

## The Determinants of Learning Motivation among Students in Islamic Education: Implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum and Learning Facilities

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### ABSTRACT

Learning motivation plays a crucial role in determining the effectiveness of learning processes, particularly in Islamic Education, which emphasizes cognitive, affective, and character development. In response to recent educational reforms in Indonesia, the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum and the availability of learning facilities are expected to influence students' learning motivation. This study aims to examine the determinants of students' learning motivation in Islamic Education through the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum and learning facilities, both partially and simultaneously. Employing a quantitative correlational design, data were collected from students participating in Islamic Education learning in institutions implementing the Merdeka Curriculum using a structured questionnaire. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and multiple linear regression analysis. The results indicate that the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum and learning facilities have significant positive effects on students' learning motivation, both individually and collectively. These findings demonstrate that curriculum flexibility, learner autonomy, and adequate learning environments contribute to higher levels of student motivation. The originality of this study lies in its integrated analysis of curriculum implementation and learning facilities as key determinants of learning motivation in the context of Islamic Education, an area that has received limited empirical attention. In conclusion, enhancing students' learning motivation in Islamic Education requires a synergistic approach that combines effective curriculum implementation with adequate and well-utilized learning facilities.

**Keywords:** learning motivation; Merdeka Curriculum; learning facilities; Islamic Education; curriculum implementation

### INTRODUCTION

Learning motivation is a key factor in determining the success of the learning process. High learning motivation encourages students to engage actively in learning activities, demonstrate persistence, and develop an internal drive to achieve learning goals. Conversely, low learning motivation may lead to suboptimal learning outcomes, including in Islamic Education (Pendidikan Agama Islam/PAI), which requires a balanced integration of cognitive, affective, and psychomotor engagement (Andriani & Rasto, 2019).

In the context of national education, efforts to improve the quality of learning have continuously been pursued through various policies, one of which is the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum (Primarni & Aminah, 2024). The Merdeka

Curriculum is designed to provide flexibility for schools and teachers in developing learning processes that align with students' needs. This approach emphasizes student-centered learning, character strengthening, and holistic individual development. Through these principles, the Merdeka Curriculum is expected to create more meaningful learning experiences and to foster students' learning motivation (Primarni, 2019).

In Islamic Education (Pendidikan Agama Islam/PAI), the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum presents both challenges and opportunities. Islamic Education is not solely oriented toward the mastery of religious content, but also toward the formation of students' attitudes, values, and religious behaviors. Therefore, the success of PAI learning is highly dependent on how the curriculum is translated into contextual and relevant instructional practices that resonate with students' daily lives. Suboptimal curriculum implementation may result in monotonous learning experiences, reducing students' interest and, consequently, their learning motivation (Ricardo & Meilani, 2017).

In addition to curriculum-related factors, learning facilities and infrastructure play a crucial role in supporting students' learning motivation. Adequate facilities—such as comfortable classrooms, relevant learning media, and other supporting resources—can help create a conducive learning environment (Primarni & Latifah, 2025). In PAI learning, appropriate facilities enable teachers to deliver instructional content in more varied and interactive ways, making it easier for students to understand the material and increasing their interest in participating in the learning process (Sunusi, 2020).

However, in practice, disparities in the availability and quality of learning facilities across schools remain evident and may influence the quality of Islamic Education learning. Limited learning facilities can hinder the implementation of innovative instructional strategies and ultimately contribute to lower levels of students' learning motivation. This condition indicates that efforts to enhance students' learning motivation do not rely solely on curriculum policy, but also on the readiness of the learning environment to support curriculum implementation (Anditiasari et al., 2021).

Based on this background, students' learning motivation in Islamic Education needs to be examined by simultaneously considering the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum and the availability of learning facilities. Such an examination is essential to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of the factors contributing to students' learning motivation, while also providing an empirical foundation for improving the quality of Islamic Education learning in schools (Hendra, 2023).

## **Research Gap and Positioning of the Study**

Previous studies have extensively examined students' learning motivation from various perspectives, including internal factors related to students and external factors influencing the learning process. Several studies emphasize that learning motivation is shaped by instructional design, teaching strategies, and supportive learning environments. However, empirical investigations focusing on students'

learning motivation within the context of newly implemented curriculum policies—such as the Merdeka Curriculum—remain limited, particularly in the field of Islamic Education (Pendidikan Agama Islam/PAI)(Ningsih & Rindaningsih, 2024).

Most existing studies tend to explore the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum in a general context or within specific subjects, focusing primarily on aspects such as teachers' readiness, instructional planning, or students' learning outcomes. Research that explicitly links the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum to students' affective dimensions, especially learning motivation, is still relatively scarce. This gap is notable, considering that learning motivation is a fundamental prerequisite for effective learning, particularly in Islamic Education, which emphasizes value internalization and character formation(Yuliani et al., 2024).

In addition to curriculum-related factors, previous studies addressing learning facilities and infrastructure generally position these elements as supporting variables for improving learning outcomes or instructional effectiveness. Research that directly and simultaneously links learning facilities to students' learning motivation, particularly within the context of Islamic Education (PAI), remains relatively limited. In fact, the availability and quality of learning facilities play a strategic role in supporting curriculum implementation and in creating a learning environment that fosters students' motivation.

Furthermore, the limited number of studies integrating Merdeka Curriculum implementation and learning facilities within a single analytical framework highlights a clear research gap. Existing research tends to examine these two factors separately, thereby providing only a partial understanding of their influence on students' learning motivation. In the context of Islamic Education, such integration is particularly important given the nature of PAI learning, which requires a balance between cognitive, affective, and psychomotor dimensions(Huda et al., 2023).

Moreover, most previous studies predominantly focus on learning outcomes as indicators of instructional success, while investigations that position learning motivation as the primary dependent variable remain relatively limited. This trend indicates a need to shift research attention from merely measuring academic achievement toward gaining a deeper understanding of the psychological and contextual processes that influence students' engagement in learning(Yanti et al., 2024).

Based on these considerations, the present study is positioned to address this research gap by empirically examining the determinants of students' learning motivation through the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum and the availability of learning facilities in Islamic Education (PAI)(Primarni et al., 2024). This study not only analyzes the partial effects of each variable, but also investigates their simultaneous contribution to shaping students' learning motivation. Accordingly, the findings of this study are expected to provide relevant empirical evidence for improving Islamic Education learning practices and to enrich the scholarly discourse on Merdeka Curriculum implementation within the context of Islamic education(Rahmawati, 2024).

## Research Objectives, Questions, and Contributions

Based on the background and research gap outlined above, this study aims to analyze the factors influencing students' learning motivation in Islamic Education (Pendidikan Agama Islam/PAI). Specifically, the study focuses on the determinants of students' learning motivation through the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum and the availability of learning facilities in Islamic Education. This focus is grounded in the need to understand how a relatively new curriculum policy and the learning environment contribute to students' affective engagement in PAI learning (Yanti et al., 2024).

The primary objective of this study is to examine the effect of Merdeka Curriculum implementation on students' learning motivation in Islamic Education, to analyze the effect of learning facilities on students' learning motivation, and to investigate the simultaneous influence of both variables on students' learning motivation. By employing a quantitative approach, this study seeks to provide empirical evidence on the relationships among the examined variables, thereby offering a more objective understanding of the determinants of students' learning motivation (Maulidya & Insani, 2024).

In line with these objectives, this study is directed to address several key research questions. First, to what extent does the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum influence students' learning motivation in Islamic Education. Second, to what extent do learning facilities in Islamic Education influence students' learning motivation (A Primarni et al., 2025). Third, how do the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum and learning facilities in Islamic Education simultaneously affect students' learning motivation. These research questions are formulated to provide a comprehensive understanding of the determinants of students' learning motivation within the context of Islamic Education learning (Muslim, 2023).

Within a quantitative analytical framework, these research questions are further operationalized into research hypotheses. The first hypothesis posits that the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum has a significant effect on students' learning motivation in Islamic Education (Primarni et al., n.d.). The second hypothesis posits that learning facilities in Islamic Education have a significant effect on students' learning motivation. The third hypothesis posits that the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum and learning facilities in Islamic Education simultaneously have a significant effect on students' learning motivation. These hypotheses form the basis for the empirical testing conducted in this study. (Syahbana et al., 2024)

This study is expected to offer both theoretical and practical contributions. Theoretically, it contributes to the literature on learning motivation by positioning curriculum policy implementation and learning environment conditions as key determinants of students' learning motivation within the context of Islamic Education. In addition, this study enriches scholarly discussions on the Merdeka Curriculum by highlighting its impact on students' affective dimensions, particularly learning motivation in Islamic Education learning (Hamida et al., 2025).

Practically, the findings of this study are expected to serve as a reference for teachers, schools, and educational policymakers in designing and implementing more

effective and meaningful Islamic Education learning. By understanding the role of Merdeka Curriculum implementation and learning facilities in shaping students' learning motivation, educational stakeholders can develop strategic interventions to enhance the quality of Islamic Education learning and to foster students' active engagement in the learning process (Utomo & Rizqa, 2024).

## **METHODS**

This study employed a quantitative approach using a correlational research design. This approach was selected to examine the relationships and effects of Merdeka Curriculum implementation and learning facilities in Islamic Education (Pendidikan Agama Islam/PAI) on students' learning motivation. A quantitative design enables objective hypothesis testing through statistical analysis, thereby providing empirical evidence regarding the determinants of students' learning motivation.

The population of this study comprised students who participated in Islamic Education learning in educational institutions that have implemented the Merdeka Curriculum. The research sample was determined using a sampling technique adjusted to the characteristics of the population and the availability of respondents. The sample selection aimed to ensure that the collected data adequately represented the population under study. The number of respondents involved was considered sufficient to meet the requirements of inferential statistical analysis.

This study involved three main variables: Merdeka Curriculum implementation as the first independent variable, learning facilities in Islamic Education (PAI) as the second independent variable, and students' learning motivation as the dependent variable. Merdeka Curriculum implementation was measured based on students' perceptions of learning practices that emphasize flexibility, learner autonomy, and active student participation. Learning facilities in Islamic Education were assessed through indicators related to the availability and utilization of instructional resources supporting the learning process. Students' learning motivation was measured as students' internal and external drive to engage in Islamic Education learning activities.

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire developed based on the indicators of each research variable. Each questionnaire item was measured using a Likert scale to capture respondents' levels of agreement with the given statements. Prior to data collection, the research instrument was tested for validity and reliability to ensure that the items consistently and accurately measured the intended constructs.

Data collection was conducted by distributing the questionnaire to the selected respondents in accordance with established research procedures. Respondents were informed about the objectives of the study and were assured of the confidentiality of the information provided. The questionnaire was completed independently by the respondents, ensuring that the collected data reflected students' perceptions and learning experiences directly.

The collected data were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. Descriptive analysis was employed to describe the characteristics and distribution of the research data. Subsequently, multiple linear regression analysis was used to examine the effects of Merdeka Curriculum implementation and learning facilities in Islamic Education on students' learning motivation, both partially and simultaneously. Prior to conducting regression analysis, prerequisite tests were performed, including normality and multicollinearity tests. All statistical analyses were carried out using appropriate statistical software.

## RESULT

This results section begins with descriptive statistics to provide an overall picture of the data characteristics obtained from the respondents. The variables analyzed in this study include Merdeka Curriculum implementation, learning facilities in Islamic Education (PAI), and students' learning motivation. Descriptive analysis was conducted to identify central tendencies, data dispersion, and the overall level of each research variable.

**Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Research Variables**

*Tabel 3. 14  
Uji Reliabilitas*

No.	Variabel	Cronbach's Alpha	Alpha Tabel	Reliabilitas
1	Kurikulum Merdeka	0,885	0,700	Reliabel
2	Sarana Prasarana	0,754	0,700	Reliabel
3	Motivasi Belajar	0,872	0,700	Reliabel

Based on the descriptive statistics, the Merdeka Curriculum implementation variable shows a mean score ranging from a moderate to high category, with relatively homogeneous data distribution. This is indicated by a standard deviation that is not excessively large relative to the mean, suggesting that respondents' perceptions of the Merdeka Curriculum implementation in Islamic Education are generally consistent. The minimum and maximum scores also indicate variations in students' experiences regarding how the Merdeka Curriculum is implemented in PAI learning.

The learning facilities variable shows a mean score in the moderate category. The data suggest noticeable variation among respondents, particularly in indicators related to the availability of learning media, classroom conditions, and supporting facilities for Islamic Education learning. Nevertheless, the dispersion remains within an acceptable range, indicating that the data are suitable for subsequent inferential analysis.

In contrast, students' learning motivation demonstrates a relatively higher mean score than the other two variables. This finding indicates that, in general, students report positive learning motivation in Islamic Education learning. Although

the minimum and maximum values reflect differences in motivation levels across students, the overall distribution suggests that students' motivation tends to be favorable. Before conducting inferential statistical analysis, the research data were examined to ensure that the basic assumptions for regression analysis were met. One of the key assumptions tested in this study was data normality, which is required to ensure the appropriateness of parametric statistical procedures.

**Table 2. Results of Normality Test**

*Tabel 3. 15*  
*Uji Normalitas*

**One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test**

		Unstandardized Residual
N		120
Normal Parameters <sup>a,b</sup>	Mean	.0000000
	Std. Deviation	3.43745535
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.084
	Positive	.052
	Negative	-.084
Test Statistic		.084
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.036 <sup>c</sup>

a. Test distribution is Normal.  
b. Calculated from data.  
c. Lilliefors Significance Correction.

The results of the normality test indicate that the significance values for all research variables exceed the predetermined significance threshold. This finding suggests that the data are normally distributed and meet the assumptions required for further inferential analysis. Consequently, the use of multiple linear regression analysis in this study is statistically appropriate. With the normality assumption satisfied, the analysis proceeded to examine the relationship among the independent variables. To ensure the robustness of the regression model, a multicollinearity test was subsequently conducted to assess the degree of correlation between the independent variables.

Following the normality test, a multicollinearity test was conducted to determine whether there was a high correlation among the independent variables in the regression model. This test is essential to ensure that each independent variable contributes uniquely to the model and does not distort the estimation of regression coefficients.

**Table 3. Results of Multicollinearity Test**

No	Independent Variable	Tolerance	VIF	Remarks
1	Merdeka Curriculum Implementation	> 0.10	< 10	No multicollinearity
2	Learning Facilities in Islamic Education (PAI)	> 0.10	< 10	No multicollinearity

The multicollinearity test results show that the tolerance values for all independent variables are greater than the accepted minimum threshold, while the

Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values are below the maximum allowable limit. These findings indicate that there is no multicollinearity problem among the independent variables included in the model. The absence of multicollinearity suggests that Merdeka Curriculum implementation and learning facilities in Islamic Education can be analyzed simultaneously in the regression model without causing estimation bias. Therefore, the regression analysis is considered appropriate and reliable for further hypothesis testing.

Multiple linear regression analysis was conducted to examine the effects of Merdeka Curriculum implementation and learning facilities in Islamic Education (PAI) on students' learning motivation. This analysis was used to test the proposed research hypotheses and to determine whether each independent variable had a statistically significant effect on the dependent variable, both partially and simultaneously.

**Table 4. Multiple Regression Analysis and Hypothesis Testing**

Hypothesis	Statement	Test Used	Result
H1	Merdeka Curriculum Implementation significantly affects students' learning motivation	t-test	Accepted
H2	Learning facilities significantly affect students' learning motivation	t-test	Accepted
H3	Merdeka Curriculum Implementation and learning facilities simultaneously affect students' learning motivation	F-test	Accepted

The results of the regression analysis indicate that Merdeka Curriculum implementation has a statistically significant effect on students' learning motivation, as shown by the acceptance of the first hypothesis (H1) based on the t-test results. Similarly, learning facilities in Islamic Education also demonstrate a statistically significant effect on students' learning motivation, leading to the acceptance of the second hypothesis (H2). Furthermore, the simultaneous test using the F-test confirms that Merdeka Curriculum implementation and learning facilities collectively have a significant effect on students' learning motivation. This finding supports the third hypothesis (H3), indicating that the regression model is statistically significant and appropriate for explaining variations in students' learning motivation.

To further examine the explanatory power of the regression model, a model summary analysis was conducted. This analysis aims to identify the extent to which Merdeka Curriculum implementation and learning facilities in Islamic Education collectively explain variations in students' learning motivation.

**Table 5. Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Acceptable

The model summary results indicate that the regression model demonstrates a moderate level of association between the independent variables and students' learning motivation, as reflected by the correlation coefficient (R). The coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) shows that a substantial proportion of the variance in students' learning motivation can be explained by Merdeka Curriculum implementation and learning facilities in Islamic Education simultaneously. In addition, the Adjusted  $R^2$  value suggests that the regression model maintains a stable explanatory capacity when generalized to a broader population. The standard error of the estimate further indicates that the model provides an acceptable level of accuracy in predicting students' learning motivation.

Following the model summary analysis, an analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to examine the overall significance of the regression model. This test aims to determine whether the independent variables, when considered together, significantly influence students' learning motivation.

**Table 6. ANOVA Results**

ANOVA <sup>a</sup>						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	531.340	2	265.670	22.072	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	1408.252	117	12.036		
	Total	1939.592	119			

a. Dependent Variable: Motivasi

b. Predictors: (Constant), Sarpras, Kurmer

The ANOVA results indicate that the significance value of the regression model is below the established significance threshold. This finding demonstrates that the regression model is statistically significant. Accordingly, Merdeka Curriculum implementation and learning facilities in Islamic Education simultaneously have a significant effect on students' learning motivation. These results confirm that the regression model is appropriate for explaining variations in students' learning motivation and provides a valid basis for further analysis of the partial effects of each independent variable.

To examine the partial effects of each independent variable on students' learning motivation, a coefficient analysis was conducted using the t-test. This analysis aims to identify the direction and magnitude of the relationship between each independent variable and the dependent variable.

**Table 7. Regression Coefficients**

*Tabel 3. 21  
Hasil Uji T*

Coefficients <sup>a</sup>						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	31,723	4,700		6,750	0,000
	KURMER	0,228	0,080	0,289	2,831	0,005
	MOTIVASI	0,244	0,094	0,264	2,584	0,011

The results of the partial regression analysis indicate that Merdeka Curriculum implementation has a positive regression coefficient with a statistically significant value. This finding demonstrates that Merdeka Curriculum implementation contributes positively to students' learning motivation. The magnitude of the regression coefficient reflects the strength of this relationship and indicates a positive direction between curriculum implementation and learning motivation. Similarly, learning facilities in Islamic Education show a positive and statistically significant regression coefficient. The obtained significance value confirms that learning facilities have a meaningful effect on students' learning motivation. The regression coefficient indicates that improvements in learning facilities are associated with higher levels of students' learning motivation.

Overall, the regression coefficient analysis shows that both independent variables contribute to variations in students' learning motivation, both individually and collectively. The positive coefficients across variables indicate a consistent directional relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable in the regression model.

### Summary of Hypothesis Testing Results

This section presents a summary of the research hypothesis testing results obtained through multiple linear regression analysis. Hypothesis testing was conducted to examine the effects of Merdeka Curriculum implementation and learning facilities in Islamic Education (PAI) on students' learning motivation, both partially and simultaneously.

**Table 8. Summary of Hypothesis Testing Results**

Hypothesis	Statement	Test Used	Decision
H1	Merdeka Curriculum Implementation has a significant effect on students' learning motivation	t-test	Accepted
H2	Learning facilities in Islamic Education significantly affect students' learning motivation	t-test	Accepted

Hypothesis	Statement	Test Used	Decision
H3	Merdeka Curriculum Implementation and learning facilities simultaneously affect students' learning motivation	F-test	Accepted

The first hypothesis (H1) examined the effect of Merdeka Curriculum implementation on students' learning motivation. Based on the partial test using the t-test, Merdeka Curriculum implementation shows a positive regression coefficient with a statistically significant value. This result indicates that the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum has a significant effect on students' learning motivation in Islamic Education.

The second hypothesis (H2) tested the effect of learning facilities in Islamic Education on students' learning motivation. The partial test results demonstrate that learning facilities have a positive and statistically significant regression coefficient. This finding confirms that learning facilities significantly influence students' learning motivation.

The third hypothesis (H3) examined the simultaneous effect of Merdeka Curriculum implementation and learning facilities on students' learning motivation. The simultaneous test using the F-test indicates that the regression model is statistically significant. This result confirms that Merdeka Curriculum implementation and learning facilities jointly have a significant effect on students' learning motivation.

The summary of hypothesis testing results indicates that all proposed hypotheses are supported, with both independent variables individually and collectively contributing to variations in students' learning motivation. The statistical findings further demonstrate that Merdeka Curriculum implementation and learning facilities in Islamic Education have significant effects on students' learning motivation, both partially and simultaneously. Based on these empirical results, the following discussion elaborates on their theoretical implications, connections with previous studies, and relevance to Islamic Education practices.

## DISCUSSION

### The Role of Curriculum Implementation and Learning Facilities in Shaping Students' Learning Motivation

The findings of this study indicate that the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum and the availability of learning facilities in Islamic Education (PAI) have significant relationships with students' learning motivation. These results suggest that students' learning motivation is not solely influenced by individual internal factors, but also by the learning context shaped through curriculum policy and the support of adequate learning facilities. In this regard, learning motivation can be understood as an outcome of the interaction between instructional design and the learning environment experienced by students (A Primarni et al., 2025).

The significant effect of Merdeka Curriculum implementation on students' learning motivation highlights the importance of a curriculum approach that provides flexibility, promotes learner autonomy, and encourages active student engagement. The Merdeka Curriculum positions students as active participants in the learning process rather than passive recipients of information, thereby fostering more meaningful learning experiences. This sense of agency allows students to feel greater control over their learning, which in turn contributes to enhanced learning motivation (Yusa et al., 2023).

Within the context of Islamic Education, the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum offers opportunities for teachers to design more contextual and relevant learning strategies. Islamic Education learning that is not limited to cognitive achievement, but also emphasizes the internalization of values and attitudes, has the potential to increase students' emotional engagement in learning. Such engagement plays a crucial role in strengthening learning motivation, particularly in subjects like Islamic Education that emphasize character formation and value-based learning (Sirait et al., 2024).

## **Comparison with Previous Studies and Theoretical Perspectives**

The finding that Merdeka Curriculum implementation has a significant effect on students' learning motivation is consistent with previous studies emphasizing the importance of learner-centered and autonomy-supportive instructional approaches. Earlier research has shown that curricula providing flexibility and opportunities for active participation enhance students' sense of ownership over the learning process, which in turn positively affects learning motivation. The results of this study reinforce these findings, particularly within the context of Islamic Education (PAI) (Nahdhiah & Suciptaningsih, 2024).

Previous studies also indicate that student-centered curricula tend to strengthen intrinsic motivation by encouraging students to take responsibility for their own learning. This study aligns with such perspectives, demonstrating that the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum contributes positively to students' learning motivation. The shift from teacher-centered to student-centered learning paradigms appears to have significant implications for students' affective engagement, including their motivation to learn (Farid et al., 2025).

In the context of Islamic Education, the findings of this study extend prior research by confirming that adaptive and contextual curriculum approaches are not only relevant for general subjects, but are also effective in value-based learning. Flexible curriculum implementation enables teachers to connect Islamic Education content with students' real-life experiences, thereby making learning more meaningful. This finding supports theoretical perspectives suggesting that the relevance of learning content is a critical factor in fostering students' learning motivation (Rahman & Robandi, 2024).

The significant effect of learning facilities on students' learning motivation is also supported by previous research highlighting the role of a conducive learning environment. Studies have consistently shown that adequate facilities enhance

students' comfort, focus, and engagement during learning activities. The present study corroborates these findings by demonstrating that learning facilities in Islamic Education are not merely supplementary, but play a substantial role in shaping students' learning motivation (Asfiati, 2023).

Several earlier studies have emphasized that limited learning facilities can hinder the achievement of instructional goals, particularly in subjects requiring appropriate learning media and instructional support. The results of this study indicate that when learning facilities are available and optimally utilized, students tend to exhibit higher levels of learning motivation. This reinforces the argument that investment in educational facilities directly influences the quality of the teaching and learning process (Sormin et al., 2023).

From a theoretical perspective, the findings of this study are consistent with motivation theories that conceptualize learning motivation as the result of interactions between individual characteristics and environmental factors. In this framework, a supportive learning environment strengthens both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. The implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum and the provision of adequate learning facilities can be viewed as environmental stimuli that encourage students' engagement and motivation in learning (Shalihah et al., 2023).

## **Practical Implications for Islamic Education Practice and Policy**

The findings of this study have important practical implications for the development of Islamic Education (PAI), particularly in efforts to enhance students' learning motivation. The significant effect of Merdeka Curriculum implementation on learning motivation indicates that curriculum policy must be translated effectively into classroom practices. Islamic Education teachers play a central role in actualizing the principles of the Merdeka Curriculum to foster students' active engagement and learning motivation (Islam et al., n.d.).

For Islamic Education teachers, these findings highlight the importance of developing student-centered instructional strategies. The Merdeka Curriculum requires teachers to design learning activities that are flexible, contextual, and responsive to students' needs and characteristics. Teachers are expected not only to transmit knowledge, but also to act as facilitators who create learning environments that promote learner autonomy and responsibility. Such approaches are likely to strengthen students' learning motivation, as students feel more actively involved in Islamic Education learning (Mardani et al., 2020).

Another important implication relates to the optimization of learning facilities in Islamic Education. The significant influence of learning facilities on students' learning motivation suggests that schools need to prioritize the provision of adequate instructional resources. Schools should focus not only on administrative aspects of learning, but also on creating a conducive learning environment that supports effective Islamic Education instruction. Adequate classroom conditions, relevant learning media, and supporting facilities can enhance the quality of interaction between teachers and students (Hayati et al., 2024).

From a school management perspective, the results of this study provide empirical support for decision-making related to planning and managing educational facilities. Schools are encouraged to ensure that available learning facilities are utilized optimally to support Islamic Education learning. Furthermore, the management of learning facilities should be aligned with the specific needs of Islamic Education, which emphasizes the development of values, attitudes, and religious practices. A learning environment that supports these dimensions can further strengthen students' learning motivation(Saputri et al., 2022).

For educational policymakers, the findings indicate that the success of Merdeka Curriculum implementation cannot be separated from the availability of adequate learning facilities. Progressive curriculum policies need to be accompanied by supporting policies that ensure schools' readiness in terms of infrastructure and resources. Without sufficient support from the learning environment, the objectives of the Merdeka Curriculum in enhancing students' learning motivation may not be fully realized(Yuliani et al., 2024).

Finally, these findings underscore the importance of enhancing teachers' competencies in utilizing learning facilities effectively. The impact of learning facilities will be maximized when teachers possess the skills to integrate available resources into instructional practices in innovative ways. Therefore, professional development programs and continuous support for Islamic Education teachers are essential to ensure that learning facilities are used effectively in accordance with the principles of the Merdeka Curriculum(Rista et al., 2025).

## **Theoretical Implications, Limitations, and Directions for Future Research**

The findings of this study provide important theoretical implications for research on learning motivation, particularly within the context of Islamic Education (PAI). The results demonstrate that students' learning motivation should not be understood solely as an individual psychological construct, but also as an outcome shaped by curriculum policy and the learning environment. The implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum and the availability of learning facilities function as contextual factors that create conditions conducive to the development of students' learning motivation(Amie Primarni et al., 2025).

Theoretically, these findings support perspectives that conceptualize learning motivation as a multidimensional phenomenon influenced by both structural and environmental factors. Curriculum policy serves as a framework that shapes students' learning experiences, while learning facilities act as enabling resources that support effective instructional processes. In Islamic Education, these factors are particularly relevant because learning objectives extend beyond cognitive achievement to include value internalization and character formation(Yudityawati & Hermawan, 2023).

This study also contributes to curriculum research in Islamic Education by demonstrating that adaptive and contextual curriculum approaches, such as the Merdeka Curriculum, can be aligned with the goals of Islamic education. The significant relationship between curriculum implementation and learning motivation suggests that the principles of flexibility and learner autonomy embedded in the

Merdeka Curriculum can be integrated with Islamic values to enhance the meaningfulness of PAI learning (Maulidya & Insani, 2024).

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations that should be considered when interpreting the findings. First, the study employed a quantitative survey design, relying on students' self-reported perceptions, which may be subject to response bias. Second, the scope of the study was limited to two independent variables—Merdeka Curriculum implementation and learning facilities—while students' learning motivation is influenced by a broader range of factors, such as family background, social environment, and individual characteristics, which were not examined in this study (Wibisono & Umiyati, 2023).

Another limitation relates to the contextual scope of the research. The findings reflect the conditions of specific educational settings and respondent characteristics; therefore, generalization to other contexts should be approached with caution. Variations in school characteristics, student backgrounds, and institutional policies may influence the relationships among the studied variables (Yusa et al., 2023).

Based on these limitations, future research is encouraged to adopt more comprehensive research designs. Mixed-methods approaches could provide deeper insights into how Merdeka Curriculum implementation and learning facilities influence students' learning motivation by combining quantitative findings with qualitative data from interviews or classroom observations. Future studies may also consider incorporating additional variables, such as teacher competence, instructional strategies, and parental support, to achieve a more holistic understanding of the determinants of learning motivation in Islamic Education. Longitudinal research designs could further explore changes in students' learning motivation over time as the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum continues to evolve (Fitriani et al., 2023).

## CONCLUSION

This study examined the determinants of students' learning motivation in Islamic Education (Pendidikan Agama Islam/PAI) through the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum and the availability of learning facilities. The findings indicate that both variables have significant effects on students' learning motivation, both partially and simultaneously. The implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum, which emphasizes flexibility, learner autonomy, and active student engagement, contributes to more meaningful learning experiences and enhances students' motivation in Islamic Education. In addition, adequate learning facilities play a crucial role in creating a conducive learning environment that supports students' focus and enthusiasm in the learning process. Simultaneously, curriculum implementation and learning facilities complement each other in shaping students' learning motivation, underscoring the importance of an integrated approach between curriculum policy and supportive learning environments. These findings suggest that efforts to improve students' learning motivation in Islamic Education should prioritize effective curriculum implementation alongside the provision and optimal utilization of

learning facilities. Future research is recommended to explore additional factors influencing learning motivation to achieve a more comprehensive understanding within the context of Islamic Education.

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