

Students' Learning Motivation Through Self-Control Techniques

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ABSTRACT

Background	Students' learning motivation is influenced by internal habits and external environmental factors, requiring effective self-control strategies to enhance academic engagement.
Purpose	This study aims to describe students' learning motivation through self-control techniques based on behavioral, cognitive, and decisional control aspects.
Research Methodology	This qualitative study employed a case-study approach using observations, interviews, documentation, data condensation, data display, conclusion drawing, and source and technique triangulation to ensure the credibility of the findings.
Result	The findings revealed that behavioral control, including time management, independent learning, positive peer support, note-taking, initiative, and avoiding negative influences, improved students' discipline and classroom focus. Cognitive control, through structured daily planning, perseverance, resilience, and active participation, strengthened learning consistency and concentration. Decisional control encouraged students to avoid absenteeism, manage time effectively, broaden knowledge, pursue academic achievement, and respect teachers, promoting greater engagement during classroom activities. Overall, self-control techniques significantly enhanced students' learning motivation by fostering disciplined behavior, sustained attention, responsible decision-making, and positive academic attitudes toward learning.
Conclusion	Self-control techniques effectively strengthen students' motivation, discipline, concentration, responsible behavior, and overall academic engagement, supporting improved educational outcomes consistently.
Keywords	Learning, Motivation, Self-Control, Students



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INTRODUCTION

Learning is a process of providing experiences through the transfer of knowledge and the practice of activities aimed at producing changes in an individual's attitudes and behavior (Faizah, 2017). In society, learning is often associated with school activities because the school environment facilitates active interaction between teachers and students, supporting the achievement of educational objectives, namely changes in students' knowledge, attitudes, and behavior (Pane, 2017). The success of the learning process in schools is influenced by various factors originating from both the students themselves and their surrounding environment (Muslem, 2019). One of the most important internal factors is learning motivation, which refers to the drive that encourages students to enthusiastically face learning challenges, complete assignments, defend their opinions during discussions, and improve their academic achievement and discipline at school (Lukita & Sudibjo, 2021). Furthermore, motivation accompanied by effective learning planning creates more optimal learning conditions, thereby supporting the achievement of maximum learning outcomes (Hartata, 2019).

The role of counseling services in enhancing students' learning motivation has become increasingly important. Humanistic counseling and group counseling approaches have been proven effective in improving interpersonal skills and learning motivation through emotional and social support within the school environment (Kustinah & Kambali, 2022). Research has shown that both individual and group counseling services significantly improve students' learning motivation by strengthening self-efficacy and psychological well-being (Baroroh & Imania, 2024; Dilag, 2022). In addition, self-counseling-based interventions and self-reinforcement help students develop greater self-confidence, resilience, and commitment to learning (Igung & Soetjningsih, 2024; Lestari et al., 2023). Guidance and counseling teachers also play an essential role in fostering learning motivation through group guidance services and preventive strategies implemented in schools (Fahrurrazi & Damayanti, 2021; Arum & Khasanah, 2025). Furthermore, individual counseling has been shown to enhance the learning motivation of students experiencing psychological and academic difficulties (Marisa & Putri, 2017).

The role of counseling services in improving students' learning motivation has become a crucial aspect of modern education because these services help students overcome academic, psychological, and social barriers that affect their engagement in learning (Hartini, 2023). Numerous studies have demonstrated that guidance and counseling services, whether delivered individually or in groups, effectively enhance learning motivation by reinforcing positive attitudes and adaptive learning strategies (Fadila et al., 2022; Marisa et al., 2020). Moreover, counseling techniques such as cognitive restructuring have been proven effective in modifying students' negative thinking patterns, thereby significantly increasing their learning motivation (Astuti & Wangid, 2020).

The Motivational Enhancement Therapy approach has also demonstrated a positive contribution to strengthening university students' learning motivation (Saadu & Okesina, 2025). On the other hand, innovative counseling media, such as educational videos and the jigsaw method, have made guidance services more engaging and interactive, thereby increasing student participation (Hulukati et al., 2019; Ashshiddiqi et al., 2026). Reality counseling has likewise been shown to be effective in improving students' sense of responsibility and learning motivation (Sudiarsana et al., 2021). Furthermore, the development of counseling services in the modern era emphasizes the importance of digital and collaborative approaches to enhancing learning motivation (Sukma et al., 2024). Overall, counseling services have a significant impact on improving students' learning motivation through various strategic approaches integrated within the educational environment (Budi & Cahyadi, 2025).

To improve students' learning motivation at school, they can employ various strategies, one of which is self-control practiced individually. Self-control is defined as an individual's effort to transform negative behavior into positive behavior in order to overcome the problems they encounter (Majid et al., 2019). Through self-

control, individuals who are capable of regulating their behavior can adapt more effectively to the circumstances and interactions within their social environment (Wahyuni et al., 2020). According to Averill, there are several forms of control that individuals, including students, can apply to regulate their self-control. The first is behavioral control, which relates to regulating one's behavior by utilizing all available personal resources. The second is cognitive control, which concerns an individual's knowledge and ability to regulate their behavior. The third is decisional control, which involves making decisions regarding the behavioral control strategies that will be implemented (Nurwaidah, 2018).

Previous studies have primarily discussed students' learning motivation in general or through guidance and counseling services without specifically examining the role of self-control. Moreover, limited research has comprehensively explained learning motivation based on the integrated dimensions of behavioral control, cognitive control, and decisional control. Consequently, a gap remains in understanding how students' self-control influences their learning motivation within vocational high school settings. The novelty of this study lies in its focus on analyzing students' self-control in maintaining learning motivation through three dimensions: behavioral control, cognitive control, and decisional control. This study not only describes students' learning motivation but also examines the mechanisms of students' self-regulation in depth within the context of vocational education. Furthermore, this research was conducted at Putra Bangsa Vocational High School, Waru, Pamekasan, a context that has received limited attention in previous studies.

This study aims to analyze and explain students' self-control in maintaining their learning motivation at Putra Bangsa Vocational High School, Waru, Pamekasan. The analysis focuses on three dimensions: behavioral control, cognitive control, and decisional control to understand how students regulate their behavior and maintain their learning motivation within the school environment. This study is expected to contribute theoretically to the development of research on self-control and students' learning motivation, particularly in the field of guidance and counseling. Practically, the findings may serve as a reference for guidance and counseling teachers in designing strategies to improve students' learning motivation through strengthening self-control. In addition, the study may benefit schools by improving the quality of student development programs. Ultimately, this research is expected to enhance students' understanding of self-control, thereby increasing their learning motivation, discipline, and academic achievement more effectively.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted at Putra Bangsa Vocational High School (SMK Putra Bangsa), Waru, Pamekasan. It employed a qualitative research design using an analytical case study approach, which aims to gain an in-depth understanding of a phenomenon through descriptive data in the form of words obtained from the research participants. The informants consisted of students, teachers, and parents who were involved in supporting students' learning motivation. This qualitative approach was used to comprehensively analyze students' learning motivation through self-control techniques encompassing the dimensions of behavioral control, cognitive control, and decisional control, thereby providing a comprehensive understanding of the actual conditions in the field.

Data were collected using three primary techniques: interviews, observations, and documentation. In-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted with students, teachers, and parents to obtain detailed information regarding students' learning motivation and the implementation of self-control techniques in their daily learning activities. The semi-structured interview format enabled the researcher to explore participants' experiences flexibly while maintaining alignment with the research objectives. Furthermore, observations were conducted by directly examining students' behavior within the school environment, particularly behaviors related to behavioral control, cognitive control, and decisional control during the learning process. These observations

were intended to verify the consistency between the interview data and actual classroom conditions. In addition, documentation was used to collect supporting data, including school records, teachers' reports, and other documents relevant to students' learning motivation.

The data were analyzed using the interactive qualitative data analysis model developed by Miles and Huberman, which consists of three main stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. Data reduction involved summarizing, selecting, and focusing the data obtained from interviews, observations, and documentation according to the research focus, namely students' learning motivation through self-control techniques. Irrelevant data were excluded to maintain analytical focus. Subsequently, the data were presented in the form of narrative descriptions, tables, or systematic explanations to facilitate the identification of relationships and patterns among the data, particularly concerning the dimensions of behavioral control, cognitive control, and decisional control. The final stage involved drawing conclusions and verifying the findings through continuous interpretation of the data to identify meaningful patterns. The conclusions were continuously verified throughout the research process to ensure their consistency with the collected data.

The trustworthiness of the data was established through credibility testing using source triangulation and technique triangulation. Source triangulation was conducted by comparing and cross-checking information obtained from different informants students, teachers, and parents regarding students' learning motivation and the implementation of self-control techniques, including behavioral control, cognitive control, and decisional control. This comparison aimed to ensure the consistency and accuracy of information across multiple perspectives. Meanwhile, technique triangulation was performed by comparing findings obtained from interviews, observations, and documentation. The results from these three data collection methods were analyzed to ensure that the findings were valid, credible, and trustworthy.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Self-control refers to an individual's ability to regulate themselves in order to develop attitudes and behaviors that enable them to fulfill their responsibilities. According to Averill, self-control is the process through which individuals regulate their behavior, manage information according to their goals, and make decisions regarding the actions they intend to take (Marsela & Supriatna, 2019). In this study, self-control is examined through three dimensions: behavioral control, cognitive control, and decisional control, all of which are associated with students' motivation to maintain discipline in attending school and participating in classroom learning. These three dimensions are explained as follows.

A. Behavioral Control

Behavioral control refers to the condition in which individuals determine the behaviors they will adopt to regulate themselves. Averill defines behavioral control as an individual's ability to transform an unfavorable situation into a more favorable one by regulating their behavior and determining actions that enable them to control the situation. Individuals with strong self-control are capable of regulating their own behavior effectively, whereas those with weaker self-control tend to rely on external conditions to regulate their behavior (Harahap, 2017). behavioral control related to school discipline and behavioral control during classroom learning. Behavioral control refers to the regulation of actions and behaviors through monitoring, discipline, and the establishment of appropriate behavioral expectations. Within the parenting literature, behavioral control is regarded as an essential mechanism that supports children's self-regulation and adaptive development. It encompasses two complementary dimensions, namely reactive control, which involves responding to immediate situations, and proactive control, which focuses on anticipating and preparing for future challenges (Spithoven et al., 2016). Furthermore, behavioral regulation has been conceptualized as comprising cognitive, emotional,

and volitional control subsystems that jointly facilitate effective behavioral adaptation across contexts (Sergienko et al., 2023). Beyond parenting, behavioral control also underpins perception, decision-making, and movement coordination in computational models such as crowd simulations (Zheng et al., 2016).

In this study, students' behavioral control related to learning motivation at Putra Bangsa Vocational High School, Waru, Pamekasan, is classified into two categories: The first category, behavioral control related to school discipline, aims to ensure students arrive at school on time. The behavioral control strategies practiced by students include, first, time management, particularly when students have multiple responsibilities either at home (for those living with their families) or in the boarding school dormitory (for those residing in Islamic boarding schools). Time management is based on students' sense of responsibility toward their school obligations, enabling them to arrive at school punctually. Second, students engage in independent learning at home or in the dormitory without being instructed by their parents or peers. Third, students utilize peer support by asking classmates who own vehicles for transportation to school to avoid arriving late. Baumeister, Vohs, and Tice explain self-control as an individual's ability to regulate behavior according to the norms, values, customs, and culture prevailing within their social environment (Ningsih, 2018).

The second category, behavioral control during classroom learning, refers to students' efforts to establish behaviors that enable them to pay close attention to teachers' explanations. Students demonstrate this behavioral control in several ways. First, they adopt an appropriate sitting posture, such as sitting upright, choosing seats near the front of the classroom, and leaning slightly forward, all of which help maintain concentration during lessons. Second, they take notes while the teacher is explaining the material, making it easier to remember the lessons and review them at home. Third, students take the initiative to overcome drowsiness during class by applying eucalyptus oil to their heads or washing their faces, allowing them to remain focused on the lesson. Fourth, students avoid negative peer influences by reminding classmates who are talking during lessons, as such distractions interfere with their concentration. Chaplin defines self-control as an individual's ability to regulate and direct their own behavior (Adi, 2016).

B. Cognitive Control

Cognitive control refers to an individual's ability to establish behaviors that contribute positively to their learning. According to Averill, cognitive control involves the ability to process incoming information by interpreting, evaluating, and organizing it so that it influences behavior and minimizes errors in behavioral decision-making (Harahap, 2017). Cognitive control, in contrast, involves the ability to acquire, process, and interpret information in ways that make situations more understandable and predictable. By increasing knowledge and reducing ambiguity, cognitive control enables individuals to evaluate circumstances more effectively and regulate their emotional and behavioral responses (Badre, 2025).

In this study, cognitive control is divided into two categories: cognitive control related to school discipline and cognitive control during classroom learning. The first category, cognitive control related to school discipline, refers to students' ability to organize behaviors that prevent them from arriving late to school. Students achieve this through careful time planning before leaving for school. Their daily schedule typically begins at 5:00 a.m. with morning preparations, followed by completing household or dormitory responsibilities at 5:30 a.m., preparing school materials at 6:00 a.m., and leaving for school between 6:15 and 6:30 a.m. Second, students consistently implement the plans they have established, enabling them to avoid wasting time before school. James O. Whittaker describes motivation as a condition in which individuals actively engage in activities to achieve desired goals (Laka et al., 2020).

The second category, cognitive control during classroom learning, concerns students' ability to develop behaviors that support effective learning. This is demonstrated in several ways. First, students are persistent in asking questions whenever they do not understand the teacher's explanation, either during or outside class.

Second, students demonstrate the ability to express opinions or provide counterarguments when teachers encourage classroom discussions. Third, students remain persistent and do not give up, maintaining concentration throughout lessons regardless of the subject or the teacher delivering the instruction. According to W. S. Winkel, learning is an activity involving both psychological and physical processes through which individuals acquire knowledge, understanding, and skills (Setiawati, 2018).

C. Decisional Control

Decisional control refers to an individual's ability to choose behaviors that are considered beneficial. Averill explains decisional control as the process of selecting actions based on desired goals, whereby individuals evaluate alternative behaviors to solve problems before deciding on the action they believe will most effectively reduce those problems (Harahap, 2017). Decisional control represents the opportunity to choose among alternative courses of action, thereby strengthening individuals' sense of autonomy, responsibility, and involvement in decision-making processes (Akhavannasab & Roschk, 2026). In this study, decisional control is divided into two categories: decisional control related to school discipline and decisional control during classroom learning. The first category, decisional control related to school discipline, involves students' decisions to adopt behaviors that ensure punctual school attendance. Students exercise this control by, first, deciding not to skip school, and second, choosing to use their time for positive activities, such as participating in the school's collective recitation of *Surah Yasin* with teachers before classes begin and performing classroom cleaning duties according to the assigned schedule.

The second category, decisional control during classroom learning, involves students' decisions to adopt behaviors that enhance concentration during lessons. First, students choose to broaden their knowledge by carefully listening to teachers' explanations, enabling them to acquire new information and strengthen their understanding of previously learned material. Second, students recognize that maintaining concentration during classroom instruction contributes to academic achievement, as reflected in semester evaluations and class rankings. Third, students choose to respect their teachers, recognizing that respectful behavior creates a more conducive learning environment and helps them participate actively in classroom activities. According to W. S. Winkel, learning motivation is an internal drive that arises from an individual's desire to learn, providing direction and purpose for achieving meaningful learning outcomes (Laka et al., 2020).

CONCLUSION

Self-control refers to an individual's effort to develop the ability and make decisions that promote positive behavior. To strengthen students' learning motivation, it is important to consider Averill's three dimensions of self-control: behavioral control, cognitive control, and decisional control, particularly in fostering students' discipline and concentration during classroom learning. Behavioral control related to school discipline includes effective time management, utilizing peer support, and engaging in independent study at home. Behavioral control for maintaining classroom focus involves adopting appropriate sitting positions, taking notes, overcoming drowsiness, and avoiding peers who display negative behaviors during learning activities. Cognitive control for school discipline is demonstrated through planning and consistently carrying out daily activities. Meanwhile, cognitive control in the classroom includes the ability to ask questions, express counterarguments, and maintain concentration throughout the learning process. Decisional control related to school discipline involves students' decisions to avoid absenteeism and use their time at school productively. In the classroom, decisional control is reflected in students' decisions to pay close attention to teachers' explanations, strive for academic achievement, and demonstrate respect for their teachers.

This study contributes to the development of research on students' self-control and learning motivation by examining Averill's three dimensions of self-control. The findings may serve as a reference for guidance and

counseling teachers in designing strategies to improve students' discipline, classroom focus, and learning motivation. However, this study has several limitations. First, it was conducted in only one school, limiting the generalizability of the findings. Second, the data relied on participants' perceptions, which may have been influenced by subjective interpretations. Future research is therefore recommended to involve multiple schools in order to obtain more comprehensive findings. In addition, future studies may employ quantitative or mixed-methods approaches to measure the effect of self-control on learning motivation more objectively and include additional variables, such as the family environment and peer support. Overall, effective self-control through the dimensions of behavioral control, cognitive control, and decisional control plays a crucial role in enhancing students' learning motivation, enabling them to become more disciplined, focused, and academically successful.

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AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTION

- Author 1 : Conceptualization, research design, data collection, data analysis, manuscript drafting, and corresponding author.
Author 2 : Literature review, data collection, data validation, and manuscript revision.
Author 3 : Data analysis, interpretation of findings, methodology development, and manuscript editing.

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