

Reconceptualizing Speaking Self-Efficacy and Learning Motivation in Arabic Higher Education: Evidence from Indonesian Islamic Universities

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ABSTRACT

Speaking competence occupies a central position in Arabic language education, yet students in Arabic Language Education programs often encounter psychological challenges that affect their confidence and motivation to develop oral communication skills. While previous studies have discussed speaking proficiency, anxiety, and motivation in foreign language learning, the relationship between speaking self-efficacy and learning motivation in the context of Arabic higher education, particularly in Indonesian Islamic universities, remains insufficiently explored. Therefore, this study investigates the correlation between speaking self-efficacy and learning motivation among students of the Arabic Language Education Study Program. A quantitative correlational design was employed, involving all 62 third-semester students at UIN Sulthan Thaha Saifuddin Jambi through total sampling. Data were collected using a validated Likert-scale questionnaire and analyzed using descriptive statistics and Pearson's Product-Moment correlation. The results showed that students' speaking self-efficacy and learning motivation were generally at moderate to high levels. The magnitude dimension emerged as the strongest component of self-efficacy, while persistence in effort was the dominant indicator of motivation. The correlation analysis revealed a strong and significant positive relationship between speaking self-efficacy and learning motivation ($r = 0.893$; $p < 0.001$). These findings suggest that strengthening students' speaking self-efficacy through successful learning experiences, constructive feedback, and emotion regulation may substantially enhance their motivation to learn Arabic speaking skills.

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Introduction

Arabic language proficiency is a fundamental competence for students in Arabic Language Education Study Programs, particularly because it determines their ability to

participate meaningfully in academic discourse and in professional preparation as future Arabic educators (Sopian et al., 2025). Among the four language skills, speaking skills (*maharah al-kalam*) occupy a strategic position since they represent not only linguistic mastery but also communicative readiness in real interaction (Yousif & Mohamed, 2023). However, in the context of Arabic higher education, students' ability to speak Arabic cannot be understood merely as a matter of grammatical knowledge or vocabulary mastery. Many learners who possess adequate linguistic knowledge still experience hesitation, low confidence, and psychological pressure when required to express ideas orally. This condition indicates that the development of *maharah al-kalam* is closely related to psychological factors that shape students' willingness and persistence in using Arabic for communication.

Within this psychological dimension, self-efficacy has increasingly been recognized as an important factor in second- and foreign-language learning. Previous studies have shown that learners' beliefs in their own abilities contribute to their engagement, persistence, and learning achievement (Meng & Jia, 2023; Tian et al., 2026). Nevertheless, much of the existing discussion tends to treat self-efficacy as a broad construct in language learning, without sufficiently distinguishing how it operates within specific language skills. This distinction is important because students may feel confident in reading or understanding Arabic grammar but remain uncertain when speaking Arabic in front of peers or lecturers. Therefore, speaking self-efficacy needs to be examined as a skill-specific construct that directly reflects learners' perceived capability to perform oral communication tasks in Arabic.

The relevance of speaking self-efficacy becomes more significant when viewed alongside the emotional dynamics of language learning. Self-efficacy theory emphasizes that emotional and physiological states contribute to learners' judgments of their own capabilities (Harris & Bennett, 2004). Recent studies have also demonstrated that learners' emotional conditions, including anxiety, worry, enjoyment, and learning satisfaction, are associated with variations in self-efficacy levels (Chen et al., 2024; Shi et al., 2025; Islam et al., 2025). However, these findings should not be read merely as evidence that emotions influence confidence. More critically, they suggest that students' confidence in speaking Arabic is shaped by a complex interaction among perceived competence, emotion regulation, and motivational orientation. In this sense, speaking self-efficacy may serve as a psychological bridge connecting students' emotional experiences to their motivation to continue engaging in Arabic-speaking activities.

In the realm of Arabic language acquisition, particularly in speaking proficiency, self-efficacy in oral communication is believed to be substantially correlated with students' motivation to learn (Liu & Zhang, 2025). Students who are confident in their speaking abilities tend to show higher motivation to actively participate in learning (Awruk et al., 2026). Therefore,

this study focuses on the relationship between self-efficacy in speaking and the learning motivation of Arabic Language Education students. In learning practice, various obstacles still hinder Arabic Language Education students in developing their speaking skills (Low et al., 2026). These obstacles are not solely linguistic in nature but are also influenced by psychological factors (Zhichun, 2025). A significant psychological characteristic that significantly contributes is self-efficacy in communicating (Rohde et al., 2026), namely, an individual's belief in their ability to use Arabic effectively in spoken communication. Students exhibiting low self-efficacy in speaking often evade speaking exercises, endure heightened anxiety, and dread making linguistic errors, which adversely affects their engagement in the learning process (Bandura, 1998).

The success of Arabic language acquisition is significantly influenced by the learner's motivation (Alhamami, 2025). Learning motivation acts as a driving force that influences the intensity of effort, perseverance, and consistency of students in undergoing the learning process (Aung & Nikolov, 2025). Students with high levels of learning motivation generally demonstrate active, enthusiastic, and responsible attitudes in participating in learning activities (Alghameeti et al., 2025). Therefore, learning motivation is an important variable that needs to be studied in depth in the context of Arabic language learning in higher education (Abdu et al., 2024).

Theoretically, self-efficacy and learning motivation are closely related. Bandura posits that self-efficacy affects individuals' cognition, emotions, and behaviors, particularly in academic contexts. (Intishar et al., 2024). Individuals with high confidence in their abilities tend to exhibit greater motivation when facing learning tasks (Alrasheedy et al., 2025). This framework posits that the relationship between self-efficacy (independent variable X) and learning motivation (dependent variable Y) warrants investigation through a quantitative approach to yield objective, measurable, and generalizable empirical evidence.

Previous studies have consistently demonstrated that self-efficacy is associated with learning motivation, learner engagement, and language learning outcomes (Bandura, 1989; Calafato, 2023). Learners with higher self-efficacy tend to show stronger motivation, greater persistence, and more active participation in foreign language learning activities. In speaking-related contexts, self-efficacy has also been linked to students' willingness to participate in classroom interaction and oral communication tasks (Meng & Jia, 2023). However, these studies have generally positioned self-efficacy as a broad psychological construct in language learning rather than as a skill-specific belief related to speaking performance. As a result, they do not sufficiently explain how learners' confidence in performing oral communication tasks contributes to their motivation to sustain engagement in speaking activities.

In addition, much of the existing empirical evidence has been generated in foreign-language contexts other than Arabic, particularly in English-language learning (Chang et al., 2024). This tendency limits the applicability of previous findings to Arabic language education, where speaking skills involve distinct linguistic, affective, and pedagogical challenges. Arabic learners, especially in Islamic higher education, often face not only difficulties in vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation, but also psychological barriers when using Arabic orally in academic and classroom settings. Therefore, examining speaking self-efficacy in Arabic learning is important because the construct may operate differently from general language self-efficacy or self-efficacy in English-speaking contexts.

Furthermore, studies on self-efficacy and learning motivation among students in Arabic Language Education Study Programs remain limited, particularly in Indonesian Islamic universities (Dogham et al., 2022). Existing research has tended to employ qualitative designs, examine self-efficacy alongside multiple psychological variables, or focus on broader aspects of Arabic learning rather than the direct relationship between speaking self-efficacy and learning motivation (Rochmat et al., 2025). Consequently, there is still insufficient empirical evidence to explain the strength and direction of the relationship between these two variables using a quantitative correlational approach. This limitation is significant because understanding the statistical association between speaking self-efficacy and learning motivation can provide a clearer basis for designing pedagogical interventions that strengthen students' confidence and motivation in *maharah al-kalam*.

Based on these considerations, this study makes a more specific contribution by examining speaking self-efficacy as a skill-based psychological construct and analyzing its correlation with learning motivation among students in the Arabic Language Education Study Program at an Indonesian Islamic university. Unlike previous studies that discuss self-efficacy in general language learning contexts, this study focuses specifically on *maharah al-kalam* and provides quantitative evidence on the extent to which students' perceived speaking capability is associated with their motivation to learn Arabic. Thus, the novelty of this study lies in its contextual focus on Arabic higher education, its skill-specific treatment of speaking self-efficacy, and its empirical attempt to clarify the direct relationship between speaking self-efficacy and learning motivation.

This study aims to examine the correlation between speaking self-efficacy and learning motivation among students in the Arabic Language Education Study Program. Based on the theoretical and empirical considerations discussed above, this study hypothesizes that speaking self-efficacy is positively and significantly associated with students' learning motivation.

Method

Research Design

This study employed a quantitative correlational design to examine the relationship between speaking self-efficacy and learning motivation among students in the Arabic Language Education Study Program (Bloomfield & Fisher, 2019). The correlational design was considered appropriate because this study did not manipulate variables, but rather measured the direction and strength of the statistical association between speaking self-efficacy and learning motivation.

Data Collection Techniques

The population of this study consisted of all third-semester students of the Arabic Language Education Study Program at UIN Sulthan Thaha Saifuddin Jambi. Since the population was relatively small and fully accessible, a census was conducted. Accordingly, all 62 students were included as research participants. Data were collected using a structured closed-ended questionnaire based on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = Never, 2 = Rarely, 3 = Sometimes, 4 = Often, to 5 = Always. The questionnaire was developed based on the theoretical dimensions of self-efficacy and learning motivation. Speaking self-efficacy was constructed based on Bandura's self-efficacy framework, which includes three dimensions: magnitude, strength, and generality. The final speaking self-efficacy scale consisted of 44 items, distributed into magnitude or level of difficulty, strength or level of confidence, and generality or breadth of self-efficacy across learning situations. Meanwhile, the learning motivation scale was constructed based on motivational indicators relevant to academic learning, namely desire and will to succeed, belief in success, and perseverance in effort. The final learning motivation scale also consisted of 44 items, covering students' goal orientation, expectation of success, and persistence in completing learning tasks. Higher scores on each scale indicated higher levels of speaking self-efficacy and learning motivation.

Data Analysis Techniques

Before being used for data analysis, the questionnaire was examined for validity and reliability. Content validity was established by ensuring that each item corresponded to the theoretical dimensions of the variables and was relevant to the context of Arabic-speaking skill learning. Empirical validity was tested using item-total correlation analysis in SPSS. Items were considered valid when their correlation coefficients exceeded the minimum validity criterion. Reliability was examined using Cronbach's Alpha to determine the internal consistency of each scale. The reliability coefficients indicated that the speaking self-efficacy scale and the learning motivation scale had acceptable internal consistency, as shown by Cronbach's Alpha values above the generally accepted threshold of 0.70. Data were analyzed using descriptive and

inferential statistics in SPSS. Descriptive analysis was used to calculate the frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations for each dimension and indicator. The mean scores were interpreted using the categorization criteria adapted from Sanjaya and Hidayat (2022), as presented in Table 1. Furthermore, Pearson's product-moment correlation was used to examine the relationship between speaking self-efficacy and learning motivation. This test was selected because the study aimed to identify the strength and direction of the relationship between two quantitative variables. The interpretation of the correlation was limited to statistical association and was not intended to establish causal influence between the two variables.

Table 1. Mean Score Interpretation

Mean Score		Interpretation
4.23	5.00	Very high
3.42	4.22	High
2.61	3.41	Moderate
1.81	2.60	Low
1.00	1.80	Very Low

Since the data were collected via a self-report questionnaire, this study also acknowledges the potential for response bias. Students' answers may reflect their subjective perceptions rather than their actual Arabic speaking performance. In addition, social desirability bias may occur when respondents provide answers that they consider more acceptable in an academic context. To minimize these potential biases, participants were informed that their responses would be used only for research purposes, that there were no right or wrong answers, and that their identities would remain confidential. Therefore, the findings should be interpreted as representing students' perceived speaking self-efficacy and learning motivation, rather than as a direct measure of their actual speaking proficiency.

Result and Discussion

Descriptive Statistics of Student Self-Efficacy Based on the Dimensions of Magnitude, Strength, and Generality

Based on descriptive analysis of the three main dimensions of self-efficacy, namely difficulty level (magnitude), confidence level (strength), and breadth level (generality), variations were found in the characteristics of respondents' self-confidence in facing academic demands.

In terms of magnitude, the majority of respondents showed a positive tendency, with the largest proportion falling into the agree (39.1%) and strongly agree (26.5%) categories. The mean score of 3.70, accompanied by a standard deviation of 0.44, suggests that respondents typically exhibit a high degree of self-efficacy in managing academic activities of varying

difficulty levels, including particularly tough ones. The low dispersion value indicates consistency in respondents' perceptions of their ability to manage academic difficulties. These findings align with Bandura's theory, which posits that individuals with high self-efficacy perceive challenges as manageable rather than as obstacles to evade.

In contrast to the magnitude dimension, the results for the strength dimension show a relatively balanced distribution of responses across all answer categories. A mean value of 2.98 with a standard deviation of 0.70 places this dimension at a moderate level, indicating that respondents' confidence in their abilities is not yet fully established and consistent. The greater variability of responses compared to the magnitude dimension indicates that there are significant differences in the level of self-confidence among respondents. This condition implies that, although some students are able to maintain strong self-confidence, others are still prone to doubt, especially when facing academic pressure or failure. This discovery aligns with Bandura's theoretical framework, which underscores that strength is intimately connected to an individual's resilience in sustaining self-efficacy throughout recurrent adversities.

Meanwhile, on the generality dimension, the average score was 3.20 with a standard deviation of 0.88, indicating that respondents had a fairly good ability to generalize their self-efficacy to various academic contexts. More than half of the respondents agreed with the statements in this dimension, indicating a tendency to apply self-efficacy not only to one specific type of task but also to various academic situations. However, the high standard deviation suggests heterogeneity in this generalization ability, with some students still showing a tendency to limit their self-belief to certain contexts only.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics of Student Self-Efficacy Based on the Dimensions of Magnitude, Strength, and Generality

Assessment Techniques	N	R	S	O	A	Mean	SD
Level of Difficulty (Magnitude)	82 (6,0%)	138 (10,1%)	249 (18,3%)	533 (39,1%)	362 (26,5%)	3,70	0,44
Level of Confidence (Strength)	197 (16,7%)	276 (23,4%)	253 (21,5%)	255 (21,6%)	197 (16,7%)	2,98	0,70
Level of Generality (Generality)	35 (18,8)	30 (16,1%)	27 (14,5%)	51 (27,4%)	43 (23,1%)	3,20	0,88

N=Never, R=Rarely, S=Sometimes, O=Often, A=Always

The findings of this research are in line with the theoretical framework proposed by (Wang et al., 2025), and in line with Bandura's concept of self-efficacy, which emphasizes that someone's belief in their abilities is shaped through interactions between personal experiences, social feedback, and affective conditions (Bandura, 1990), In this context, students' self-

efficacy not only reflects their perception of their ability to cope with task difficulty (magnitude), but is also greatly influenced by the quality of academic feedback and the emotional experiences that accompany it. The dominance of the magnitude dimension indicates that students have relatively positive initial beliefs about their academic capacity, while the weakness of the strength dimension indicates that these beliefs have not been fully internalized in a stable manner to withstand long-term academic pressure. This supports Bandura's theory of the roles of mastery experiences, social persuasion, and affect regulation in the formation of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1991). Wang (2025) emphasizes that constructive, consistent, and learning-oriented feedback plays a strategic role in strengthening self-efficacy (strength) and in expanding that belief to broader academic contexts (generality). Therefore, these findings emphasize the urgency of designing academic interventions that systematically strengthen experiences of success, provide reflective feedback, and develop emotional regulation to build more stable, adaptive, and cross-situational self-efficacy in students (Salsabila et al., 2024).

Descriptive Statistics of Student Learning Motivation Based on Indicators

The findings from the descriptive study of the three main indicators of learning motivation reveal variations in respondents' levels of intrinsic motivation as they pursue academic success.

On the indicator of desire and willingness to succeed, respondents' responses were relatively evenly distributed across all answer categories. The highest proportions were in the strongly agree (22.9%) and agree (21.0%) categories, although the neutral and disagree categories also showed significant percentages. The average score of 3.13 places this indicator at a moderate level, indicating that the drive to achieve academic success is not yet fully optimal among all respondents. These findings show that although some students have a strong goal orientation, there is still variation in the intensity of intrinsic motivation, likely influenced by individual characteristics and the learning environment.

On the confidence-in-success indicator, the majority of respondents showed a positive tendency, choosing the agree (26.4%) and strongly agree (20.0%) categories. The mean value of 3.15 reflects a fairly good level of confidence in academic success, although it has not yet reached the high category. The relatively even distribution of responses across the negative and neutral categories indicates that some students' confidence in academic success remains situational and not yet fully consistent. This shows that respondents' academic self-confidence can still fluctuate in line with their learning experiences or the challenges they face.

Conversely, the persistence-of-effort indicator showed the strongest results among the three indicators analyzed. The dominance of responses in the strongly agree (33.3%) and agree (22.6%) categories, along with the highest average score of 3.47, indicates a relatively

high level of perseverance and persistence in meeting academic demands. These findings show that students tend to persevere despite facing difficulties and do not give up easily when completing tasks or achieving learning goals. Perseverance is a crucial aspect of learning motivation because it plays an important role in maintaining long-term academic effort.

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics of Student Learning Motivation Based on Indicators

Asesment technique	N	R	S	O	A	Mean	STD
Desire and Will to Succeed	110 (16,1%)	148 (21,7)	125 (18,3%)	143 (21,0%)	156 (22,9%)	3,13	0,61
Belief in Success	273 (16,3%)	320 (19,1%)	304 (18,2%)	442 (26,4%)	335 (20,0%)	3,15	0,52
Perseverance in Effort	43 (11,6%)	70 (18,8%)	51 (13,7%)	84 (22,6%)	124 (33,3%)	3,47	0,58

N=Never, R=Rarely, S=Sometimes, O=Often, A=Always

The results of this study confirm that perseverance of effort represents the most prominent behavioral dimension in student learning motivation. The high level of perseverance indicates that students have a relatively strong ability to maintain consistent effort and learning resilience in the face of academic demands. However, the affective and cognitive aspects of motivation, including belief in success and clarity of goal orientation, are still in the moderate category. These findings align with the study examining the relationship among personality, mentality, academic drive, and tenacity (persistence). Aulia et al., (2022) which reports a significant relationship between academic motivation and grit, particularly in the persistence dimension, thereby confirming the role of perseverance as an important indicator in the development of learning motivation (Tóth, 2003). However, the study also confirms that grit does not develop independently, but is influenced by internal psychological factors such as motivation and individual mindset. This perspective aligns with Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1991). which places self-efficacy as the main determinant of the intensity of effort and endurance in individuals, as well as Expectancy-Value Theory, which emphasizes that the sustainability of learning efforts is greatly influenced by learners' expectations of success and clarity of purpose. Therefore, even though the level of student persistence is in the high category, Achievement Motivation Theory formulated by Revelle & Michaels (1976) emphasizes that perseverance cannot be positioned as the main determinant of learning success. Within this theoretical framework, achievement behavior is understood as the result of an interaction between an individual's expectations of the possibility of success and the value attached to the goals to be achieved, rather than being solely determined by the intensity

of effort expended. Therefore, perseverance will only contribute optimally when accompanied by realistic expectations of success and the perception that learning goals have meaningful value. These findings indicate that although perseverance is an important component in the learning process, academic success cannot be guaranteed without the support of clear goal orientation and adequate cognitive beliefs, as emphasized in Achievement Motivation Theory.

Results of Pearson's Correlation Test between Self-Efficacy and Student Learning Motivation

Pearson's correlation analysis findings indicate a robust and substantial link between the TOTAL X and TOTAL Y variables.. The correlation coefficient value obtained is $r = 0.893$ with a significance level of $p < 0.001$ for a sample size of $N = 62$. This finding indicates that an increase in the TOTAL X variable tends to be followed by a corresponding increase in the TOTAL Y variable.

The strength of the correlation coefficient signifies a robust association between the two variables, in accordance with the requirements for interpreting Pearson's correlation. A positive relationship indicates that the two variables move in the same direction, so that the higher the TOTAL X score, the higher the TOTAL Y score obtained by respondents. The very low significance level ($p < 0.001$) confirms that this relationship does not occur by chance, but reflects a statistically significant correlation.

Table 4. Pearson Correlation between Speaking Self-Efficacy and Learning Motivation

		TOTAL X	TOTAL Y
TOTAL X	Pearson Correlation	1	0,893**
	Sig (2-tailed)		<0,001
	N	62	62
TOTAL Y	Pearson Correlation	0,893**	1
	Sig (2-tailed)	<0,001	
	N	62	62

The results of this investigation are consistent with Social Cognitive Theory developed by Bandura (1991) which positions self-efficacy as the main cognitive construct that plays a role in directing individuals' cognitive, affective, and behavioral processes in achieving goals, including in the context of learning. Within this framework, self-efficacy is not understood solely as a reflection of actual ability but rather as a psychological determinant that influences an individual's effort, persistence, and motivational engagement when facing academic demands. Therefore, the strong correlation between TOTAL X (self-efficacy) and TOTAL Y (learning motivation) indicates that individuals with greater self-confidence tend to exhibit stronger, more consistent, and more focused learning motivation.

Moreover, Social Cognitive Theory elucidates motivation as a consequence of reciprocal interactions among personal variables, behaviour, and the environment, as articulated in the principle of triadic reciprocal determinism. Correlational findings showing that variations in learning motivation can be partly explained by differences in self-efficacy levels reinforce Bandura's assumption that self-efficacy functions as a proximal determinant of motivation (Bosnjak et al., 1841), especially through the mechanisms of goal setting, outcome expectations, and self-regulation in learning. However, the identified relationship cannot be directly interpreted as a causal relationship. Although the findings of this study reinforce the relevance of Social Cognitive Theory by emphasizing the role of contextual factors and prior learning experiences in shaping learning motivation, Self-Determination Theory Ryan et.al., (2009) submitting conceptual criticism of this interpretation. SDT views learning motivation not as a direct consequence of individual cognitive beliefs such as self-efficacy, but rather as the result of fulfilling fundamental psychological requirements for independence, proficiency, and social connectedness in the context of learning. Within this framework, a linear regression-based predictive approach that places self-efficacy as the main predictor has the potential to reduce the complexity of qualitative and hierarchical motivation. SDT emphasizes that the influence of learning experiences and educational contexts on motivation is mediated by the quality of the resulting motivational regulation, so that a comprehensive understanding of learning motivation requires attention to contextual support rather than merely to linear relationships between psychological constructs.

Students' motivational dynamics cannot be reduced to a single psychological construct, as evidenced by the conceptual differences between Self-Determination Theory (SDT) and Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) in their descriptions of the primary sources of motivation (Deci & Ryan, 1985). According to Bandura, self-efficacy is a proximal variable that directly influences behavioral decisions, the level of effort put forth, and an individual's persistence (Tena et al., 2026). Conversely, Self-Determination Theory emphasizes that the degree to which the learning environment facilitates the fulfillment of essential psychological needs, autonomy, competence, and relatedness, substantially influences the quality of motivation. Therefore, the study's findings of a strong correlation between self-efficacy and learning motivation can be interpreted as a component of a more intricate motivational process, in which a framework of contextual support and individual self-confidence shapes students' motivational regulation (Ayabe et al., 2026).

These findings align with Expectancy Value Theory (Eccles & Wigfield, 2024), which posits that expectancies of success and task value are the primary predictors of academic engagement. This idea posits that self-efficacy is integral to the expectation of success, indicating that students with elevated self-confidence are more inclined to perceive academic

tasks as achievable and valuable. This suggests that self-efficacy's role in learning motivation encompasses not only affective aspects but also cognitive and evaluative aspects of task assessment.

However, the correlations found in this study cannot be directly interpreted as definitive causal relationships. It is possible that mediating and moderating variables such as faculty support, classroom climate, goal orientation, and self-regulation strategies play a role in shaping these patterns of relationships. In the context of triadic mutual determinism the interplay among personal, behavioural, and environmental elements is dynamically reciprocal, whereby alterations in one dimension can influence the others (Abdullah, 2019). Consequently, more research employing a more thorough analytical method, such as multiple regression or structural equation modelling, is necessary to attain a more profound comprehension of the relationship structure among variables.

Implicitly, the results of this study indicate that efforts to increase student motivation should not only focus on developing academic competencies but also systematically strengthen self-efficacy. Providing authentic experiences of success (mastery experiences), offering reflective, constructive feedback, and creating a learning environment that supports autonomy and social connectedness are important strategies for building sustainable motivation. (Ryan & Deci, 2020). Thus, integrating strengthening self-efficacy and fulfilling basic psychological needs offers a more holistic approach to improving the quality of student motivation for learning.

Overall, these findings not only reinforce the relevance of Social Cognitive Theory in higher education but also open up a conceptual dialogue with other motivational approaches, particularly Self-Determination Theory. This integrative approach allows for a more comprehensive understanding of the dynamics of learning motivation and enriches the theoretical basis for the development of evidence-based academic interventions (Blume, 2026).

Moreover, the amalgamation of Social Cognitive Theory and Self-Determination Theory in this research substantiates that student learning motivation is both multidimensional and contextual. Self-efficacy can function as a cognitive mechanism that initiates and maintains learning engagement, but the quality and sustainability of motivation are highly dependent on the accompanying environmental support structure. In the context of higher education, this dynamic becomes even more complex, as students face demands for greater autonomy, challenging academic standards, and diverse social expectations (Wigfield, 2022). The connection between self-efficacy and learning motivation should be perceived as an adaptive process that evolves progressively through continuous academic encounters.

In addition, from the perspective of self-regulation, self-efficacy influences the standards individuals set for their goals and the strategies they use to achieve them. Individuals with high self-efficacy tend to set more challenging goals, show greater consistency in their commitment, and are more resilient in the face of temporary failures. This mechanism reinforces the argument that self-efficacy's contribution to learning motivation lies not only in internal motivation but also in its ability to guide planning, monitoring, and self-evaluation. Thus, the relationship identified in this study reflects the functional link between self-belief and students' academic regulation systems (Urhahne & Wijnia, 2023).

On the other hand, these findings also have conceptual implications for developing a more integrative model of learning motivation. If self-efficacy is understood as a proximal determinant, then distal factors such as prior learning experiences, social support, and the academic climate shape and strengthen self-efficacy (Tudge et al., 2009). This type of model places self-efficacy as a connecting node between context and motivation, thereby providing a more systematic explanation of how psychological and environmental variables interact to influence academic engagement.

Methodologically speaking, the correlational findings of this investigation also offer opportunities for the development of increasingly intricate and inferential analytical models. For instance, self-efficacy stability and changes in learning motivation over time can be tested using a longitudinal method. A more accurate understanding of the channels of impact between variables can be obtained by examining mediation and moderation relationships simultaneously using structural equation modeling. The advancement of this research design is critical to enhancing external validity and broadening the theoretical scope of academic motivation research (Martin et al., 2010).

In the end, the justifications derived from this research confirm that student learning motivation is a psychological concept that cannot be reduced to a single element. Although self-efficacy is a key proximal predictor, the caliber of learning opportunities and the availability of contextual support significantly influence its success. Therefore, the most effective method for raising the standard of learning motivation in higher education is an integrated approach that combines enhancing self-belief with meeting fundamental psychological requirements and creating meaningful learning designs.

Conclusion

This study concludes that students' speaking self-efficacy and learning motivation in the Arabic Language Education Study Program are generally situated at moderate to high levels, with distinct patterns across dimensions and indicators. In the self-efficacy construct, the magnitude dimension emerged as the most prominent aspect, followed by generality, while

strength remained relatively low, indicating that students tend to perceive Arabic-speaking tasks as manageable but have not yet fully developed stable confidence when facing continuous academic pressure. In terms of learning motivation, persistence in effort was the dominant indicator, while belief in success and desire to succeed remained at a moderate level, suggesting that students show strong behavioral persistence, although their cognitive and affective motivational orientations still require reinforcement. The correlation analysis revealed a strong and significant positive relationship between speaking self-efficacy and learning motivation ($r = 0.893$; $p < 0.001$), indicating that students with greater perceived capability in performing Arabic-speaking tasks tend to exhibit higher learning motivation.

Theoretically, this study contributes to Arabic language education research by positioning speaking self-efficacy as a skill-specific psychological construct within *maharah al-kalam*, rather than treating self-efficacy as a general learning attribute. It also extends the relevance of Social Cognitive Theory in Arabic higher education by showing that perceived speaking capability is closely associated with motivational persistence, expectation of success, and engagement in learning. Practically, the findings imply that Arabic-speaking instruction should not focus solely on linguistic mastery, such as vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation, but should also systematically strengthen students' self-efficacy through gradual speaking tasks, constructive feedback, successful learning experiences, and emotional regulation. More broadly, this study offers implications for Arabic as a foreign language education in non-Arabic-speaking contexts, where psychological barriers often hinder students' oral communication. Therefore, strengthening speaking self-efficacy may be an important pedagogical strategy for improving students' motivation to learn Arabic across diverse higher education contexts. Future research is recommended to employ longitudinal, experimental, or structural equation modeling approaches to more comprehensively examine the causal mechanisms and mediating factors underlying the relationship between speaking self-efficacy and learning motivation.

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