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The Effect Of The Pesantren Environment And Participation In Local Organizations On The Academic Achievement Of Santri From Sumatra

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Abstract:
This study aims to examine the influence of the pesantren environment and participation in regional organizations on the academic achievement of students from Sumatra, with learning motivation as a mediating variable. The study employed a quantitative approach using an ex-post facto design with a cross-sectional survey. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire distributed to 57 Sumatran students studying in pesantren environments in Java. The data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). The results indicate that participation in regional organizations has a significant positive effect on academic achievement (β = 0.560; p = 0.002). The pesantren environment significantly influences learning motivation (β = 0.345; p = 0.000), but does not have a significant direct effect on academic achievement (β = 0.241; p = 0.193). In addition, academic achievement significantly affects learning motivation (β = 0.513; p = 0.000). The mediation analysis shows that academic achievement significantly mediates the relationship between organizational participation and learning motivation (β = 0.288; p = 0.005), while it does not mediate the relationship between the pesantren environment and learning motivation. The model explains 60.7% of the variance in academic achievement (R^2 = 0.607) and 93% of the variance in learning motivation (R^2 = 0.930). These findings highlight that academic success among Sumatran students in pesantren settings is influenced by social engagement, institutional environment, and motivational factors.

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INTRODUCTION

Islamic boarding schools, widely known as pesantren, represent one of the oldest and most influential educational institutions in Indonesia. As socio-religious educational communities, pesantren integrate academic instruction with character formation, discipline,

and communal life (Indra and Alim 2024). According to Kementerian Agama Republik Indonesia, pesantren have experienced significant growth in both number and institutional diversity, reflecting their expanding role in shaping students' intellectual and moral development (Sholihah et al. 2025; Marzuki and Rofi'ah 2025b). Beyond religious instruction, contemporary pesantren increasingly adopt formal curricula aligned with national education standards, positioning themselves as hybrid institutions that balance tradition and modern academic expectations (Irpani 2024; Mawardi and Ruhiyah 2022). For students originating from Sumatra who pursue education in pesantren outside their home regions particularly in Java the educational experience is not merely academic but also socio-cultural (Kahu and Nelson 2018; Tinto 2017). These students encounter new cultural norms, linguistic variations, and organizational dynamics that may influence their adaptation processes and academic performance (Junaedi and Suhartini 2022; Sopian et al. 2025). The pesantren environment, characterized by structured daily routines, collective living, spiritual mentoring, and strong kyai leadership, may serve as both a supportive ecosystem and a demanding context that shapes students' motivation to learn. In this regard, learning motivation becomes a central psychological construct mediating how environmental stimuli translate into academic achievement (Nashihin et al. 2025a; Idhan et al. 2024).

Previous studies have consistently shown that learning motivation is a significant predictor of students' academic achievement across different educational contexts (Mustikarini and Puspasari 2021; Umar et al. 2023). Research based on self-determination theory and expectancy-value theory indicates that motivated students demonstrate greater persistence, stronger learning engagement, and better academic performance (Eccles and Wigfield 2020a; Copeman Petig et al. 2019). In the context of pesantren, studies have found that institutional culture, religious values, and disciplined learning environments positively influence students' motivation and educational outcomes (Indra & Alim, 2024; Irpani, 2024; Nashihin et al., 2025a). Other researchers have emphasized that participation in regional student organizations provides social support, leadership experience, and cultural identity reinforcement, which contribute to students' self-efficacy and academic persistence (Zhou and Ahmad 2025; Marzuki and Rofi'ah 2025; Rasid and Al Azhari 2025).). However, previous studies have generally examined the pesantren environment, organizational participation, and learning motivation independently. Empirical evidence integrating these variables, particularly among Sumatran students studying in pesantren outside their home region, remains limited, leaving an important gap that this study seeks to address (Fauzah 2025a; Yunus et al. 2025).

This study aims to examine the influence of the pesantren environment and participation in regional student organizations on the academic achievement of santri from Sumatra studying in Islamic boarding schools outside their home region, particularly in Java. Specifically, the research investigates whether a supportive pesantren environment and active involvement in local organizations contribute directly to students' academic achievement and indirectly through learning motivation as a mediating variable. By integrating environmental, organizational, and psychological perspectives into a single analytical framework, this study seeks to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the contextual factors affecting the academic success of migrant santri. Furthermore, the research intends to address the limited empirical evidence concerning the combined effects of institutional environment,

organizational participation, and learning motivation within the pesantren context. The findings are expected to enrich the literature on Islamic education and educational psychology while offering practical recommendations for pesantren leaders, educators, and regional student organizations in designing programs that strengthen learning motivation, social adaptation, and sustainable academic achievement among Sumatran santri.

Based on the theoretical framework and findings of previous studies, this research proposes that the pesantren environment and participation in regional student organizations significantly influence the academic achievement of Sumatran santri. A supportive pesantren environment characterized by disciplined learning, spiritual guidance, and positive social interaction is expected to enhance students' learning motivation, which subsequently improves academic performance. Likewise, active participation in local organizations is hypothesized to strengthen students' social support, leadership skills, and self-efficacy, thereby contributing positively to their academic achievement. Furthermore, this study assumes that learning motivation functions as a mediating variable that explains the relationship between the pesantren environment, organizational participation, and academic achievement. Accordingly, the principal hypotheses are that: (1) the pesantren environment has a positive and significant effect on academic achievement; (2) participation in local organizations positively affects academic achievement; (3) both variables positively influence learning motivation; and (4) learning motivation mediates the relationship between the independent variables and the academic achievement of Sumatran santri.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed an expost facto method with a cross sectional design, as it focused on examining phenomena and conditions that had already occurred without manipulating the research variables (Hair et al. 2021). Data were collected at a single point in time through a structured questionnaire developed based on the conceptual framework of the study. This design enabled the researchers to analyze both direct and indirect effects among the variables, namely Pesantren Environment (X1), Organization Participation (X2), Learning Motivation (Z), and Academic Achievement (Y), using empirical data obtained from the field. The respondents of this study consisted of 57 students from Sumatra who were pursuing their studies while living in a pesantren environment in Java. The sample was selected using a non-probability sampling method through a purposive sampling technique. The inclusion criteria were: (1) active students at least in their second semester, (2) originating from Sumatra, (3) residing or actively engaged in a pesantren environment, (4) participating or having participated in regional student organizations, and (5) willing to complete the research questionnaire voluntarily. The use of purposive sampling ensured that participants had direct experience with the dynamics of the pesantren environment and organizational participation, which are central to this study.

The sample size of 57 respondents was considered adequate for analysis using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). According to (Hair et al. 2021; Dash and Paul 2021). PLS-SEM is suitable for small to medium sample sizes without compromising the validity of the estimated relationships between constructs. The general rule of thumb in PLS-SEM states that the minimum sample size should be ten times the largest number of structural paths directed at a particular endogenous construct. In this study, the endogenous variables (Learning Motivation and Academic Achievement) each receive two

main structural paths from exogenous variables, resulting in a minimum recommended sample size of 20 respondents. Therefore, the total of 57 respondents exceeds the minimum requirement and is considered sufficient to generate valid and interpretable findings.

The research instrument was developed based on four main constructs: (1) Pesantren Environment (X1), including social support, discipline, learning facilities, and religious guidance; (2) Organization Participation (X2), covering intensity of involvement, organizational roles, and contribution to activities; (3) Learning Motivation (Z), reflecting intrinsic and extrinsic motivational aspects; and (4) Academic Achievement (Y), measured through students' academic performance indicators. All items were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The questionnaire grid is presented in Table 1.

Table 1.

The Construct of the Research Variables

No	Variable	Indicators	Construction	References
1	X_1 (Pesantren Enviroment)	Study Habit Formation	LP 1	(Nashihin et al. 2025b; Sari et al. 2025a; Marzuki and Rofi'ah 2025c)
2		Time Discipline	LP 2	
3		Academic Responsibility	LP 3	
4		Religious Academic Reinforcement	LP 4	
5		Learning Focus	LP 5	
6		Character Building	LP 6	
7		Psychological Comfort	LP 7	
8		Peer Support	LP 8	
9		Moral & Academic Guidance	LP 9	
10	X_2 (Organization Participation)	Participation Intensity	KO 1	(Sari et al. 2025b; Mustaqim and Wahjoedi 2024; Zhang et al. 2025)
11		Participation Frequency	KO 2	
12		Organizational Role	KO 3	
13		Leadership Involvement	KO 4	
14		Social Adaptation	KO 5	
15		Social Acceptance	KO 6	
16		Organizational Pride	KO 7	
17		Commitment	KO 8	
18	Y (Academic Achievement)	Perceived Performance	PA 1	(Azmi et al. 2024; Maharani et al. 2024; Nashihin et al. 2025b)
19		Academic Understanding	PA 2	
20		Assignment Discipline	PA 3	
21		Course Stability	PA 4	

No	Variable	Indicators	Construction	References
22		GPA Consistency	PA 5	
23		Classroom Engagement	PA 6	
24		Academic Enrichment	PA 7	
25		Academic Self-Development	PA 8	
26		Intrinsic Motivation	MB 1	
27		Learning Enjoyment	MB 2	
28		Achievement Orientation	MB 3	
29	Z (Learning Motivation)	Family Motivation	MB 4	(Khoiriyah et al. 2025; Masriani et al. 2024; Fauzah 2025b)
30		Career Aspiration	MB 5	
31		Persistence	MB 6	
32		Academic Resilience	MB 7	
33		Goal Setting	MB 8	

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

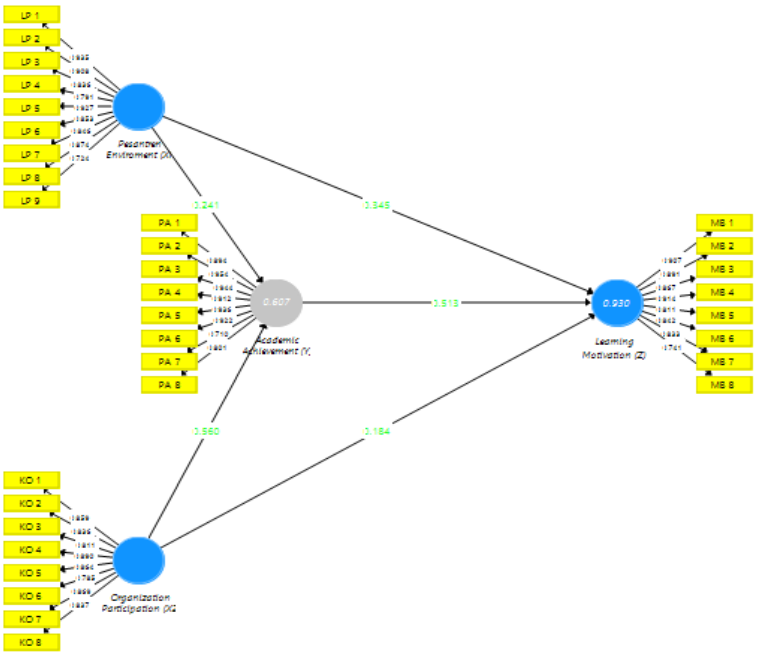
Results

Evaluation of Measurement Models

The assessment of the measurement model was carried out to ensure that each construct met the criteria of validity and reliability before proceeding to the structural model analysis. Convergent validity was examined through factor loadings, Average Variance Extracted (AVE), and Composite Reliability (CR).

Figure 1.

Measurement Model Testing (Outer Model)



Indicators were considered valid when their loading values exceeded 0.70, while an AVE value greater than 0.50 indicated that the construct explained more than half of

the variance of its indicators. Discriminant validity was tested to confirm that each construct was empirically distinct from the others. This was evaluated by comparing the square root of AVE with the correlations among constructs. A construct was deemed to satisfy discriminant validity if the square root of its AVE was higher than the inter-construct correlations. Reliability was measured using Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability. Both values above 0.70 suggested internal consistency and stability of the indicators in representing their respective constructs.

Table 2.
Outer Model: Convergent Validity and Reliability

NO	Variable	Indicator	Convert Validity		Consistency Reliability		
			FL (λ>0.70)	AVE (>0.50)	CA (α>0.70)	rho_A (φ>0.70)	CR (δ>0.70)
1	X_1 (Pesantren Enviroment)	LP 1	0.935	0.788	0.960	0.960	0.967
2		LP 2	0.908				
3		LP 3	0.836				
4		LP 4	0.791				
5		LP 5	0.927				
6		LP 6	0.853				
7		LP 7	0.846				
8		LP 8	0.874				
9		LP 9	0.724				
10	X_2 (Organization Participation)	KO 1	0.859	0.727	0.946	0.948	0.955
11		KO 2	0.836				
12		KO 3	0.811				
13		KO 4	0.890				
14		KO 5	0.864				
15		KO 6	0.785				
16		KO 7	0.869				
17		KO 8	0.859				
18	Y (Academic Achievement)	PA 1	0.894	0.713	0.942	0.945	0.952
19		PA 2	0.954				
20		PA 3	0.944				
21		PA 4	0.912				
22		PA 5	0.936				
23		PA 6	0.922				
24		PA 7	0.710				
25		PA 8	0.801				
26	Z (Learning Motivation)	MB 1	0.907	0.735	0.954	0.956	0.961
27		MB 2	0.891				
28		MB 3	0.867				
29		MB 4	0.914				
30		MB 5	0.811				
31		MB 6	0.842				
32		MB 7	0.833				
33		MB 8	0.741				

Based on the measurement model assessment indicators demonstrate outer loading values above the recommended threshold of 0.70, confirming adequate

convergent validity. The Pesantren Environment (X_1) construct shows loading values for KO1–KO8 ranging from 0.785 to 0.890. The Organization Participation (X_2) construct presents loadings for LP1–LP9 between 0.724 and 0.935. Furthermore, the Learning Motivation (Z) construct reports loading values for MB1–MB8 ranging from 0.741 to 0.914. The Academic Achievement (Y) construct demonstrates loadings for PA1–PA8 between 0.710 and 0.954. These findings indicate that each indicator substantially reflects its respective latent construct, suggesting that the measurement model satisfies the criteria for convergent validity and is appropriate for subsequent structural model analysis.

The evaluation of the measurement model demonstrates that all constructs meet the recommended criteria for reliability and convergent validity In terms of indicator reliability, all outer loading values exceed 0.70. The Pesantren Environment (X_1) construct shows loadings ranging from 0.785 to 0.890. Organization Participation (X_2) presents loadings between 0.724 and 0.935. Learning Motivation (Z) has loading values from 0.741 to 0.914, while Academic Achievement (Y) ranges from 0.710 to 0.954. These results confirm that each indicator strongly reflects its respective latent construct. Regarding internal consistency reliability, all Cronbach's Alpha values range from 0.942 to 0.960, rho_A values from 0.945 to 0.960, and Composite Reliability values from 0.952 to 0.967, all exceeding the 0.70 threshold. Furthermore, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values range from 0.713 to 0.788, surpassing the minimum criterion of 0.50. Overall, these findings indicate that the measurement model demonstrates strong reliability and satisfactory convergent validity, making it suitable for subsequent structural model analysis.

Table 3.
Measurement of Structural Model R^2

Variables	R Square	R Square Adjusted
Academic Achievement (Y)	0.607	0.592
Learning Motivation (Z)	0.930	0.926

Based on the effect size (f^2) results Academic Achievement, the magnitude of each exogenous construct's contribution to the endogenous variables can be interpreted using Cohen's criteria (0.02 = small, 0.15 = medium, 0.35 = large). The effect of Organization Participation (X_2) on Academic Achievement (Y) is 0.193, indicating a moderate effect. In contrast, Pesantren Environment (X_1) on Academic Achievement (Y) shows an f^2 value of 0.036, which reflects a small effect. Regarding Learning Motivation (Z), the effect of Organization Participation (X_2) is 0.097, categorized as small, whereas Pesantren Environment (X_1) demonstrates an f^2 value of 0.396, indicating a large effect.

Table 4.
Measurement of Structural Mode (f^2)

Variables	(Y)	(Z)
Academic Achievement (Y)	-	1.478
Organization Participation (X_2)	0.193	0.097
Pesantren Enviroment (X_I)	0.036	0.396

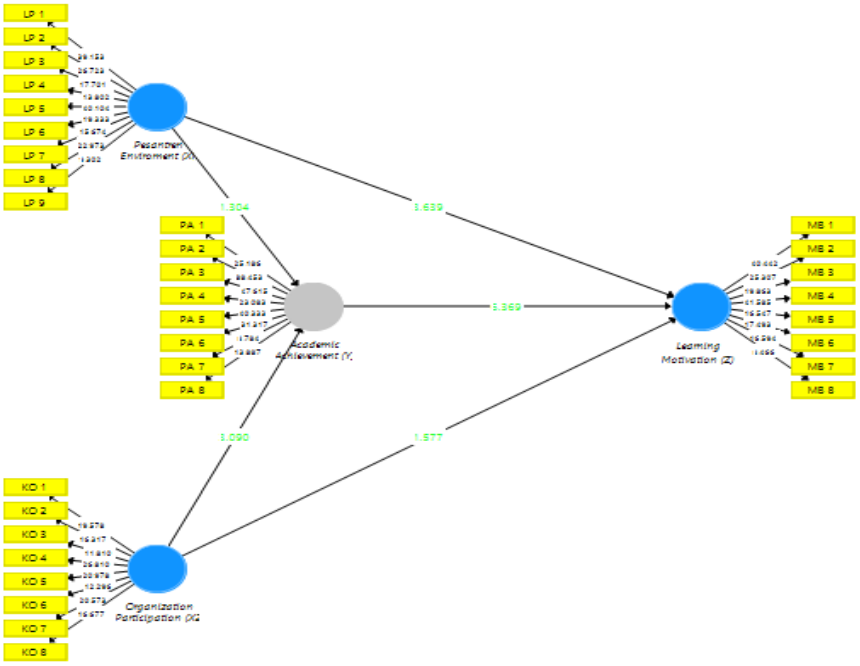
Based on the R^2 values R Squar, the structural model demonstrates solid explanatory strength. The R^2 for Academic Achievement (Y) is 0.607, with an adjusted R^2 of 0.592, meaning that approximately 60% of the variance in Academic Achievement is accounted for by the predictors included in the model. This indicates a moderate level of explanatory power, while the remaining variance is influenced by other variables not examined in this study. For Learning Motivation (Z), the R^2 value reaches 0.930, with an adjusted R^2 of 0.926. This shows that 93% of the variance in Learning Motivation is explained by the exogenous constructs, reflecting a very strong level of explanatory power.

Table 5.
Discriminant Validity: The Fornell Larcker

Variable	Y	Z	X_2	X_1
Y→PA	0.888			
Z→MB	0.906	0.852		
X_2→KO	0.770	0.880	0.845	
X_1→LP	0.729	0.879	0.871	0.857

Based on the Fornell Larcker criterion, the square root of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for each construct was calculated to evaluate discriminant validity. The obtained values were 0.888 for Academic Achievement (Y), 0.852 for Learning Motivation (Z), 0.845 for Organization Participation (X2), and 0.857 for the Pesantren Environment (X1). According to the Fornell–Larcker criterion, the square root of the AVE for each construct should be greater than its correlations with all other constructs, indicating that each latent variable shares more variance with its own indicators than with other constructs in the model. However, the correlation matrix reveals several values that exceed the corresponding square root of the AVE. Specifically, the correlation between Academic Achievement and Learning Motivation is 0.906, which is higher than the square root of the AVE for both constructs (0.888 and 0.852). Likewise, the correlation between Learning Motivation and Organization Participation reaches 0.880, while the correlation between Learning Motivation and the Pesantren Environment is also relatively high. These findings indicate that discriminant validity is not fully established, suggesting that the constructs exhibit substantial conceptual overlap. Consequently, further assessment using complementary approaches, such as the Heterotrait–Monotrait (HTMT) ratio or cross-loading analysis, is recommended to confirm the distinctiveness of the measurement model before interpreting the structural relationships.

Figure 2.
Evaluation of Structural Models



Path analysis in PLS-SEM is applied to assess the relationships among latent constructs within the structural model. The path coefficient indicates both the direction and the magnitude of influence between exogenous and endogenous variables and is estimated using a regression-based procedure. Hypothesis testing is performed by examining the statistical significance of each path coefficient through t-statistics and p-values. A relationship is considered significant when the p-value is below the chosen significance level, typically 0.05. Bootstrapping is commonly used to generate standard errors and t-values, ensuring more reliable results. Through this procedure, researchers can determine whether the proposed relationships are empirically supported and evaluate how strongly each construct contributes to explaining the model.

Table 6.
The Result of Path Analysis

Hypothesis	Path Analysis	β-Values (+/-)	T-Statistics	SDV	Std. Error (>1.96)	Sig. (<0.05)	Decision
H-DIR1	PA→MB	0.513	0.514	0.081	6.369	0.000	Accepted
H-DIR2	KO→PA	0.560	0.554	0.181	3.090	0.002	Accepted
H-DIR3	KO→MB	0.184	0.187	0.116	1.577	0.115	N/A
H-DIR4	LP→PA	0.241	0.250	0.185	1.304	0.193	N/A
H-DIR5	LP→MB	0.345	0.341	0.095	3.639	0.000	Accepted

Based on the bootstrapping results uji, Academic Achievement (Y) has a positive and statistically significant effect on Learning Motivation (Z), with a path coefficient of 0.513, a t-statistic of 6.369, and a p-value of 0.000. This indicates that better academic performance is associated with higher learning motivation. In addition, Organization Participation (X_2) significantly influences Academic Achievement (Y), as shown by a coefficient of 0.560, a t-statistic of 3.090, and a p-value of 0.002. These findings suggest that students who actively engage in organizational activities tend to achieve stronger academic outcomes. On the other hand, Organization Participation (X_2) does not have a significant direct effect on Learning Motivation (Z), as reflected by a coefficient of 0.184, a t-statistic of 1.577, and a p-value of 0.115. Similarly, Pesantren Environment (X_1) does not significantly affect Academic Achievement (Y) (coefficient = 0.241; t = 1.304; p = 0.193). However, Pesantren Environment (X_1) significantly influences Learning Motivation (Z), with a coefficient of 0.345, a t-statistic of 3.639, and a p-value of 0.000. Overall, the results indicate that learning motivation is strongly shaped by academic achievement and the pesantren environment, while organizational participation.

Table 7.
The Mediating Roles of Joint Commitment

Hypothesis	Path Analysis	β-Values (+/-)	T-Statistics	SDV	Std. Error (>1.96)	Sig. (<0.05)	Decision
H-IND1	$X_2 \rightarrow Y \rightarrow Z$	0.288	0.284	0.102	2.809	0.005	Accepted
H-IND2	$X_1 \rightarrow Y \rightarrow Z$	0.124	0.128	0.098	1.261	0.208	$^{N}/_{A}$

Based on the mediation analysis results, the indirect effect of Organization Participation (X_2) on Learning Motivation (Z) through Academic Achievement (Y) is statistically significant, with a coefficient of 0.288, a t-statistic of 2.809, and a p-value of 0.005. This indicates that Academic Achievement successfully mediates the relationship between Organization Participation and Learning Motivation, meaning that students' involvement in organizations enhances motivation indirectly by improving academic performance. In contrast, the indirect effect of Pesantren Environment (X_1) on Learning Motivation (Z) through Academic Achievement (Y) is not significant, as shown by a coefficient of 0.124, a t-statistic of 1.261, and a p-value of 0.208. Therefore, Academic Achievement does not mediate the relationship between Pesantren Environment and Learning Motivation. Overall, the findings suggest that academic performance plays a meaningful mediating role only in the relationship between organizational participation and learning motivation.

Discussion

The findings indicate that the pesantren environment plays a significant role in shaping the academic achievement of students from Sumatra. A structured religious atmosphere, disciplined daily routines, close supervision from teachers (ustadz/ustadzah), and strong peer interaction create a supportive learning climate. Such an environment not only strengthens students' character but also fosters responsibility and persistence in completing academic

tasks. This suggests that the educational culture within the pesantren contributes positively to students' academic outcomes (Lizzio et al. 2002; Chen et al. 2018).

Participation in regional organizations also demonstrates an important contribution to academic achievement. Through involvement in student associations based on regional background, students develop leadership skills, communication competence, social solidarity, and emotional support networks. These experiences enhance self-confidence and time-management skills, which indirectly support their academic performance (Eccles and Wigfield 2020b; Nashihin et al. 2025c). Active organizational engagement may also reduce feelings of cultural isolation among students from Sumatra, helping them adapt more effectively to the broader academic environment. Furthermore, learning motivation emerges as a mediating variable in the relationship between the pesantren environment, organizational participation, and academic achievement. A conducive pesantren environment and active participation in regional organizations appear to strengthen students' intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Increased motivation encourages greater learning effort, persistence, and academic engagement, which ultimately improves academic achievement (Yusuf 2024; Rasid 2025a).

If the mediation effect is significant, it indicates that the influence of environmental and organizational factors is not merely direct but also operates through psychological mechanisms, particularly learning motivation. This highlights the importance of fostering both supportive institutional environments and student engagement activities to enhance academic success (Rasid et al. 2024; Azis and Saleh 2023; De et al. 2024). Overall, the study emphasizes that academic achievement among students from Sumatra is shaped by a combination of environmental, social, and motivational factors. Strengthening the quality of the pesantren environment and encouraging active participation in regional organizations can serve as strategic approaches to improving students' academic performance, especially when accompanied by efforts to enhance learning motivation (Rasid 2025b; Batubara 2023).

CONCLUSIONS

The results of this study demonstrate that organizational participation significantly contributes to students' academic achievement, while the pesantren environment plays a crucial role in strengthening learning motivation. Students who actively participate in regional organizations tend to develop better academic outcomes due to increased social interaction, leadership experience, and emotional support networks. In addition, the findings reveal that academic achievement mediates the relationship between organizational participation and learning motivation, indicating that organizational engagement can indirectly strengthen students' motivation through improved academic performance.

These findings provide important insights for educational institutions, particularly pesantren based education, by emphasizing the significance of both institutional environment and student engagement. A supportive pesantren environment characterized by discipline, moral guidance, and collaborative learning can foster students' motivation, while active participation in student organizations can enhance academic competence and social development. Future research is recommended to involve a larger and more diverse sample across different pesantren institutions to increase the generalizability of the findings. In addition, longitudinal approaches may provide deeper insights into how organizational participation, learning motivation, and academic achievement interact over time. Educational institutions are also encouraged to facilitate structured organizational activities that support both students' academic development and personal growth.

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