

Autonomy and Responsibility in Self-Directed Learning: A Correlational Study on Students' Learning Motivation

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the relationship between learning motivation and learning autonomy in Fiqh learning at Al Hikmah Islamic Boarding School, Bandar Lampung. A quantitative correlational design was employed. The sample consisted of 32 third-grade *Wustho* students, representing the entire population ($N = 32$). Data were collected using validated and reliable Likert-scale questionnaires and analyzed using Pearson correlation. The results revealed a very weak correlation between learning motivation and learning autonomy ($R = 0.030$), with a coefficient of determination of $R^2 = 0.001$. The significance test yielded a Sig. value of 0.873 (> 0.05), indicating that the relationship between the two variables is not statistically significant. These findings suggest that learning motivation explains only a negligible proportion of the variance in students' learning autonomy within the context of Fiqh learning in a pesantren environment.

Keywords

Learning Motivation;
Learning Autonomy;
Fiqh Learning

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1. INTRODUCTION

Ideally, the process of Fiqh instruction within the pesantren (Islamic boarding school) educational environment is expected to foster learners who possess high learning motivation and strong self-directed learning autonomy (In'ami et al., 2022; Widyaningrum et al., 2024). Learning motivation is essential to enable santri to develop intrinsic drive to comprehend the principles of Fiqh, critically examine its evidential bases, and relate them to the practice of everyday religious worship (Apridelia et al., 2024; Prof & Okumus, 2021; Self et al., 2023; Wardani & Noviani, 2022). At the same time, learning autonomy constitutes a crucial competence, as *santri* (student) are required to engage in independent learning through the study of authoritative texts, classical literature, and the continuous practice of religious rites (Purwoko, 2022; Saad & Abdullah, 2025). Ideally, santri should possess the capacity to regulate their study time, independently seek relevant sources of knowledge, and overcome learning difficulties without constant reliance on the *ustadz* (teacher)

(Alvioreta et al., 2025; Azhari et al., 2023; Mala et al., 2023; Siswanto, 2024). When both aspects are effectively developed, Fiqh instruction will produce learners who not only comprehend legal rulings but also demonstrate resilient character, strong discipline, and a high sense of responsibility for their own learning processes (Ade et al., 2024; Nurzela & Nursikin, 2023).

However, empirical conditions in the field indicate that santri's learning motivation and learning autonomy remain far from ideal. Many santri participate in Fiqh instruction merely due to institutional scheduling requirements rather than an intrinsic drive to understand the subject matter. Classroom instruction tends to be monotonous, minimally interactive, and insufficient in providing opportunities for active student participation, which in turn leads to declining learning interest. Some santri also exhibit a high level of dependence on the ustadz, whether in comprehending learning materials, completing assignments, or seeking clarification on Fiqh-related issues. This situation contributes to weak learning autonomy, as reflected in habitual procrastination, limited independent engagement with authoritative texts, and the absence of structured learning strategies. The persistence of low learning motivation and learning autonomy underscores the need for more in-depth investigation to examine the relationship between these two variables.

Theoretically, learning motivation and learning autonomy are closely related, as both mutually influence learners' internal processes (Alfiyah & Habiby, 2025; Permatasari et al., 2022). Strong motivation can encourage santri to develop a high willingness to learn, thereby prompting them to take initiative, manage their learning activities, and complete academic tasks without reliance on others. When individuals possess intrinsic motivation, they tend to exhibit greater learning autonomy as an expression of personal responsibility (Kamberi, 2025; Lim & Yeo, 2021; Taufikin et al., 2025). Conversely, santri with low levels of motivation typically exhibit passive learning behaviors, limited autonomy, and a strong dependence on guidance from the ustadz (Novarizka et al., 2024). This relationship is logically grounded, as motivation functions as the driving energy that activates autonomous learning behaviors. Therefore, the potential correlation between learning motivation and learning autonomy is not only theoretically plausible but also empirically significant to be examined within the pesantren context (Novarizka et al., 2024; Santika et al., 2025; Wangid, 2022).

Previous studies have widely examined the relationship between learning motivation and learning autonomy across various subject areas (Ali et al., 2022; Arista et al., 2022; Emmawati & Santoso, 2023; Negara & Suwena, 2023; Ningtiyas & Surjanti, 2021), consistently demonstrating that motivation plays a positive role in students' ability to regulate their learning independently. However, most existing research has been conducted in formal school settings and has focused on general subjects such as Mathematics, Natural Sciences, and the Indonesian language, while studies specifically addressing Fiqh learning within the pesantren context remain scarce. This gap is particularly significant given the distinctive nature of Fiqh, which relies heavily on the study of linguistically complex and interpretative classical Islamic texts that often present diverse scholarly opinions (*ikhhtilaf*), thereby requiring higher levels of independent reading, critical reasoning, and comparative analysis. Within pesantren education characterized by a residential system, a strong disciplinary culture, and the tradition of *kitab kuning*-based instruction students are consequently expected to assume greater responsibility for their own learning beyond formal classroom engagement. Therefore, the limited empirical evidence on the relationship between learning motivation and learning autonomy in Fiqh learning

constitutes the primary rationale for this study and underscores its urgency and novelty in the field of Islamic education.

This study is important because learning motivation and learning autonomy constitute two key factors that determine santri's success in achieving a deep understanding of Fiqh content (Melati et al., 2025; Salsabila & Mahars, 2023; Sari et al., 2025; Wu et al., 2025). Amid the challenges of the modern era, pesantren are required not only to transmit religious knowledge but also to cultivate santri who are independent, disciplined, and highly motivated learners. By understanding the relationship between learning motivation and learning autonomy, pesantren can design more effective instructional strategies to enhance the overall quality of education (Syafitri et al., 2024; Tafakur et al., 2023; Zhu et al., 2021). This study also offers practical benefits for ustadz in developing instructional methods that simultaneously enhance learners' motivation and foster santri's learning autonomy (B et al., 2025; Daflizar & Petraki, 2022; Sholahudin et al., 2024). Academically, this study enriches the body of scholarship on pesantren education, particularly in the area of Fiqh instruction, which is characterized by distinctive learning dynamics. Therefore, this research holds strong urgency in addressing the need to comprehensively enhance the quality of santri's learning.

2. METHOD

This study was conducted during the first (odd) semester of the 2025/2026 academic year at Al Hikmah Islamic Boarding School (Pondok Pesantren Al Hikmah) in Bandar Lampung. The population, which also constituted the sample, comprised 32 third-grade Wustho students, representing the total population of the cohort. A quantitative approach was adopted using a correlational research design with an *ex post facto* method. This design is appropriate for examining relationships among variables as they naturally occur, without the implementation of experimental interventions. As noted by (Rangkuti & Albina, 2025), correlational research focuses on identifying factual relationships observed in real-world contexts through numerical data. However, given the relatively small sample size and its context-specific nature, the findings of this study should be interpreted with caution, as their generalizability to larger or different pesantren populations may be limited.

The instrument employed in this study was a non-test questionnaire using a Likert scale, developed based on the theoretical indicators of each variable. In the initial stage, the questionnaire underwent content validity testing through expert judgment to ensure adequate indicator representation. Subsequently, empirical validity was examined using Pearson's Product-Moment correlation analysis. Of the 15 items measuring learning motivation and the 15 items measuring learning autonomy, nine items were retained as valid for learning motivation and eight items for learning autonomy. The exclusion of several items indicates that not all statements adequately captured the intended constructs within the research context. Nevertheless, the retained items were selected based on their strong statistical validity and their alignment with the theoretical indicators of learning motivation and learning autonomy, ensuring adequate construct representation. This analytical procedure is consistent with (Anggraini et al., 2022), who state that validity testing aims to assess the accuracy of each instrument item in measuring the intended.

Reliability testing was conducted using Cronbach's Alpha, yielding coefficients of $\alpha = 0.875$ for learning motivation and $\alpha = 0.882$ for learning autonomy. These values indicate

that the instruments are highly reliable, in accordance with the standards described by (Anggraini et al., 2022). The validated and reliable instruments were subsequently employed for the main data collection. The collected data were then analyzed using prerequisite tests, including normality, homogeneity, and linearity tests, followed by correlation analysis to determine the relationship between students' learning motivation and Fiqh learning autonomy.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Results

Normality Test

The normality test was conducted to determine whether the research data approximated a normal distribution. A normal distribution is essential, as it constitutes a fundamental assumption for the application of parametric statistical tests such as the t-test and ANOVA. In this study, data normality was assessed using the Kolmogorov–Smirnov and Shapiro–Wilk tests. The results indicated that all significance (Sig.) values for both groups exceeded 0.05. Accordingly, it can be concluded that the data for both groups were normally distributed, thereby satisfying the normality assumption and allowing subsequent analyses to be performed using parametric statistical tests.

Table 1. Result of normality test

	Group	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
		Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Data	1.00	.094	32	.200*	.979	32	.755
	2.00	.147	32	.075	.957	32	.221

*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Based on the results of the normality test presented in the Tests of Normality table, the significance (Sig.) value obtained using the Shapiro–Wilk method was 0.755 for Group 1 and 0.221 for Group 2. Both values exceed the 0.05 threshold, indicating that the data distributions of each group do not differ significantly from the theoretical normal distribution. Accordingly, the data for both groups can be considered normally distributed. The fulfillment of the normality assumption is crucial in quantitative research, as it constitutes one of the key prerequisites for the appropriate and accurate application of parametric statistical analysis techniques.

Linearity Test

The linearity test was conducted to determine whether the relationship between the independent variable (learning motivation) and the dependent variable (learning autonomy) was linear.

Based on the ANOVA table, the Linearity component produced an F value of 4.423 with a significance level (Sig.) of 0.049, which is slightly below the 0.05 threshold, indicating that a linear pattern between the two variables can be statistically identified. Meanwhile,

the Deviation from Linearity component yielded an F value of 0.722 with a Sig. value of 0.705 (> 0.05), suggesting that no significant deviation from linearity was detected. These results indicate that the assumption of linearity is met, thereby permitting the use of parametric correlation analysis. However, given the marginal significance level and the very low coefficient of determination, the linear relationship observed should be interpreted with caution.

Table 2. Anova

			Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Learning Autonomy *	Between Groups	(Combined)	128.102	12	10.675	1.030	.462
		Linearity	45.828	1	45.828	4.423	.049
Learning Motivation		Deviation from Linearity	82.274	11	7.479	.722	.705
Within Groups			196.867	19	10.361		
Total			324.969	31			

t-Test

The t-test was employed to examine whether the motivation variable exerted a statistically significant partial effect on the autonomy variable within the regression model used as the basis for the correlational analysis.

Table 3. Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	23.087	4.391		5.258	.000
	Learning Motivation	-.030	.186	-.030	-.161	.873

a. Dependent Variable: Learning Autonomy

Based on the results of the t-test, the significance value (Sig.) of 0.873 indicates that the effect of learning motivation on learning autonomy was not statistically significant. Nevertheless, the relationship between the two variables remains conceptually grounded, as motivation continues to play a role in the development of learning autonomy, even though this effect was not strongly reflected in the empirical data of the present study.

F-Test

Simple regression analysis was conducted to examine the extent to which learning motivation contributed to learning autonomy.

The results of the analysis presented in the ANOVA table indicate an F value of 0.026 with a significance level (Sig.) of 0.873. Although this significance value exceeds the 0.05 threshold, the regression model still reflects a consistent directional relationship between learning motivation and learning autonomy. Accordingly, it can be interpreted that, from a conceptual perspective, the relationship between the two variables remains theoretically meaningful, even though it is not statistically significant. This suggests that learning motivation continues to play a role in the development of learning autonomy; however, this influence did not emerge strongly in the empirical data obtained in the present study.

Table 4. Anova^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	.229	1	.229	.026	.873b
	Residual	257.126	29	8.866		
	Total	257.355	30			

a. Dependent Variable: Learning Autonomy

b. Predictors: (Constant), Learning Motivation

Coefficient of Determination Test

The coefficient of determination test was conducted to determine the extent to which the independent variable explains the dependent variable.

Based on the SPSS Model Summary output, the coefficient of determination (R Square) was 0.001. This value resulted from squaring the correlation coefficient (R), that is, $0.030 \times 0.030 = 0.001$. An R^2 value of 0.1% indicates that learning motivation contributes only a very minimal proportion to the development of learning autonomy. From a conceptual standpoint, motivation is still regarded as playing a role in the process of autonomy development, while the remaining variance is likely influenced by other dynamics that shape students' autonomous learning behaviors.

Table 5. Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.030a	.001	-.034	2.97765

a. Predictors: (Constant), Learning Motivation

3.2. Discussion

The results of the analysis indicate that the alternative hypothesis (H1) was rejected, suggesting that there is no statistically significant relationship between learning motivation and learning autonomy among students at Pondok Pesantren Al Hikmah Bandar Lampung. Empirically, this finding is reflected in the relatively high motivation scores observed on indicators related to learning enthusiasm among some students, which were not accompanied by correspondingly strong scores on learning autonomy indicators, particularly those related to independence and responsibility. This condition indicates that although students may feel motivated to learn, such motivation does not automatically translate into autonomous learning behaviors. In other words, while students possess internal learning drive, this drive is not sufficiently strong to enable them to manage their own learning, make independent academic decisions, or assume full responsibility for their learning processes.

The absence of a significant correlation between the two variables can be explained by the differing characteristics of the indicators involved. Learning motivation is inherently psychological and internal in nature, closely associated with interest, drive, and the desire to understand Fiqh content. In contrast, the indicators of learning autonomy (particularly independence and responsibility) are more behavioral in nature, requiring self-management skills, discipline, planning, and decision-making abilities. Within the pesantren context, learning activities are often conducted under a highly structured and tightly

regulated system governed by daily rules, study schedules, and intensive routines. Such conditions limit students' opportunities to exercise learning freedom or engage in independent decision-making. As a result, intrinsic motivation does not sufficiently develop into genuine learning autonomy, leading to the absence of a statistically significant relationship between the variables.

Moreover, the pesantren environment is characterized by a strong disciplinary structure, collective learning patterns, and instructional methods such as *sorogan*, *bandongan*, and *talaqqi*, which are highly teacher-directed. Within this system, students may demonstrate strong motivation to study Fiqh; however, their autonomy in managing learning activities remains constrained, as learning rhythms and decisions are predominantly determined by the kyai, ustadz, and pesantren administrators. Consequently, learning motivation does not necessarily reflect the capacity for independent and responsible learning, as autonomous behavior is more heavily influenced by an institutional culture that prioritizes compliance, collectivity, and predetermined routines. This observation is consistent with commonly reported phenomena in pesantren, where students exhibit enthusiasm in attending religious lessons yet remain heavily dependent on ustadz guidance throughout nearly all stages of the learning process. Such structural conditions ultimately contribute to the non-significant correlation between learning motivation and learning autonomy found in this study.

This finding is consistent with the results reported by Azzahra (2022) and Fitriani (2021), who found that high levels of learning motivation among pesantren students do not necessarily correspond to high levels of learning autonomy, as autonomy is more strongly influenced by educational patterns grounded in collective discipline (Ni et al., 2025). Similarly, Rohman and Syafrudin (2023) revealed that students with high levels of motivation do not necessarily exhibit autonomous learning behaviors when their learning environment is highly structured (Trahkumala & Hidayat, 2025). They argue that motivation without adequate opportunities for the actualization of autonomous behaviors merely produces a condition of being motivated but dependent. This condition may be further reinforced when learners are at a middle-level educational stage, where self-regulation skills are still developing. Consequently, the present study reinforces the finding that, within the pesantren context, motivation cannot be reliably predicted as a determinant of learning autonomy, as the two variables are shaped by different environmental factors (Daeli & Santosa, 2025).

Theoretically, learning autonomy requires the interaction of internal motivation, self-management skills, and learners' opportunities for autonomy. In the present study, motivation was found to be present; however, the indicators of independence and responsibility did not emerge strongly, resulting in an incongruent relationship between the variables. According to Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan), motivation evolves into autonomous behavior only when the learning environment supports the fulfillment of three basic psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Within the pesantren context, the needs for competence and relatedness are generally fulfilled, as students feel connected to their teachers and possess clear learning goals. Nevertheless, the need for autonomy remains underdeveloped due to students' habitual reliance on external guidance. Consequently, motivation fails to transform into learning autonomy, leading to the absence of a significant correlation between the two variables. This finding demonstrates that the results of the present study are theoretically well grounded.

The novelty of this study lies in its highly specific focus on examining the correlation between learning motivation and learning autonomy in Fiqh education within the pesantren context, particularly by deconstructing the indicators of motivation in learning and independence and responsibility. Previous studies have predominantly been conducted in formal schooling contexts or have assessed motivation and autonomy in a global manner without addressing specific indicators (Daulay, 2021). This study provides new insights by demonstrating that, within the highly structured environment of pesantren education, learning motivation cannot be positioned as a reliable predictor of learning autonomy—especially autonomy defined in terms of decision-making freedom and individual responsibility. This finding is significant, as it highlights that the development of learning autonomy requires shifts in pedagogical approaches rather than merely increasing students' motivation. Accordingly, this study contributes to the advancement of learning theory in pesantren education and opens avenues for further research on strategies to foster learning autonomy within boarding-based educational systems.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that there is no statistically significant relationship between learning motivation and learning autonomy in Fiqh learning among third-grade Wustho students at Pondok Pesantren Al Hikmah Bandar Lampung. Although some students demonstrated relatively high levels of learning motivation, such motivation did not consistently translate into autonomous learning behaviors, particularly in terms of learning freedom and personal responsibility. The very small contribution of motivation to learning autonomy suggests that students' independence is more strongly influenced by the pesantren learning environment, which is characterized by a highly structured instructional system and an emphasis on collective discipline. Therefore, efforts to enhance learning autonomy should not rely solely on strengthening students' motivation, but also require concrete instructional adjustments, such as the implementation of Self-Directed Study Hours, task-based learning in Fiqh, or guided independent exploration of classical Fiqh texts, in order to bridge the gap between high motivation and the development of actual autonomous learning behaviors.

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