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THE MODERATING ROLE OF PEER SUPPORT ON LEARNING INTEREST AND LEARNING DISCIPLINE ON STUDENT LEARNING MOTIVATION IN ECONOMICS SUBJECTS IN 3T AREAS

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ABSTRACT

*This study investigates the moderating role of peer support on the relationship between learning interest, learning discipline, and student motivation in a 3T (frontier, outermost, and disadvantaged) region Batuputih sub-district. While previous studies have explored these variables individually, limited research has examined how peer support interacts with interest and discipline to influence learning motivation in underdeveloped regions. Employing a quantitative approach with a survey method, data were collected from 201 grade XI students at SMAN Tupan and SMAN Benlutu using purposive sampling. A 5-point Likert scale questionnaire was administered, and sample adequacy was determined using G*Power analysis (effect size = 0.15, power = 0.95, α = 0.05), resulting in a minimum requirement of 107 participants. Data were analyzed using PLS-SEM via SmartPLS. The findings indicate that both learning interest (p = 0.027) and learning discipline (p = 0.000) significantly influence student motivation. However, peer support does not moderate these relationships, as shown by p-values of 0.744 and 0.861, respectively. These results suggest that while interest and discipline are critical drivers of motivation, peer support may not play a significant moderating role in this context. This study contributes to the understanding of motivational factors in disadvantaged educational settings and provides insights for educators in designing targeted interventions.*

***Keywords**: Learning Interest, Learning Discipline, Learning Motivation, Peer Support.*

INTRODUCTION

The SDGs are national and international pledges to raise the standard of living in society. At the UN General Assembly in September 2015, affluent and developing nations announced 17 global goals and targets for 2030. To realize the SDGs goals, one essential point that needs to be considered is the quality of education, especially in Indonesia. Ali Faisal (2019) Says the level of education can measure the quality of human resources in a region. If the level of education is higher in an area, the population's quality will also be better. However, the Disadvantaged, Frontier, and Outermost (3T) regions in Indonesia, including the Batuputih sub-district, face various challenges in the field of education. Limited access to educational resources, unfavorable economic conditions, and lack of infrastructure support are some factors that affect the quality of education in the 3T areas. Batuputih sub-district is one of 32 in TTS district, East Nusa Tenggara province. NTT which is included in the 3T category Perpres (2020) with an area of 102.32 km^2 (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2024). Education in Indonesia's 3T areas is known to be unique, with various complex problems (Rahmadi, 2020). In Tungga et al., (2020) research, Indonesian people, especially the Batuputih sub-district, expect their children to receive a proper education. In reality, not having enough schools with close travel distances makes some people reject the 12-year compulsory education recommended by the central government. Learning in 3T areas experiences obstacles, as expressed. These include a lack of human resources and infrastructure, such as student parents' laptops or cellphones, trouble accessing the internet, erratic power supplies, and a cap on the amount parents can offer. Therefore, it is essential to conduct this research because it provides crucial insights to improve the quality of education in 3T areas by understanding the factors that influence student learning motivation. By understanding how factors affect learning motivation in 3T areas, more targeted education policies and programs can be developed to reduce the education gap between 3T and non-3T areas. Understanding the moderating role of peer support can help develop students' potential to the fullest, aiming to achieve better academic performance.

Falah & Hadna (2022) said that, in general, the main problems of education in 3T areas are as follows: difficulties with internet and communication tools to support learning; financial limitations of parents; limited educational facilities and infrastructure; lack of available educators and education personnel; and lack of road infrastructure and school travel distances. Tutukansa & Tuffahati (2022) say that the absence of educational facilities, such as facilities and infrastructure, causes problems for educators and teachers. Other problems, as revealed by Maulido et al., (2024), are that many schools still need to be feasible and cannot be used for teaching and learning activities. Building damage and lack of facilities, such as books and educators, are significant problems in some areas of Indonesia. Cahyaning Tyas et al., (2024) Remote education services have several shortcomings, including lack of facilities and infrastructure, unclear curriculum, lack of professional teachers, and limited access to education, therefore requiring genuine efforts from the government and related institutions to overcome the problems faced in education services in remote areas. Dudung et al. (2018) said that

the main problems in the 3T areas are the shortage of teachers, unbalanced distribution of teachers, substandard teaching qualifications, lack of competence, and a mismatch between educational qualifications and the fields taught. In addition, low student participation rates, inadequate facilities and infrastructure, and limited school access. Therefore, the government needs to pay attention to the quality of education in the 3T areas to overcome the existing problems.

Based on the results of unstructured interviews during pre-research conducted with economics teachers in the Batuputih sub-district, it is said that student motivation in learning economics is still very low due to a lack of interest in learning the students themselves because they only want to get a diploma. Some students come to school to avoid a lot of work at home due to economic factors from middle to lower-class families, which impacts learning, including economic learning in the classroom. Other factors that influence learning motivation are not getting support from parents, so students lack learning discipline. Another factor that affects learning motivation is not getting support from parents, so students lack learning discipline. The distance between home and school is quite far, so it becomes one of the obstacles in learning economics and even in other subjects; not enough until there are peer factors that are less supportive of different friends, so students are not motivated in the economic learning process and existing learning.

Safira et al., (2021) Motivation is an effort aimed at encouraging, arousing, and influencing others to act. Low motivation to learn is when a person no longer feels the connection between the effort made and the results obtained (Ayu & Nur, 2024). When learning motivation decreases, this will be a serious problem for students regarding their future (Maghfirah et al., 2023). Students who need more motivation to learn no longer see the goal of developing their potential, which results in low academic achievement (Susanto & Lestari, 2018). In addition to having an impact on reducing students' grades, achievements, and learning outcomes, low motivation can also affect their emotional and social well-being and the quality of human resources (Jannah & Sontani, 2018). Student learning motivation must be improved. If students are motivated, their laziness will increase, and they will no longer try to hone their potential, ultimately affecting their learning outcomes (Syafria et al., 2020). According to Qianyi & Zhiqiang (2024), to effectively modify their teaching strategies, teachers must thoroughly understand their students' desire for learning. Teachers can fulfill individual requirements, provide structured learning experiences, give prompt feedback, and create a positive and stimulating learning atmosphere in the classroom by assessing motivation levels. Therefore, to increase student learning motivation, attention must be paid to the factors that influence student learning motivation, either from within the student or outside the student himself.

One important component of students' learning success is their interest in learning, which comes from themselves (Mohzana, 2023). Student learning interest is important in motivating students to learn (Putri & Rifai, 2019). Learning interest affects learning motivation (Rista, 2022). Aminingtyas & Dwi (2023) state that because it makes a person more interested or like to do an activity without being asked, those interested will pay more attention to it. Every person's consideration, love, and interest in learning activities is called learning interest, and learning interest is shown through support, activeness in the learning process, and understanding of the material (Dewi & Ariza, 2021). According to Rahmayanti

(2016), In the cognitive aspect, interest functions as an impetus to achieve goals or needs so that everything that is done will provide added value to the individual. Meanwhile, in the attitude aspect, the things done will provide pleasure and happiness, not cause boredom. Therefore, interest becomes an energy source for carrying out activities to achieve goals or needs. Firdza & Uno (2023) According to the study, interest in learning and drive to learn are significantly correlated. Therefore, motivation increases with interest in learning. On the other hand, junior high school pupils in grade 2 are less motivated to learn if they have less interest in learning. This is corroborated by earlier studies carried out by Lukita & Sudibjo (2021), Rista (2022), Octora et al., (2021), Dewi & Ariza (2021), Pongoh (2023) saying that interest in learning affects learning motivation. This research also contradicts research conducted by Yulyani (2020), Rubiana & Dadi (2020) saying that interest in learning does not affect learning motivation.

Another factor that is considered necessary in increasing student learning motivation is learning discipline. Kamaruddin et al., (2023) Learning discipline includes various behaviors and habits that affect how students manage time and assignments, attend lectures, and interact with subject matter. According to Matussolikhah & Rosy (2021), The benchmarks of learning discipline are actions and time. Time discipline includes studying on time, attending the learning process, and submitting assignments on time. Meanwhile, the discipline of action includes obedience and compliance with school rules, craftsmanship, independence, and honesty in doing something. In addition, there are other parameters of learning discipline, such as awareness in obeying rules at school, obedience and order when studying in class, timeliness in completing and submitting assignments, and crafts in studying at home (Permana & Latifah, 2015). Sari et al., (2023) said discipline cannot be built without habituation. Cooperation between school and family is essential in shaping students' disciplinary attitudes. At school, teachers need to monitor discipline violations that occur during the learning process and those that interfere with the smooth teaching and learning process. Teachers must also be firm in explaining students' responsibilities at school and matters related to the learning process. Chairani (2024), in the results of her research, shows that work discipline affects learning motivation, which is evident from the t count value > t (table) (2.216 > 2.048). This is also supported by previous research conducted by Afandi & Redjeki (2021), Liubana & Puspasari (2021), Lestari (2019), Meliana et al., (2021), Bahrun et al., (2022), Astuti & Syofyan (2022) said that learning discipline affects learning motivation. This research also contradicts research conducted by Wahab et al., (2021), Widana (2016), saying that interest in learning does not affect learning motivation.

As with appearance, social activities, and behavior, peers have a huge impact (Gulo & Laia, 2023). According to Siswanto et al., (2023), peer interaction can positively and negatively influence adolescent behavior. Anggreni & Rudiarta (2022) Although peer groups have many similarities, there are still differences, especially in character. Character differences can impact student learning outcomes and motivation. Poorers may be one of the factors that cause students to fail in learning (Asmara et al., 2021). Peers who have high learning motivation will influence other peers to have the same learning motivation (Agustiningtyas &

Surjanti, 2021). Observations made by Putri et al., (2024) of several students at SMP Negeri 74 Jakarta show that students behave similarly to their close friends at school. For example, when their friends invite them to talk, they will join in the conversation without paying attention to the teacher who is talking, or when their friends invite them to do the assignment, they will also do the assignment. Previous research conducted by Agustiningtyas & Surjanti (2021), Anggreni & Rudiarta (2022), Prastika et al., (2021), Safitri (2020), Kristanto et al., (2021), and Sumarni (2021) said that peers affect learning motivation. This study also contradicts research conducted by Hisyam (2018), which says that peers do not affect learning motivation.

Most existing studies have examined the direct influence of peer support on learning motivation without considering the potential mediating roles of learning interest and learning discipline. Furthermore, prior research has largely been conducted in urban or more developed areas, thereby limiting its applicability to disadvantaged and underrepresented regions such as Indonesia's 3T (frontier, outermost, and least developed) areas. This highlights a significant research gap in understanding how educational dynamics unfold in rural or marginalized settings. Learning motivation is a critical determinant of students' academic success. Numerous studies have established that study interest and discipline contribute significantly to shaping students' motivation. However, limited attention has been given to how peer support moderates this relationship particularly in the context of rural or 3T areas. Peer support may serve as a reinforcing or weakening factor in the influence of learning interest and discipline on motivation. Despite this potential, existing research often overlooks the moderating role of peer interactions in educational settings. In the specific cultural context of Indonesia's 3T regions, such as Soe in East Nusa Tenggara, students are embedded in tightly-knit social communities where peer relationships carry substantial influence. Cultural values that emphasize collectivism, mutual assistance, and conformity may intensify the role of peer support both positively and negatively in shaping students' educational attitudes. Moreover, limited access to educational resources and socioeconomic constraints often places additional pressure on students, making peer interactions a critical source of motivation, reinforcement, or distraction. Therefore, this study seeks to address these gaps by examining 1.) the direct effects of learning interest and learning discipline on students' learning motivation, and 2.) the moderating role of peer support within these relationships, specifically among senior high school students in disadvantaged rural areas.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study adopts a quantitative approach using a survey method. The primary objective is to analyze the moderating role of peer support (Z) on the influence of learning interest (X1) and learning discipline (X2) on students' learning motivation (Y) in the 3T (frontier, outermost, and disadvantaged) area of Batuputih Subdistrict. The population of this study comprises all 11th-grade students at Tupan Public Senior High School and Benlutu Public Senior High School, totaling 201 students. The sampling technique employed was purposive sampling, based on specific inclusion criteria. Using G*Power analysis with an effect size of 0.15, significance level (α) of 0.05, power of 0.95, and two predictors,

the minimum required sample size was determined to be 107 students. To ensure robustness and anticipate non-response, the final sample exceeded this minimum requirement. The data collection instrument was a structured questionnaire using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from “Strongly Disagree” (1) to “Strongly Agree” (5). The questionnaire items were adapted and validated from previous studies, measuring each variable: learning interest, learning discipline, peer support, and learning motivation. Data were collected by distributing printed questionnaires directly to the selected respondents. Prior to completion, participants were briefed on the study’s purpose and assured of their anonymity and the confidentiality of their responses. Completed questionnaires were checked for completeness before proceeding to analysis. Data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS 3 software. This technique was chosen for its ability to handle small sample sizes, non-normal data distribution, and multicollinearity among variable Hair et al., (2014) and Sullivan & Feinn (2012). The analysis included assessments of convergent and discriminant validity, construct reliability, and path analysis for hypothesis testing. PLS-SEM was selected due to its flexibility and suitability for exploratory research with real-world data limitations, such as incomplete responses or small samples. However, this method also has limitations in terms of generalizability, thus findings should be interpreted with caution.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Measurement Model

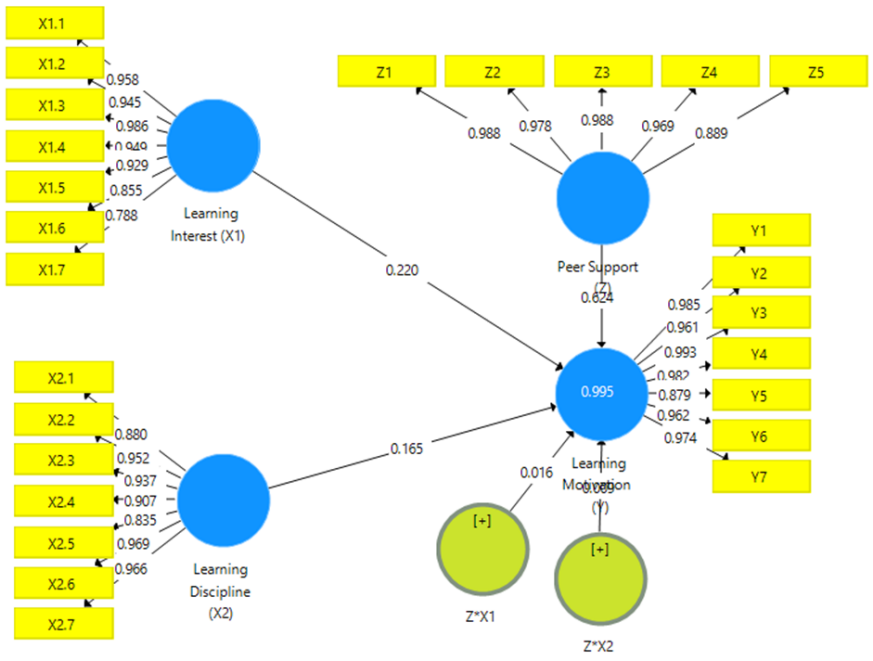

Figure 1. Loading Factors

Figure 1 on the results of data processing with the help of the SmartPLS 3 program on 26 indicators shows that all factor loading values on X1 (0.958, 0.945,

0.986, 0.949, 0,929, 0.855, 0.788), X2 (0.880, 0.952, 0.937, 0.907, 0.835, 0.969, 0.966), Y (0.985, 0.961, 0.993, 0.982, 0.879, 0.962, 0.974) and Z (0.988, 0.978, 0.988, 0.969, 0.889) > 0.07. 0,07. So, this study's correlation can be considered convergent validity because it has a loading factor value > 0.7 (Irwan & Adam, 2020).

Hair et al., (2012) Evaluated the validity and reliability of the constructs using the correlation constructs and the average variance extracted (AVE) value for each construct. Assume that the correlation value is less than the AVE square value. In that case, it supports discriminant validity, Irwan & Adam (2020) where AVE > 0.5 and Cronbach's Alpha value > 0.60 indicate satisfactory results for constructs with reflexive indicators.

Table1. Construct Reliabilityand Validity

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
X1	0.968	0.973	0.974	0.843
X2	0.970	0.973	0.975	0.850
Z	0.980	0.983	0.985	0.928
Y	0.987	0.988	0.989	0.927

Based on Table 1, construct reliability and Validity in this study are known under the AVE value on X1 (0.843), X2 (0.850), Z (0.928) and Y (0.927) > 0.5, meaning discriminant Validity, and Cronbach's Alpha value on X1 (0.968), X2 (0.970), Z (0.980) and Y (0.987) > 0.60, meaning it has good reliability.

Additionally, the goal is to assess the degree to which exogenous constructs influence endogenous constructs by examining the R-square value. Hair et al., (2012) Said that a study's SEM model has a satisfactory explanatory power if its R Square value is more than 0.50. The R Square value for this investigation is as follows:

Table 2. R Square

Construct	R Square	R Square Adjusted
Y	0.995	0.995

According to Table 2, the study's R Square value is 0.995, or 99.5%, indicating that learning interest, learning discipline, and peer support influence 99.5% of learning motivation. Other factors not included in the study impact the remaining 0.5%.

To ascertain the predictor level of latent variables, effect size analysis (f2) is employed. The f2 values utilized are 0.02 for minor effects, 0.15 for medium effects, and 0.35 for significant effects (Hair Jr et al., 2021). The following table displays the f2 value:

Table 3. Effect Size (f^2)

Construct	Motivation to Learn (Y)
X1	0.262
X2	0.073
Z	1.085

Construct	Motivation to Learn (Y)
Y	-
Z*X1	0.002
Z*X2	0.000

Based on Table 3, it is known that X1 has a medium effect of 0.262%, X2 has a small effect of 0.073%, Z has a significant impact of 1.085%, Z*X1 has a small effect of 0.002%, and Z*X2 has a negligible effect of 0.000%. Next, the Q-square test is conducted to measure how well the model produces the observation value and its estimation. Blindfolding results on SmartPLS demonstrate the Q-square test; predictive relevance is higher for models with a Q-square value > 0 and lower for models with a Q-square < 0 (Hair Jr et al., 2021). The blindfolding test results on SmartPLS show that the model has a predictive relevance value with a Q-squared value of 0.913, greater than 0.

The next step is to test the hypothesis. Hypothesis testing in this study is seen from the Bootstrapping results on Path Coefficients. Hair et al., (2012) hypothesis testing evaluates whether the path coefficient were seen from the P-values < 0.05 the hypothesis is accepted.

Tabel 4. Hypothesis Test

Path	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P Values	Decision
X1 → Y	0.220	0.219	0.059	3.716	0.000	Significant
X2 → Y	0.165	0.178	0.074	2.220	0.027	Significant
Z * X1 → Y	0.016	0.003	0.049	0.327	0.744	Not Significant
Z * X2 → Y	-0.009	0.006	0.050	0.175	0.861	Not Significant

Note: Decision is based on the criterion p-value < 0.05 = Significant.

Economics is one of the subjects in high school. Badan Standar Kurikulum dan Asesmen Pendidikan (2022) Economic conduct in the community's social life is the basis for economic subjects, which are chosen and organized utilizing economic science ideas for educational objectives. Globalization, another name for social interactions between individuals and groups, is the cause of societal change. Globalization boosts competitiveness, fosters mutual influence between individuals and groups, and produces quick interactions across time and space borders. Their respective value systems influence relationship patterns between these individuals and groups. Badan Standar Kurikulum dan Asesmen Pendidikan (2022) The objective of the Economics subject is to ensure learners achieve the following: 1.) Gratitude and Resource Utilization: Express gratitude for the wealth of resources that God Almighty has made accessible and make sustainable and efficient use of them. 2.) Understanding and Resolving Economic Issues: Understand and resolve economic issues responsibly and effectively. 3.) Understanding Dynamic Economic Activities: Capable of comprehending and appreciating the effects of dynamic economic activities. 4.) Future Planning and Decision Making: Capable of making

decisions about financial matters and planning for future economic activity. 5.) Understanding Financial Services Institutions: Capable of comprehending the features, advantages, dangers, rights, and responsibilities of financial services institutions and their offerings, as well as being able to select financial products and services based on their requirements. 6.) Critical Attitude toward Economic Policy: Have a critical attitude toward economic policies on a local, national, and worldwide scale and be able to map how they affect various parties and stakeholders. By accomplishing these goals, students should be able to manage financial resources as highly competitive, perceptive, and responsible individuals who can actively participate in the dynamics of the global economy and even inspire their peers to learn in class (Sianipar et al., 2023).

Based on Table 3 for the first hypothesis, it is known that interest in learning affects learning motivation, as evidenced by the p values of 0.027 < 0.05. The higher a person's interest in learning, the impact on his learning motivation will also increase. Research by Firdza & Uno (2023) Indicates that learning motivation and interest in learning are significantly correlated. Therefore, motivation increases with interest in learning. On the other hand, junior high school pupils in grade 2 are less motivated to learn if they have less interest in learning. This is also supported by previous research conducted by Lukita & Sudibjo (2021), Rista (2022), Octora et al., (2021), Dewi & Ariza (2021), Pongoh (2023) saying that interest in learning affects learning motivation. This research also contradicts research conducted by Yulyani (2020), Rubiana & Dadi (2020) saying that interest in learning does not affect learning motivation. This is in line with the social-cognitive theory developed by Bandura (1989), which says that student interest in learning is one factor that motivates students to learn. When students have a high interest in learning, they will form greater expectations for success, meaning that when students have positive expectations, it will be their motivation to continue learning; students who have a high interest in learning will make others role models and motivation to be successful in the future, high interest can encourage students to continue to learn new things to make these students confident and motivated to learn and make students manage adequate time to be organized in learning.

Based on Table 3 for the second hypothesis, it is known that learning discipline affects learning motivation, as evidenced by the p values of 0.000 < 0.05. The higher the learning discipline of a student, the higher his learning motivation. Chairani (2024), in the results of her research, shows that work discipline affects learning motivation, which is evident from the t count value > t (table) (2.216 > 2.048). This is also supported by previous research conducted by Afandi & Redjeki (2021), Liubana & Puspasari (2021), Lestari (2019), Meliana et al., (2021), Bahrun et al., (2022), Astuti & Syofyan (2022) said that learning discipline affects learning motivation. This research also contradicts research conducted by Wahab et al., (2021), Widana (2016), saying that interest in learning does not affect learning motivation. This is in line with the social-cognitive theory developed by Bandura (1989), which says that student learning discipline is one factor that motivates students to learn. Learning discipline can be how students manage their time, focus on the tasks given by the teacher, and focus on completing the assigned tasks. Thus, disciplined students are likely to achieve success in their learning. Students who have high learning discipline will efficiently complete the assignments given on time and can understand the subject matter provided. This success will have a

positive influence on their learning motivation. Students who are disciplined in learning will also evaluate their learning methods so that they continue to improve and motivate them to learn.

Interestingly, the findings also reveal that peer support does not moderate the relationship between interest in learning and learning discipline on learning motivation, as indicated by the p-values of 0.744 and 0.861 (> 0.05). This result contrasts with Bandura's (1989) theory, which suggests that social support, including peer support, can enhance students' learning motivation. Several possible explanations can account for this unexpected outcome: (1) internal factors may be more dominant in influencing students' motivation; (2) students with high learning discipline tend to be more structured and self-reliant, thus requiring less peer support; (3) peer support may have a stronger impact on students' social development rather than academic motivation; and (4) students with high interest and discipline may not depend on peer support to sustain their motivation. From a theoretical perspective, this study contributes to the development of social-cognitive theory by demonstrating that in certain educational contexts, intrinsic motivation and self-regulation may outweigh the influence of external social factors. It suggests the need for a more context-sensitive adaptation of the theory to account for varying cultural and educational settings. From a practical perspective, teachers and educators are encouraged to focus on cultivating students' individual interest and discipline. While social interaction remains important, personalized and self-directed learning strategies appear more effective in enhancing academic motivation.

This study has several limitations. First, the research was conducted within a single school level and geographical area, limiting the generalizability of the findings. Second, the measurement of peer support relied solely on self-reported data, which may introduce perceptual bias. Third, the exclusive use of quantitative methods may not fully capture the psychological and social dynamics that influence learning motivation. Future studies are recommended to employ mixed-method approaches to gain deeper insights into the role of peer support in students' academic motivation. Additionally, other potential moderating or mediating variables such as teacher support, family involvement, and digital learning tools should be considered. Conducting research in diverse cultural and geographical contexts will also enrich the understanding of students' motivational dynamics across different educational environments.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that both learning interest and learning discipline significantly influence students' learning motivation, aligning with Bandura's social cognitive theory. Students who are genuinely interested in learning and who practice disciplined study habits are more likely to be motivated, organized, and successful in their academic endeavors. However, the study also finds that peer support does not moderate the relationship between interest or discipline and motivation, which contrasts with some theoretical expectations. These findings are particularly important for educational development in 3T (frontier, outermost, and

disadvantaged) areas, where resource limitations and environmental challenges may hinder academic progress. In such contexts, fostering intrinsic factors such as strengthening students' personal interest and discipline may be more effective than relying on peer influences. Policy recommendations include: Implementing school programs that nurture students' individual interest in learning through engaging, relevant, and culturally contextual content. Promoting time management and self-regulation training to improve students' learning discipline. Providing professional development for teachers in 3T areas to recognize and enhance these intrinsic motivators in the classroom. Future research should explore alternative moderating variables, such as teacher support, parental involvement, or digital learning access, that may better explain variations in student motivation within disadvantaged settings.

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