



Integrating Learning Psychology Theories to Enhance Student Self-Management and Motivation in Islamic Secondary Education

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ABSTRACT

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This study aims to examine how educational institutions develop students' self-management and learning motivation through institutional programs, daily habituation, reward systems, and diverse learning approaches, while identifying challenges in sustaining these practices. A qualitative descriptive approach was employed. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, observations, and documentation and analyzed using the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña, comprising data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The findings show that students' motivation is developed through a combination of intrinsic and extrinsic strategies, including verbal appreciation and periodic rewards in the form of certificates and trophies. Self-management is strengthened through routines emphasizing punctuality, discipline, environmental responsibility, and congregational prayer. Learning activities integrate behaviorist, constructivist, social cognitive, and contextual learning perspectives through varied learning zones. Periodic evaluations indicate progressive but fluctuating motivation, with 65% of students demonstrating increased enthusiasm and motivation. However, inconsistent reinforcement of discipline within the home environment remains a significant challenge. The findings highlight the importance of integrating motivational strategies, structured routines, and theory-informed learning practices. Sustainable collaboration among educational institutions, parents, and the wider community is recommended to reinforce students' self-management and learning motivation.

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INTRODUCTION

Educational institutions play a strategic role in preparing adolescents to become independent, responsible, and adaptive learners. Beyond academic knowledge, students need the psychological capacity to regulate their behavior, sustain learning motivation, and manage learning demands effectively. Self-management enables students to organize time, control distractions, complete tasks, and maintain productive learning habits, while motivation provides the energy and direction needed to persist in academic activities. Research indicates that self-regulation is associated with academic achievement and psychological well-being during adolescence (Morosanova et al., 2023; Hassan & Laval, 2024; Sain & Laval, 2023), while motivational self-regulation also contributes to adolescents' academic achievement (Villar et al., 2025; Aminullah et al., 2025; Lisah & Baharun, 2025). Therefore, strengthening students' psychological capacities is not merely an instructional concern but a broader educational responsibility. Integrating psychological principles into school management and classroom practices can consequently support more sustainable student development.

A major educational problem is that students' academic difficulties cannot always be explained by cognitive ability or instructional quality alone. Many students struggle to organize study activities, maintain concentration, regulate behavior, and sustain motivation when facing demanding academic tasks. Self-regulated learning requires students to actively manage their learning processes, yet developing such capacities remains challenging, particularly when students encounter competing environmental demands. Evidence from educational research shows that self-regulation interventions can improve academic achievement among primary and secondary students (Elhusseini et al., 2022; Maulidah et al., 2023; Pratiwi & Zaini, 2023). Moreover, changes in students' learning habits are closely related to the development of self-regulated learning (David et al., 2024; Dewi et al., 2024). These findings suggest that educational institutions need systematic strategies that connect motivation, behavioral routines, and learning processes rather than addressing academic performance through achievement-oriented interventions alone.

In everyday school settings, students' motivation and self-management are reflected through punctuality, classroom participation, task completion, discipline, environmental responsibility, and persistence in learning. These behaviors may fluctuate because students are simultaneously influenced by teachers, peers, parents, school routines, and their own psychological resources. Research has demonstrated that parental behavior and teacher behavior are related to developmental trajectories of self-regulated learning during

adolescence (Bardach et al., 2023; Ghozali & Syafiih, 2024). Parental involvement has likewise been associated with students' academic performance (Adaro, 2025; Hamdani & Muzaffar, 2023). However, school-based efforts may become inconsistent when expectations and reinforcement differ between educational and home environments. This phenomenon highlights the need to understand how schools translate psychological theories into concrete routines, motivational practices, and learning environments that can strengthen students' self-management and motivation in daily educational contexts.

Previous studies provide substantial evidence concerning the separate roles of parental involvement, self-regulation, motivation, and learning engagement. Self-regulated learning has been associated with academic achievement among secondary students (Bhagwat & Sadaphal, 2024), while longitudinal evidence indicates an important interplay between student engagement and self-regulation (Heikkinen et al., 2025; Putri et al., 2024). Similarly, learning motivation has been examined through Self-Determination Theory, emphasizing the importance of motivational processes for student engagement and learning (Yang et al., 2025; Zhou & Ahmad, 2025). These studies establish that motivation and self-regulation are essential dimensions of effective learning. Nevertheless, much of the existing literature examines individual psychological variables or specific interventions rather than investigating how multiple learning psychology theories are operationalized simultaneously through institutional programs, daily habituation, and differentiated learning environments.

Other research has demonstrated that structured learning strategies and motivational interventions can influence students' learning behavior and academic outcomes. Biwer et al. (2022), for example, showed the relevance of learning-strategy training for students' study behavior and academic performance, while Ballouk et al. (2022) emphasized self-regulation within blended learning environments. Motivation can also be strengthened through approaches grounded in Self-Determination Theory, including gamification and supportive learning experiences (Luarn et al., 2023; Li et al., 2025; Haris, 2024). Despite these contributions, a research gap remains concerning the integration of behaviorist, constructivist, social cognitive, and contextual perspectives within routine school management. Existing studies provide limited explanation of how such theoretical perspectives can be combined into practical institutional mechanisms for simultaneously developing motivation and self-management, particularly within Islamic secondary education.

The state of the art of this study lies in conceptualizing student self-management and learning motivation as interconnected outcomes that can be developed through an integrated institutional learning system. Rather than

treating psychological theories as abstract frameworks or isolated classroom techniques, this study positions them as practical foundations for designing daily routines, reinforcement mechanisms, learning zones, and student-centered activities. The novelty therefore concerns the integration of multiple learning psychology perspectives into a coherent educational management practice that addresses students' behavioral, cognitive, social, and contextual needs simultaneously. This approach is important because sustainable student development requires continuity between what students learn, how they behave, how they are motivated, and how their learning environment supports these processes. Understanding this integration can provide a more comprehensive model for strengthening students' independence and motivation.

The research problem addressed in this study is how learning psychology theories can be integrated into institutional programs and everyday educational practices to enhance students' self-management and learning motivation. This study argues that students' psychological development can be strengthened when motivational reinforcement, structured habituation, and varied learning approaches operate as complementary components rather than isolated strategies. Accordingly, the study examines the implementation of motivational practices, self-management routines, and theory-informed learning activities, while also identifying challenges that may limit their sustainability. The study contributes by providing an empirically grounded description of how psychological theories can be translated into practical educational management strategies. Its findings are expected to offer a useful framework for educators and school leaders seeking to create learning environments that foster disciplined behavior, sustained motivation, learner autonomy, and more consistent collaboration between educational institutions and students' wider social environments.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed a qualitative descriptive design to obtain an in-depth understanding of how learning psychology theories are implemented to support students' self-management and learning motivation (Stanley, 2023; Hall & Liebenberg, 2024). The qualitative design was selected because the study focuses on exploring educational practices, routines, motivational strategies, and learning processes within their natural context rather than measuring relationships statistically (Pregoner, 2024). The research was conducted in an Islamic secondary education setting selected because it implements structured student routines, motivational programs, and diverse learning approaches that provide a relevant context for examining the integration of learning psychology theories. The primary informant was the head of the madrasah, selected purposively because of their direct responsibility for managing, supervising,

evaluating, and developing educational programs related to student motivation and self-management.

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, direct observation, and documentation. Interviews with the head of the madrasah explored motivational strategies, student self-management programs, learning practices, evaluation procedures, and challenges encountered in implementation. Observations were conducted to examine students' daily routines, including punctuality, discipline, environmental responsibility, participation in learning activities, and other behaviors reflecting self-management and motivation. Documentation was used to complement and corroborate interview and observation findings through relevant institutional records, student attendance data, regulations, program documents, and other supporting materials. The use of multiple data collection techniques enabled triangulation across sources and strengthened the credibility of the findings by comparing reported practices with observed activities and documented evidence.

Data were analyzed using an interactive qualitative analysis process consisting of data condensation, data display, and verification. During data condensation, interview transcripts, observation notes, and documents were selected, organized, coded, and focused according to the research objectives, particularly motivational strategies, self-management practices, learning theory integration, and implementation challenges. The condensed data were subsequently displayed narratively and thematically to identify patterns and relationships across the findings. The final stage involved verification by comparing emerging interpretations across interview, observation, and documentation data. This process was used to establish consistent findings and ensure that the conclusions were grounded in empirical evidence. The analytical process was also informed by research emphasizing the importance of self-regulation, learning strategies, and student engagement in educational development (David et al., 2024; Heikkinen et al., 2025).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Implementation of Student Motivation Programs

The findings indicate that the madrasah implements two complementary forms of student motivation: extrinsic and intrinsic-oriented motivational practices. Extrinsic motivation is provided through direct verbal appreciation during daily interactions and formal rewards at the end of each semester. Teachers provide spontaneous positive statements to acknowledge students' achievements, progress, participation, and positive behavior. These expressions are delivered during classroom and school activities as immediate forms of appreciation.

In addition to daily verbal appreciation, the madrasah provides formal recognition at the end of each semester in the form of certificates and trophies. The award system does not assess students solely on academic achievement. Students' daily behavior and discipline are also considered in determining recipients. Thus, the motivational program incorporates both academic and behavioral aspects in its evaluation of student achievement.

Development of Student Self-Management

Student self-management is developed through structured daily routines implemented consistently within the madrasah. The main practices identified in the findings include punctuality, discipline, environmental responsibility, and regulation of daily activities. These routines are incorporated into students' regular school activities rather than being implemented as separate programs.

One of the main activities is the morning assembly. Students are required to be present on the assembly field at 7:00 a.m. when the school bell rings. During the assembly, students are also monitored in terms of punctuality, dress neatness, and orderly participation. This routine provides a regular mechanism for monitoring students' daily discipline and attendance.

Another activity is congregational Dhuhr prayer. Students participate in the activity according to established procedures concerning punctuality, dress, etiquette, and orderly conduct. The activity is conducted as part of the madrasah's daily routine and serves as one of the structured activities through which students practice responsibility and behavioral consistency.

Implementation of Diverse Learning Approaches

The findings show that the madrasah provides teachers with flexibility to use different learning spaces through an "Open Learning Facilitation" policy. Teachers are allowed to select learning locations according to the characteristics of the material and learning activities. Three learning zones are utilized.

The first zone is classroom-based learning. Teachers primarily use this setting to deliver theoretical materials, explain basic concepts, provide instructions, and conduct direct classroom interactions. The second zone involves learning activities outside the classroom but within the madrasah environment. Teachers use the surrounding environment as a learning resource by involving students in direct observation and interaction with objects or situations related to the learning material.

The third zone involves learning activities outside the madrasah area. These activities are conducted periodically and enable students to observe situations and conditions within the wider community. Teachers use the external

environment as an additional learning resource and provide students with opportunities to connect classroom materials with situations encountered outside the school environment.

Periodic Evaluation of Student Motivation

Periodic evaluations conducted during one semester indicate that students' learning motivation did not remain constant. The evaluation data show fluctuations in students' motivation throughout the observation period. Despite these fluctuations, an overall improvement was identified in students' participation and enthusiasm in learning activities.

The evaluation indicates that 65% of students demonstrated increased motivation and enthusiasm during the learning process. The increase was identified through students' participation and responses to learning activities during the evaluation period. However, the findings also indicate that improvements were not uniform among all students, as some students continued to demonstrate variations in motivation.

Challenges in Sustaining Student Self-Management

The findings identify differences between the behavioral routines established at the madrasah and their continuation in students' home environments. Discipline and self-management practices that are routinely implemented at school are not always maintained when students return home. The consistency of students' routines therefore varies between the school and home environments.

The madrasah identifies the lack of continuity between school-based and home-based practices as a major challenge in sustaining students' self-management. Differences in expectations, supervision, and reinforcement may result in students receiving different behavioral directions across environments.

Institutional Response and Follow-Up

In response to the identified challenges, the madrasah emphasizes the need for stronger coordination between the educational institution and parents. The proposed follow-up focuses on increasing parental involvement in maintaining students' discipline and self-management practices outside school.

The findings therefore show that the madrasah has established motivational programs, structured daily routines, diverse learning activities, and periodic evaluations. At the same time, the sustainability of these practices remains influenced by the consistency of student self-management across school and home environments. Strengthening coordination with parents is identified as an important institutional response to this challenge.

Discussion

The findings demonstrate that student motivation is developed through a combination of immediate verbal appreciation and semester-based rewards. This finding is consistent with Adaro (2025) and Hamdani and Muzaffar (2023), who emphasize the importance of parental and educational involvement in supporting students' academic development. However, the present findings extend this perspective by showing that motivational practices can be embedded in everyday institutional interactions rather than being limited to formal academic interventions. The combination of spontaneous appreciation and cumulative recognition also indicates that motivation is maintained through both short-term and long-term reinforcement. This suggests that institutional motivation programs may become more meaningful when recognition acknowledges not only academic outcomes but also students' daily discipline and behavioral progress.

The development of self-management through punctuality, discipline, and structured daily routines is consistent with research emphasizing self-regulation as an important resource for academic achievement. Morosanova et al. (2023) found that conscious self-regulation contributes to academic achievement and psychological well-being among young adolescents, while Bhagwat and Sadaphal (2024) reported a relationship between self-regulated learning and academic achievement. Similarly, Elhusseini et al. (2022) demonstrated that self-regulation interventions can improve academic achievement. The current findings complement these studies by showing how self-management can be cultivated through routine institutional practices rather than through specialized interventions alone. Daily attendance routines, orderly participation, and structured activities provide repeated opportunities for students to practice behavioral regulation within authentic school situations..

The findings concerning learning-space flexibility indicate that teachers utilize classroom, school-environment, and community-based settings to provide varied learning experiences. This result corresponds with Biwer et al. (2022), who demonstrated the relevance of structured learning-strategy training for improving study behavior and academic performance, and Ballouk et al. (2022), who highlighted the importance of self-regulated learning in varied learning environments. However, the present study differs by emphasizing institutional facilitation of multiple physical learning zones rather than focusing primarily on individual learning strategies or particular instructional technologies. The contribution lies in identifying learning-space flexibility as an organizational mechanism that allows teachers to vary instructional experiences while simultaneously providing opportunities for students to practice independence, participation, and adaptation across different learning contexts.

The integration of different learning perspectives also strengthens the study's contribution to understanding how psychological principles can be operationalized in educational practice. Previous research has examined motivation through Self-Determination Theory and student engagement (Luarn et al., 2023; Yang et al., 2025), while Li et al. (2025) examined students' learning motivation from an SDT perspective. The present findings show a broader institutional arrangement in which motivational reinforcement, structured routines, and varied learning environments operate simultaneously. Rather than implementing one psychological theory as a stand-alone instructional framework, the institution combines several approaches according to different educational activities. This integrated implementation represents a distinctive contribution because it connects motivational and self-management development with the organization of everyday learning experiences.

The finding that student motivation increased among 65% of students, although remaining fluctuating, is consistent with Heikkinen et al. (2025), who identified an interplay between student engagement and self-regulation over time. Villar et al. (2025) likewise found relationships among peer support, motivational self-regulation, and academic achievement in adolescents. The fluctuating pattern identified in this study suggests that motivational development should not be understood as a linear process. Instead, students may respond differently to institutional strategies across time and situations. The present study contributes by documenting this dynamic pattern within an integrated school-based program, demonstrating that positive motivational changes can coexist with continuing variations in students' engagement and enthusiasm.

A significant finding is the discontinuity between self-management practices at school and those maintained at home. This result corresponds with Bardach et al. (2023), who identified relationships between teacher and parent behavior and developmental trajectories of self-regulated learning. It also aligns with research emphasizing parental involvement in students' academic development (Adelantar, 2024; Mtumika et al., 2025). However, the present findings shift attention from parental involvement as a predictor of academic performance toward continuity of behavioral expectations across educational environments. This provides an important contribution by identifying environmental consistency as a practical condition for sustaining self-management. The findings suggest that institutional programs may have limited continuity when routines, discipline, and reinforcement established at school are not reinforced within students' home environments.

Overall, the study contributes a practical perspective on integrating learning psychology theories into institutional management of student motivation and self-management. Existing research has established the

importance of self-regulation, motivation, learning strategies, and social support, but the present study demonstrates how these dimensions can be connected through daily routines, recognition systems, flexible learning spaces, and cross-environmental coordination. Its novelty lies in viewing learning psychology not merely as a theoretical foundation for classroom instruction but as an integrated management framework for shaping students' everyday learning behavior. The findings further indicate that sustainable development requires stronger collaboration between educational institutions and parents. Thus, the study offers an empirically grounded model in which motivation, self-management, instructional flexibility, and environmental continuity are treated as interconnected components of student development.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that student motivation and self-management can be strengthened through an integrated combination of daily teacher appreciation, formal recognition, structured routines, and flexible learning environments. The most important insight is that learning psychology theories become more meaningful when translated into consistent institutional practices that connect motivation, discipline, and varied learning experiences. The study contributes academically by offering an integrated perspective in which behaviorist, constructivist, social cognitive, and contextual approaches function as complementary mechanisms for supporting students' psychological and behavioral development rather than as isolated instructional theories. The findings also highlight environmental continuity as an important condition for sustaining self-management, particularly between school and home. However, the study is limited by its qualitative descriptive design and reliance primarily on institutional perspectives, which restricts the generalizability of the findings and does not directly capture students' or parents' experiences. Future research should therefore incorporate multiple informant groups, longitudinal designs, and mixed-method approaches to examine how integrated psychological strategies influence students' motivation and self-management over time.

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