



Project-Based Learning and Self-Efficacy as Predictors of Students' Motivation in *Aqidah* Learning

Nur Mubin ¹, Nur Fikriyatul Hasanah²

^{1,2}Institut Agama Islam Daruttaqwa Gresik, Indonesia

Email: normubin@insida.ac.id

Article History

Received: 05-09-2025

Revised: 13-09-2025

Accepted: 17-09-2025

Keywords

Project-Based Learning (PjBL), Self-Efficacy, Motivation, *Aqidah* Learning

Abstract

Research Objective – This study aimed to examine the predictive influence of Project-Based Learning (PjBL) and self-efficacy on students' learning motivation in the subject of *aqidah* at the *Madrasah Ibtidaiyah* level. The research was designed to bridge pedagogical innovation and psychological constructs, thereby providing a comprehensive understanding of factors that shape motivation in Islamic primary education.

Methodology – A quantitative correlational design was employed with 60 fifth-grade students from Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Daruttaqwa Suci Gresik. Data were collected through three stages: observation checklists measuring the fidelity of PjBL implementation, questionnaires on self-efficacy and motivation adapted from validated instruments, and short reflective teacher interviews to confirm classroom practices. All instruments demonstrated acceptable reliability (Cronbach's alpha > 0.70). Multiple regression analysis using SPSS version 26 was conducted to test the predictive relationships, following assumption checks for normality, linearity, and multicollinearity.

Findings – Results indicated that students reported high levels of PjBL implementation (M = 4.12), moderate-to-high self-efficacy (M = 3.89), and strong learning motivation (M = 4.21). Correlation analysis revealed significant positive associations among all variables, with self-efficacy demonstrating the strongest correlation with motivation ($r = .62, p < .01$). Regression analysis confirmed that PjBL and self-efficacy jointly explained 52% of the variance in learning motivation, with self-efficacy ($\beta = 0.46, p < .001$) emerging as a stronger predictor than PjBL ($\beta = 0.34, p < .01$).

Research Implications/Limitations – The findings highlight the need to integrate student-centered pedagogies with strategies that strengthen learners' self-belief. However, the study's focus on a single school and cross-sectional design limits generalizability.

Originality/Value – This study contributes to the limited literature on Islamic education by demonstrating the universal role of self-efficacy and the value of combining innovative pedagogy with psychological empowerment to enhance learning motivation.

This is an open access article under [CC BY-SA 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/) license.

Copyright © 2025 by Author. Published by [CV. Zamron Pressindo](https://cv.zamronpressindo.com/).

Available online at: <https://journal.zamronedu.co.id/index.php/arfahruddin/issue/archive>



INTRODUCTION

In the contemporary discourse of educational research, student motivation has emerged as a pivotal determinant of learning effectiveness and long-term academic achievement.¹ Motivation not only sustains attention and effort but also fosters resilience in the face of challenges, thereby serving as a fundamental driver of both cognitive and affective learning outcomes.² Within the framework of Islamic education, particularly in the teaching of *aqidah* at the primary level of *Madrasah Ibtidaiyah*, motivation acquires heightened significance. The abstract and theological nature of *aqidah* demands not merely cognitive comprehension but also the internalization of spiritual and moral values that are central to students' character formation and religious identity.³

Globally, there has been a growing recognition that traditional teacher-centered models are often insufficient to address the dynamic learning needs of 21st-century students.⁴ Pedagogical reforms increasingly emphasize learner-centered approaches that foster creativity, collaboration, and critical thinking.⁵ Within this shift, Project-Based Learning (PjBL) has been highlighted as a pedagogical innovation capable of enhancing learning motivation by situating knowledge in authentic and meaningful contexts.^{6, 7} PjBL encourages students to construct knowledge through active inquiry and collaboration, while simultaneously connecting classroom learning with broader social and cultural realities.⁸

In the specific domain of Islamic education, PjBL offers transformative potential. By framing *aqidah* instruction around real-life projects—such as community service, religious campaigns, or creative media that convey theological concepts—students can experience faith not merely as theoretical abstraction but as a lived and practiced value system. Such integration allows the teachings of *aqidah* to become more tangible, relatable, and capable of shaping both spiritual awareness and social responsibility. In this sense, PjBL aligns closely

¹ E. L. Ryan, R. M., & Deci, *Self-Determination Theory: Basic Psychological Needs in Motivation, Development, and Wellness* (London & New York: Guilford Press, 2017), <https://doi.org/10.1521/978.14625/28806>.

² R. M. Deci, E. L., & Ryan, "The 'What' and 'Why' of Goal Pursuits: Human Needs and the Self-Determination of Behavior," *Psychological Inquiry* 11, no. 4 (2020): 227–268.

³ R. Mutaqorribain, S., Asrori, A., & Rusman, "The Effect of Teacher's Motivation on Student Learning Activities in Islamic Education Lessons," *Nazhruna: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 5, no. 3 (2022): 887–907, <https://doi.org/10.31538/nzh.v5i3.2101>.

⁴ S Bell, "Project-Based Learning for the 21st Century: Skills for the Future," *The Clearing House: A Journal of Educational Strategies, Issues and Ideas* 83, no. 2 (2010): 39–43, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00098650903505415>.

⁵ G. A. N. Asrafzani, A. R., Charis, M., Asrori, A., & Zakaria, "Problem Posing Method In Establishing Students' Creative Thinking Ability In Islamic Education Subjects," *At-Tarbiyat :Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 5, no. 3 (2022): 476–82, <https://doi.org/10.37758/jat.v5i3.476>.

⁶ M. B Mutanga, "Students' Perspectives and Experiences in Project-Based Learning: A Qualitative Study," *Trends in Higher Education* 3, no. 4 (2024): 903–11, <https://doi.org/10.3390/higheredu3040052>.

⁷ M Fernandes, S., Conde, A., & Abelha, "Student Motivation in the First Year of University: Findings from the Implementation of a PBL Project for a Real Context," in *Proceedings of the International Symposium on Project Approaches in Engineering Education; Active Learning in Engineering Education Workshop; International Conference on Active Learning in Engineering Education. (PAEE/ALE'2021)*, ed. Rui M V. V.-B. Anabela C. Alves, Natascha van Hattum-Janssen (Braga - Portugal, 2021), <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.5096981>.

⁸ Petri Vesikivi et al., "The Impact of Project-Based Learning Curriculum on First-Year Retention, Study Experiences, and Knowledge Work Competence," *Research Papers in Education*, 2020, <https://doi.org/10.1080/02671522.2019.1677755>.

with the broader aims of Islamic pedagogy, which aspires not only to convey knowledge but also to inculcate values and nurture holistic individuals.

Complementing the role of instructional methods is the psychological construct of self-efficacy, defined as individuals' belief in their capacity to execute actions necessary to achieve desired outcomes.⁹ A robust sense of self-efficacy empowers students to persevere in the face of academic difficulties, regulate their learning strategies, and sustain motivation over time.^{10, 11} In faith-based subjects such as *aqidah*, self-efficacy may determine whether students approach tasks with confidence or anxiety, and whether they are able to transfer learned principles into daily practices of worship, ethics, and social interaction.¹²

The interaction between innovative pedagogy and self-efficacy thus provides a compelling framework for understanding learning motivation in Islamic education.¹³ However, despite the extensive literature on both PjBL and self-efficacy in general education, research that examines their combined influence in religious subjects remains scarce.¹⁴ This lacuna is particularly evident in the Indonesian context, where *Madrasah Ibtidaiyah* represents a distinctive educational environment that integrates national curricula with Islamic values. Exploring how PjBL and self-efficacy jointly contribute to motivation in *aqidah* learning can yield valuable insights not only for practitioners but also for policymakers seeking to enhance the quality of Islamic education in alignment with global educational standards.

Accordingly, this study investigates the extent to which Project-Based Learning and self-efficacy predict students' motivation in learning *aqidah* at *Madrasah Ibtidaiyah* Daruttaqwa Suci Gresik By bridging pedagogical and psychological perspectives, the research seeks to provide empirical insights that enrich the discourse on effective instructional design in Islamic primary education. Moreover, the findings are expected to contribute to the broader field of educational innovation, highlighting how the integration of contemporary learning models and motivational psychology can enhance both academic achievement and value-based education in a globalized era.

⁹ A Bandura, *Self-Efficacy: The Exercise of Control* (New York: W. H. Freeman, 1997), <https://psycnet.apa.org/record/1997-08589-000>.

¹⁰ M. K Schunk, D. H., & DiBenedetto, "Motivation and Social Cognitive Theory," *Contemporary Educational Psychology* 60 (2020), <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cedpsych.2019.101832>.

¹¹ E. L Klassen, R. M., & Usher, "Self-Efficacy in Educational Settings: Recent Research and Emerging Directions," in *Advances in Motivation and Achievement*, ed. T. Urdan & S. Karabenick (London: Emerald Group Publishing, 2010), [https://doi.org/10.1108/S0749-7423\(2010\)000016A004](https://doi.org/10.1108/S0749-7423(2010)000016A004).

¹² A Asrori, "The Function of Class Management in The Improving Effectiveness of Learning *Aqidah* in MTs Al-Hidayah Betyokauman Gresik," *Studia Religia: Jurnal Pemikiran Dan Pendidikan Islam* 3, no. 2 (2019): 145–58, <https://doi.org/10.30651/sr.v3i2.3950>.

¹³ M Alkandari, K., & Alabdulhadi, "Promoting Self-Regulation Skills among Pre-Service Islamic Studies Teachers through Project-Based Learning Utilizing a Flipped Learning Strategy," *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research* 22, no. 5 (2023): 74–100, <https://doi.org/10.26803/ijlter.22.5.4>.

¹⁴ A.M Donoso, D., Cisneros, C., Donoso, S., Gallardo, "Transforming Higher Education: A Bayesian Analysis of Professional Competencies Through Project-Based Learning," in *Perspectives and Trends in Education and Technology. ICITED 2024. Lecture Notes in Networks and Systems, Vol 859*, ed. M Abreu, A., Carvalho, J.V., Mesquita, A., Sousa Pinto, A., Mendonça Teixeira (Springer, Cham, 2025), https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-78155-1_34.

METHOD

Research Design

This study adopted a quantitative correlational research design¹⁵ to explore the predictive influence of Project-Based Learning (PjBL) and Self-Efficacy on students' Learning Motivation in the subject of *aqidah* at the *Madrasah Ibtidaiyah* level. A correlational design was considered appropriate because the primary aim was not only to describe the existing conditions but also to statistically test the direction and strength of the relationships among the study variables. By employing this design, the researchers were able to determine how variations in the implementation of PjBL and the level of self-efficacy were associated with differences in students' motivation to learn *aqidah*.

The rationale for choosing a quantitative correlational approach lies in its ability to provide empirical evidence through statistical testing while maintaining objectivity and replicability. Unlike experimental designs, which manipulate variables under controlled conditions, a correlational design allows researchers to examine natural variations in classroom settings. This is particularly relevant for the current study, where the focus was on real-world classroom practices and psychological constructs as they occur in authentic learning environments.¹⁶ Through this design, it was possible to measure the degree of association between instructional strategies (PjBL) and psychological beliefs (self-efficacy) with students' motivation, thereby producing insights that are both pedagogically and theoretically meaningful for Islamic primary education.

Population and Sample

The population of the study comprised all fifth-grade students of *Madrasah Ibtidaiyah* Daruttauqwa Suci Gresik, during the 2023/2024 academic year. Using purposive sampling, a total of 60 students were selected as participants, representing intact classes that had experienced instruction in *aqidah* with PjBL strategies. The sample size was considered sufficient based on statistical recommendations for regression analysis.¹⁷

Variables and Instruments

1. Independent Variables

- a. *Project-Based Learning (PjBL)*: measured through an observation checklist assessing the degree of implementation across dimensions such as student-centered inquiry, problem-solving, collaboration, and product creation.¹⁸
- b. *Self-Efficacy*: measured using a modified version of the Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ) self-efficacy subscale, adapted to the context of Islamic education.¹⁹

¹⁵ John W. Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*, 5th ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2018).

¹⁶ K. Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, *Research Methods in Education*, 8th ed. (London: Routledge, 2018), <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315456539>.

¹⁷ L. S. Tabachnick, B. G., & Fidell, *Using Multivariate Statistics*, 5th ed. (New York, NY: Pearson Education, 2007).

¹⁸ A Kokotsaki, D., Menzies, V., & Wiggins, "Project-Based Learning: A Review of the Literature," *Improving Schools* 19, no. 3 (2016): 267–77, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1365480216659733>.

¹⁹ W. J. Pintrich, P. R., Smith, D. A. F., García, T., & McKeachie, *A Manual for the Use of the Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ)* (Ann Arbor, MI: National Center for Research to Improve Postsecondary Teaching and Learning, University of Michigan, 1991), <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED338122>.

2. Dependent Variable

- a. *Learning Motivation*: measured through a Likert-scale questionnaire (1–5), adapted from Keller's ARCS motivation model,²⁰ covering attention, relevance, confidence, and satisfaction, contextualized for *aqidah* subject learning.
- b. All instruments underwent content validation by two experts in Islamic education and one educational psychologist. Reliability was tested using Cronbach's alpha, with all scales exceeding the 0.70 threshold, indicating acceptable internal consistency.²¹

Data Collection Procedure

Data were collected in three stages:

1. Observation of PjBL implementation during the *aqidah* lessons (two project cycles).
2. Administration of questionnaires measuring students' self-efficacy and learning motivation.
3. Triangulation of data through short reflective interviews with teachers to confirm the implementation fidelity of PjBL.²²

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using multiple regression analysis to determine the extent to which PjBL and self-efficacy predict students' motivation. Prior to regression, assumptions of normality, linearity, and multicollinearity were tested. Statistical analyses were conducted using SPSS version 26. Significance was set at $p < 0.05$.²³

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Descriptive Statistics

The descriptive analysis was conducted to provide an overview of the three major variables examined in this study: Project-Based Learning (PjBL), Self-Efficacy, and Learning Motivation. As presented in Table 1, the mean score of PjBL implementation was 4.12 (SD = 0.56). This relatively high value indicates that PjBL strategies were applied consistently in the classroom, enabling students to actively participate in inquiry-based tasks, collaborate with peers, solve authentic problems, and produce project outcomes. The relatively small standard deviation also suggests that the implementation of PjBL was evenly experienced across the sample, with little variability among students.

The average score for Self-Efficacy was 3.89 (SD = 0.61), reflecting a moderate to high level of students' confidence in their ability to engage with and complete learning tasks in *aqidah*. While the mean was slightly lower than the other variables, it still demonstrates that students generally believed in their learning capacities. The higher standard deviation compared to PjBL implies that some variability existed in students' levels of confidence, with certain students expressing greater self-assurance than others.

²⁰ J. M Keller, *Motivational Design for Learning and Performance: The ARCS Model Approach* (New York: Springer, 2010), <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4419-1250-3>.

²¹ W. Lawrence Neuman, *Social Research Methods: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*, 7th ed. (Boston: Pearson Education, 2014).

²² S Kvale, S., & Brinkmann, *InterViews: Learning the Craft of Qualitative Research Interviewing*, 2nd ed. (Sage Publications, 2009).

²³ A.P. Field, *Discovering Statistics Using IBM SPSS Statistics*, 5th ed. (Newbury Park: Sage, 2018).

Finally, Learning Motivation recorded the highest mean score of 4.21 (SD = 0.58), which indicates that students generally displayed strong enthusiasm, persistence, and positive attitudes toward *aqidah* learning activities. This finding demonstrates that, overall, students were motivated to learn not only due to external instructional factors but also due to their internal drive. The standard deviation suggests a relatively consistent distribution of motivation across the sample, meaning that the majority of students shared similarly high levels of motivation.

Taken together, these descriptive results suggest that students at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Daruttaqwa Suci Gresik benefited both from innovative instructional practices like PjBL and from their own psychological resources in the form of self-efficacy. The combination of high motivation, supported by effective pedagogical design and self-confidence, provides a strong foundation for enhanced learning in Islamic religious education.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics

| Variable | Mean | SD |
|-------------------------------|------|------|
| Project-Based Learning (PjBL) | 4.12 | 0.56 |
| Self-Efficacy | 3.89 | 0.61 |
| Learning Motivation | 4.21 | 0.58 |

The bar chart illustrates the average values for the three study variables, accompanied by error bars representing their standard deviations. Learning Motivation recorded the highest mean score (M = 4.21, SD = 0.58), followed closely by Project-Based Learning (M = 4.12, SD = 0.56). Self-Efficacy, while slightly lower (M = 3.89, SD = 0.61), still reflects a moderate to high level among students. These findings suggest that students generally showed positive attitudes toward *aqidah* learning, supported by both instructional strategies and their confidence in personal abilities.

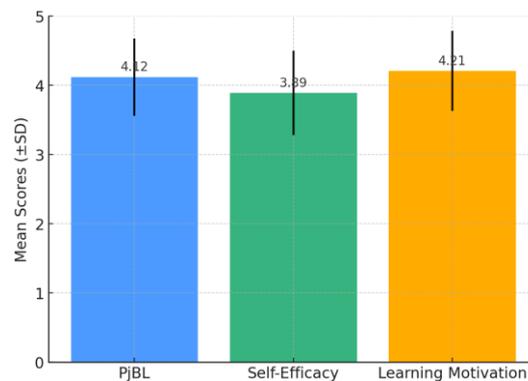


Figure 1. Descriptive statistics of PjBL, Self-Efficacy, and Learning Motivation with mean scores and standard deviations.

Correlation Analysis

To identify the relationships among Project-Based Learning (PjBL), Self-Efficacy, and Learning Motivation, Pearson’s correlation analysis was carried out. The results, presented in Table 2, indicate that all the correlations between the three variables are positive and statistically significant at the $p < .01$ level. This outcome suggests that improvements in

instructional practices and psychological belief systems are consistently associated with greater student motivation in *aqidah* learning.

Specifically, the correlation between PjBL and Learning Motivation was found to be $r = .56$ ($p < .01$), which indicates a moderately strong and positive relationship. This means that when PjBL is implemented more effectively—by engaging students in authentic projects, inquiry, and collaborative activities—students report higher levels of motivation toward learning *Aqidah*.

Similarly, the correlation between Self-Efficacy and Learning Motivation was even stronger, at $r = .62$ ($p < .01$). This finding demonstrates that students who possess higher confidence in their learning abilities are more likely to sustain attention, persist in difficult tasks, and remain enthusiastic about religious education. In other words, students' belief in their own competence is a key driver of motivation.

Finally, the relationship between PjBL and Self-Efficacy was also significant, with $r = .48$ ($p < .01$). This implies that effective application of PjBL may contribute to strengthening students' self-confidence, as engaging in structured projects allows them to experience mastery, collaboration, and successful problem-solving—all of which reinforce their sense of capability.

Taken together, these results highlight that both pedagogical approaches and psychological constructs are interdependent in fostering motivation. PjBL not only provides a stimulating environment but also indirectly nurtures self-efficacy, which in turn fuels stronger motivation.

Table 2. Correlation Matrix

| | PjBL | Self-Efficacy | Learning Motivation |
|---------------------|-------|---------------|---------------------|
| PjBL | 1.00 | .48** | .56** |
| Self-Efficacy | .48** | 1.00 | .62** |
| Learning Motivation | .56** | .62** | 1.00 |

Note. $p < .01$

The heatmap demonstrates that all variables are strongly and positively related. Specifically, PjBL is positively associated with both self-efficacy ($r = .48$, $p < .01$) and learning motivation ($r = .56$, $p < .01$). Self-efficacy shows the strongest correlation with motivation ($r = .62$, $p < .01$), reaffirming that students' confidence in their abilities is a critical determinant of sustained motivation in *Aqidah* learning at *Madrasah Ibtidaiyah*.

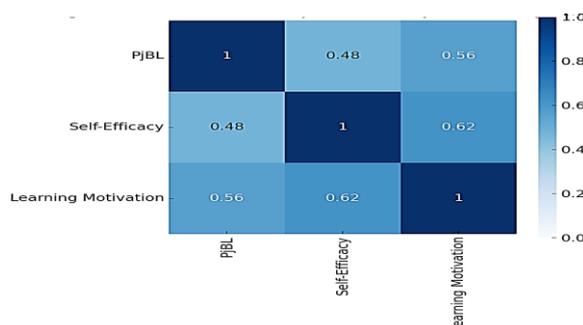


Figure 2. Correlation matrix showing significant positive relationships among Project-Based Learning (PjBL), Self-Efficacy, and Learning Motivation

Regression Analysis

To further investigate the extent to which Project-Based Learning (PjBL) and Self-Efficacy jointly contribute to students' learning motivation, a multiple regression analysis was conducted. The overall regression model was found to be statistically significant, $R^2 = .52$, $F(2, 57) = 31.0$, $p < .001$, which indicates that approximately 52% of the variance in students' learning motivation in *aqidah* lessons can be explained by the combination of PjBL implementation and students' self-efficacy levels. This substantial percentage highlights the importance of considering both pedagogical strategies and psychological constructs when examining factors that shape learning motivation.

As shown in Table 3, both predictors made significant contributions to the model. Project-Based Learning (PjBL) yielded a standardized beta coefficient of .34 ($t = 3.21$, $p < .01$), suggesting that higher-quality implementation of PjBL moderately increases students' motivation to learn *aqidah*. This finding confirms that pedagogical strategies emphasizing collaboration, problem-solving, and authentic projects foster greater engagement and interest among students.

Self-Efficacy, on the other hand, emerged as a stronger predictor with a standardized beta coefficient of .46 ($t = 4.28$, $p < .001$). This indicates that students who hold stronger beliefs in their own learning capabilities demonstrate higher levels of persistence, confidence, and motivation in engaging with *aqidah* tasks. In essence, while innovative instructional practices provide the context for meaningful learning, students' internal confidence and belief in their ability to succeed play an even greater role in sustaining motivation.

Taken together, the results underscore the dual significance of combining instructional innovation (through PjBL) with psychological reinforcement (through self-efficacy building) in strengthening students' motivation.

Table 3. Regression Analysis

| Predictor | Beta (β) | t | Sig. (p) |
|---------------|------------------|------|----------|
| PjBL | 0.34 | 3.21 | < .01 |
| Self-Efficacy | 0.46 | 4.28 | < .001 |

Model Summary: $R^2 = .52$, $F(2, 57) = 31.0$, $p < .001$

The figure illustrates that both PjBL and Self-Efficacy are significant predictors of motivation in *aqidah* learning at *Madrasah Ibtidaiyah*. Among the two variables, Self-Efficacy ($\beta = 0.46$, $t = 4.28$, $p < .001$) demonstrates a stronger predictive effect compared to PjBL ($\beta = 0.34$, $t = 3.21$, $p < .01$), confirming the crucial role of psychological belief systems in sustaining student motivation.

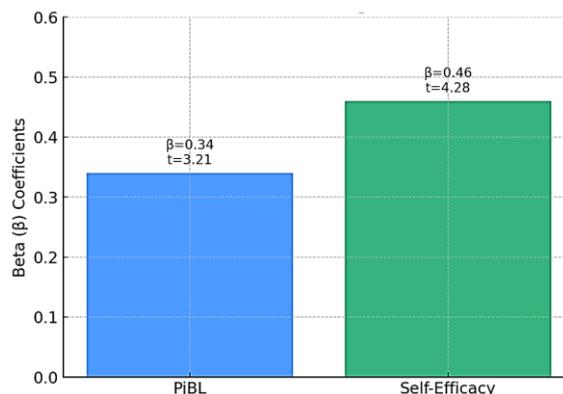


Figure 1. Beta coefficients of predictors of students' learning motivation.

Discussion

Descriptive Findings

The descriptive analysis of this study highlights that students demonstrated positive perceptions toward both Project-Based Learning (PjBL) and their own self-efficacy, with motivation emerging as the highest dimension. This result suggests that in the context of *Aqidah* learning, interactive instructional designs that emphasize inquiry, collaboration, and authentic application can successfully stimulate learners' enthusiasm. The high motivation score ($M = 4.21$, $SD = 0.58$) indicates that student-centered strategies in Islamic education not only foster persistence but also nurture intrinsic interest in the subject matter. These findings align with prior evidence that student-centered pedagogies create deeper engagement by fulfilling learners' needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness, which are essential psychological drivers for sustainable learning outcomes.²⁴

Moreover, the relatively high self-efficacy score ($M = 3.89$, $SD = 0.61$) reflects students' confidence in their abilities to accomplish academic tasks, even though some variations exist among individuals. This suggests that when PjBL is integrated into *aqidah* instruction, it does not merely strengthen students' spiritual understanding but also supports the development of transferable competencies such as problem-solving, collaboration, and resilience. Prior research confirms that project-oriented approaches enhance learners' self-efficacy and critical thinking by situating knowledge in real-world contexts.²⁵ In this regard, the combination of high motivation and robust self-efficacy serves as a powerful indicator that Islamic education can achieve holistic objectives—intellectual, spiritual, and psychological—when supported by innovative pedagogy.²⁶

Correlation Findings

The results of the correlation analysis underscore the interrelated nature of pedagogical design, student motivation, and self-efficacy. The moderate to strong positive

²⁴ I. G. W. Luh Masdarini, Candiasa, I. M., Agustini, K., & Sudatha, "The Effect of Project-Based Learning and Self-Efficacy towards Students' Entrepreneurial Readiness in Vocational High School," *Pegem Journal of Education and Instruction* 14, no. 2 (2024): 324–330, <https://doi.org/10.47750/pegegog.14.02.38>.

²⁵ K. Yew, E. H. J., & Goh, "Problem-Based Learning: An Overview of Its Process and Impact on Learning," *Health Professions Education* 2, no. 2 (2016): 75–79, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.hpe.2016.01.004>.

²⁶ Bell, "Project-Based Learning for the 21st Century: Skills for the Future."

relationship between Project-Based Learning (PjBL) and motivation ($r = .56, p < .01$) suggests that instructional strategies emphasizing authentic inquiry and collaboration are effective in stimulating learners' engagement. This finding is consistent with previous scholarship that has shown how innovative teaching practices enhance both interest and persistence, thereby fostering more meaningful learning outcomes.²⁷ Such results indicate that when applied in *aqidah* education, PjBL may serve not only as a vehicle for transmitting religious knowledge but also as a catalyst for students' enthusiasm and deeper involvement in the learning process.

Equally significant is the strong correlation between self-efficacy and motivation ($r = .62, p < .01$), which resonates with Bandura's social cognitive theory, positing that confidence in one's ability is a robust predictor of effort and persistence in academic tasks.²⁸ This study further highlights that PjBL correlates positively with self-efficacy ($r = .48, p < .01$), implying that the experiential and collaborative dimensions of PjBL contribute to students' confidence in mastering tasks. Prior research confirms that active and project-oriented approaches in education not only enhance learners' motivation but also reinforce their sense of capability to succeed.²⁹ Taken together, these findings suggest that effective implementation of PjBL in Islamic education can strengthen a dual foundation: cultivating students' psychological resources and advancing their academic development.

Regression Findings

The regression analysis further clarifies the predictive dynamics underlying students' motivation. The model explained 52% of the variance in learning motivation, which is notable given the multifaceted nature of motivational constructs. Both predictors were statistically significant, yet self-efficacy ($\beta = .46, p < .001$) emerged as a stronger determinant than Project-Based Learning (PjBL) ($\beta = .34, p < .01$). This indicates that while innovative pedagogical frameworks create enabling contexts for engagement, it is ultimately students' confidence in their own competence that exerts a more powerful influence on their sustained effort and interest.³⁰ This outcome corroborates established evidence that self-efficacy functions as a critical psychological driver of persistence and achievement across diverse learning environments.

Moreover, the significance of PjBL as a predictor, despite being weaker than self-efficacy, should not be understated. Its role in facilitating authentic, collaborative experiences provides students with mastery opportunities that in turn strengthen their self-beliefs.³¹ Recent studies on online collaborative PBL—such as the Bridge21 approach—demonstrate how structured teamwork and authentic problem-solving tasks contribute not only to heightened

²⁷ Klassen, R. M., & Usher, "Self-Efficacy in Educational Settings: Recent Research and Emerging Directions."

²⁸ Bandura, *Self-Efficacy: The Exercise of Control*.

²⁹ J Tangney, B., Sullivan, K., & Lawlor, "Online Collaborative PBL – The Bridge21 Approach," *Computers and Education* 7 (2024): 1–20, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.caeo.2024.100224>.

³⁰ J Cherukuri, "Beyond Lectures: Innovative Approaches to Promote Student Engagement Through Scenario-Based Learning (SBL)," *Journal of Engineering Education Transformations* 38, no. 2 (2025): 570–75, <https://doi.org/10.16920/jeet/2025/v38is2/25083>.

³¹ A Belwal, R., Belwal, S., Sufian, A. B., & Al Badi, "Project-Based Learning (PBL): Outcomes of Students' Engagement in an External Consultancy Project in Oman," *Education and Training* 63, no. 3 (2021): 336–359, <https://doi.org/10.1108/ET-01-2020-0006>.

motivation but also to stronger confidence in learners' abilities.⁴ When viewed together, these findings suggest that motivation in *aqidah* education is best cultivated through the interplay of effective pedagogy and psychological resources, where PjBL provides the scaffolding and self-efficacy sustains long-term commitment.

CONCLUSION

This study investigated the predictive influence of Project-Based Learning (PjBL) and self-efficacy on students' learning motivation in *aqidah* at *Madrasah Ibtidaiyah* Daruttaqwa Suci Gresik. The findings showed that both variables significantly contributed to motivation, with self-efficacy emerging as the stronger predictor. Correlation and regression analyses confirmed that effective implementation of PjBL fosters engagement and collaborative learning, while students' belief in their own abilities more strongly sustains persistence and enthusiasm. Together, these factors explained 52% of the variance in learning motivation, underscoring the interplay between pedagogy and psychology in shaping students' learning outcomes. The results suggest that strengthening motivation in Islamic education requires a dual focus: adopting innovative, student-centered instructional models such as PjBL, and cultivating learners' self-efficacy through feedback, mastery experiences, and supportive classroom environments. This study contributes to the literature by extending the discussion of PjBL and self-efficacy into the underexplored domain of Islamic religious education, demonstrating the universal relevance of motivational constructs across contexts. Future research should involve larger samples and longitudinal designs to further clarify the sustained impact of instructional and psychological factors on motivation and achievement.

REFERENCE

- Alkandari, K., & Alabdulhadi, M. "Promoting Self-Regulation Skills among Pre-Service Islamic Studies Teachers through Project-Based Learning Utilizing a Flipped Learning Strategy." *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research* 22, no. 5 (2023): 74–100. <https://doi.org/10.26803/ijlter.22.5.4>.
- Asrafzani, A. R., Charis, M., Asrori, A., & Zakaria, G. A. N. "Problem Posing Method In Establishing Students' Creative Thinking Ability In Islamic Education Subjects." *At-Tarbiyat :Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 5, no. 3 (2022): 476–82. <https://doi.org/10.37758/jat.v5i3.476>.
- Asrori, A. "The Function of Class Management in The Improving Effectiveness of Learning Aqidah in MTs Al-Hidayah Betoyokauman Gresik." *Studia Religia: Jurnal Pemikiran Dan Pendidikan Islam* 3, no. 2 (2019): 145–58. <https://doi.org/10.30651/sr.v3i2.3950>.
- Bandura, A. *Self-Efficacy: The Exercise of Control*. New York: W. H. Freeman, 1997. <https://psycnet.apa.org/record/1997-08589-000>.
- Bell, S. "Project-Based Learning for the 21st Century: Skills for the Future." *The Clearing House: A Journal of Educational Strategies, Issues and Ideas* 83, no. 2 (2010): 39–43. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00098650903505415>.
- Belwal, R., Belwal, S., Sufian, A. B., & Al Badi, A. "Project-Based Learning (PBL): Outcomes of Students' Engagement in an External Consultancy Project in Oman." *Education and Training* 63, no. 3 (2021): 336–359. <https://doi.org/10.1108/ET-01-2020-0006>.
- Cherukuri, J. "Beyond Lectures: Innovative Approaches to Promote Student Engagement Through Scenario-Based Learning (SBL)." *Journal of Engineering Education Transformations* 38, no. 2 (2025): 570–75.

- <https://doi.org/10.16920/jcet/2025/v38is2/25083>.
- Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. *Research Methods in Education*. 8th ed. London: Routledge, 2018. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315456539>.
- Creswell, John W. *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*. 5th ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2018.
- Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. "The 'What' and 'Why' of Goal Pursuits: Human Needs and the Self-Determination of Behavior." *Psychological Inquiry* 11, no. 4 (2020): 227–268.
- Donoso, D., Cisneros, C., Donoso, S., Gallardo, A.M. "Transforming Higher Education: A Bayesian Analysis of Professional Competencies Through Project-Based Learning." In *Perspectives and Trends in Education and Technology. ICITED 2024. Lecture Notes in Networks and Systems, Vol 859*, edited by M Abreu, A., Carvalho, J.V., Mesquita, A., Sousa Pinto, A., Mendonça Teixeira. Springer, Cham, 2025. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-78155-1_34.
- Fernandes, S., Conde, A., & Abelha, M. "Student Motivation in the First Year of University: Findings from the Implementation of a PBL Project for a Real Context." In *Proceedings of the International Symposium on Project Approaches in Engineering Education; Active Learning in Engineering Education Workshop; International Conference on Active Learning in Engineering Education. (PAEE/ALE'2021)*, edited by Rui M V. V.-B. Anabela C. Alves, Natascha van Hattum-Janssen. Braga - Portugal, 2021. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.5096981>.
- Field, A.P. *Discovering Statistics Using IBM SPSS Statistics*. 5th ed. Newbury Park: Sage, 2018.
- Keller, J. M. *Motivational Design for Learning and Performance: The ARCS Model Approach*. New York: Springer, 2010. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4419-1250-3>.
- Klassen, R. M., & Usher, E. L. "Self-Efficacy in Educational Settings: Recent Research and Emerging Directions." In *Advances in Motivation and Achievement*, edited by T. Urdan & S. Karabenick. London: Emerald Group Publishing, 2010. [https://doi.org/10.1108/S0749-7423\(2010\)000016A004](https://doi.org/10.1108/S0749-7423(2010)000016A004).
- Kokotsaki, D., Menzies, V., & Wiggins, A. "Project-Based Learning: A Review of the Literature." *Improving Schools* 19, no. 3 (2016): 267–77. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1365480216659733>.
- Kvale, S., & Brinkmann, S. *InterViews: Learning the Craft of Qualitative Research Interviewing*. 2nd ed. Sage Publications, 2009.
- Luh Masdarini, Candiasa, I. M., Agustini, K., & Sudatha, I. G. W. "The Effect of Project-Based Learning and Self-Efficacy towards Students' Entrepreneurial Readiness in Vocational High School." *Pegem Journal of Education and Instruction* 14, no. 2 (2024): 324–330. <https://doi.org/10.47750/pegegog.14.02.38>.
- Mutanga, M. B. "Students' Perspectives and Experiences in Project-Based Learning: A Qualitative Study." *Trends in Higher Education* 3, no. 4 (2024): 903–11. <https://doi.org/10.3390/higheredu3040052>.
- Mutaqorribain, S., Asrori, A., & Rusman, R. "The Effect of Teacher's Motivation on Student Learning Activities in Islamic Education Lessons." *Nazhruna: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 5, no. 3 (2022): 887–907. <https://doi.org/10.31538/nzh.v5i3.2101>.
- Neuman, W. Lawrence. *Social Research Methods: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. 7th ed. Boston: Pearson Education, 2014.
- Pintrich, P. R., Smith, D. A. F., García, T., & McKeachie, W. J. *A Manual for the Use of the Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ)*. Ann Arbo, MI: National Center for Research to Improve Postsecondary Teaching and Learning, University of Michigan, 1991. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED338122>.
- Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. *Self-Determination Theory: Basic Psychological Needs in Motivation, Development, and Wellness*. London & New York: Guilford Press, 2017.

- <https://doi.org/10.1521/978.14625/28806>.
- Schunk, D. H., & DiBenedetto, M. K. "Motivation and Social Cognitive Theory." *Contemporary Educational Psychology* 60 (2020). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cedpsych.2019.101832>.
- Tabachnick, B. G., & Fidell, L. S. *Using Multivariate Statistics*. 5th ed. New York, NY: Pearson Education, 2007.
- Tangney, B., Sullivan, K., & Lawlor, J. "Online Collaborative PBL – The Bridge21 Approach." *Computers and Education* 7 (2024): 1–20.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.caeo.2024.100224>.
- Vesikivi, Petri, Minna Lakkala, Jaana Holvikivi, and Hanni Muukkonen. "The Impact of Project-Based Learning Curriculum on First-Year Retention, Study Experiences, and Knowledge Work Competence." *Research Papers in Education*, 2020.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/02671522.2019.1677755>.
- Yew, E. H. J., & Goh, K. "Problem-Based Learning: An Overview of Its Process and Impact on Learning." *Health Professions Education* 2, no. 2 (2016): 75–79.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.hpe.2016.01.004>.