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Influence of Self-Efficacy on Learning Motivation among Primary School Students

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to examine the impact of self-efficacy on primary school students' learning motivation. A quantitative research approach with a simple linear regression design was employed. The sample consisted of 71 fourth-, fifth-, and sixth-grade students from Primary School, selected using purposive sampling. Data were collected through a validated questionnaire measuring self-efficacy and learning motivation and analyzed using SPSS. The results revealed a significant positive effect of self-efficacy on students' learning motivation. The self-efficacy contributed to students' learning motivation. These findings suggest that strengthening self-efficacy can play a crucial role in enhancing students' motivation to learn, particularly at the primary school level. The study highlights the importance of integrating self-efficacy-building strategies into early education to foster better academic engagement and outcomes.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Education is a planned effort to create a learning atmosphere and learning process. Thus, students can actively develop their potential. Education is also an important stage in individual development, especially at primary school age. At this stage, children begin to form attitudes and learning habits that will affect their future academic journey. Education has a very close relationship with the learning process at school, especially to achieve learning outcomes. Various factors, both intrinsic and extrinsic, can influence learning outcomes. Various efforts have also been made to improve learning outcomes through various ways such as developing learning methods, learning strategies, learning media, etc. One of the key factors to determine learning success is learning motivation.

Motivation is the stage that provides motive, purpose, and persistence in behavior. In other words, motivated behavior is behavior that is passionate, focused, and lasting (Duke *et al*., 2021). Motivation is something that guides, revives, and maintains a behavior. In other words, motivation pushes someone to move in a certain direction and keeps them moving on it (Dewi *et al*., 2020). Therefore, the level of learning motivation can help students in choosing the future outlook and ideals they want. The existence of future outlooks and ideals is one of the factors that influence the increase in students' learning motivation (Qibtiyah *et al*., 2021). In other words, motivation has a tight relationship with the level of student effort in achieving academic goals and how they overcome the challenges they face.

Students who have a low level of learning motivation are more prone to feel hopeless in facing learning challenges at school.

Aside from being influenced by students' interests, expectations values, attributes, and goals, learning motivation is also influenced by students' specific beliefs in their abilities (Sucitno *et al*., 2020). One of the intrinsic factors that influence motivation is self-efficacy (Latif & Anwar, 2024). Motivation, self-efficacy, and values or expectations are the most influential factors in students' academic performance (Yu *et al*., 2022). Students' confidence is the main explanation of motivation in self-efficacy theory. Self-efficacy is a student's belief in their ability to solve the challenges faced, based on the individual's ability to plan, self-organize, and individual confidence in tackling difficult tasks (Suantini *et al*., 2024). Students who have high levels of self-efficacy tend to be more motivated to learn and achieve their goals, while students with low levels of self-efficacy tend to feel discouraged and give up more easily when facing difficulties. In other words, having self-efficacy is one of the ways to help individuals overcome their learning motivation problems. That being said, self-efficacy can help reduce the concerns about lack of motivation in students, and help to grow individual confidence to explore their abilities and decide on the necessary actions (Sucitno *et al*., 2020).

Self-efficacy refers to beliefs about an individual's ability to generate the motivation, thinking ability, and actions needed to meet the demands of the situation in achievement (Orakci, 2023). Students have different levels of self-efficacy. Self-efficacy levels start from very high, high, medium, low, and very low levels (Jiatong *et al*., 2021). High self-efficacy can help students solve learning difficulties they face through commitment and motivation to learn. The different levels of self-efficacy that students have will affect students' learning motivation and their interactions with their surroundings. Those who do not have sufficient self-efficacy will experience difficulties in the learning process at school and in the surrounding environment because of fear, embarrassment, insecurity, etc. tend to feel unsure of their abilities and skills. A person with these conditions is prone to feel worthlessness, and it is a description of a person who has low self-efficacy (Fatimah *et al*., 2024).

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High self-efficacy is a person's belief to succeed in taking the necessary actions to achieve goals and these actions will lead to the expected results (Hidayanti, 2023). The characteristics of low self-efficacy, namely: difficulty in doing tasks, lack of effort to overcome problems, inability to take lessons from past events, always feeling worried, and easily getting stressed. Meanwhile, the characteristics of high self-efficacy, namely: more proactive, able to take lessons from past events, able to plan goals and develop work plans, are more innovative in solving problems. Thus, they are not easily stressed, and always trying harder to achieve optimal work results (Lukito & Tarigan, 2023). The aspects of self-efficacy consist of three aspects, which include:

(i) Level, which is the difficulty level of the task an individual is believed to be able to face.
(ii) Generality, which is the diversity of conditions that allow an individual to foster the belief that they can overcome these conditions.
(iii) Strength, which is the level of strength of individual belief in their abilities (Ismail, 2016).

Research on the effect of self-efficacy on student motivation at Senior High School showed the result of a significant relationship between self-efficacy and student motivation by 20% (Sucitno *et al.*, 2020). Some researchers Korucuk (2025) have also examined the effect of self-efficacy on student learning motivation, the results showed a positive and significant effect of self-efficacy on student learning motivation by 9.61%. Research with the same results was also presented by other reports (Bradley *et al*., 2017) regarding self-efficacy which has a direct positive effect on learning motivation with a regression coefficient of 0.170. Another study with similar results was discussed by literature (Lu & Wang, 2025) with the results that self-efficacy has a huge effect on student learning motivation by 29.6%. There are various variations of results obtained from previous studies at the middle and high school levels. However, research at the primary school level is still limited. This shows that there is a significant gap in research on the effect of self-efficacy on student learning motivation between the primary school level compared to the middle and high school levels. This lack of research at the primary school level indicates the lack of understanding of the impact of self-efficacy in the primary school age. In other words, there are a lot of people who still do not know how much the impact of self-efficacy has on student learning motivation, especially at the primary school level. Therefore, this article aims to fill the knowledge gap and provide insight into how much the impact of self-efficacy has on the learning motivation of primary school students.

Based on this explanation, we examined the impact of self-efficacy on primary school students' learning motivation. This study determined how much the impact of self-efficacy has on the learning motivation of primary school students. Novelties of this study are in the following:

(i) Focus on Primary School Level. While most previous studies on self-efficacy and learning motivation focus on middle and high school students, this research specifically targets primary school students, addressing a significant gap in the existing literature.
(ii) Quantitative Evidence in Early Education. The study provides empirical, quantitative evidence on how self-efficacy impacts learning motivation among younger learners—an area that remains underexplored in current educational research.
(iii) Use of Validated Instruments Tailored for Children. This research utilizes a validated and adapted self-efficacy and motivation scale appropriate for primary school-aged children, ensuring accurate measurement within this specific developmental stage.
(iv) Practical Implications for Early Intervention. The findings offer actionable insights for educators and policymakers by demonstrating that enhancing self-efficacy can

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significantly increase motivation in early learners, supporting the design of more effective interventions in basic education.

(v) Local Context in Indonesia. This study adds context-specific data from an Indonesian primary school, contributing to the growing body of localized research in Southeast Asian education and providing a comparative reference for international studies.

2. METHODS

This study employed a quantitative approach using a simple linear regression design to analyze the relationship between students' self-efficacy and learning motivation. The sampling method used was purposive sampling, targeting students in higher grades who are considered to better understand the concepts of self-efficacy and learning motivation due to their broader learning experiences. The sample consisted of 71 students from Primary Schools in Sidoarjo, Indonesia, including 23 fourth-grade students, 26 fifth-grade students, and 22 sixth-grade students. Data were collected using a validated questionnaire, which included a modified self-efficacy scale and a learning motivation scale. The instrument used a Likert scale with four response options: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD). To ensure the instrument's validity and reliability, the following steps were carried out:

(i) Content and construct validity were assessed by expert lecturers in self-efficacy and learning motivation.

(ii) An empirical validity test was conducted through a trial run involving 22 fifth-grade students from Primary School.

(iii) Reliability testing was performed, and the results were evaluated based on Guilford's criteria.

(iv) The data analysis was conducted using SPSS 23.0.

For data analysis, two techniques were used:

(i) Descriptive analysis, which categorized the data based on the mean and standard deviation into five categories: very high, high, moderate, low, and very low.

(ii) Parametric inferential analysis, which included assumption testing (normality and linearity tests), followed by hypothesis testing using:

- Simple linear regression, to assess the effect of self-efficacy on learning motivation.
- Coefficient of determination (R^2), to determine the extent to which self-efficacy explains variations in learning motivation.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A preliminary study conducted by researchers through interviews with 6 students of grade VI Primary School on 23 October 2024, showed that students are easily distracted by other things resulting in less focus on the material delivered by the teacher, often procrastinate in doing assignments or homework, rarely open their textbooks, reluctant to ask teachers or friends about material they do not understand, and lack of sense to compete for obtaining high scores. This aligns with the results of an interview with the VI-grade teacher of Primary School that students tend to have low learning motivation, there is still some basic knowledge that they do not know and understand yet, and during learning hours, there are still students wandering around in the canteen or the schoolyard. This is supported by the calculation of the average percentage of individual material absorption results that have low learning motivation from each subject and results by less than 65%. Students who have higher learning motivation have individual material absorption percentage results of larger than 65%.

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Students are considered to have completed learning individually if the percentage of individual absorption is more than 65% (Laguador, 2014). In other words, based on the average percentage result of students' absorption with low learning motivation of less than 65%, they are considered to fall into the category of having not completed learning individually.

Based on the results of the preliminary research, show that the level of student learning motivation is still low. The indicators of low learning motivation are lack of concern for lessons, learning seen as a heavy burden, low fighting spirit for learning, difficulty being given individual tasks (task division) in group assignments, lack of concentration, tendency to create noise, dependence on others, easily complaining about the tasks given, and quickly giving up when finding difficulties (Murtiyasa & Amini, 2021). Four elements influence learning motivation (Dewi *et al*., 2020):

(i) Interest, students who are interested in a topic will be actively involved in discussing the topic. Thus, students will tend to study it in detail.
(ii) Expectations and values, students' beliefs about their learning outcomes, and the values they expect will affect students' learning motivation. When expectations and the value they get are equal, it will increase students' learning motivation.
(iii) Attributes, awareness of the abilities and resources they have for learning. This forms a positive mentality towards motivation as an effort to improve the abilities they have.
(iv) Student goals, having clear goals will guide the students in achieving these goals with more diligence and focus.

3.1. Data Analysis: Parametric Inferential Analysis

Parametric inferential analysis in this study was calculated using SPSS. Assumption tests in this study include normality tests and linearity tests. The normality test aims to test whether regression, confounding, or residual variables have or have a normal distribution. In **Table 1**, obtained an asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) value of o.2oo. Standard Deviation value of 7.7250. The normality test using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov (K-S) test of the self-efficacy variable on 71 student learning motivation. With the value of asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) of 0.200, which is larger than 0.05, the residual data is normally distributed.

The linearity test aims to determine whether or not there is a linear relationship between variable X and variable Y. Based on the results of the linearity test in **Table 2**, the significance value in the deviation from linearity is 0.382, which is larger than 0.05. There is a linear relationship between variable X and variable Y. The basis for making a linearity test decision is if the significance value on the deviation from linearity, with the use of significance value criteria of larger than 0.05, then the variable has a linear relationship. And it is considered non-linear if the significance value of the variable is less than 0.05.

Table 1. The normality test using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov (K-S) test.

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test		
		residual 2
N		71
Normal Parameters[a, b]	Mean	0.0000000
	Std. Deviation	7.72503037
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	0.081
	Positive	0.063
	Negative	-0.081
Test Statistic		0.081
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		0.200 [c,d]

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Table 2. The linearity test (ANOVA Table).

			Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
b_Motivasi Belajar *a_Self-efficacy	Between Groups	(Combined)	6419.815	40	160.495	2.824	0.002
		Linearity	3947.321	1	3947.321	69.461	0.000
		Deviation from Linearity	2472.493	39	63.397	1.116	0.382
	Within Groups		1704.833	30	56.828		
	Total		8124.648	70			

The steps of hypothesis testing consist of two steps: the simple linear regression test and the coefficient of determination (R square) test. The basis for making simple linear regression test decisions in this study uses a comparison between the significance value and the significance level of 0.05. If the significance value of less than 0.05 then variable X affects variable Y. Meanwhile, if the significance value is higher than 0.05, variable X does not affect variable Y. On the other hand, to find out how much impact the independent variable or self-efficacy has on student learning motivation, it is seen from the results of the coefficient of determination (R square) test. The coefficient of determination ranges from 0 to 1, if the coefficient of determination in the regression model continues to be small or gets closer to zero, it means that the smaller the impact of all variable X on variable Y or the value of R square is closer to 100%, it means that the greater the impact of all variable X on variable Y.

Based on the results of the simple linear regression test in **Table 3**, the calculated F value is 65.201 with a significance level of 0.000, which is less than 0.05. The regression model can be used to predict the self-efficacy variable. In other words, there is an impact of the self-efficacy variable on the learning motivation variable. Based on the results of the coefficient of determination test, it is known that the relationship value (R) is 0.697. From **Table 4**, the coefficient of determination (R square) is 0.486, which implies that the effect of the self-efficacy variable on the learning motivation variable is 48.6%. The remaining 51.4% is impacted by other variables not examined in this study.

Table 3. The simple linear regression test.

ANOVA[a]						
Model		**Sum of Squares**	**df**	**Mean Square**	**F**	**Sig.**
1	Regression	3947.321	1	3947.321	65.201	0.000[b]
	Residual	4177.327	69	60.541		
	Total	8124.648	70			

Table 4. The coefficient of determination (R^2) test.

Model Summary				
Model	**R**	**R Square**	**Adjusted R Square**	**Std. Error of the Estimate**
1	.697[a]	.486	.478	7.781

3.2. Data Analysis: Descriptive Analysis

Other than data analysis using parametric inferential analysis, this research also used descriptive analysis. In this analysis, there were several steps of analysis with the help of Microsoft Excel 2010. This categorization can be used to determine the mean value and standard deviation value of each variable. The result is categorized into five categories, namely: very high, high, medium, low, and very low.

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Description of the level of self-efficacy result based on **Figure 1** shows the frequency and level of self-efficacy of Primary School students. The diagram/table shows that out of 71 people, consisting of a percentage of 6% as many as 4 students show very low self-efficacy. Students with a percentage of 30% with a total of 21 people showed low self-efficacy. A total of 23 students with a percentage of 32% showed moderate self-efficacy. Students with a percentage of 25% with a total of 18 people showed high self-efficacy, and students with a very high level of self-efficacy with a percentage of 7% as many as 5 people.

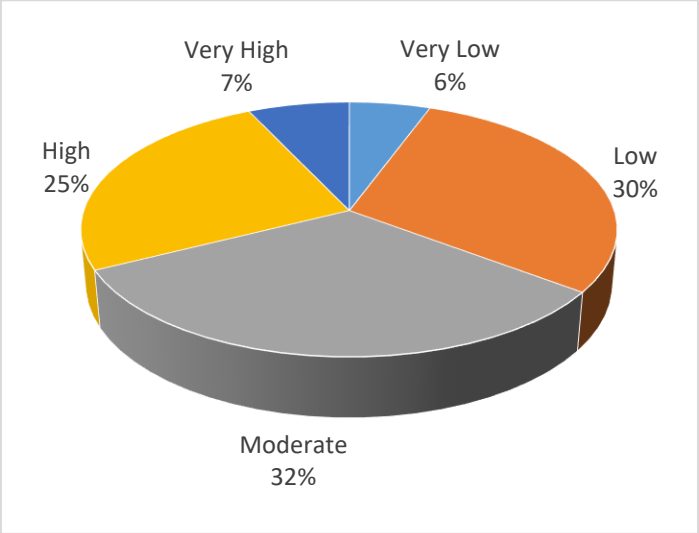

Figure 1. Frequency distribution of self-efficacy.

Description of the results of the level of learning motivation based on **Figure 2** shows the frequency and level of learning motivation of Primary School students. The diagram shows that out of 71 people consisting of a percentage of 6% as many as 4 students show very low learning motivation. Students with a percentage of 22% with a total of 16 people showed low learning motivation. Students totaling 22 people with a percentage of 31% showed moderate learning motivation. Students totaling 26 people with a percentage of 37% showed high learning motivation and students with a very high level of learning motivation with a percentage of 4% totaling 3 people.

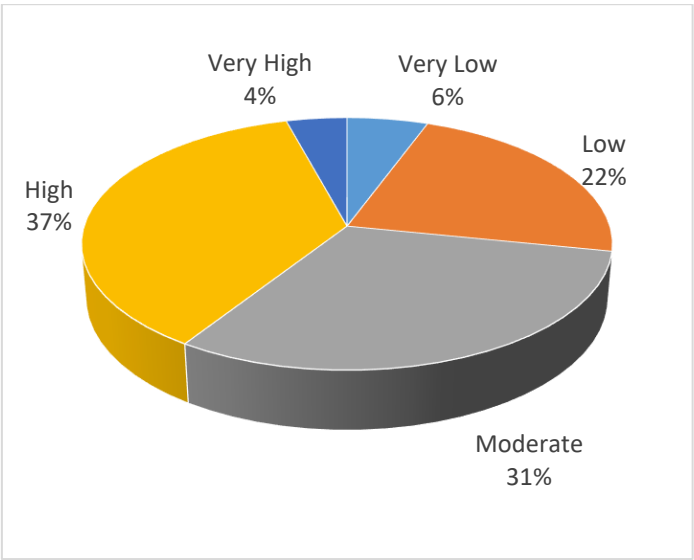

Figure 2. Frequency distribution of learning motivation.

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3.3. Discussion

Based on the results of the data analysis, show that there is a positive influence of self-efficacy on student learning motivation. The results of the simple linear regression test, show significant results with a significance value of 0.000 and an F count of 65.201 in **Table 3**. This means that the hypothesis of a positive effect of self-efficacy on student learning motivation can be accepted. Thus, if the level of self-efficacy increases, it will also increase the value of learning. On the contrary, if there is a decrease in the level of self-efficacy, the level of learning motivation will also decrease. Based on the test results of the coefficient of determination (R square), it is known that self-efficacy has an effect of 48.6% on student learning motivation. Thus, self-efficacy in this study is proven to be able to impact student learning motivation.

The results of this study align with the opinion that the different levels of students' self-efficacy will affect student learning motivation and interaction with their surroundings. Those who do not have sufficient self-efficacy will experience difficulties in the learning process at school and in the surrounding environment because of fear, embarrassment, insecurity, etc. tend to feel unsure of their abilities and skills. A person with these conditions is prone to feel worthlessness, and it is a description of a person who has low self-efficacy (Suantini *et al*., 2024). The results of the study also align with the research on the effect of self-efficacy on student motivation at Senior High School "Y" showed the result of a significant relationship between self-efficacy and student motivation by 20% (Sucitno *et al*., 2020). Some researchers Korucuk (2025) have also examined the effect of self-efficacy on student learning motivation and the results of self-efficacy have a positive and significant effect on learning motivation by 9.61%. Research with the same results was also presented by other researchers (Bradley *et al*., 2017) regarding self-efficacy which has a direct positive effect on learning motivation with a regression coefficient of 0.170. Another study with similar results was discussed by other researchers (Lu & Wang, 2025) with research results proving that self-efficacy has a large effect on student learning motivation by 29.6%.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the data analysis, this study concludes that self-efficacy has a significant and positive influence on the learning motivation of primary school students. The statistical findings demonstrate that self-efficacy accounts for 48.6% of the variance in learning motivation, indicating a substantial contribution. Students with higher self-efficacy are more likely to exhibit greater persistence, engagement, and confidence in their learning activities, while those with lower self-efficacy tend to struggle with motivation, concentration, and academic resilience. These findings emphasize the importance of fostering self-efficacy at an early age as a foundation for building strong learning habits and long-term academic success. Educators and school stakeholders are encouraged to incorporate strategies and learning environments that support students' belief in their abilities, such as providing constructive feedback, encouraging goal-setting, and designing tasks that promote a sense of achievement. Addressing self-efficacy early in a child's education can be a powerful step toward improving not only motivation but also overall academic performance and lifelong learning attitudes.

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6. AUTHORS' NOTE

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article. Authors confirmed that the paper was free of plagiarism.

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