

Motivational pathways to primary Islamic teacher education: Toward an integrative model

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Received: October 22, 2025
Revised: November 2, 2025
Accepted: December 12, 2025
Published: December 16, 2025

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Abstract

Motivation plays a crucial role in shaping students' academic decisions and professional commitment in Islamic primary teacher education. The increasing interest in the Islamic Primary School Teacher Education Study Programme (PGMI) indicates the programme's social and academic appeal, yet the motivational foundations behind students' choices require deeper investigation. Existing studies on major choice and teacher education have generally emphasised socio-economic considerations, employment prospects, professional interest, family support, and religious values, but have not sufficiently explained how these elements operate as an integrative motivational pathway. This study aims to examine the motivational pathways of PGMI students and to formulate an integrative model that connects internal motivation, external support, institutional reinforcement, and religious self-actualisation. Using a descriptive qualitative design, data were collected through questionnaires distributed to 150 students (approximately 130 valid responses), semi-structured interviews with 11 informants, and institutional documentation. The findings show four interrelated patterns: internal motivation, family support, academic environment, and self-actualisation. These patterns indicate that students' choice of PGMI is not merely an academic decision or employment strategy, but a pathway towards religiously grounded professional commitment. The study recommends strengthening academic governance, student mentoring, and values-based professional development in Islamic teacher education.

Keywords: motivational pathways; PGMI; Islamic teacher education; family support; self-actualisation

Introduction

Higher education plays a strategic role in developing high-quality, character-driven, and competitive human resources, particularly by preparing professional and integrity-oriented educators for Islamic primary education institutions (Ifrohan & Rohman, 2025). Within this context, student motivation is a critical determinant of learning orientation, academic perseverance, and the quality of students' decisions when selecting a study

To cite this article (APA Style 7th Edition): Putri, U. L., Baharudin, Afriyadi, M. M. (2025). Motivational pathways to primary Islamic teacher education: Toward an integrative model. *Al'Adalah: Journal of Islamic Studies*, 28(2), 125-142. <https://doi.org/10.35719/aladalah.v28i2.631>



programme (Sa'diyah & Mediatati, 2025). The Islamic Primary School Teacher Education Study Programme (PGMI) at the Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training, UIN Raden Intan Lampung, represents a key avenue for preparing future Islamic primary teachers. Although the increasing enrolment in this programme reflects its strong appeal, this trend does not fully account for the depth or nature of students' underlying motivations (Utari et al., 2024). Students may select PGMI for family influence, employment prospects, or the programme's social image, rather than for an intrinsic motivation to become professional teachers (Suryani, 2021).

Existing research on motivation for choosing academic majors and teacher education can be categorised into three primary tendencies. First, several studies indicate that major selection is an academic decision shaped by socio-economic factors, social mobility, educational costs, and employment prospects (Liu & Macho-Stadler, 2023; Quadlin, 2020; Zhang, 2025). Second, research on teacher education identifies interest in teaching, professional orientation, family support, and career expectations as key influences on students' decisions to pursue teacher education programmes (Alvariñas-Villaverde et al., 2022; Suryani, 2021). Third, studies in Islamic education demonstrate that prospective educators' motivation is closely linked to religious values, Islamic campus culture, service orientation, and the development of moral identity (Darmiah & Marvida, 2024; Nasir & Rijal, 2021; Rodliyah et al., 2024). However, these studies have not adequately addressed how professional, pedagogical, spiritual, familial, and institutional factors interact as an integrated motivational pathway.

This study seeks to elucidate the motivational pathways that guide students in selecting the PGMI Study Programme and to develop an integrative model illustrating the relationships among internal motivation, external support, and institutional reinforcement. The research focuses on PGMI students at UIN Raden Intan Lampung, providing an empirical context to examine how aspirations to become professional *madrasah* teachers, interest in Islamic primary education, *da'wah* motivation, family support, the academic environment, and religious self-actualisation contribute to students' initial commitment as prospective Islamic primary teachers. The central research question is: How are students' motivational pathways in choosing the PGMI Study Programme shaped by the interaction of professional, pedagogical, spiritual, social, and institutional factors? This question is significant because student motivation should be understood not simply as a collection of reasons for selecting a major, but as a dynamic process of developing professional orientation.

This article argues that students' selection of the PGMI programme represents a pathway for developing professional-religious commitment, rather than solely an academic decision or a means to secure employment. Student motivation evolves from initial interest and professional aspiration, is legitimised by family support, reinforced through academic experiences, and ultimately directed toward self-actualisation as knowledgeable, morally grounded, and service-oriented Islamic primary teachers. This perspective advances research on teacher education motivation by highlighting the roles of spirituality and the Islamic academic environment in shaping motivational direction. The study's primary contribution is the formulation of an integrative motivational model that unites psychological, social, institutional, and religious dimensions within a single analytical framework. This model may inform study programme governance, student development initiatives, and the enhancement of Islamic primary teacher education curricula.

Literature Review

Research on students' motivation in selecting study programmes and teacher education identifies three primary tendencies. The first frame's major academic decision is shaped by socio-economic factors, educational costs, employment opportunities, and social mobility. The second explores motivation for teacher education through professional interest, career orientation, family support, intrinsic motivation, and extrinsic motivation. The third situates prospective educators' motivation within the context of Islamic education, emphasising religious values, campus culture, *da'wah* orientation, and the formation of moral identity. This mapping is significant because research on PGMI is positioned at the intersection of major choice, teacher education, and Islamic education. The motivation of PGMI students should be understood not solely as an academic preference, but as a decision influenced by psychological, social, institutional, and religious factors.

The first tendency demonstrates that major choices are frequently conceptualised as rational decisions shaped by social structures and economic prospects. Quadlin (2020) notes that major choices do not always stem from stable personal interests but are influenced by social logic, gender, and future expectations. Liu and Macho-Stadler (2023) highlight the significance of labour market characteristics and employment opportunities in shaping educational preferences. Zhang (2025) finds that access to higher education does not necessarily equate to freedom in major selection, as low-income students often weigh costs, risks, and social mobility. While these studies elucidate the impact of

structural factors on students' programme choices, they do not adequately address the moral and religious dimensions relevant to Islamic teacher education.

The second tendency underscores that motivation for choosing teacher education arises from a combination of interest in teaching, professional orientation, family support, and career expectations. Alvariñas-Villaverde et al. (2022) indicate that initial motivation for entering the teaching profession may include an interest in teaching activities, a desire to work with children, the social value of teaching, and expectations of career stability. Suryani (2021) reports that prospective teachers in Indonesia select teacher education for diverse reasons, including personal calling, family support, employment opportunities, and perceptions of the profession. Fitriya et al. (2025) argue that intrinsic and extrinsic motivation should be considered together, as both affect learning quality and educational commitment. While these studies are pertinent to understanding PGMI students, the aspects of *da'wah* and the significance of worship remain underexplored.

The third tendency places the motivation of prospective educators within the framework of Islamic education, characterised by religious values, academic culture, and character development. Darmiah and Marvida (2024) find that PGMI students select the major due to a combination of interest in teaching, religious motivation, family influence, and employment considerations. Horwitz (2021) contends that religion contributes to academic achievement by fostering discipline, value orientation, and community support. Nasir and Rijal (2021) demonstrate that Islamic higher education institutions shape religious culture and promote religious moderation, thereby influencing student orientation. Rodliyah et al. (2024) show that pesantren culture, curriculum management, and the Islamic academic environment enhance professional readiness and religious commitment. Although these studies align closely with the PGMI context, religiosity is still predominantly treated as a supplementary factor.

A key limitation of previous studies is their tendency to categorise motivational factors in isolation. Research on major choice emphasises economic considerations and social mobility, whereas studies on teacher education focus primarily on professional interest, family support, and career expectations. While studies on Islamic education address religious values, campus culture, and service orientation, they have not sufficiently examined how these factors interact to shape prospective Islamic primary teachers' commitment. Classical motivational frameworks, such as those of Maslow and Herzberg, also require contextualization. Maslow's theory elucidates self-actualisation (Lee & Sims, 2023), while Herzberg's model explains motivators and supporting factors

(Galanakis & Peramatzis, 2022; Manzano-Sánchez et al., 2021). The context of Islamic education necessitates further exploration of the meanings of worship, moral character, and service (Setyaningrum & Rahmania, 2025).

This study addresses the identified gap by proposing an integrative motivational pathway within the context of the PGMI Study Programme. The study distinguishes itself by conceptualising student motivation as a trajectory encompassing professional aspiration, pedagogical interest, spiritual calling, family support, academic environmental reinforcement, and religious self-actualisation. Rather than dismissing previous findings on economic factors, professional interest, family support, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, and religious culture, this approach synthesises them within a unified processual framework. The proposed integrative model positions PGMI students as individuals who construct their academic choices through the interplay of self, family, institution, and Islamic values. This perspective advances research on teacher education motivation by demonstrating that the commitment to becoming an Islamic primary teacher emerges from psychological, social, institutional, and religious configurations.

Method

This study employed a descriptive qualitative design to explain students' motivational pathways in selecting the PGMI Study Programme. This approach was chosen to move beyond identifying motivational factors and to examine how internal, external, spiritual, social, and institutional factors interact to shape students' academic decisions. Qualitative methods facilitate a deeper understanding of the meanings, experiences, and social contexts influencing participants' actions (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The research was conducted within the PGMI Study Programme, Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training, UIN Raden Intan Lampung, which serves as an academic environment for preparing prospective Islamic primary teachers.

The unit of analysis was defined as the motivational pathway of PGMI students in selecting and pursuing Islamic primary teacher education. This unit was chosen to reflect motivation as a dynamic process, encompassing initial interest, family support, and academic experiences that contribute to the development of professional commitment. Focusing on this unit enabled the study to examine the relationships among aspirations to become professional *madrasah* teachers, interest in Islamic primary education, *da'wah* motivation, family support, the academic environment, and religious self-actualisation. The unit of analysis was operationalised through students' questionnaire responses,

interview narratives, and institutional documents. This approach conceptualised motivation as a layered trajectory rather than a collection of discrete factors.

Data sources included both primary and secondary data. Primary data were collected through questionnaires administered to PGMI students and interviews with key informants, while secondary data were derived from the study programme's institutional documents. Employing both data types enabled the study to map general motivational tendencies and to explore the experiences, reasons, and academic contexts influencing motivation. The questionnaire was distributed to 150 PGMI students, with approximately 130 responses used for descriptive mapping of motivational tendencies. Interviews were conducted with 11 informants, comprising one Department Secretary and 10 students. The Department Secretary contributed insights on academic policy and programme development, while students provided information on learning experiences, motivational drivers, and challenges encountered during their education.

Data collection methods included questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, and document analysis. The questionnaire identified general trends in student motivation, focusing on professional aspirations, pedagogical interests, *da'wah* orientation, family support, the academic environment, and self-actualisation. Semi-structured interviews provided reflective accounts of students' experiences in selecting and pursuing studies in PGMI. Document analysis offered insights into the institutional context shaping student motivation, including programme profiles, academic activities, field practice, and student development initiatives. Document analysis is particularly relevant in qualitative research for understanding the contexts, policies, and institutional factors underlying the phenomenon under investigation (Bowen, 2009). These methods were aligned to ensure that questionnaire data, interview narratives, and documentation complemented each other.

Data analysis followed an interactive model consisting of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. This model facilitated an iterative process for identifying motivational patterns across multiple data sources (Miles et al., 2014). In the data condensation phase, questionnaire responses and interview transcripts were selected, coded, and categorised as internal motivation, external support, institutional reinforcement, and self-actualisation. The data display phase involved organising findings into narrative descriptions and percentage diagrams. During verification, patterns were compared across data sources and assessed for consistency with institutional documents. Data trustworthiness was enhanced through source and technique triangulation, thereby increasing the credibility of the interpretations.

Results

The findings indicate that PGMI students' motivational pathways are shaped by four interrelated patterns. The first pattern involves internal factors, such as aspirations to become professional *madrasah* teachers, interest in Islamic primary education, *da'wah* orientation, and an intrinsic calling to serve. The second pattern concerns family support, which provides social legitimacy and reinforces students' decision to select the study programme. The third pattern emphasises the influence of the academic environment, particularly through microteaching, educational seminars, field experience programmes, and the broader campus academic culture. The fourth pattern addresses students' self-actualisation as prospective Islamic primary teachers who are knowledgeable, morally grounded, and committed to service. These patterns demonstrate that students' motivation is not driven by a single factor but rather develops as an integrative pathway toward religiously grounded professional commitment.

Table 1.

Questionnaire Mapping of Students' Motivational Pathways

Dimension	Indicator	Dominant Response	Analytical Meaning
Professional aspiration	Reason for choosing PGMI	65 students / 50.4% wanted to become professional <i>madrasah</i> teachers	PGMI is perceived as a professional pathway
Pedagogical interest	Personal factor motivating PGMI study	75 students / 58.1% were interested in children and basic education	Students show a strong pedagogical orientation
Spiritual orientation	<i>Da'wah</i> and spiritual calling	31 students / 24.0% chose <i>da'wah</i> ; 20 / 15.5% chose spiritual calling	Teaching is framed as a service and a religious commitment
Family support	Support for programme choice	74 students / 57.4% strongly supported; 37 / 28.7% supported	Family provides moral and social legitimacy
Institutional reinforcement	Campus activities	65 / 50.4% strongly agreed; 55 / 42.6% agreed	Academic practices strengthen professional motivation
Ethical self-actualisation	Meaning of self-actualisation	51 / 39.5% chose becoming a role model	Self-actualisation is ethically and religiously framed

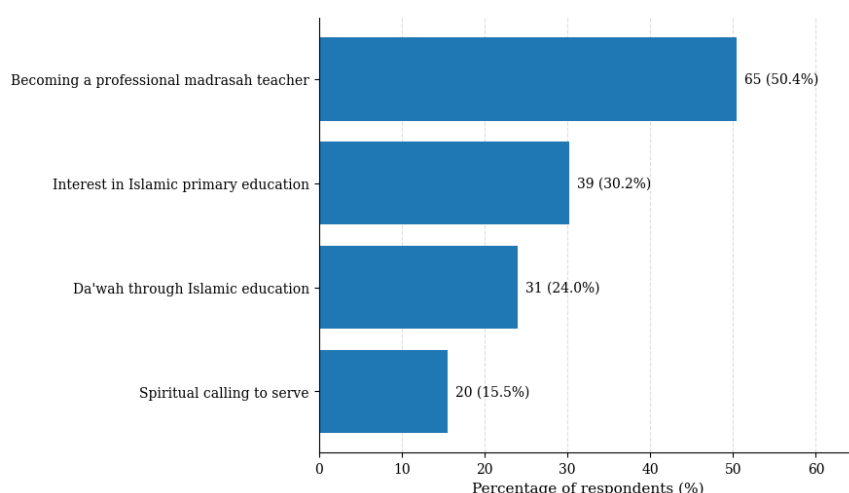
Note. Percentages are based on approximately 130 valid questionnaire responses. Some items allowed multiple responses; therefore, percentages do not always total 100%.

Internal Motivational Factors: Professional Aspiration, Pedagogical Interest, and Spiritual Calling

The questionnaire data indicate that students' internal motivation for selecting the PGMI Study Programme is shaped by a combination of professional aspiration, pedagogical interest, and spiritual orientation, rather than a single driving force. The most frequently cited motivation was the desire to become a professional *madrasah* teacher, reported by 65 respondents (50.4%). Interest in Islamic primary education was the next most common reason, cited by 39 respondents (30.2%), followed by the desire to engage in *da'wah* through Islamic education (31 respondents, 24.0%), and an inner calling or spiritual impulse to serve (20 respondents, 15.5%). These findings suggest that students' choice of PGMI serves both as a pathway for the professional development of prospective Islamic primary teachers and as a means of religious service through education.

Figure 1.

Main Reasons for Choosing the Islamic Primary School Teacher Education Programme



Note. Percentages are based on approximately 130 valid questionnaire responses. Multiple responses were allowed.

Figure 1 illustrates the distribution of students' primary reasons for selecting the PGMI Study Programme. The category of "becoming a professional *madrasah* teacher" is the most prominent, followed by interest in Islamic primary education. *Da'wah* orientation and spiritual calling function as additional layers of motivation that complement professional and pedagogical factors. This visual representation demonstrates that students' internal motivation is not solely based on religious calling, but is also strongly influenced by professional aspirations and interest in primary education. While spirituality remains significant, it interacts with professional and pedagogical interests in shaping students' decisions to enrol in PGMI.

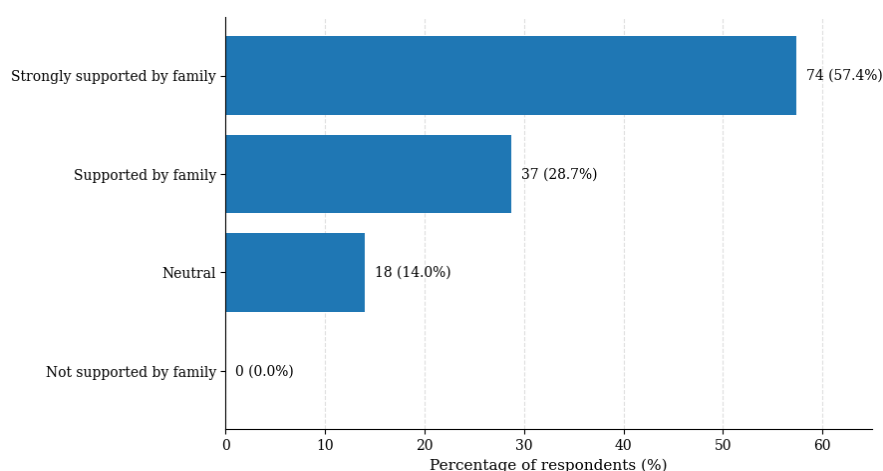
The pattern depicted in Figure 1 suggests that PGMI students' internal motivation is multi-layered. The aspiration to become a professional *madrasah* teacher is the primary motivating factor, while interest in Islamic primary education reinforces the alignment between students' academic choices and pedagogical orientation. Additional data indicate that interest in children and primary education is the most prevalent personal factor, reported by 75 respondents (58.1%), followed by the desire to become an Islamic teacher (44 respondents, 34.1%). These results indicate that spiritual calling is integrated within professional aspirations and pedagogical interests, rather than existing independently. Consequently, the choice of PGMI reflects a progression from personal interest to a commitment to becoming a professional, religiously grounded, and service-oriented Islamic primary educator.

Family Support and Social Legitimacy in Programme Choice

The questionnaire data indicate that family support is a significant external factor influencing students' decisions to enroll in the PGMI Study Programme. Among the respondents, 74 (57.4%) reported that their families strongly supported their choice, while 37 (28.7%) indicated some level of family support. An additional 18 respondents (14.0%) were neutral, and none reported a lack of family support. These findings demonstrate that the selection of the PGMI programme is influenced not only by individual preferences but also by family approval and encouragement. Family support reinforces initial motivation, as the family serves as the primary environment that instils confidence in students' academic choices and professional aspirations as future teachers of basic Islamic education.

Figure 2.

Family Support for Students' Programme Choice



Note. Percentages are based on approximately 130 valid questionnaire responses.

Figure 2 presents the distribution of family support levels in relation to students' decisions to select the PGMI Study Programme. The bar chart shows that most respondents are categorised as either "strongly supported" or "supported," while the "neutral" category is less prevalent, and no respondents reported a lack of support. This distribution indicates that families play a decisive role in students' academic decision-making. Family support encompasses not only formal approval but also moral motivation, social expectations, and the perception that PGMI represents a valuable field of study. The data highlight the family's role as a source of emotional and social stability, which enhances students' confidence in pursuing basic Islamic teacher education.

The pattern shown in Figure 2 indicates that family support involves more than simply approving a study programme. The family provides social legitimacy, as the choice of PGMI aligns with religious values, moral expectations, and the positive reputation of the *madrasah* teaching profession. Interview data further reveal that encouragement from family, lecturers, the broader community, and the academic environment enhances students' confidence in pursuing PGMI studies (Interviews with PGMI students, cohort 2024, 2025). In this context, family support acts as a bridge between personal motivation and social acceptance. Students perceive that their chosen programme not only aligns with their interests but also receives moral validation from their immediate environment. This legitimacy strengthens the external motivational factors that sustain students' commitment as prospective Islamic primary teachers.

Academic Environment and Institutional Reinforcement of Motivation

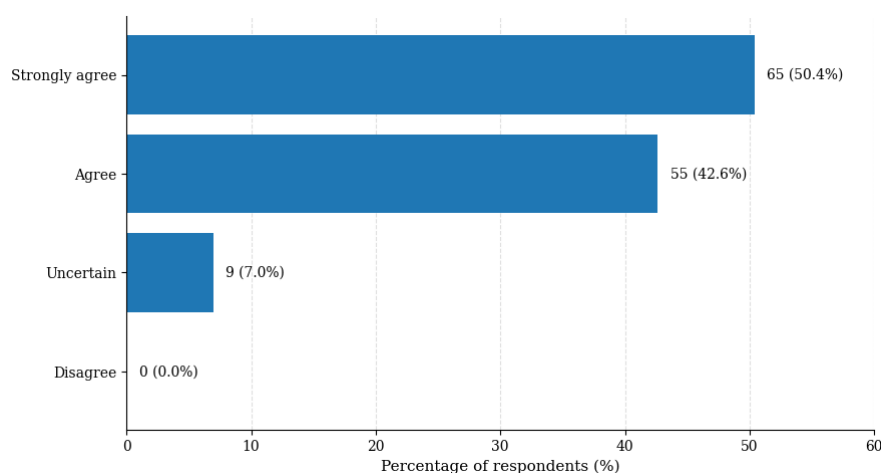
The questionnaire data indicate that the academic environment significantly contributes to strengthening PGMI students' motivation to become professional teachers of basic Islamic education. Of the respondents, 65 (50.4%) strongly agreed that academic activities such as microteaching, educational seminars, and field experience programmes enhanced their motivation, while 55 (42.6%) agreed. An additional 9 respondents (7.0%) expressed uncertainty, and no respondents disagreed. These findings suggest that students' motivation is influenced not only by their initial interest in the study programme but is also reinforced through structured academic experiences. Consequently, campus activities serve as a critical link between students' personal motivation and the professional competencies required of prospective *madrasah* teachers.

Figure 3 illustrates the distribution of students' assessments regarding the contribution of academic activities to their motivation to become professional teachers. The bar chart shows a predominance of responses in the "strongly agree" and "agree"

categories, with only a small proportion indicating “uncertain” and none in the “disagree” category. This pattern suggests that most students perceive academic experiences on campus positively. Microteaching provides opportunities to practice teaching skills, educational seminars expand pedagogical and Islamic perspectives, and field experience programmes offer direct exposure to educational practice in schools or *madrasahs*. Several students stated that these activities increased their confidence, communication skills, and belief that choosing PGMI was an appropriate decision for their future professional path (Interview with PGMI students, cohort 2024, 2025). The visualisation and data interviews underscore the role of the academic environment as an institutional mechanism that sustains and directs students’ motivation throughout their studies.

Figure 3.

Contribution of Academic Activities to Students’ Professional Motivation



Note. Percentages are based on approximately 130 valid questionnaire responses.

The pattern depicted in Figure 3 suggests that students’ motivation is enhanced through practical, relational, and institutional academic experiences. Academic activities contribute not only to increased knowledge but also to the development of self-confidence, pedagogical skills, and an emerging professional identity as future teachers of basic Islamic education. Microteaching serves as a platform for professional simulation, seminars expand academic orientation, and field experience enables direct engagement with educational practice. Additionally, lecturers, student organisations, and the broader campus academic culture reinforce this process by providing social support, guidance, and opportunities for self-actualisation. These findings indicate that PGMI students’ motivational pathways evolve gradually through the interplay of internal motivation, external support, and institutional reinforcement during their studies.

Self-Actualisation and Emerging Professional Commitment

The questionnaire data indicate that PGMI students interpret self-actualisation as closely related to exemplarity, academic achievement, professionalism, and an orientation towards worship. Specifically, 51 respondents (39.5%) understood self-actualisation as the ability to become a role model and exemplary figure. Additionally, 47 respondents (36.4%) associated it with achieving the highest academic performance. In comparison, 29 respondents (22.5%) defined it as the ability to become a morally grounded professional teacher, and 20 respondents (15.5%) identified self-actualisation with teaching motivated by worship and *da'wah*. These findings show that students link self-actualisation not only to achievement, but also to a moral and professional identity as future teachers of basic Islamic education.

The data distribution reveals that “becoming a role model and exemplary figure” is the most prominent aspect of students’ understanding of self-actualisation. This finding suggests that students perceive the teaching profession not only as instructional work but also as a social role requiring integrity, moral character, and the ability to serve as an example. The second most prominent category, “highest academic achievement,” underscores the continued significance of academic attainment in self-development. The categories “morally grounded professional teacher” and “teaching with the intention of worship and *da'wah*” further emphasise the religious dimension of self-actualisation. Interview data indicate that the department facilitates students’ self-actualisation through field practice, scholarly activities, and the enhancement of pedagogical competence (Interview with the Department Secretary, 2025).

This data pattern indicates that PGMI students’ self-actualisation evolves from a focus on individual achievement to the development of ethical and religious commitment as future educators. While academic achievement remains significant, it supports the teacher’s role as an exemplar, a guide in moral development, and an agent of social change within Islamic primary education. The concept of self-actualisation also highlights the interplay between internal motivation, external support, and institutional reinforcement, as outlined in previous sections. Students select PGMI based on professional interests and aspirations, receive support from family and the institution, and subsequently cultivate an orientation toward becoming knowledgeable, morally grounded, and impactful Islamic primary teachers. This finding serves as an empirical foundation for the discussion of the integrative motivational pathway model.

Discussion

The findings indicate that students' selection of the PGMI Study Programme cannot be attributed solely to economic rationality, employment prospects, or pragmatic considerations. Instead, the data demonstrate a more complex motivational configuration that includes aspirations to become professional *madrasah* teachers, interest in Islamic primary education, *da'wah* motivation, family support, and religious self-actualisation. While Quadlin (2020) and Zhang (2025) argue that major choices are often driven by socio-economic considerations, social mobility, and employment opportunities, this study identifies a distinct, context-specific pattern within Islamic teacher education. Students select PGMI not only as a potential employment pathway but also as a means for professional development, social contribution, and the embodiment of Islamic values.

This specificity expands the conceptualisation of motivation for choosing teacher education within Islamic higher education. While the decision to become a teacher is frequently influenced by professional interest, family support, and career expectations (Alvariñas-Villaverde et al., 2022; Liu & Macho-Stadler, 2023), the current findings add a sharper point: family support and employment prospects are intertwined with moral legitimacy and religious values. Families endorse PGMI because it is regarded as a reputable, secure, and religiously significant field of study. The *madrasah* teaching profession is perceived as a vocation with socio-religious importance. Consequently, students' selection of PGMI shows that academic decisions are embedded in family values, *da'wah* orientation, and a perception of teaching as morally significant.

The analysis of PGMI students' self-actualisation suggests that Maslow's theory should be contextualised within the framework of Islamic education. In this context, self-actualisation extends beyond academic achievement, personal potential development, or individual career success. Students interpret self-actualisation as the capacity to serve as role models, exemplary figures, and morally grounded professional teachers who educate with the intention of worship. While Maslow identifies self-actualisation as a higher-order need that arises once basic needs are met (Lee & Sims, 2023), for PGMI students, it assumes a more ethical and religious orientation. The actualised self is characterised not only by individual success but by the ability to be beneficial, morally upright, and to integrate Islamic values into primary education.

Herzberg's two-factor theory also gains new significance when applied to the motivation of PGMI students. In this setting, motivation encompasses more than achievement, recognition, responsibility, and the nature of the work, as outlined in Herzberg's framework (Galanakis & Peramatzis, 2022). Students' primary motivations

include a sense of calling to teach, *da'wah* orientation, consciousness of worship, and pride in becoming future Islamic primary teachers. Supporting elements such as family, lecturers, student organisations, microteaching activities, seminars, field practice, and campus culture collectively sustain motivational stability. A prosocial organisational climate can reinforce positive behaviours and learners' motivational orientation (Manzano-Sánchez et al., 2021). Thus, the PGMI academic environment functions as a supportive ecosystem that transforms initial interest into enduring professional commitment.

The synthesis of these findings results in an integrative motivational pathway model that explains the progression of students' motivation from initial selection to professional commitment. This pathway comprises the following stages: family and religious background, initial choice of PGMI, consolidation of internal motivation, institutional reinforcement, ethical-religious self-actualisation, and commitment to becoming Islamic primary teachers. The model shows that students' motivation is not a mere aggregation of discrete factors, but a dynamic interplay among pedagogical interest, professional aspiration, spirituality, family support, and academic experience. Religious culture, moderation values, and the learning environment serve as significant motivational resources in shaping the orientation of future educators in Islamic educational contexts (Nasir & Rijal, 2021; Rodliyah et al., 2024). The model provides a more systematic explanation of this process.

The primary strength of this integrative model is its capacity to explain motivational change as a multi-layered process. The research inquiry extends beyond identifying factors that motivate students to choose PGMI to examine how motivation evolves, is reinforced, and culminates in professional commitment. Previous research has established that both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation influence learning outcomes and educational commitment (Fitriya et al., 2025). The present findings highlight an additional, indispensable dimension in the PGMI context: spiritual meaning. Spirituality is not merely a normative addition, but a guiding element for professional aspiration and academic experience. The proposed integrative model unites psychological, social, institutional, and religious dimensions within a coherent pathway of identity formation for prospective Islamic primary teachers.

These findings have significant implications for the management of the PGMI Study Programme, which should integrate student motivation into academic governance and professional development. The programme should not be confined to delivering the curriculum, conducting lectures, and carrying out field practice as administrative

functions. Instead, academic activities should be structured to enhance spiritual and professional motivation through lecturer mentoring, student organisation development, reflective microteaching, values-based field practice, teacher profession seminars, and the cultivation of a religious campus culture. Family support should also be incorporated into the programme's communication strategy to ensure sustained social reinforcement of students' choices. Research on family support demonstrates its crucial role in students' career decision-making, self-efficacy and academic well-being (Koçak et al., 2021). Therefore, effective PGMI governance must systematically integrate academic, religious, and professional development.

Conclusion

The motivational pathways of students in selecting Islamic primary teacher education (PGMI) are shaped by the interplay of internal factors, family support, academic environmental reinforcement, and religious self-actualisation. Internal motivation encompasses aspirations to become professional *madrasah* teachers, a strong interest in Islamic primary education, a *da'wah* orientation, and an intrinsic calling to serve. Family support provides social legitimacy, thereby enhancing students' confidence in their chosen study programme. The academic environment, facilitated through microteaching, educational seminars, field experience programmes, lecturer guidance, and campus academic culture, reinforces professional motivation. Consequently, students' self-actualisation is oriented toward developing an identity as prospective Islamic primary teachers who are knowledgeable, morally grounded, exemplary, and committed to service.

The theoretical contribution of this study is the development of an integrative motivational pathway model that conceptualises student motivation as a dynamic, mutually reinforcing process rather than a collection of discrete factors. This model integrates psychological, social, institutional, and religious dimensions to explain students' selection of the PGMI Study Programme. Methodologically, the study demonstrates that combining questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, and documentation enables both the mapping of general motivational tendencies and the exploration of subjective meanings underlying student motivation. This approach reveals that PGMI students' academic choices are shaped not only by employment prospects, but also by family values, campus experiences, *da'wah* orientation, and perceptions of the teaching profession as a vocation of service.

However, this study is limited by its focus on a single study programme at a single Islamic higher education institution. Additionally, the questionnaire responses are descriptive and reflect motivational tendencies specific to this context. Future research should investigate the integrative motivational pathway model across multiple PGMI Study Programmes in various State and private Islamic higher education institutions to enable cross-institutional comparisons. Subsequent studies could also utilise quantitative or mixed-methods approaches to examine the relationships among internal motivation, family support, academic environment, self-actualisation, and professional commitment. Further, variables such as gender, educational background, organisational experience, family socio-economic status, and field practice experience warrant examination to deepen understanding of motivational development among prospective Islamic primary teachers.

Author Contribution Statement

Author contributions to this article: Umi Lailatul Putri contributed as the initiator and drafter of the article, as well as the data analyst and interpreter; Baharudin and Muhammad Muchsin Apriyadi contributed as validators of the data and analysis results, collected the data, and critically revised the article. All authors agree to be accountable for all aspects of this work.

Statement of Interest

All authors declare that they have no conflicts of interest.

Funding

This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

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