gaps, the present study aims to investigate three primary research questions. The first question seeks to establish the motivational and attitudinal profiles of Arabic Language Education students at STAI As-sunnah based on the AMTB framework. The second question explores the factors that influence these motivations and attitudes within the specific context of the boarding school environment. The third question examines the role of the boarding system in shaping and sustaining language learning motivation and attitudes.

The contributions of this research are manifold. From a theoretical perspective, the study extends the application of the AMTB framework to the underexplored domain of Islamic boarding

higher education contexts, thus broadening the understanding of language learning motivation in diverse educational settings. Methodologically, the study implements a mixed-method approach, combining quantitative and qualitative data to capture a more holistic picture of motivation in immersive Arabic learning environments. The findings of this research provide practical, evidence-based insights that can inform the improvement of Arabic language programs in Islamic higher education institutions. Moreover, the study offers data-driven recommendations for the development of effective immersive language learning environments, which can guide policy decisions in the field of Arabic language education.

This study builds upon (Gardner, 2001) AMTB framework while incorporating recent theoretical developments. (Dörnyei, 2009) L2 Motivational Self System and (Darvin & Norton, 2023) investment theory provide additional theoretical lenses for understanding motivation in immersive learning contexts. This study also draws on (Al-Tamimi & Shuib, 2009) modified AMTB framework for Arabic language learning in Islamic contexts.

Dörnyei's L2MSS focuses on the interaction between the L2 learner's ideal self, ought-to self, and L2 learning experience. This model provides crucial insights into how learners' self-conceptions and future aspirations shape motivation in immersive settings. Meanwhile, Norton's investment theory highlights the complex relationship between identity, agency, and investment in language learning. It emphasizes how language learners negotiate their identities and positions within different social contexts. Investment theory is particularly relevant to the boarding school context, where language learning is inseparable from social interaction and learner identity development.

The integration of these theoretical perspectives enables a richer and more nuanced understanding of the unique motivational dynamics in Arabic language learning within immersive Islamic educational environments. By combining insights from Gardner's AMTB, Dörnyei's L2MSS, Norton's investment theory, and Al-Tamimi and Shuib's model, this study aims to capture the full complexity of the affective factors shaping Arabic acquisition in this distinctive context.

METHOD

This study employed a sequential explanatory mixed-methods design (Creswell & Clark, 2017), consisting of a quantitative phase followed by a qualitative phase. The quantitative phase involved the administration of a modified Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB) survey and subsequent statistical analysis. The qualitative phase comprised in-depth interviews and thematic

analysis. This sequential approach allowed the quantitative findings to guide the qualitative inquiry, providing a deeper understanding of the motivation and attitude patterns among the participants.

The study population consisted of 180 final-year Arabic Language Education students at STAI As-sunnah Deli Serdang, Indonesia. The gender distribution was 45% male and 55% female, with an age range of 20-24 years. All participants resided in the campus boarding facilities.

For the quantitative phase, a sample of 120 students (66.67% of the population) was selected using stratified random sampling based on gender, academic performance, and previous Arabic exposure. The sample size was determined with a confidence level of 95% and a margin of error of $\pm 5\%$. In the qualitative phase, 12 participants were chosen through maximum variation sampling, considering factors such as motivation levels, gender balance, academic performance, and regional backgrounds. The inclusion criteria for qualitative participants were enrollment in the intensive Arabic language program, residence in the campus boarding facility, and completion of the quantitative AMTB survey. Non-completion of the academic program and unwillingness to participate in in-depth interviews were considered as exclusion criteria.

The primary research instrument was a modified AMTB questionnaire, which underwent pilot testing with 30 students to assess item clarity, relevance, and completion time. Additionally, an expert review was conducted by 3 language education specialists and 2 psychometricians to evaluate the appropriateness and relevance of the items for each construct and provide feedback on content validity. The final instrument consisted of 104 items measuring five dimensions: integrative motivation, instrumental motivation, learning situation attitudes, language anxiety, and religious motivation. The items were rated on a 5-point Likert scale. The instrument demonstrated strong psychometric properties, with a Cronbach's α of 0.89, satisfactory construct validity (CFA $\chi^2/df = 2.34$, CFI = 0.92, RMSEA = 0.058), and content validity established through expert review.

A semi-structured interview protocol was developed, comprising 12 core questions with follow-up probes. The protocol covered themes such as personal language learning history, motivational changes over time, boarding system experiences, and religious aspects of motivation. The protocol was pilot tested with 3 students, reviewed by 2 qualitative research experts, and iteratively refined based on feedback.

The data collection procedures were divided into two phases. In the quantitative phase, research ethics approval was obtained, informed consent was sought from participants, and the survey was administered using a mixed-mode distribution (online and paper-based) over a two-week completion window. Response rates were monitored, and data quality checks were implemented. In

the qualitative phase, participants were selected based on survey results, schedules were coordinated, and interviews were conducted, lasting 45-60 minutes each. The interviews were audio-recorded with participant consent, and field notes were taken. Member checking was performed post-interview to ensure the accuracy of the data.

The quantitative data analysis involved preliminary steps such as data cleaning, normality testing, descriptive statistics, and reliability analysis. Advanced analyses, including Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), and multiple regression analysis, were conducted using SPSS 27.0 and AMOS 26.0. The qualitative data analysis began with interview transcription, translation (when necessary), and data organization in NVivo 13. Thematic analysis was performed following (Braun et al., 2022) six-phase approach, and a coding framework was developed. Inter-coder reliability was assessed using Cohen's κ , yielding a satisfactory value of 0.87.

The integration of quantitative and qualitative findings was achieved through joint displays, cross-validation of findings, and the identification of convergent and divergent patterns. Ethical considerations were prioritized throughout the study, including institutional approval from the STAI As-sunnah Ethics Committee, informed consent from all participants, data confidentiality and anonymity measures, secure data storage and handling procedures, the participant's right to withdraw, and cultural sensitivity in data collection and reporting.

The research timeline encompassed the quantitative phase (September-October 2023), qualitative phase (November-December 2023), data analysis (January-February 2024), and report writing (March 2024).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

a. Student Motivational Profiles

1. Integrative Motivation

Analysis of integrative motivation revealed high overall levels ($M = 4.17$, $SD = 0.68$, 95% CI [4.05, 4.29]). A one-sample t-test indicated this was significantly above the scale midpoint, $t(119) = 18.76$, $p = .001$, $d = 1.71$. Factor analysis revealed three primary components:

Table 1. Integrative Motivation Components (N = 120)

Component	Mean	SD	95% CI	Factor Loading
Cultural Integration	4.3	0.64	[4.18, 4.42]	0.856
Integration Orientation	4.0	0.72	[3.87, 4.13]	0.789

Component	Mean	SD	95% CI	Factor Loading
Arab Cultural Interest	4.2	0.68	[4.08, 4.32]	0.745

2. Instrumental Motivation

Instrumental motivation showed significantly higher levels ($M = 4.5$, $SD = 0.55$, 95% CI [4.40, 4.60]) compared to integrative motivation (paired t-test: $t(119) = 4.32$, $p = .001$, $d = 0.53$). Religious factors emerged as the strongest component:

Table 2. Instrumental Motivation Components (N = 120)

Component	Mean	SD	95% CI	Factor Loading
Religious Purposes	4.7	0.48	[4.61, 4.79]	0.892
Career Prospects	4.5	0.55	[4.40, 4.60]	0.845
Academic Achievement	4.3	0.62	[4.19, 4.41]	0.778

b. Learning Environment Impact

Structural equation modeling (SEM) revealed significant relationships between boarding system elements and motivation:

$$\chi^2 (245) = 456.78, p = .001$$

$$CFI = 0.92$$

$$RMSEA = 0.058 [90\% \text{ CI: } 0.049, 0.067]$$

$$SRMR = 0.045$$

Five key environmental factors emerged through factor analysis:

Table 3. Environmental Factors Impact (N = 120)

Factor	Loading	Variance Explained	p-value
Boarding Environment	0.856	24.3%	< .001
Teacher Quality	0.789	18.7%	< .001
Learning Facilities	0.745	15.4%	< .001
Peer Support	0.723	12.8%	< .001
Curriculum	0.698	10.2%	< .001

The qualitative findings of the study revealed two major themes that emerged from the analysis of the interview data ($n = 12$): the impact of the immersive environment and the integration of religious motivation in Arabic language learning.

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Regarding the immersive environment, participants consistently emphasized the significant role of 24-hour language exposure in their learning experiences. As one female participant (P4) stated, "The constant Arabic environment forces us to adapt quickly. Even simple daily conversations become learning opportunities." The analysis identified three key sub-themes related to the immersive environment: continuous language exposure (mentioned by 11 out of 12 participants), peer learning dynamics (10/12 participants), and cultural immersion benefits (9/12 participants). These findings highlight the multifaceted nature of the immersive learning experience and its profound impact on Arabic language acquisition.

The second major theme that emerged from the qualitative data was the integration of religious motivation in Arabic language learning. Participants consistently identified religious factors as a primary motivator for their language learning efforts. As one male participant (P7) expressed, "Understanding religious texts directly in Arabic gives us deeper insight into our faith." The analysis revealed three key aspects of religious motivation: direct access to religious texts (mentioned by all 12 participants), enhanced religious understanding (11/12 participants), and community service motivation (8/12 participants). These findings underscore the deep interconnection between language learning and religious identity in the context of Islamic boarding schools.

Mixed-Methods Integration

a. Convergent Findings

Joint display analysis revealed strong alignment between quantitative and qualitative results:

Table 4. Mixed-Methods Integration Matrix

Quantitative Finding	Qualitative Support	Integration Insight
High Religious Motivation (M = 4.7)	12/12 participants emphasized religious factors	Religious motivation strengthened by immersive environment
Strong Peer Impact (Loading = 0.723)	10/12 participants noted peer influence	Peer interactions create reinforcing motivation cycle

b. Divergent Patterns

Analysis revealed two notable areas of divergence:

1. Stress levels: Quantitative measures showed moderate stress (M = 3.2), while qualitative data suggested higher impact
2. Teacher influence: Stronger in quantitative (Loading = 0.789) than qualitative data

c. Mixed-Methods Integration

1. Integrative Insights

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The synthesis of quantitative and qualitative findings revealed several key integrative insights that shed light on the complex dynamics of Arabic language learning motivation in the Islamic boarding school context.

First, the immersive environment and religious context were found to synergistically reinforce religious motivation as the primary driver of language learning. The continuous exposure to Arabic language in daily activities, coupled with its extensive use in religious study and practice, mutually strengthen each other. This dynamic interaction creates a robust and sustainable ecology of motivation, where language learning and religious engagement are deeply intertwined and mutually reinforcing.

Second, peer learning dynamics emerged as a crucial factor that serves not only as a social reinforcer but also as a catalyst for cultural and religious identity development. As students engage in shared language practices within the boarding school environment, they actively negotiate their positions within the learning community. Through these interactions, students simultaneously construct their linguistic competence and religious beliefs, forging a strong sense of shared identity and purpose.

Third, the structural elements of the boarding system, including curriculum, facilities, and teacher support, were found to play a critical role in systemically shaping learning attitudes and behaviors. The dynamic interaction of these factors creates a holistic learning ecosystem that supports the growth of motivation and language learning fluency. The curriculum provides a structured framework for language acquisition, while the facilities and resources create an enabling environment for immersive learning. Teacher support, both in terms of instructional quality and emotional guidance, further enhances students' engagement and persistence in their language learning journey.

These integrative insights highlight the multifaceted nature of motivation in Arabic language learning within the Islamic boarding school context. The findings underscore the importance of considering the complex interplay between individual, social, and institutional factors in shaping language learning motivation. By understanding these dynamics, educators and policymakers can develop more effective strategies to foster sustained motivation and support successful language acquisition in immersive religious educational settings.

2. Practical Implications

The findings of this study offer several practical implications for designing effective Arabic language programs in Islamic educational institutions. First, it is crucial to explicitly

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integrate religious and language learning objectives in the curriculum and pedagogy. This can be achieved by incorporating religiously-based textual materials, religious contextualization tasks, and activities that simultaneously involve linguistic and religious practices. By aligning language learning with religious goals, students' motivation and engagement can be significantly enhanced.

Second, implementing strategies to maximize language exposure and interaction is essential for creating an immersive and supportive learning environment. This may include establishing "Arabic Only" policies, offering Arabic-enriched co-curricular activities, and providing shared learning spaces where students can practice their language skills in a natural setting. These measures can foster a sense of community and encourage students to actively use Arabic in their daily interactions.

Third, developing teachers' capacities to facilitate peer learning and support students in their identity negotiations is critical for promoting a collaborative and inclusive learning environment. This may involve providing training in collaborative learning techniques, cross-cultural mentoring, and socio-emotional support. By equipping teachers with the necessary skills and knowledge, they can effectively guide students through the challenges of language learning and help them navigate the complex dynamics of cultural and religious identity development.

Fourth, enhancing learning facilities and resources for Arabic language learning is essential for creating an enabling environment that supports students' learning needs. This may include investing in technology, media, and dedicated spaces that facilitate language acquisition and practice. By providing access to a wide range of learning resources and tools, students can engage with the language in multiple ways and develop a more comprehensive understanding of Arabic language and culture.

By applying these insights and recommendations, Islamic educational institutions can design high-quality Arabic language programs that leverage the unique strengths of the boarding environment and align language learning outcomes with religious goals. This holistic approach to language education can foster a deep sense of motivation, engagement, and cultural immersion among students, ultimately leading to more effective and sustainable language acquisition.

Discussion

Theoretical Implications

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The findings of this study contribute to the theoretical understanding of language learning motivation in several key ways. First, the results highlight the need to extend and adapt the traditional Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB) framework to better capture the unique dynamics of Arabic language learning in religious educational contexts. The strong influence of religious factors on motivation, which surpassed the conventional integrative/instrumental dichotomy, suggests that a modified AMTB model incorporating religious dimensions would provide a more accurate and comprehensive understanding of motivation in these settings.

Second, the study sheds light on the distinctive motivational dynamics created by the boarding school system. The immersive environment and close-knit peer relationships within the boarding context appear to amplify the role of peer influence on language learning motivation compared to traditional educational settings. This finding underscores the importance of considering the specific learning environment when examining motivational factors and highlights the need for theoretical models that account for these contextual differences.

Practical Implications

The results of this study offer valuable insights for the practical design and implementation of effective Arabic language learning programs in Islamic boarding schools. One key implication is the importance of integrating religious and linguistic objectives in curriculum development. By aligning language learning activities and materials with students' religious motivations, programs can leverage this powerful driving force to enhance engagement and outcomes.

Additionally, the findings emphasize the potential benefits of strengthening peer learning components within language programs. Facilitating structured peer interaction and collaboration can harness the motivational influence of peer relationships and create a supportive learning community. However, program designers should also be mindful of the need to balance the benefits of immersion with appropriate stress management strategies. Incorporating techniques to help students cope with the demands of intensive language learning can optimize motivation and well-being.

Furthermore, the study highlights opportunities for teaching approaches that capitalize on students' religious motivation. Integrating religious themes, texts, and practices into language instruction can make the learning experience more meaningful and relevant for students. Teachers can also foster peer learning by designing activities that encourage cooperative learning and peer feedback. Finally, developing targeted stress mitigation strategies, such as mindfulness techniques or support groups, can help students navigate the challenges of intensive language study.

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Limitations and Future Directions

While this study provides valuable insights, it is important to acknowledge its limitations. The focus on a single institution restricts the generalizability of the findings to other contexts. Future research should examine multiple Islamic boarding schools to determine the extent to which the observed motivational patterns hold across different settings.

Additionally, the cross-sectional design of the study limits the ability to draw causal inferences about the relationship between the boarding school environment and language learning motivation. Longitudinal studies that track students' motivation over time could provide a clearer understanding of how the boarding experience shapes motivational development.

Another potential limitation is the risk of social desirability bias in students' responses regarding religious motivation. Future studies could employ more indirect measures or triangulate self-report data with behavioral observations to mitigate this concern.

Moving forward, researchers should consider conducting comparative studies that examine the impact of cultural variations on language learning motivation in Islamic boarding schools. Investigating how factors such as cultural background, linguistic diversity, and regional differences influence motivational patterns could yield valuable insights for tailoring language programs to specific student populations.

Finally, given the importance of stress management in intensive language learning environments, future research should prioritize the development and evaluation of effective stress mitigation strategies. Empirical studies testing the impact of different interventions on student motivation and well-being could inform best practices for supporting learners in these challenging contexts. This study breaks new ground in understanding the complex dynamics of Arabic language learning motivation in Islamic boarding schools. The findings underscore the importance of considering religious and contextual factors in theoretical models of motivation and highlight promising avenues for enhancing language programs in these unique educational settings. By addressing the limitations and pursuing the future directions identified, researchers can continue to advance our understanding of this critical issue and inform evidence-based practices that optimize student motivation and success.

While this study breaks new ground, it also has limitations that point to important directions for future research. The focus on a single institution limits the generalizability of the findings, highlighting the need for comparative studies across different boarding school contexts. Although our findings provide crucial insights into students' motivational experiences, we acknowledge that

they may not fully capture the dynamics of Arabic language learning in all Islamic higher education institutions. Further research in various geographic locations and institutional settings is necessary to validate and extend our findings.

The cross-sectional design also constrains our ability to make causal inferences, indicating the value of longitudinal research to trace motivational dynamics over time. Understanding of how language learning motivation and attitudes evolve during students' study periods and beyond remains limited. Future studies that follow learners from their first year through graduation and into their careers could provide vital insights into the long-term impact of immersive Arabic language learning experiences.

Moreover, the potential for social desirability bias in participants' responses around religious motivation warrants further investigation. Future research could employ implicit measures or observational methods to triangulate self-report data. This may involve ethnographic studies that examine students' semiotic practices and discourses as they navigate religiously-laden language learning landscapes.

Finally, our findings indicate the need for more granular research on specific aspects of the boarding experience, such as the impact of different curricular models, teacher characteristics, or peer interaction patterns on motivation. Exploring these micro-level dynamics could yield valuable insights for refining immersive language learning environments.

Overall, the limitations of this study pave the way for several exciting future research directions. By addressing these gaps, researchers can develop a more comprehensive and accurate understanding of Arabic language learners' motivation in Islamic higher education. This, in turn, can inform the development of more effective pedagogical approaches that are responsive to unique institutional contexts and learner needs.

Student Motivational Profiles

The analysis revealed high levels of both integrative motivation ($M = 4.17$, $SD = 0.68$) and instrumental motivation ($M = 4.5$, $SD = 0.55$) among the students. Integrative motivation was driven primarily by cultural integration, integration orientation, and Arab cultural interest. Instrumental motivation showed an even higher level overall and was most strongly influenced by religious purposes, followed by career prospects and academic achievement.

These findings align with previous research highlighting the importance of both integrative and instrumental factors in language learning motivation (Boo et al., 2015; Macintyre et al., 2019). However, the particularly high level of instrumental motivation, and the emergence of religious

purposes as its strongest component, suggest that the Islamic boarding school context may foster a distinct motivational profile compared to other language learning settings.

The centrality of religious motivation is consistent with (Selim & Abdalla, 2022) findings on the role of religious factors for non-Arab Muslim students learning Arabic. However, the boarding school environment appears to amplify this effect, likely due to the constant integration of religious practice and study with language learning.

Learning Environment Impact

Structural equation modeling revealed significant relationships between elements of the boarding system and student motivation. The path analysis results indicate that the overall boarding environment, teacher quality, learning facilities, peer support, and curriculum all contribute substantially to shaping motivation and attitudes.

These findings provide empirical support for the motivational impact of immersive learning environments posited by (Riyadi & Rozaanah, 2023b). The 24-hour exposure to Arabic and the close-knit community dynamics serve to constantly reinforce language acquisition.

However, the results also highlight the multidimensional nature of the boarding system's influence. While full immersion is key, factors like instructional quality, resources, social support, and curricular design work synergistically to optimize student motivation. This suggests that institutions should take a holistic approach to crafting an effective immersive learning experience.

The qualitative findings shed further light on the mechanisms underlying the boarding system's motivational impact. Participants consistently emphasized the role of the immersive environment, with continuous language exposure, peer learning dynamics, and cultural immersion benefits emerging as prominent sub-themes.

These results align with (Riyadi & Rozaanah, 2023a) findings on intensive language exposure in boarding settings promoting acquisition. However, our analysis provides additional insight into how this exposure translates into motivation. The constant need to use Arabic for daily communication and the socio-cultural insights gained appear to foster a self-reinforcing cycle of engagement and learning.

Religious motivation also emerged as a central qualitative theme, with participants highlighting their drive to access religious texts directly and deepen their faith. This mirrors the quantitative findings and underscores the interconnection of linguistic and religious development in this context. The convergence of quantitative and qualitative findings paints a rich picture of the

boarding system's motivational dynamics. The joint display analysis reveals how the immersive environment and religious context work in tandem to strengthen and sustain student motivation.

These results extend existing AMTB research by illuminating how different elements of the learning environment interact to shape motivational processes. The boarding system appears to create a uniquely powerful synergy between linguistic, socio-cultural, and religious drivers of motivation.

At the same time, the divergent findings on stress levels and teacher influence highlight potential areas for further investigation and improvement. The qualitative data suggests that the motivational benefits of immersion may come at the cost of higher stress, an issue that warrants focused attention in program design and support structures.

Our findings make several key contributions to the theoretical understanding of language learning motivation. First, they demonstrate the need to extend and adapt traditional AMTB frameworks to better capture the distinctive dynamics of religious and immersive learning contexts. The outsized role of religious motivation and the amplifying effects of the boarding environment point to a complex interplay of factors that may not be fully accounted for in existing models.

Second, our results provide compelling evidence for the motivational impact of immersive learning, while also identifying the specific mechanisms through which this impact occurs. The multidimensional influence model that emerged, encompassing environmental, instructional, social, and curricular factors, offers a nuanced framework for understanding and optimizing immersive learning experiences.

At a practical level, these insights suggest several avenues for enhancing Arabic language programs in Islamic boarding schools. Integrating religious and linguistic learning objectives, strengthening peer learning structures, and proactively addressing stress management emerge as key priorities. More broadly, our findings underscore the value of holistic, environmentally-attuned approaches to language education in religious settings.

Limitations and Future Directions

While this study breaks new ground, it also has limitations that point to important directions for future research. The focus on a single institution limits the generalizability of the findings, highlighting the need for comparative studies across different boarding school contexts. The cross-sectional design also constrains our ability to make causal inferences, suggesting the value of longitudinal research to trace motivational dynamics over time.

Additionally, the potential for social desirability bias in participants' responses around religious motivation merits further investigation. Future studies could employ implicit measures or observational methods to triangulate self-report data.

Finally, our findings point to the need for more granular research on specific aspects of the boarding experience, such as the impact of different curricular models, teacher characteristics, or peer interaction patterns on motivation. Exploring these micro-level dynamics could yield valuable insights for refining immersive language learning environments.

CONCLUSIONS

The present study provides compelling evidence for the significant impact of the Islamic boarding school system on shaping Arabic language learning motivation and attitudes among final-year students preparing to become professional Arabic teachers. The immersive language environment and religious context fostered by the boarding system have been shown to cultivate high levels of both instrumental and integrative motivation. The empirical findings underscore the effectiveness of immersive learning environments in enhancing students' Arabic competency, revealing that consistent language exposure and intensive peer interactions within the boarding setting contribute significantly to the development of positive learning attitudes. The implications of this research are particularly relevant for Islamic higher education institutions aiming to produce competent Arabic language teachers, as the results offer valuable insights for designing effective Arabic language programs that capitalize on the motivational benefits of immersive learning environments and religious contexts. Moreover, this study extends the application of the AMTB framework to the context of Islamic higher education, demonstrating its utility in understanding language learning motivation in religious educational settings.

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