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Influence of Motivation, Learning Aqidah and Morals on the Activity of Students' Prayers at MTs Negeri Model

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Abstract. This study aims to determine the effect of motivation to learn Aqidah Akhlak on students' prayer activeness at MTs Negeri Model Palopo. This study was motivated by the fact that some students still do not consistently perform prayers. The study used a quantitative approach and was conducted in November–December 2026. The population comprised 403 seventh-grade students, and researchers selected a sample of 277 using simple random sampling. The Slovin formula determined the sample size at a 5% margin of error. Data were collected through observation and questionnaires and analyzed using descriptive statistics, assumption tests, simple linear regression, and hypothesis testing in IBM SPSS Statistics version 25. The results showed that motivation to learn Aqidah Akhlak and prayer activity fell into the moderate category. The regression equation $\hat{Y} = 11.883 + 0.690X$, with Tcount =17.575 > Ttable 1.969 and significance 0.000 < 0.05. The contribution of influence is 52.9%, with a large effect size (Cohen's $f^2 = 1.123$). Therefore, increasing learning motivation requires varied learning methods, teacher role models, the habit of congregational prayer, religious culture in madrasas, and family support to increase students' prayer activity.

Keywords: Learning Motivation, Aqidah and Morals, Prayer Activity, Students.

1. Introduction

Education plays a crucial role in shaping students to possess not only intellectual abilities but also strong faith, piety, and morals (Haryani et al., 2025). Students' personality development is inseparable from instilling religious values, which are realized through the learning process and daily habits. One subject that plays a crucial role in this process is Aqidah Akhlak (Islamic Creed). Aqidah Akhlak learning not only aims to provide an understanding of faith and morals, but is also expected to encourage students to practice religious values in their daily lives (Pratista et al., 2026).

Belief and morals play an important role in forming behavior and religious participation (Basuki & Febriansyah, 2020) . Learning this not only equips participants with knowledge about Islamic teachings, but also directs them to behave in accordance with religious teachings values (Rahmawati & Zulfa, 2025). One of Islam's most important teachings to practice is prayer. As the second pillar of Islam, prayer is a form of main servitude of a Muslim to Allah SWT, because understanding of obligatory prayers obtained through religious learning is expected to be reflected in behavior; one way to carry out prayer is through activity (Ami & Anggraini, 2024). The importance of performing prayers is also emphasized in the Qur'an. Allah SWT says in QS Al-Baqarah/2:43:

وَاَقِيْمُوا الصَّلٰوةَ وَاٰتُوا الزَّكٰوةَ وَارْكَعُوْا مَعَ الرّٰكِعِيْنَ ﴿٤٣﴾

Translation: "And perform prayer, pay *zakat*, and bow with those who bow." (RI, 2019) .

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This verse shows that prayer is one of Allah Swt. commands that must be carried out by Muslims. Prayer is not only about human relationships with Allah SWT, but also fosters discipline, responsibility, and obedience in daily life (Shodiq et al., 2026). Therefore, the habit and practice of prayer must be instilled from an early age through families and educational institutions.

Student engagement in prayer can be influenced by various internal and external factors. One internal factor related to practicing religious teachings is motivation to learn. Learning motivation is a drive within students or from their environment that fosters enthusiasm for participating in learning activities, sustaining the learning process, and achieving learning goals (Arsyad et al., 2020). Students with strong learning motivation are expected to take learning materials more seriously, including those related to faith, worship, and morals.

In learning Aqidah Akhlak, learning motivation is important because learning success is not only seen from students' ability to understand the material, but also from their ability to internalize and practice the values that have been learned (Arsyad et al., 2020). Good motivation can encourage students to participate more actively in learning, pay attention to teacher explanations, understand the importance of worship, and strive to apply religious teachings in everyday life. Conversely, if students' learning motivation is low, the learning process can only take place as far as fulfilling academic obligations, so the values conveyed are not necessarily optimally applied in everyday life (Fauziyah et al., 2026).

Although learning Aqidah and Akhlak has become an important part of Islamic education in madrasas, its implementation is not yet automatic, and it does not ensure that all participants can understand, appreciate, and practice religious values in everyday life. In reality, many participants remain less educated and inconsistent in their worship, especially the five daily prayers. Some participants are educated but still lack discipline in carrying out prayer, especially in accuracy, timeliness, regularity, and awareness, and must always be reminded.

A similar phenomenon also occurred at MTs Negeri Model Palopo. Based on initial observations at MTs Negeri Model Palopo, as one of the Islamic educational institutions in Palopo City, the school has a responsibility to shape students with religious knowledge who can practice religious values in their daily lives. This effort is carried out through religious learning and various religious activities that support the formation of students' religious behavior. However, students' participation in prayer still varies under different conditions. Some students still do not consistently pray, both at school and outside the school environment.

Research conducted by Yuliani, Damopolii, and Usman (2019) shows that discipline in religious learning can support students' worship practices. Furthermore, research by Ramadhani, Pewangi, and Nurhaeni (2024) found that teacher supervision, guidance, and habituation support students' prayer discipline. Meanwhile, research by Pratista, Amin, and Mahendra (2026) shows that Aqidah Akhlak learning shapes religious behavior through teacher role models, habituation, and strengthening faith values. These findings indicate that religious learning and guidance relate to students' religious behavior.

Based on a review of previous research, several gaps inform this study: studies on learning Aqidah Akhlak and students' religious behavior tend to focus on prayer discipline, teachers' roles in fostering worship, and the formation of religious behavior in general. In addition, research on learning motivation is more closely associated with achieving learning outcomes. In contrast, studies that specifically link motivation to learn Aqidah Akhlak to students' prayer activity remain limited. Previous research has also not specifically examined how motivation to learn Aqidah Akhlak influences students' prayer activity at MTs Negeri Model Palopo.

This study offers novelty by examining the influence of motivation to learn Aqidah Akhlak on students' prayer activity at MTs Negeri Model Palopo using a quantitative approach and simple linear regression analysis to provide empirical evidence of the relationship between the two variables. This study focuses not only on discipline and habituation of prayer through teachers' roles, but also examines learning motivation as a factor suspected to relate to students' worship practices. In addition, this study links motivation in learning Aqidah Akhlak with prayer as an act of obedience to Allah SWT. It is expected to contribute empirically to understanding the relationship between the process of religious learning and students' worship practices in daily life.

Based on the background that has been presented, the formulation of the problem in this study is: what is the level of motivation to learn Aqidah Akhlak of students at MTs Negeri Model Palopo; what is the level of active prayer of students at MTs Negeri Model Palopo; is there an influence of motivation to learn Aqidah Akhlak on the active prayer of students at MTs Negeri Model Palopo; and what are the supporting and inhibiting factors in increasing motivation to learn Aqidah Akhlak related to the active prayer of students at MTs Negeri Model Palopo. The purpose of this study is to determine the level of motivation to learn Aqidah Akhlak of students at MTs Negeri Model Palopo, to determine the level of active prayer of students at MTs Negeri Model Palopo, to determine the influence of motivation to learn Aqidah Akhlak on the active prayer of students at MTs Negeri Model Palopo, and to determine the supporting and inhibiting factors in increasing motivation to learn Aqidah Akhlak related to the active prayer of students at MTs Negeri Model Palopo.

2. Method

This study uses a quantitative approach and was implemented at MTs Negeri Model Palopo from November to December 2025. The population is all participants in the VII class education program at MTs Negeri Model Palopo, totaling 403 people. This study used *accidental sampling*. Accidental *sampling* selects a sample based on its availability in an appropriate place and context for the study, and the sample size was determined using Slovin's formula at a 5% level. error (Altares et al., 2003).

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Information:
n = number of samples
N = population size
e = error rate

Based on calculations using the Slovin formula, it can be seen that the sample in this study was 277 people. The operational definition of the variables in this study includes two variables, namely learning motivation, faith, and morals (X), and prayer activity (Y), as presented in the following table:

Table 1. Definitions of Operational Variables

No	Variables Study	Definition	Indicator
1.	Motivation to Learn Aqidah and Morals (X)	Motivation to learn Aqidah and morals is the internal drive or outward expression within the self that motivates participants to learn Aqidah and Akhlak actively and seriously.	1. Interest in the material of Aqidah and Akhlak 2. Perseverance in following lessons 3. Business in understanding and practicing values of faith and morals

			4. Discipline in performing religious tasks
2.	Activity Prayer (Y)	Activity Prayer involves participants in learning and performing the five daily prayers, both personally and in congregation.	1. Frequency of performing the five daily prayers 2. Punctuality in prayer 3. Involvement in congregational prayer 4. Quality and solemnity in prayer

This study used observation and questionnaires to collect data. Observations were conducted by observing the research objects directly; the data obtained were then analyzed descriptively and used as supporting data to provide an overview of the learning of Aqidah Akhlak and the activeness of student prayer. Meanwhile, questionnaires were used to collect data through questions or statements presented to respondents using a 5-point Likert scale. The learning motivation questionnaire consisted of 16 statement items, and the prayer activeness questionnaire consisted of 15 statement items, with the following grid:

Table 2. Grid of the Aqidah and Akhlak Learning Motivation Questionnaire

No	Indicator	Item Number	Amount
1.	Interest in the material of Aqidah Akhlak	1-4	4
2.	Diligence in following lessons	5-9	5
3.	Efforts to understand and practice the values of Aqidah Akhlak	10-12	3
4.	Discipline in carrying out religious duties	13-16	4
	Amount		**16**

Table 3. Layout of the Prayer Activity Questionnaire

No	Indicator	Item Number	Amount
1.	Frequency of performing the five daily prayers	1-4	4
2.	prayer times	5-8	4
3.	Involvement in congregational prayer	9-11	3
4.	Quality and solemnity of prayer	12-15	4
	Amount		**15**

Before being analyzed, the instrument was tested for validity (items are valid if $_{\text{the calculated}}$ r > r $_{\text{table}}$) and reliability (reliable if Cronbach's Alpha > 0.60). As a result, all items were declared valid, and both instruments were reliable, as shown in the following table:

Table 4. Results of Instrument Validity and Reliability Tests

Variables	Number of Grains	R $_{\text{count}}$ range	R $_{\text{table}}$	Cronbach's Alpha	Information
Motivation to Learn Moral Aqidah (X)	16	0.833 - 0.883	0.30	0.976	Valid and reliable
Prayer Activity (Y)	15	0.838 - 0.872	0.30	0.974	Valid and reliable

Normality test using the *Kolmogorov-Smirnov method, paying attention to the Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) value. Sig. (2-tailed) value*, with the provision that the data is normally distributed if the Sig. value > 0.05 and not normally distributed if the Sig. value < 0.05. Linearity test, with the provision that if *the Sig. Deviation from Linearity* > 0.05 means there is a linear relationship, whereas if the *Sig. Deviation from Linearity* < 0.05, it means there is no linear relationship. Linear regression analysis uses the formula Y = a + bX, where Y is the dependent variable, a is the intercept (constant), b is the regression coefficient, and X is the independent variable. A partial test (t-test) is used to determine the effect of

learning motivation in Aqidah Akhlak (X) on prayer activity (Y) by comparing the calculated t value with the *t* table at a significance level of 0.05. If the calculated *t value* > *t* table, then H_0 is rejected, and H_a is accepted, meaning the independent and dependent variables are related. In addition, the coefficient of determination (R^2) ranges from 0 to 1; the higher the R^2 value, the greater the proportion of the dependent variable's variation explained by the independent variable.

3. Result

Motivation for Learning Aqidah and Akhlak of Students at MTs Negeri Model

Based on the data obtained from participants through the questionnaire that has been determined, the data description regarding motivation Study in a general way is as follows:

Table 5. Motivation Study

No	Question	Alternative Answer					Mean
		SS	S	KR	TS	STS	
1	I feel like learning material creed morals	4 (1.44%)	65 (23.47%)	144 (51.99%)	59 (21.30%)	5 (1.81%)	3.01
2	I pay attention to the teacher when explaining material, creed, and morals	7 (2.53%)	56 (20.22%)	154 (55.60%)	57 (20.58%)	3 (1.08%)	3.03
3	I want to know more about creed morals	5 (1.81%)	59 (21.30%)	142 (51.26%)	70 (25.27%)	1 (0.36%)	2.99
4	I am looking forward to learning moral lessons at school	6 (2.17%)	58 (20.94%)	145 (52.35%)	65 (23.47%)	3 (1.08%)	3.00
5	I seldom roll call moment lesson creed morals	3 (1.08%)	62 (22.38%)	143 (51.62%)	66 (23.83%)	3 (1.08%)	2.99
6	I try to answer the teacher's questions in the lesson on moral creed	5 (1.81%)	60 (21.66%)	147 (53.07%)	61 (22.02%)	4 (1.44%)	3.00
7	I do assignments given by the teacher truly	5 (1.81%)	58 (20.94%)	146 (52.71%)	64 (23.10%)	4 (1.44%)	2.99
8	I bravely ask if there are material creed morals that I understand	4 (1.44%)	58 (20.94%)	152 (54.87%)	59 (21.30%)	4 (1.44%)	3.00
9	I read return material creed morals at home	6 (2.17%)	54 (19.49%)	155 (55.96%)	58 (20.94%)	4 (1.44%)	3.00
10	I try to apply morals commendably in life every day	4 (1.44%)	61 (22.02%)	149 (53.79%)	60 (21.66%)	3 (1.08%)	3.01
11	I try to avoid acts prohibited by religion	3 (1.08%)	56 (20.22%)	155 (55.96%)	60 (21.66%)	3 (1.08%)	2.99
12	I emulate the good attitude that is taught in lesson creed morals	8 (2.89%)	57 (20.58%)	142 (51.26%)	66 (23.83%)	4 (1.44%)	3.00
13	I carry out prayer just in time	6 (2.17%)	61 (22.02%)	138 (49.82%)	70 (25.27%)	2 (0.72%)	3.00
14	I try to operate religious obligations consistently	8 (2.89%)	54 (19.49%)	149 (53.79%)	62 (22.38%)	4 (1.44%)	3.00
15	I obey school rules in performing worship	6 (2.17%)	57 (20.58%)	151 (54.51%)	59 (21.30%)	4 (1.44%)	3.01
16	I try to complete religious obligations even though I am currently Busy	2 (0.72%)	65 (23.47%)	143 (51.62%)	63 (22.74%)	4 (1.44%)	2.99

Most participants chose Less Doubtful (KR) answers on almost all statements. This suggests that interest, attention, and practice among religious participants are at an intermediate level, not yet at the maximum. More effort and learning are required to improve religious attitudes and practices among participants.

Activity Prayer Students at MTs Negeri Model

Based on the data obtained from participants through the questionnaire that has been determined, the data description regarding the activity prayer is presented in a general way as follows:

Table 6. Activity Prayer

No	Question	Alternative Answer					Mean
		SS	S	KR	TS	STS	
1	I always carry out five daily prayers every day	7 (2.53%)	59 (21.30%)	145 (52.35%)	63 (22.74%)	3 (1.08%)	3.01
2	I rarely leave five daily prayers	5 (1.81%)	58 (20.94%)	147 (53.07%)	65 (23.47%)	2 (0.72%)	3.00
3	I feel I make a loss if I do not carry out prayer	1 (0.36%)	67 (24.19%)	149 (53.79%)	55 (19.86%)	5 (1.81%)	3.01
4	I am trying to replace missed prayers	7 (2.53%)	62 (22.38%)	140 (50.54%)	63 (22.74%)	5 (1.81%)	3.01
5	I am trying prayer just in time	5 (1.81%)	64 (23.10%)	138 (49.82%)	68 (24.55%)	2 (0.72%)	3.01
6	I often postpone prayer until almost finished time	3 (1.08%)	66 (23.83%)	143 (51.62%)	60 (21.66%)	5 (1.81%)	3.01
7	I pray more often at the beginning time than at the end time	4 (1.44%)	58 (20.94%)	147 (53.07%)	64 (23.10%)	4 (1.44%)	2.98
8	I am trying to miss prayer	6 (2.17%)	68 (24.55%)	142 (51.26%)	57 (20.58%)	4 (1.44%)	3.05
9	I am trying to carry out prayer in a way that the congregation	4 (1.44%)	60 (21.66%)	149 (53.79%)	60 (21.66%)	4 (1.44%)	3.00
10	I am more like prayer Alone than congregation	6 (2.17%)	64 (23.10%)	138 (49.82%)	66 (23.83%)	3 (1.08%)	3.01
11	I follow a prayer congregation at school in an orderly manner	5 (1.81%)	60 (21.66%)	139 (50.18%)	70 (25.27%)	3 (1.08%)	2.98
12	I feel calm and solemn during prayer	6 (2.17%)	61 (22.02%)	145 (52.35%)	61 (22.02%)	4 (1.44%)	3.01
13	Thought I often float a kite when praying	3 (1.08%)	65 (23.47%)	141 (50.90%)	63 (22.74%)	5 (1.81%)	2.99
14	I am trying guard reading and movement prayer with Correct	4 (1.44%)	58 (20.94%)	141 (50.90%)	70 (25.27%)	4 (1.44%)	2.96
15	I pray really, really after prayer	6 (2.17%)	48 (17.33%)	153 (55.23%)	64 (23.10%)	6 (2.17%)	2.94

Most participants chose Less Doubtful (KR) answers on almost all statements. This shows that prayer participation education is implemented at an intermediate level and is not yet fully consistent in accuracy, time, solemnity, and habit in the congregation. Still needs coaching and motivation to improve quality and discipline; prayer participation can increase.

Influence Motivation Study to Activity Prayer

Table 7. Normality Test Results Kolmogorov-Smirnov

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test		Unstandardized Residual
N		277
Normal Parameters [a,b]	Mean	.0000000
	Standard Deviation	6.70274645
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.030
	Positive	.030

	Negative	-.020
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		.030
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.200 c,d

Based on the table above, the Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) value is 0.200. Sig. (2-tailed) is 0.200. Because it is greater than 0.05 (0.200 > 0.05), the data used in this study are normally distributed.

Table 8. Linearity Test Results

			Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Student prayer activity * Motivation to learn faith and morals	Between Groups	(Combined)	15459.971	48	322,083	6,758	.000
		Linearity	13927.110	1	13927.110	292,206	.000
		Deviation from Linearity	1532,861	47	32,614	.684	.940
	Within Groups		10866939	228	47,662		
	Total		26326.910	276			

Based on the table, the deviation from linearity is> 0.05. Therefore, it can be concluded that motivation for learning aqidah and akhlak is linearly related to students' prayer activity.

Simple linear regression analysis was used to determine the effect of learning motivation on students' prayer activity. Data processing was performed using SPSS version 25.0, with the following analysis results:

Table 9. Results of Simple Linear Regression Analysis Test

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	11,883	1,926		6,170	.000
	X1	.690	.039	.727	17,575	.000

Based on the results of the simple regression test above, the following regression was obtained:

Y = a + b1X1

Y = 11.883 + 0.690X

Based on the equation, the constant 11.883 means that if motivation to study is zero, prayer activity is 11.883. The regression coefficient of 0.690 is positive, meaning that every 1-unit increase in motivation to study increases prayer activity by 0.690 units. Thus, motivation to study positively influences prayer activity.

Hypothesis Test (T-Test)

The partial significance test (t-test) is used to determine whether independent variables individually influence the dependent variable. If the calculated t-count> t-table and Sig. value < 0.05, then the independent variables significantly partially influence the dependent variable.

Table 10. T-Test Results

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	11,883	1,926		6,170	.000
	X1	.690	.039	.727	17,575	.000

Based on the t-test results (partial) in the Coefficients Table, the variables motivation, learning Aqidah, and morals have a T-count of 17,575 with a significance of 0.000 < 0.05. Thus, H_0 is rejected, and H_1 is accepted, showing that motivation to learn Aqidah and Morals significantly influences

prayer participation. This means that the more motivated students are to learn Aqidah and morals, the higher their prayer participation in school.

The coefficient of determination analysis was conducted to assess how much learning motivation influences students' prayer activity.

Table 11. R Square Test Results

Model Summary				
Model	**R**	**R Square**	**Adjusted R Square**	**Standard Error of the Estimate**
1	.727 [a]	.529	.527	6.71492

Based on the coefficient of determination table, the R-squared value was 0.529. This indicates that motivation to learn Aqidah Akhlak explains 52.9% of the variation in students' prayer activity. In comparison, the remaining 47.1% is explained by other factors outside the regression model that were not examined in this study.

Table 13. Calculation Results: Size Effect (Cohen's f^2)

R Square (R^2)	Cohen's $f^2 = R^2/(1 - R^2)$	Criteria (Cohen, 1988)
0.529	1,123	Large ($f^2 \geq 0.35$)

The effect size is calculated using Cohen's f^2 with the formula $f^2 = R^2/(1-R^2)$. Based on Table 13, the R^2 value of 0.529 produces $f^2 = 0.529 /(1-0.529) = 1.123$. This value exceeds the 0.35 threshold, so it is classified as a large effect size. Thus, the influence of motivation to learn Aqidah and Morals on prayer activity is not only statistically significant, but also practically meaningful.

Supporting and Inhibiting Factors in Increasing Motivation to Learn Aqidah and Akhlak on the Activeness of Students' Prayers at Mts Negeri Model

Based on the pattern-answer questionnaire, regression test results, and previous findings, there were indications of factors that support and inhibit motivation to learn Aqidah and Morals to participate in prayer activities, as follows:

Table 14. Supporting and Inhibiting Factors

No	Types of Factors	Factor	Indicators /Basis of Findings
1	Supporters	Motivation for learning Aqidah and Morals	Influential, positive, and significant to the prayer activity, with a regression coefficient of 0.690 and a contribution of 52.9%.
2	Supporters	Teacher's exemplary behavior	These are factors that can support habituation behavior in religious participants.
3	Supporters	Habituation through prayer congregations and religious programs at school	As many as 17.33%–24.55% of respondents answered Agree to the item activity prayer
4	Supporters	Cultural religious schools and support from family	Identified in discussion as factors that can support activity prayer.
5	Inhibitor	Intrinsic motivation that is not optimal	Less Doubtful (KR) Answers dominate almost all items on the questionnaire, with percentages around 49.82%–55.96%.
6	Inhibitor	Inconsistency in carrying out prayer	Disagree responses were 21.66%–25.27% for the items prayer appropriate time, prayer congregation, guard reading, and movement prayer.
7	Inhibitor	Influence of socializing, friends, peers, and free time	These are other possible factors related to prayer activity, but they were not measured in this study.

8	Inhibitor	Lack of supervision and habituation of worship at home	Identified as possible factors that can hinder prayer activity, but not tested specifically through variable study.

4. Discussion

Motivation Learning Aqidah and Morals Participant educated at MTs Negeri Model

The analysis of 277 seventh-grade students using a 16-statement questionnaire showed a minimum score of 16, a maximum of 80, and an average of 47.99. The categorization showed that 48 respondents (17.33%) were low, 181 respondents (65.34%) were moderate, and 48 respondents (17.33%) were high; therefore, motivation to learn Aqidah Akhlak was moderate. This finding is reinforced by the dominance of KR answers (49.82%–55.96%) in almost all items. This means students have learning motivation, but it is not yet strongly intrinsic; it is neither high nor low.

Arumsari's (2022) research found that learning motivation in religious subjects tends to be moderate when learning remains conventional and does not involve active student participation. Aulia's (2023) research also found moderate motivation, characterized by minimal initiative in independent learning, asking questions, and reviewing material outside of class hours. This was evident in the items rereading material at home and the courage to ask questions in this study. Suprianto's (2023) research, in the moderate category, indicates that students are aware of the importance of learning, but are not supported by strong intrinsic motivation due to a lack of continuous reinforcement of values, habits, and role models at school and at home.

Theoretically, learning motivation is influenced by internal and external factors that encourage students to engage in learning. Ryan and Deci's theory explains that motivation develops through fulfilling three basic psychological needs: autonomy (independence), competence (confidence in one's own abilities), and relatedness (positive relationships with others) (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Meanwhile, expectancy-value theory explains that motivation is influenced by students' expectations of success and the value they place on a learning activity (Wigfield & Eccles, 2000). The moderate category in this study indicates that students' motivation to learn Aqidah Akhlak has formed but still needs improvement through strengthening learning independence, active involvement in learning, and understanding the benefits of the material for everyday life.

Based on the description, participants' motivation to learn Aqidah and Akhlak at MTs Negeri Model Palopo is concluded to be in the moderate category. Findings: This indicates the need to improve the quality of Aqidah and Akhlak learning through more varied methods, a contextual approach, and stronger motivation and habituation of religious values, so students' motivation can increase and positively impact religious behavior, especially prayer activities.

Activity: Student Prayers at Mts Negeri Model

Analysis of 277 students using a 15-statement questionnaire showed a minimum score of 18, a maximum of 73, an average of 44.98, and a standard deviation of 9.767. Categorization showed 48 respondents (17.33%) in the low category, 177 respondents (63.90%) in the medium category, and 52 respondents (18.77%) in the high category, so prayer activity falls in the medium category. Students perform obligatory prayers but are not consistent in punctuality, reverence, and congregational habits. The low STS percentage indicates that prayer activity is not in the low category but is at the developing stage.

Aulia's (2023) research found that students' moderate prayer activity was still heavily influenced by external factors such as teacher supervision, school rules, and the environment. Without strong internal motivation, students tended to be inconsistent. Suprianto's (2023) research reported that moderate prayer performance, especially in congregation and on time, stemmed from

personal awareness and a lack of sustained habituation. Arumsari's (2022) research added that formal religious guidance that did not address affective aspects caused worship activity to stop at a moderate level, and this was reflected in the points of reverence and the habit of praying after prayer.

In a theoretical way, consistent worship behavior is influenced by quality motivation and habits that are formed in self-participant education. *Self-determination theory, proposed by Ryan and* Deci, explains that behavior can be driven by external regulation, such as rules and supervision, as well as by internalized values pursued for their own sake (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Meanwhile, habit theory explains that behavior becomes consistent and automatic through repetition in a stable context, so the process requires time and continuous practice (Lally et al., 2010). Category currently under research. This suggests that participants have prayed, but accuracy, timing, solemnity, and congregational prayer are not yet fully formed. This pattern may reflect worship values that have not been fully internalized or habituated and have not been sustained, either at school or at home, so intensive coaching and consistent practice are still required. However, this nature-conceptual instrument does not measure motivation and duration of habituation.

Based on the description, it can be concluded that the level of prayer activity among participants studied at MTs Negeri Model Palopo is in the moderate category. This shows that participants have carried out obligatory prayer but still need more intensive coaching, consistent worship practice, and stronger religious motivation so prayer activity can increase optimally, both in the school environment and in daily life.

The Influence of Motivation to Learn Aqidah and Akhlak on Students' Active Prayer

The results indicate that motivation to learn Aqidah Akhlak has a positive and significant effect on students' prayer activity. This is proven through a simple linear regression analysis, which produces the equation $\hat{Y} = 11.883 + 0.690X$. The positive regression coefficient indicates that as motivation to learn Aqidah Akhlak increases, students pray more. The t-test results show that the calculated t (17.575) exceeds the table t (1.969), with a significance value of 0.000 (< 0.05), so H0 is rejected, and Ha is accepted. The correlation coefficient of 0.727 indicates a strong relationship, while the coefficient of determination of 52.9% indicates that motivation to learn Aqidah Akhlak contributes 52.9% to students' activeness in prayer.

Research by Khotmawati, Sa'dullah, and Subekti (2019) found that Islamic Religious Education learning affects students' activeness in performing prayers. fardhu. These results indicate that the religious learning process relates to students' worship practices. Research by Sari, Huda, and Muthohari (2017) also shows a relationship between learning motivation and prayer practice outcomes, strengthening the finding that motivation in the learning process relates to students' ability to practice religious material. In addition, research by Faridatul, Salamah, and Jazilurrahman (2026) at the MTs level examines the relationship between Dhuha prayer discipline and Islamic Religious Education learning motivation. Although the variables and direction of the relationship differ, the study shows that Islamic Religious Education learning motivation and the implementation of Islamic Religious Education (Salat) are two aspects that can be studied empirically in the madrasah environment.

Theoretically, strong motivation to study pushes participants to educate themselves and practice the values they learn. Self-determination theory explains that internalized values are more Likely to be realized in consistent behavior because the behavior is executed by the person themselves (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Meanwhile, expectancy-value theory explains that choice and perseverance are influenced by beliefs about one's abilities and the value one places on an activity (Wigfield & Eccles, 2000). The relationship is strongly positive (r = 0.727), accounting for 52.9% of the variance. This indicates that participants with more education, motivation, and stronger beliefs in

creed and morals tend to be more active in carrying out prayer. Meanwhile, the remaining 47.1% of the variation is unexplained, suggesting that other factors, such as belief, capabilities, perceived costs, and support from family, friends, and peers, may play a role but were not measured in this study. Because of the survey design and one-time relationship, the results are interpreted as associations, not cause and effect.

The 52.9% contribution suggests that students' prayer activity relates to their motivation to learn Aqidah Akhlak (Islamic creed), but other factors not examined in this study may also influence it. These factors can originate from the family environment, social interactions, teacher role models, habits, and the school's religious culture. Thus, the results indicate that motivation to learn Aqidah Akhlak contributes to students' prayer activity, but it is not the only factor in implementing this worship.

Supporting and Inhibiting Factors

Based on the respondents' answer patterns, regression results, and previous findings, indications of supporting and inhibiting factors in increasing the motivation to learn Aqidah Akhlak towards students' prayer activity are summarized in Table 14. The strongest supporting indication is the positive and significant influence of learning motivation on prayer activity (b = 0.690). The most prominent inhibiting indication is intrinsic motivation, which does not seem to be optimal, as seen from the KR answers, which range from 49.82%-55.96% and dominate almost all items, as well as inconsistent prayer implementation, as seen from the Disagree answers of 21.66%-25.27% on the items of praying on time, praying in congregation, and maintaining prayer readings and movements.

The regression results show that learning motivation has a positive and significant effect on prayer activity, with a regression coefficient of 0.690 and a contribution of 52.9%. A total of 17.33%-24.55% of respondents answered Agree on the prayer activity item, indicating that some students already pray actively. Previous findings stated that teacher role models, the habit of congregational prayer, religious programs and school religious culture, and the habit of worship in the family play a role in prayer activity. However, this study did not measure these factors directly, so their relationships still need further establishment.

On the other hand, the respondents' response patterns indicate several factors that could potentially hinder prayer activity. Intrinsic motivation appears suboptimal, as indicated by the dominance of KR responses on almost all learning motivation questionnaire items. Inconsistencies in prayer performance are evident in punctuality, congregational participation, and monitoring of prayer readings and movements. Based on previous studies, peer interaction, unproductive use of free time, and lack of parental supervision and prayer habituation at home may contribute. However, this study's data cannot confirm them. The remaining 47.1% is explained by other variables outside the model, suggesting these factors may also play a role. Because this study uses a quantitative design, the above description interprets questionnaire response patterns and does not yet describe the causal factors in depth. Future research can explore this through interviews or observations.

5. Conclusion

The study revealed four main findings. First, students' motivation to learn Aqidah Akhlak at MTs Negeri Model Palopo was in the medium category, with an average of 47.99; 48 students (17.33%) were in the low category, 181 students (65.34%) in the medium category, and 48 students (17.33%) in the high category, indicating that learning motivation still needs strengthening. Second, prayer activity was also in the medium category, with an average of 44.98; 48 students (17.33%) were

in the low category, 177 students (63.90%) in the medium category, and 52 students (18.77%) in the high category, indicating that consistency in prayer practice, especially punctuality, solemnity, and congregational prayer, still needs improvement. Third, motivation to learn Aqidah Akhlak had a positive and significant effect on prayer activity, as shown by the regression equation $\hat{Y} = 11.883 + 0.690X$, with t-count 17.575 > t-table 1.9698 and a significance value of 0.000 < 0.05, contributing 52.9%. In comparison, other factors not analyzed in this study explained 47.1%. Fourth, the questionnaire response patterns indicated that learning motivation, teacher role models, the habit of congregational prayer, the school's religious culture, and family support may be supporting factors, whereas weak independent learning motivation, the influence of social circles, and limited parental supervision may be inhibiting factors; however, these factors were not tested separately or explored through in-depth interviews and therefore cannot be stated as direct causes of students' prayer activity.

This study has limitations because it used only motivation to learn Aqidah Akhlak as the independent variable; data were collected through a questionnaire relying on students' perceptions and did not provide an in-depth picture of daily worship practices; the sample was limited to seventh-grade students at a single madrasah, so generalization requires caution; and supporting and inhibiting factors were interpreted from questionnaire response patterns rather than from specific testing or in-depth interviews. Practically, schools should develop a program to habituate congregational prayer, regularly monitor participation, and evaluate its implementation monthly; Aqidah Akhlak teachers can link learning materials to daily worship practices through case discussions, reflection, and participatory learning activities; schools can also communicate regularly with parents to support prayer habits at home without making supervision the sole approach; and students can strengthen their awareness of worship through habit targets and regular personal reflection. Further research is recommended to include other variables, such as family support, social environment, teacher role models, and the school's religious culture, and to use a mixed-method approach so that the supporting and inhibiting factors of prayer activity can be examined in greater depth.

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