

The Quality of Peer Relations on the Learning Motivation of Islamic Education Students

Fatma Izzatun Najwa¹, Helma Hidayati², Hilya Izatillah³, Surawan Surawan⁴

^{1,2,3,4}Universitas Islam Negeri Palangkaraya, Indonesia

Corresponding author, email: najwafatma45@gmail.com

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Abstract

Background – This study is motivated by the importance of teachers' roles in managing effective learning, particularly at the elementary school level, where various instructional challenges often occur. In Indonesian language learning, listening skills are essential for supporting students' language development, especially in lower grades.

Research Urgency – Listening is a fundamental skill in language acquisition and classroom communication. At the early elementary level, weak listening skills may hinder students' ability to understand instructions, process oral information, and participate actively in learning. Therefore, this study is important to identify the problems faced by teachers in teaching listening skills and to formulate practical strategies that can support more effective Indonesian language learning in lower grades.

Research Objectives – This study aims to describe the problems encountered in teaching listening skills in Indonesian language learning and to identify teacher strategies for strengthening students' listening skills at SD Negeri 1 Pondok.

Research Method – This study employed a qualitative approach with a case study design. Data were collected through interviews, observations, and documentation. Interviews were conducted with teachers of grades 1, 2, and 3. Observations were carried out directly during classroom learning activities, while documentation was conducted by collecting relevant documents related to the learning process. The data were analyzed using the Miles and Huberman model, which consists of data collection, data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing.

Research Findings – The findings show that the problems of listening skills in Indonesian language learning in lower grades at SD Negeri 1 Pondok include students' low concentration, limited learning motivation, and an unsupportive learning environment. These factors make it difficult for students to understand, process, and respond to oral information effectively. To overcome these problems, teachers apply several reinforcement strategies, such as using attractive learning media, including pictures and videos; implementing enjoyable learning methods, such as question-and-answer activities and role-playing; and conducting light, simple, and enjoyable evaluations.

Conclusion – The study concludes that listening skill problems in lower-grade Indonesian language learning are mainly influenced by students' concentration, motivation, and learning environment. Teacher strategies that integrate attractive media, interactive methods, and enjoyable evaluation activities can support the improvement of students' listening skills.

Research Novelty/Contribution – The novelty of this study lies in its emphasis on teacher-based practical strategies derived from real classroom needs. This study contributes concrete insights for elementary school teachers and education policymakers in designing more effective strategies to improve listening skills and the quality of Indonesian language learning in lower grades.

Keywords: *Islamic education students, motivation to learn, quality of peer relationships*

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INTRODUCTION

Students in higher education are required to have high academic readiness and responsibility in undergoing the learning process. The success of the study is not only influenced by cognitive abilities, but also by various psychological factors that encourage individuals to be active in learning activities. In the midst of these academic demands, interaction with peers has become an important part of student life. Relationships with peers provide opportunities for individuals to develop social skills, gain emotional support, and build confidence in social interactions (Astuti, 2024).

Learning motivation is one of the psychological factors that has an important role in the learning process (Rahman, 2022). Learning motivation can be understood as the encouragement in individuals to carry out learning activities to achieve certain goals (Herwati et al., 2023). John W. Santrock (2004) explained that motivation is a process that gives energy, direction, and perseverance to individual behavior in achieving goals. In line with that, Dale H. Schunk in Ryan (2012) states that motivation is related to the process that makes goal-oriented activities directional and sustainable. Both views show that motivation has a close relationship with individual involvement in learning activities.

Students who have high learning motivation tend to show great interest in academic activities, are more active in learning, and are diligent in completing assignments. Anita Woolfolk (2009) explained that learning motivation plays a role in increasing student engagement and helping individuals maintain their learning efforts despite facing various difficulties. Learning motivation can also be understood through several components that make up individual involvement. According to Paul R. Pintrich and Elisabeth V. De Groot, these components include intrinsic goal orientation, task values, belief in learning control, and self-efficacy in learning and academic performance (Paul et al., 1991). These components show that the social environment of students can be related to the formation of learning motivation.

Student motivation for learning does not just appear. Internal factors such as learning interests and goals, as well as external factors such as the learning environment and social support are also related to the development of learning motivation (Uno, 2023). One of the external factors that is often associated with the academic life of students is peer relationships. Most of the students' academic and social activities are carried out with friend groups. Social interaction in these groups can be related to student attitudes, values, and behaviors, including in viewing learning activities.

Peer relationships are not only a means of social interaction, but also related to the comfort of students in undergoing academic activities. Established social bonds can provide emotional support, a sense of belonging, and opportunities to exchange information. Lev Vygotsky in Handani (2026) explains that the individual's learning process is greatly influenced by the social interactions that occur in his environment. Interaction allows for an exchange of knowledge that helps individuals understand difficult concepts. This view suggests that a supportive social environment can be related to student involvement in learning activities.

According to Albert Bandura in Araminta & Izzati (2025), social support from peers can help increase students' confidence in their learning abilities. Indicators of positive peer relationships according to Kelly and Hansen in Puspitasari et al. (2024) include emotional support, social skills, and self-esteem. These aspects are an important means for students to adjust to the educational environment and build a sense of security in social interactions (Bukowski et al., 1994). Students who are in supportive friendships tend to feel more comfortable and more easily involved in academic activities.

Several previous studies have shown a relationship between peer support and student learning motivation. Fini's research (2024) shows that peer social interaction is related to student involvement in Islamic Religious Education learning. Noverina et al. (2025) also showed that peer support is related to students' efforts to maintain motivation and focus on learning. Similar findings were obtained by

Fauzan et al. (2025) which show that positive friendship relationships are related to student involvement in academic activities. In addition, research by Rohalya et al. (2025) found that peer social support is related to a decrease in students' academic stress. These findings show that social interaction and emotional support in friendship relationships are related to student learning comfort.

Although various studies have discussed learning motivation, studies that specifically examine the relationship between the quality of peer relationships and the learning motivation of Islamic Religious Education students are still limited. Most previous research has focused more on high school students or general educational environments. The lack of study on the dynamics of friendship relationships at State Islamic Religious Universities is an important research gap to be studied further. Sixth semester Islamic Religious Education students were chosen as research subjects because they are in a fairly important academic phase, namely facing the demands of more complex lecture assignments, preparation for field practice, and the initial process of preparing final projects that require consistent learning motivation. In this phase, students also tend to be more active in discussions, academic cooperation, and social interaction with peers in completing various lecture demands. This condition makes the quality of peer relationships relevant to be studied in relation to student learning motivation.

Understanding the relationship between the quality of peer relationships and learning motivation is important to provide an overview of how students' social environment can be related to student motivation in the learning process. The results of this research are expected to be considered for students to build a supportive and positive friendship environment in supporting academic activities. In addition, this research is also expected to contribute to study programs and educational institutions in creating a campus social environment that supports student learning motivation. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the relationship between the quality of peer relationships and the learning motivation of sixth-semester Islamic Religious Education students at UIN Palangka Raya.

METHODS

This study uses a quantitative approach with an associative research design (Sugiyono, 2021). This study aims to analyze the relationship between the quality of peer relationships and the learning motivation of students of Islamic Religious Education in the sixth semester at UIN Palangka Raya. The population of this study is all students of Islamic Religious Education in the sixth semester at UIN Palangka Raya. Sixth-semester students were chosen as respondents because they were in an academic phase that required more stable learning motivation in facing lecture assignments, field practice, and final project preparation. This study uses purposive sampling techniques to determine samples so that they can represent each class unit (Timamah et al., 2025). Based on the results of data collection, 36 respondents were selected because they met the criteria for class representation and were willing to fill out questionnaires voluntarily.

Data collection was carried out after all respondents had been given an explanation of the purpose of the study and expressed their willingness to participate voluntarily. The researcher also maintains the confidentiality of the identities and answers of the respondents during the research process. Data collection was carried out using a closed questionnaire consisting of 32 statement items using the Likert scale of four answer choices, namely Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree. The use of four answer options aims to encourage respondents to give clearer answers and avoid neutral choices that often do not describe the actual conditions (Sulianta, 2025). The variables of the quality of peer relationships were compiled based on Kelly and Hansen's theories which included emotional support, social skills, and self-esteem. Meanwhile, the learning motivation variable refers to the theories of Paul R. Pintrich and Elisabeth V. De Groot which include goal orientation, task value, belief in learning control,

and self-efficacy. All questionnaire items have gone through validity and reliability tests to ensure the accuracy and consistency of the research instruments (Nasution & Junaidi, 2024).

Data processing is carried out using IBM SPSS Statistics. The researcher first conducts a prerequisite test in the form of normality and linearity tests before entering the main analysis stage. The analysis technique used was a simple linear regression to see the relationship between the variable of the quality of peer relationships and student learning motivation. The t-test was used to determine the significance of the relationship between variables, while the determination coefficient (R-square) was used to see the magnitude of variation in learning motivation related to the quality of peer relationships (Mulyati et al., 2024).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Instrument Validation

Validity Test

The researcher conducts a validity test to ensure that each item in the questionnaire accurately measures the research variable. This step is done by comparing the calculated r-value with the r-value of the table at a significance level of 5%.

Table 1. Variable Validity Test Results

Research Variables	Number of Items	Calculated range r	Table Values r	Description
Quality of Peer Relations (X)	16	0,409 – 0,816	0,329	Applicable
Motivation to Learn (Y)	16	0,545 – 0,838	0,329	Applicable

The data in the table shows that all items have calculated r-values that are greater than the table's r-values. These results prove that each item in the questionnaire accurately represents a variable indicator. This validity ensures that the data on emotional support, social skill improvement, and learning motivation collected truly reflect the actual condition of sixth-semester PAI students. A valid instrument is an absolute requirement for research conclusions to have high accuracy in explaining academic phenomena in the field.

Reliability Test

Reliability tests are performed to measure the consistency of the instrument as a reliable measuring tool, even when used at different times. The test uses Cronbach's Alpha, with a minimum threshold of 0.60 as the standard for data reliability.

Table 2. Reliability Test Results for Variables

Research Variables	Alpha Cronbach Values	Ambang Minimum	Description
Quality of Peer Relations (X)	0,888	0,60	Reliabel
Motivation to Learn (Y)	0,927	0,60	Reliabel

The results showed that Cronbach's Alpha values far exceeded the minimum standard of 0.60 for both variables. This shows that the respondents' answers are very consistent and stable. This consistency convinces researchers that the data obtained is not only coincidental but provides a reliable picture for use in further statistical analysis. Reliable instruments are essential to ensure that the relationship between peer relationships and learning motivation is not the result of measurement errors but rather genuine psychological phenomena that occur among students.

Prerequisite Test

Normality Test

The normality test aims to ensure that the data obtained from the Peer Relationship Quality and Learning Motivation variables follow the normal distribution. The researchers used the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test in a single sample, with the decision criterion that the significance level (Asymp. Sig.) must be greater than 0.05.

Table 3. Data Normality Test Results

Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test One Sample		
		Non-Standard Residue
N		36
Parameter Normala,b	Means	0,0000000
	Std. Deviation	4,42212240
The Most Extreme Differences	Mutlak	0,141
	Positive	0,141
	Negatives	-0,079
Test Statistics		0,141
Asimpa. Sig. (2 Oaks)		,067c

The Asymp. A Sig. value of 0.067 shows that the distribution of motivation and peer relationship data among sixth-semester Islamic Education students tends to be normal. In the context of academic behavior, this suggests that variations in students' levels of learning motivation are not limited to elite or low-performing groups alone, but rather reflect heterogeneous classroom environments. This normal distribution of data is an important prerequisite for regression models used to accurately and objectively predict the influence of peer relationships on students' learning motivation.

Linearity Test

The linearity test was performed to find out whether the relationship between Quality of Peer Relations (X) and Learning Motivation (Y) followed a linear pattern. This test is important as a prerequisite before proceeding to the analysis of variable effects.

Table 4. Linearity Test Results

ANOVA Table							
			Number of Squares	df	Square Average	F	Say.
Learning motivation * relationship quality	Antar Group	(Combined)	891,506	16	55,719	2,495	0,030
		Linearitas	631,458	1	631,458	28,271	0,000
		Deviations from Linearity	260,047	15	17,336	0,776	0,687
	In a Group		424,383	19	22,336		
	Quantity		1315,889	35			

A significance value of 0.687 is obtained for the Deviation from Linearity, which is greater than 0.05. These findings suggest that the relationship between the two variables is linear, or forms a straight line. Practically, this figure implies that any improvement in the quality of social relationships with peers

will be proportionately followed by an increase in students' motivation to learn. A simple linear regression model is considered appropriate for testing hypotheses because this assumption of linearity has been fully fulfilled.

Hypothesis Testing (Simple Linear Regression Test)

A simple linear regression analysis was performed to measure the influence of the Peer Relationship Quality (X) variable on Learning Motivation (Y). The test also serves as an empirical validation of the theories used in the research.

Table 5. Model Summary

Modelb Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Customized R Box	Std. Estimation Error
1	,693a	0,480	0,465	4,487

Based on the results of the linear regression test that has been carried out, an R-Square (R²) value of 0.480 is obtained. This figure shows that the Peer Relationship Quality variable contributes 48% to the Learning Motivation of PAI students in the sixth semester. Meanwhile, the remaining 52% is related to other variables that were not included in this research model.

Table 6. Non-Standard Coefficients

Koefisiensa						
Model				Standard Coefficients	t	Say.
				Beta version		
1	(Konstan)	14,125	6,971		2,026	0,051
	Peer Quality	0,835	0,149	0,693	5,601	0,000

Based on the results of the t-test in Table 6, a significance value of 0.000 was obtained, which is less than 0.05. These results suggest that there is a significant effect of the quality of peer relationships on students' learning motivation, and that these effects are real, not just coincidental. Thus, the research hypothesis that the quality of peer relationships affects students' learning motivation is acceptable.

The results of the regression analysis in Table 6 also produced the regression equation $Y = 14.125 + 0.835X$. A constant value of 14.125 indicates that when the quality variable of peer relationships has no effect, students' learning motivation remains at a baseline value of 14.125. Meanwhile, a regression coefficient of 0.835 showed that every one unit increase in the quality of peer relationships was associated with an increase in learning motivation by 0.835 points. This positive regression coefficient shows that the relationship between the two variables is positive, meaning that the better the quality of peer relationships, the higher the student's motivation to learn.

The Relationship Between the Quality of Peer Relationships and Learning Motivation

Facts in the field show that the quality of positive peer relationships has a significant relationship with the learning motivation conditions of sixth-semester PAI students. At this academic stage, students are faced with real challenges such as the preparation of research proposals and the preparation of professional practices, which can factually increase the risk of academic anxiety. In this situation, the quality of supportive peer relationships is present as a psychological support system that plays an important role in maintaining the stability of the spirit of learning. The quality of good relationships characterized by mutual support, trust, and openness between peers contributes directly to strengthening student self-esteem (Kaloko, 2026). When students have a high quality of peer

relationships, motivational aspects such as goal orientation, task scores, and control over the learning process tend to become more stable, which ultimately fosters stronger self-efficacy.

This phenomenon reveals a correlation between the quality of healthy peer relationships and the stability of learning motivation. Emotional support obtained through the positive quality of peer relationships is an important factor that ensures students still have the psychological energy to complete the demands of their studies. This is in line with Dea's (2025) research which emphasizes that emotional comfort in peer circles is a prerequisite for the effectiveness of cognitive and academic processes. Theoretically, this linkage is in line with Vygotsky's Social Constructivism Theory in Nuriah et al. (2026) which emphasizes that individual mental function and motivation develop optimally through meaningful interaction within a conducive peer relationship quality environment.

This condition is further supported by Hamdanah & Surawan (2022) who explain that the quality of healthy peer relationships is an environment that has a significant influence on the formation of individual attitudes and mindsets. The positive quality of peer relationships provides space for students to gain a sense of belonging and the opportunity to exchange experiences reciprocated. This process serves as a psychological scaffolding that helps students face various academic challenges with more confidence. In addition, strengthened by the results of Syahkilla's (2025) research, the support that arises from the quality of good peer relationships is able to minimize the risk of learning boredom. More broadly, it is supported by research by Ni Ketut Sukreni (2026) who states that the quality of good peer relationships creates an inclusive learning climate, which is one of the requirements for the emergence of intrinsic motivation and persistence of students in completing their higher education.

The Contribution of Peer Relationship Quality in Learning Motivation

Based on data analysis, it was found that the quality of peer relationships was the most prominent element in explaining fluctuations in student learning motivation. These findings confirm that interactions with peers have a very crucial position in the motivation structure of PAI students in higher education. Factually, the magnitude of the linkage found reflects that almost half of the respondents' learning motivation conditions can be explained by the quality of their peer relationships. If the rest of the influence is an accumulation of a very broad combination of various external and internal variables, so peers show a very significant role in the higher education ecosystem.

This fact is in line with the research of Dwitami & Selian (2025) which found that at the student level, peer support often has a more pronounced impact on daily academic dynamics. The positive quality of peer relationships acts as a peer modeling medium, where students tend to adopt standards of learning spirit and discipline from peers who are considered to have good performance. This condition is in line with the findings of Hidayah (2026) who stated that the existence of supportive peers is able to improve students' self-regulation skills in facing complex tasks.

In addition, the quality of healthy peer relationships provides space for the creation of informal but sustainable knowledge exchange. Based on the perspective of social support, the high quality of peer relationships has a more direct influence on students' academic resilience due to the similarity of experiences and workloads that are felt together. This is also strengthened by the results of a study by Aeni et al. (2025) that a positive quality of friendship is directly proportional to an increase in enthusiasm for learning in the classroom. Overall, the strong link between peer quality variables and learning motivation is in line with the view of Edy et al. (2025) who position the quality of peer relationships as the main social foundation that ensures students remain consistent and competent until the final stage of their studies.

Penelitian ini memiliki beberapa keterbatasan yang perlu diakui secara jujur. Pertama, studi ini hanya berfokus pada kualitas hubungan teman sebaya sebagai variabel tunggal, sehingga belum mampu menggambarkan seluruh faktor yang memengaruhi motivasi belajar secara menyeluruh. Hal ini dibuktikan dengan adanya sisa pengaruh yang cukup besar dari variabel-variabel pengganggu yang

tidak diukur, seperti dukungan ekonomi keluarga, bimbingan dosen, serta ketersediaan sarana belajar. Selain itu, desain penelitian yang bersifat korelasional ini hanya bertujuan untuk melihat derajat hubungan dan tidak dapat digunakan untuk mengklaim hubungan sebab-akibat secara mutlak antar variabel yang diteliti.

Berdasarkan keterbatasan tersebut, peneliti menyarankan bagi penelitian selanjutnya untuk memperluas variabel penelitian dengan menyertakan faktor internal maupun eksternal lainnya agar diperoleh gambaran motivasi belajar yang lebih komprehensif. Penggunaan metode penelitian mixed method juga sangat dianjurkan untuk menggali dinamika dalam kualitas hubungan teman sebaya secara lebih mendalam melalui teknik wawancara. Terakhir, penelitian masa depan diharapkan dapat melibatkan populasi yang lebih luas dan beragam di lingkungan perguruan tinggi agar hasil temuan dapat digeneralisasikan secara lebih efektif pada konteks pendidikan yang lebih luas.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research that has been carried out, it can be concluded that the results of the linear regression test obtained an R-Square (R^2) value of 0.480. This figure shows that the Peer Relationship Quality variable contributes 48% to the Learning Motivation of PAI students in the sixth semester. Based on the results of the t-test in Table 6, a significance value of 0.000 was obtained, which is less than 0.05. These results suggest that there is a significant effect of the quality of peer relationships on students' learning motivation. The results of the regression analysis in Table 6 also produced the regression equation $Y = 14.125 + 0.835X$. A constant value of 14.125 indicates that when the quality variable of peer relationships has no effect, students' learning motivation remains at a baseline value of 14.125. Meanwhile, a regression coefficient of 0.835 showed that every one unit increase in the quality of peer relationships was associated with an increase in learning motivation by 0.835 points. This positive regression coefficient shows that the relationship between the two variables is positive, meaning that the better the quality of peer relationships, the higher the student's motivation to learn.

This research shows that social relationships with peers are not just ordinary interactions, but have an important role as a source of psychological support in students' academic lives. Positive peer relationships characterized by emotional support, openness and mutual trust, as well as good socialization skills can increase confidence, learning comfort, and student involvement in academic activities. This research also shows that a supportive social environment can help students face various academic demands, this support has a role as a reinforcement, stress reduction when there are many demands, and as a place to exchange knowledge and opinions. Thus, the quality of peer relationships is one of the important factors in maintaining the stability of student learning motivation in higher education.

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