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The Influence of Parental Support and Self-Efficacy on Underprivileged Students Interest in Pursuing Higher Education

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Abstract: The high interest of underprivileged high school students in pursuing higher education is not always accompanied by their success in entering university, as they often face greater economic and social challenges, including financial constraints and limited parental support. This study aimed to examine the influence of parental support and self-efficacy on underprivileged students' interest in pursuing higher education. A quantitative approach with an explanatory research design was employed in this study, which was conducted at Master School Depok in May 2025. The participants consisted of 44 tenth-grade students and 26 eleventh-grade students who were selected purposively based on the criterion of having both parents living. Data were collected using a self-administered questionnaire. The results showed that the majority of underprivileged students were categorized as having moderate levels of parental support and self-efficacy. Meanwhile, their interest in pursuing higher education was categorized as low. The findings further revealed that self-efficacy was positively and significantly associated with and influenced students' interest in pursuing higher education. This indicates that higher levels of self-efficacy may contribute to a stronger interest in continuing education at the university level. However, parental support was not found to have a significant effect on students' interest in pursuing higher education. These findings highlight the importance of developing strategies and providing support from various sources to enhance the self-efficacy of underprivileged students, thereby fostering greater interest in pursuing higher education.

Keywords: parental support, self-efficacy, interest in pursuing higher education, underprivileged students

1. INTRODUCTION

According to data from the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology (Kemendikbudristek), approximately 53.14 million children in Indonesia were enrolled in formal education during the 2023/2024 academic year. However, the Gross Enrollment Rate (GER), which reflects the proportion of individuals participating in education at a particular level, demonstrates a declining trend across educational stages. In 2024, the GER was recorded at 104.82% for primary education, 92.21% for junior secondary education, 87.29% for senior secondary education, and only 32.00% for higher education (BPS, 2024). These figures indicate a substantial decline in educational participation as students progress to higher levels of education, particularly from senior secondary school to higher education. The relatively low GER at the tertiary level may be attributed to various factors, one of which is students' limited interest in pursuing higher education. This issue is concerning because higher education plays a critical role in preparing human resources capable of competing in the era of globalization (Afia et al., 2020).

Interest refers to a feeling of enjoyment or attraction toward a particular object, activity, or field of study (Kust, 2010). Interest differs from desire in that interest involves active participation, whereas desire merely reflects a wish or aspiration without necessarily involving action (Kustiani et al., 2019). Students with a strong interest in pursuing higher education are more likely to exert effort to achieve their educational goals. However, among underprivileged students, interest in higher education may not always translate into actual enrollment due to greater economic and social challenges, including financial constraints and limited parental support. Muksin (2004) defines *dhuafa* as individuals experiencing economic hardship,

deprivation, and vulnerability, who are unable to adequately support themselves and may face physical, mental, or social oppression resulting from marginalization, exploitation, or other forms of disadvantage.

Several factors have been identified as influencing students' interest in continuing their education. These include early school experiences, family influence, peer perspectives and acceptance, academic achievement, perceptions of employment opportunities, teacher–student relationships, and students' emotional conditions (Hurlock, 2008). Similarly, Syah (2021) argues that interest is shaped by two major factors: internal factors, such as attention, curiosity, needs, and motivation, and external factors, including family, school, community, and the surrounding environment. Consistent with this perspective, Ayuni et al. (2021) found that students' interest may be influenced by external factors such as the social environment, family, school, and the socioeconomic status of the family, as well as internal factors including intelligence, motivation, health conditions, and self-belief or self-efficacy.

Parental support is one of the external factors that may influence students' interest in pursuing higher education. Parents play a crucial role in supporting their children throughout the educational process, including decisions regarding higher education. Such support may take various forms, including providing guidance, assisting with problem-solving, purchasing educational materials, accompanying children during learning activities, and offering direct financial assistance (Nuraeni et al., 2023). However, for underprivileged students, limited parental support often constitutes a significant barrier to educational continuation. Children from economically disadvantaged families frequently encounter financial obstacles due to their parents' limited ability to provide educational resources and financial support (Hapsari et al., 2022). Previous studies have demonstrated that parental support significantly influences students' attention toward and aspirations for higher education (Addnin & Effendi, 2021). Likewise, Anjelina et al. (2023) reported that parental support has a significant positive effect on students' interest in pursuing higher education. Greater parental support is associated with stronger educational aspirations, whereas limited parental support may reduce students' interest in continuing their education (Mayang, 2018).

In addition to external influences, self-efficacy has been identified as an important internal factor affecting students' interest in pursuing higher education. Taylor et al. (2009) define self-efficacy as an individual's belief in their ability to perform specific tasks successfully. Originally introduced by Bandura (1977), the concept refers to individuals' confidence in their capacity to achieve particular goals, including educational aspirations such as obtaining a university degree. For underprivileged students, self-efficacy may be especially important in supporting educational persistence. Hapsah and Savira (2015) suggest that individuals with high self-efficacy tend to be more confident in completing assigned tasks. Similarly, Rokhimah (2014) argues that high self-efficacy encourages individuals to be more proactive and persistent in achieving their goals, including continuing their education to the tertiary level. Empirical evidence supports this relationship. Ayuni et al. (2021) found that self-efficacy has a significant positive effect on students' interest in pursuing higher education. Furthermore, Liu et al. (2023), in a study involving Chinese university students, demonstrated that self-efficacy significantly influences individuals' intentions to engage in continuous learning.

Individuals with higher levels of self-efficacy tend to work harder and persist longer when facing difficulties in pursuit of their goals (Dessyana & Riyanti, 2017). Self-efficacy enables underprivileged students to cope more effectively with academic challenges and motivates them to achieve better educational outcomes, thereby strengthening their interest in continuing their education. Nevertheless, not all students possess high levels of self-efficacy. Putri and Astuti (2018) reported that 35 out of 282 eighth-grade students at MAN Wonokromo Bantul were categorized as

having low self-efficacy. According to Rokhimah (2014), low self-efficacy negatively affects an individual's ability to complete tasks and achieve desired outcomes. Individuals with low self-efficacy often doubt their ability to succeed and may avoid challenging tasks altogether (Afia et al., 2020). Students who perceive themselves as incapable of completing academic tasks may lack confidence in their ability to pursue further education. Consequently, low self-efficacy may diminish students' aspirations and interest in continuing their studies at the tertiary level (Sasmi et al., 2022).

Although numerous studies have examined factors influencing students' interest in pursuing higher education, research investigating the combined effects of parental support and self-efficacy remains relatively limited. Existing studies generally focus on either parental support or self-efficacy separately or examine these variables alongside other factors. Furthermore, the present study was conducted in a tuition-free school specifically established for underprivileged, orphaned, and economically disadvantaged students. As a result, the participants possess characteristics that differ from those of students enrolled in conventional senior high schools or vocational schools examined in previous research. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the influence of family characteristics, parental support, and self-efficacy on underprivileged students' interest in pursuing higher education. Specifically, the study seeks to: (1) identify adolescent characteristics, family characteristics, parental support, self-efficacy, and students' interest in pursuing higher education; (2) examine the relationships between adolescent characteristics, family characteristics, parental support, self-efficacy, and students' interest in pursuing higher education; and (3) analyze the effects of adolescent characteristics, family characteristics, parental support, and self-efficacy on underprivileged students' interest in pursuing higher education.

2. METHODS

2.1 Research Design

This study employed a quantitative approach with an explanatory research design aimed at examining the relationships among two or more variables and explaining the causes of a particular phenomenon (Sari et al., 2023). The study was conducted at Master School in Depok City, which was purposively selected as the research site. The selection was based on specific characteristics aligned with the research objectives, namely that the school serves students predominantly from underprivileged families. The research was carried out from October 2024 to June 2025 through several stages, including site surveying, preparation, development of the research proposal and questionnaire, questionnaire pilot testing, data collection, data processing, and data analysis.

2.2 Sampling Technique

The population of this study consisted of all senior high school students enrolled at Master School Depok, totaling 205 students. The sampling procedure employed a non-probability sampling method using purposive sampling, in which participants were selected based on predetermined criteria. The inclusion criteria were active tenth- and eleventh-grade students from underprivileged families who had both parents living. Based on these criteria, a total of 70 students were selected as participants, comprising 44 tenth-grade students and 26 eleventh-grade students.

This study focused on underprivileged students who had both parents living because the presence of both father and mother provides a more comprehensive family support system that may contribute to the development of self-efficacy and interest in pursuing higher education. This criterion was also established to ensure consistency in measuring parental support, thereby enhancing the validity of the findings and aligning them with the study objectives.

2.3 Variable Measurement

The independent variables in this study included demographic characteristics, parental support, and self-efficacy. Demographic characteristics consisted of adolescent characteristics (age and gender) and family characteristics (parents' age, parents' years of education, parents' occupation, family income, and family size). The dependent variable was students' interest in pursuing higher education. A detailed description of the operational definitions and indicators of the research variables is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Operational Definitions and Indicators of the Research Variables

Variable	Operational Definition	Indicators
Parental Support *Measured using the* ***Perceived Parental Autonomy Support Scale (P-PASS)*** *(Mageau, 2015) Dimensions: (1) Autonomy Support, (2) Controlling Support Likert Scale: 1–4 Cronbach's α = 0.826*	Support provided by parents in the form of autonomy support and controlling support.	1. My parents allow me to make my own decisions (dot1). 2. My opinions are important to my parents when they make decisions (dot2). 3. My parents allow me to choose activities, within certain limits (dot3). 4. My parents want me to make choices based on my interests, even if they differ from theirs (dot4). 5. When my parents ask me to do something, they explain why (dot5). 6. If I am not allowed to do something, I know the reason why (dot6). 7. My parents make sure that I understand why they prohibit certain things (dot7). 8. When I ask why I should or should not do something, my parents provide a clear explanation (dot8). 9. My parents support me in being myself (dot9). 10. My parents understand my position and feelings (dot10). 11. My parents respect my thoughts and feelings, even when they differ from theirs (dot11). 12. My parents listen to my opinions when I disagree with them (dot12). 13. If I refuse to do something, my parents threaten to take away certain privileges (dot13). 14. I must do what my parents want; otherwise, they will withdraw certain privileges (dot14). 15. I will be punished if I do not comply with my parents' requests (dot15). 16. If I do not do what my parents want, they threaten to punish me (dot16). 17. If I do something that my parents do not want, they make me feel guilty (dot17). 18. My parents make me feel guilty about everything (dot18).

Variable	Operational Definition	Indicators
		19. If my parents want me to change, they make me feel ashamed (dot19). 20. My parents use guilt to control me (dot20). 21. My parents do not approve if I only want to enjoy myself rather than be the best (dot21). 22. My parents believe that to succeed, I must always do my best (dot22). 23. To make my parents proud, I must achieve success (dot23). 24. My parents want me to be better than others at all times (dot24).
Self-Efficacy Measured using the **College-Going Self-Efficacy Scale** (Gibbons & Borders, 2010) Dimensions: (1) Attendance, (2) Persistence Likert Scale: 1–4 Cronbach's α = 0.963	An individual's belief in their ability to achieve educational goals, reflected through attendance and persistence.	1. I can be admitted to a university (ed1). 2. I can develop a study plan to prepare for college (ed2). 3. I can earn good grades in mathematics (ed3). 4. I can earn good grades in science (ed4). 5. I can master computer skills needed for college admission (ed5). 6. I can choose the right subjects to gain admission to a good university (ed6). 7. I can select a good university (ed7). 8. I can choose a major that matches my interests (ed8). 9. I can make my family proud of my choices after graduating from high school (ed9). 10. I can obtain family support to attend college (ed10). 11. I can obtain scholarships or financial aid for college (ed11). 12. I can find ways to pay for college (ed12). 13. I can pay for college even if my family cannot help (ed13). 14. I can attend college after graduating from high school (ed14). 15. I can complete college and earn a bachelor's degree (ed15). 16. I have sufficient ability to complete college studies (ed16). 17. I can obtain an education that aligns with my future goals (ed17). 18. I can complete school assignments and homework (ed18). 19. I can earn A and B grades in college (ed19). 20. I can manage family responsibilities while attending college (ed20). 21. I can obtain family support to complete college (ed21).

Variable	Operational Definition	Indicators
		22. I can earn grades high enough to obtain or maintain a scholarship (ed22). 23. I can pay tuition fees each year (ed23). 24. I can choose the right college major (ed24). 25. I can manage my own schedule while in college (ed25). 26. I can obtain a job after graduating from college (ed26). 27. I can be independent while attending college (ed27). 28. I can make friends in college (ed28). 29. I can adapt to college life (ed29). 30. I will enjoy being in college (ed30).
Interest in Pursuing Higher Education Measured using an instrument developed by Walno (2019) Dimensions: (1) Enjoyment, (2) Interest, (3) Attention, (4) Motive/Goal Likert Scale: 1–4 Cronbach's α = 0.914	An individual's attitude reflecting enjoyment, attraction, and motivation to pursue further education.	1. I would be happy if I could attend college (mpt1). 2. I am reluctant to talk about college* (mpt2). 3. I enjoy hearing information about college (mpt3). 4. I prefer hearing about job vacancies rather than information about universities* (mpt4). 5. I enjoy discussing scholarships and universities (mpt5). 6. I get bored listening to university outreach programs* (mpt6). 7. I enjoy learning about the many academic programs offered by universities (mpt7). 8. I feel that listening to university presentations is a waste of time* (mpt8). 9. I am enthusiastic when universities conduct outreach activities (mpt9). 10. I am not interested in attending college because it is expensive* (mpt10). 11. I become interested in college after receiving information about scholarships (mpt11). 12. I am interested in earning a university degree after learning that graduates have broader employment opportunities (mpt12). 13. I am not interested in attending college like my friends* (mpt13). 14. I am interested in listening to university presentations (mpt14). 15. I am not interested in attending college because many graduates are unemployed* (mpt15). 16. I actively seek information about university scholarships (mpt16).

Variable	Operational Definition	Indicators
		17. I am eager to find information about employment opportunities for high school graduates* (mpt17). 18. I want to learn more about universities (mpt18). 19. I want to know how the college system works (mpt19). 20. I become more convinced not to attend college after learning how difficult the university admission process is* (mpt20). 21. I gain information about universities from senior students (mpt21). 22. I would rather sleep than attend university outreach programs* (mpt22). 23. I participate in university outreach activities (mpt23). 24. I want to earn money by working immediately after graduating from high school* (mpt24) 25. I frequently ask questions about universities (mpt25). 26. I want to achieve career success directly after high school* (mpt26). 27. I request brochures when attending university expos (mpt27). 28. I choose to work after graduating from high school* (mpt28). 29. Asking college students about their experiences helps me understand university life (mpt29). 30. I choose to work after graduating from high school* (mpt30).

2.4 Data Collection

Data were collected through face-to-face administration of self-administered questionnaires at Master School. The data collection process was conducted in May 2025. The questionnaire consisted of closed-ended questions organized into two sections. The first section gathered information on students' demographic characteristics, including age and gender, as well as family characteristics, such as parents' age, parents' years of education, parents' occupation, family income, and family size. The second section contained a series of statements measuring the study variables, namely parental support, self-efficacy, and interest in pursuing higher education. All instruments were administered in the Indonesian language.

2.5 Data Analysis

Data processing and analysis were conducted using Microsoft Excel and IBM SPSS Statistics 25 for Windows. Microsoft Excel was used for data editing, coding, scoring, entering, and cleaning. IBM SPSS Statistics 25 for Windows was used to perform descriptive analysis, Pearson correlation analysis, and multiple linear regression analysis to test the research hypotheses.

3. RESULTS

3.1 Adolescent and Family Characteristics

This study involved 70 active students from Master School Depok. The majority of participants were 17 years old (41.4%), followed by 16 years old (35.7%), 18 years old (14.3%), 19 years old (4.3%), 15 years old (2.9%), and 20 years old (1.4%). The average age of the adolescents was 16.86 years, with the youngest participant being 15 years old and the oldest being 20 years old. The participants consisted of 34 male students (48.6%) and 36 female students (51.4%). Based on information regarding parental age, the majority of fathers (72.9%) and mothers (60.0%) were categorized as middle-aged adults, with an average age of 47.56 years for fathers and 43.67 years for mothers. Regarding parents' educational attainment, fathers had a slightly higher average length of education (9.06 years) than mothers (9.03 years). This indicates that, on average, the parents had completed nine years of formal education or junior secondary school. In terms of occupation, the majority of fathers worked as casual laborers (32.9%), while most mothers were homemakers (55.7%). The average monthly family income was IDR 2,942,857, ranging from IDR 200,000 to IDR 9,000,000. More than half of the adolescents (64.3%) belonged to medium-sized families (5–7 family members), with family sizes ranging from 3 to 12 members.

3.2 Parental Support

Parental support can be defined as parents' active involvement in their children's lives through the provision of emotional attention, resources, and guidance in decision-making. In this study, parental support was divided into two dimensions: autonomy support and controlling support. The autonomy dimension refers to children's freedom to make decisions and explore their interests, whereas the control dimension refers to parental efforts to direct and regulate their children's behavior (Mageau et al., 2015). The results presented in Table 2 indicate that parental support was predominantly categorized as moderate (57.1%), with an average index score of 64.05. The autonomy dimension had an average index score of 64.76, and nearly half of the adolescents (48.6%) were classified in the moderate category. Meanwhile, the control dimension had an average index score of 49.84, with the majority of adolescents (70.0%) categorized in the low category. These findings suggest that underprivileged students perceived a moderate level of autonomy support from their parents, while parental controlling support was relatively low.

Table 2. Distribution of Adolescents by Category, Minimum and Maximum Scores, Mean, and Standard Deviation of t

Dimension	Category						Mean±SD	Min-Max
	Low		Moderate		High			
	n	%	n	%	n	%		
Autonomy	23	32,8	34	48,6	13	18,6	64,76±18,837	0-100
Control	49	70,0	20	28,6	1	1,4	49,84±16,773	0-89
Parental Support	24	34,3	40	57,1	6	8,6	64,05±12,437	26-89

3.3 Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy is defined as an individual's belief in their ability to perform tasks successfully (Taylor et al., 2009). In this study, self-efficacy consisted of two dimensions: attendance, which refers to an individual's belief in their ability to participate in higher education, and persistence, which refers to an individual's belief in their ability to remain and succeed in higher education.

Overall, Table 3 shows that the self-efficacy of underprivileged students was predominantly categorized as moderate (58.6%), with a mean index score of 60.06. A closer examination reveals that both dimensions of self-efficacy were also categorized

as moderate. The attendance dimension was classified as moderate for 54.3% of students, with a mean index score of 57.45, while the persistence dimension was categorized as moderate for 57.1% of students, with a mean index score of 62.35. These findings indicate that the attendance and persistence dimensions were at a sufficient level in contributing to the self-efficacy of underprivileged students.

Table 3. Distribution of Adolescents by Category, Minimum and Maximum Scores, Mean, and Standard Deviation of the Self-Efficacy Variable

Dimension	Category						Mean±SD	Min-Max
	Low		Sedang		Low			
	n	%	n	%	n	%		
Attendance	28	40,0	38	54,3	4	5,7	57,45±20,397	5-90
Persistence	20	28,6	40	57,1	10	14,3	62,35±20,725	0-96
Self-Efficacy	22	31,4	41	58,6	7	10	60,06±19,978	7-93

3.4 Interest in Pursuing Higher Education

Interest is a strong internal drive that motivates individuals to engage in desired activities. It reflects feelings of enjoyment and attraction toward a particular object or activity without external coercion (Slameto, 2010). In this study, the variable of interest in pursuing higher education was divided into four dimensions: enjoyment, which refers to positive emotional responses toward an object; attraction, which refers to an individual's desire to become involved; attention, which refers to an individual's ability to focus thoughts and efforts on an object; and motive/goal, which refers to the driving force that encourages individuals to engage in activities to achieve specific objectives.

As presented in Table 4, the results indicate that 45.7% of underprivileged students' interest in pursuing higher education was categorized as low, with a mean index score of 60.63. The dimension with the highest mean index score was attraction (67.48), with the largest proportion of adolescents categorized as moderate (35.7%), followed by enjoyment (63.21), which was predominantly categorized as low (45.7%). The attention dimension had a mean index score of 59.86 and was equally distributed between the low and moderate categories (44.3% each). Meanwhile, the dimension with the lowest mean index score was motive/goal (45.71), with the majority of adolescents (81.4%) categorized as low. These findings suggest that adolescents' interest in pursuing higher education was relatively low because their motives and goals for continuing their education remained weak, despite having a relatively positive level of enjoyment and attraction toward higher education.

Table 4. Distribution of Adolescents by Category, Minimum and Maximum Scores, Mean, and Standard Deviation of the Interest in Pursuing Higher Education Variable

Dimension	Category						Mean±SD	Min-Max
	Low		Sedang		Low			
	n	%	n	%	n	%		
Enjoyment	32	45,7	24	34,3	14	20,0	63,21±16,817	13-96
Attraction	23	32,9	25	35,7	22	31,4	67,48±18,909	14-100
Attention	31	44,3	31	44,3	8	11,4	59,86±17,661	5-90
Motive/Goal	57	81,4	13	18,6	0	0	45,71±17,592	0-79
Interest in Pursuing Higher Education	32	45,7	31	44,3	7	10,0	57,30±13,052	0-79

3.5 Relationships among Adolescent Characteristics, Family Characteristics, Parental Support, Self-Efficacy, and Interest in Pursuing Higher Education

The correlation analysis used in this study was Pearson's correlation. The results of the correlation test between demographic characteristics and the study variables revealed that all adolescent and family characteristic variables had non-significant correlation coefficients ($p > 0.01$ or $p > 0.05$). This indicates that none of the adolescent or family characteristics were significantly associated with parental support, self-efficacy, or interest in pursuing higher education.

The results further showed that parental support was not significantly correlated with self-efficacy or underprivileged students' interest in pursuing higher education. In contrast, self-efficacy was positively and significantly associated with interest in pursuing higher education. This finding indicates that higher levels of self-efficacy among underprivileged students are associated with greater interest in continuing their education at the tertiary level.

Table 5. Correlation Coefficients among Adolescent Characteristics, Family Characteristics, Parental Support, Self-Efficacy, and Interest in Pursuing Higher Education

Variables	Parental Support	Self-Efficac	Interest in Pursuing Higher Education
Adolescent Characteristics			
Age (years)	-0,039	0,218	0,046
Gender (0 = Male, 1 = Female)	-0,061	0,021	0,135
Family Characteristics			
Father's age (years)	-0,057	-0,158	-0,028
Mother's age (years)	0,066	-0,023	0,050
Father's education (years)	-0,057	0,026	0,145
Mother's education (years)	0,058	0,050	0,018
Father's occupation (0 = Unemployed, 1 = Employed)	0,229	0,145	0,047
Mother's occupation (0 = Unemployed, 1 = Employed)	0,008	-0,035	0,050
Family income/month (IDR)	0,054	-0,160	-0,223
Family size (persons)	-0,115	-0,015	-0,010
Parental support (index)	1	0,213	0,015
Self-efficacy (index)	0,213	1	**0,656***

Note: *p < 0.05 (2-tailed); **p < 0.01 (2-tailed).*

3.6 Effects of Adolescent Characteristics, Family Characteristics, Parental Support, and Self-Efficacy on Interest in Pursuing Higher Education

Multiple linear regression analysis was conducted to examine the effects of adolescent characteristics (age and gender), family characteristics (parents' age, parents' occupation, parents' years of education, family income, and family size), parental support, and self-efficacy on students' interest in pursuing higher education. The results showed that the coefficient of determination (Adjusted R^2) was 0.427. This indicates that 42.7% of the variance in underprivileged students' interest in pursuing higher education was explained by the variables included in this study, while the remaining 57.3% was explained by other factors not examined in the present study.

The findings further revealed that adolescent characteristics and parental support did not have a significant effect on underprivileged students' interest in pursuing higher education. As shown in Table 6, only two variables significantly influenced interest in pursuing higher education: fathers' years of education ($\beta = 0.936$; $\alpha = 0.091$) and self-efficacy ($\beta = 0.565$; $\alpha = 0.000$). The results indicate that a one-unit increase in fathers' years of education was associated with a 0.936-point increase in students' interest in pursuing higher education. Similarly, a one-unit

increase in self-efficacy was associated with a 0.565-point increase in students' interest in pursuing higher education..

Table 6. Regression Coefficients of Adolescent Characteristics, Family Characteristics, Parental Support, and Self-Efficacy on Interest in Pursuing Higher Education

Variables	**Interest in Pursuing Higher Education**		**Sig.**
	Unstandardized coefficients B	***Standardized coefficient β***	
Constant	61.285		0,072
Adolescent Characteristics			
Age (years)	-1,872	-0,112	0,281
Gender (0 = Male, 1 = Female)	1,604	0,051	0,625
Family Characteristics			
Father's Age (years)	0,232	0,107	0,479
Mother's Age (years)	-0,105	-0,045	0,757
Father's Education (years)	0,936	0,191	**0,091***
Mother's Education (years)	-0,223	-0,047	0,662
Father's Occupation (0 = Unemployed, 1 = Employed)	-6,906	-0,073	0,474
Mother's Occupation (0 = Unemployed, 1 = Employed)	4,115	0,129	0,229
Family Income (IDR)	-1.450×10^{-6}	-0,167	**0,109***
Family Size (persons)	0,238	0,025	0,828
Parental Support (index)	0,170	-0,132	0,189
Self-Efficacy (index)	0,565	0,709	**0,000****
F			5,280
R Square			0,526
Adjusted R			0,427
Sig.			0,000

4. DISCUSSION

Overall, the findings indicate that the majority of underprivileged students demonstrated a low level of interest in pursuing higher education. However, their positive feelings and attention toward higher education may indicate the potential for this interest to develop consistently over time. Krapp (1992) argued that interest arising from environmental attraction, referred to as situational interest, may develop into individual interest when the object of interest remains consistent and is no longer dependent on external factors. Based on the findings, underprivileged students showed limited interest in pursuing higher education due to insufficient information about higher education institutions, high tuition costs, and a preference for entering the workforce immediately after graduating from high school. These findings are consistent with previous studies showing that students' interest in higher education tends to be low because many students prefer to work rather than continue their education (Esmi & Marasabessy, 2024; Firmawati, 2018). This finding is also consistent with Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs theory, which suggests that human motivation progresses from basic needs to self-actualization. Economic limitations may lead underprivileged students to prioritize physiological needs (e.g., food and shelter) and security needs (e.g., obtaining employment after high school) rather than pursuing self-actualization through higher education.

In addition, economic constraints may constitute a major reason why underprivileged students are less interested in pursuing higher education. Putri and Ahmad (2024) found that low interest in continuing to higher education was associated with family economic limitations, perceived academic inadequacy,

insufficient parental support, and a lack of desire to attend college. According to Vroom's (1964) Expectancy Theory, motivation is influenced by three components: expectancy (the belief that effort leads to performance), instrumentality (the belief that performance leads to outcomes), and valence (the value attached to those outcomes). Underprivileged students may possess low expectancy because they doubt their academic abilities, weak instrumentality because they are uncertain whether higher education guarantees employment, and negative valence because they perceive college costs as a burden. The combination of these factors may reduce their motivation to pursue higher education.

The findings further revealed that the level of parental support received by underprivileged students was moderate. This result is consistent with preliminary observations conducted at the school, which indicated that parental support for children's educational continuity was not fully adequate. In this study, the parental support dimension with the lowest mean index score was controlling support, indicating limited parental guidance and regulation of children's behavior. In the context of underprivileged students, this condition may occur because parents are more focused on earning a living to meet family needs than on actively participating in their children's educational experiences. Haq and Setiyani (2016) argued that low socioeconomic conditions may hinder children's educational development because of financial barriers. Another factor contributing to low parental support may be limited parental involvement in their children's academic activities, such as not attending school-related events or not assisting children with school assignments at home (Afni & Jumahir, 2020).

The results also showed that underprivileged students exhibited a moderate level of self-efficacy. This finding is consistent with previous research indicating that most adolescents tend to have moderate levels of self-efficacy (Zahra & Hernawati, 2015). In the present study, the self-efficacy dimension with the lowest mean index score was attendance, suggesting that students were less confident in their ability to cope with academic challenges and meet educational expectations. This condition may be attributed to the students' disadvantaged family backgrounds, which may lead them to perceive themselves as less capable of handling academic tasks. According to Bandura's (1997) Self-Efficacy Theory, individuals tend to pursue goals they believe they can achieve and avoid tasks they expect to result in failure. In relation to the present findings, students with lower confidence may perceive academic tasks as burdensome or threatening. Consequently, they are more likely to give up easily and avoid challenging tasks. This tendency was reflected in the finding that many students reported giving up when confronted with difficult academic tasks. Similarly, Yulistiani (2018) found that adolescents from low-income families were more likely to surrender when faced with tasks they perceived as difficult to understand and complete.

The regression analysis demonstrated that fathers' years of education had a significant positive effect on underprivileged students' interest in pursuing higher education. This finding is consistent with Lase (2020), who reported that parental educational attainment significantly influenced vocational high school students' interest in pursuing higher education in Nias. This suggests that the higher the father's educational attainment, the greater the likelihood that children will be interested in continuing their education to the tertiary level. Fathers may serve as role models and sources of inspiration because of their position as heads of households. When parents have higher levels of education, children tend to follow similar educational pathways (Sari et al., 2018).

Furthermore, family income was found to have a significant negative effect on students' interest in pursuing higher education. This finding indicates that lower family income was associated with greater interest in pursuing higher education among underprivileged students. This result differs from previous studies reporting a

significant positive relationship between parental income and students' interest in pursuing higher education (Halimah et al., 2018; Sukmawati et al., 2024). The discrepancy may be explained by the unique characteristics of the participants, who came from economically disadvantaged families. Rather than serving as a barrier, economic hardship may function as a motivating factor encouraging students to continue their education. Based on the distribution of responses, most students expressed an interest in higher education because they believed that obtaining a university degree would provide broader employment opportunities. Therefore, pursuing higher education may be perceived as a pathway to improving their families' socioeconomic conditions. Sari et al. (2013) noted that parents often hope that higher education will improve their children's future prospects. The same study also identified several strategies used by low-income families to support their children's higher education aspirations, including taking on multiple jobs, receiving assistance from extended family members, borrowing money, and obtaining scholarships.

The correlation analysis revealed that the third hypothesis was rejected because parental support was not significantly associated with self-efficacy among underprivileged students. This finding is consistent with several studies conducted in Indonesia (Putri & Hidayat, 2019; Sari & Pratiwi, 2020; Siradjuddin et al., 2023) and internationally (Wang & Sheikh-Khalil, 2014; Macalli et al., 2018; Jose & Deepti, 2023), which also reported no significant relationship between parental support and self-efficacy. However, this finding contradicts other studies that identified a significant positive relationship between perceived parental support and self-efficacy (Yulistiani, 2018; Jose, 2023). According to Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (1998), individual growth and development are strongly influenced by environmental contexts, particularly the microsystem, such as the family. Therefore, parents should play an important role in fostering children's self-efficacy. Won and Yu (2017) further argued that the type of support provided by parents can influence children's levels of self-efficacy. In the present study, the absence of a significant relationship may indicate that parental support was insufficient to strengthen students' confidence in their academic abilities. Parents may have provided limited guidance or direction regarding educational matters, leaving students without a strong foundation for developing confidence in their academic capabilities and readiness to face educational challenges. Nevertheless, Butt (2024) emphasized that parental support is a key determinant of students' self-efficacy and academic achievement. Among underprivileged families, parental support may be primarily moral or emotional in nature, while financial constraints continue to undermine students' confidence in their ability to pursue higher education. Consequently, self-efficacy may not develop strongly, and interest in continuing education may remain low. In addition, students may perceive parental support as unrelated to academic achievement, viewing it as general advice rather than concrete assistance for completing secondary education and transitioning to higher education. These findings suggest that parental support within underprivileged families may not be sufficiently strong to foster self-efficacy, highlighting the importance of considering other factors as potential determinants.

The regression analysis also revealed that parental support did not have a significant effect on underprivileged students' interest in pursuing higher education. This finding contrasts with previous studies demonstrating a significant positive influence of parental support on students' interest in pursuing higher education (Addnin & Effendi, 2021; Anjelina et al., 2023; Hutabarat et al., 2024). Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (1998) suggests that individual development is strongly shaped by environmental influences, particularly those originating from the family. Thus, parents are expected to play a crucial role in fostering children's educational aspirations. However, the absence of a significant effect in this study may be explained by the relatively low level of parental support reported by participants. As noted by Mayang (2018), low parental support is often

associated with low educational aspirations among students. In the context of underprivileged families, Hapsari et al. (2022) argued that limited parental support is frequently attributable to financial constraints that restrict parents' ability to provide educational resources and assistance.

Finally, this study found that self-efficacy had a significant positive effect on underprivileged students' interest in pursuing higher education. This finding is consistent with previous studies demonstrating that self-efficacy positively influences students' interest in continuing their education to the tertiary level (Kustiani et al., 2019; Barokah & Yulianto, 2019; Ayuni et al., 2021; Astuti et al., 2024). The findings suggest that self-efficacy contributes substantially to students' educational aspirations. Self-efficacy influences the choices individuals make, the amount of effort they exert, their persistence when encountering obstacles, and their ability to recover from setbacks (Frazier et al., 2018; Webb-Williams, 2018). Students may encounter various challenges in pursuing higher education, including limited parental support, unfavorable socioeconomic conditions, competition for university admission, and peer influences (Kustiani et al., 2019). Students with higher levels of self-efficacy are more likely to perceive these challenges as obstacles that can be overcome through determination and confidence. As stated by Rochat et al. (2017), strong self-efficacy provides students with the motivation and encouragement necessary to pursue higher education despite existing barriers.

This study has several limitations that may serve as recommendations for future research. First, the study was conducted in only one school, limiting the generalizability of the findings. Second, the sample size was relatively small and included only tenth- and eleventh-grade students, excluding twelfth-grade students because data collection coincided with their graduation period and they were no longer attending school. Third, this study did not examine other variables that may influence students' interest in pursuing higher education, such as peer influence, intrinsic motivation, emotional intelligence, independence, and other related factors. These limitations should be considered in future studies to facilitate more comprehensive and in-depth investigations of factors influencing educational aspirations among underprivileged students.

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5. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

This study was conducted at Master School Depok and involved 70 students, consisting of 44 tenth-grade students and 26 eleventh-grade students who had both parents living. The average age of the adolescents was 16.86 years, ranging from 15 to 20 years. Most fathers and mothers were in the middle adulthood age group (41–60 years). Regarding parental education, the majority of fathers and mothers had completed 1–6 years of formal education (40%), although a substantial proportion of mothers had completed 10–12 years of education (40%). In terms of occupation, most fathers worked as casual laborers, while most mothers were homemakers. The average monthly family income was IDR 2,942,857, with incomes ranging from IDR 200,000 to IDR 9,000,000. Family size was generally categorized as medium-sized, ranging from 3 to 12 family members.

The findings indicated that both parental support and self-efficacy among underprivileged students were at a moderate level. Meanwhile, students' interest in pursuing higher education was categorized as low. The correlation analysis showed that adolescent and family characteristics were not significantly associated with parental support, self-efficacy, or interest in pursuing higher education. Furthermore, parental support was not significantly related to students' self-efficacy. In contrast, self-efficacy was significantly associated with interest in pursuing higher education. The regression analysis revealed that parental support did not significantly affect underprivileged students' interest in pursuing higher education. However, one family

characteristic variable, namely fathers' educational attainment, had a significant effect on students' interest in pursuing higher education. In addition, self-efficacy had a significant positive effect on underprivileged students' interest in pursuing higher education.

Based on the findings of this study, self-efficacy was found to be significantly associated with and positively influence underprivileged students' interest in pursuing higher education. Therefore, underprivileged students are encouraged to strengthen their self-efficacy by setting goals or targets when completing tasks, making independent decisions, learning from failures, and celebrating even small achievements to build self-confidence. Greater parental involvement is also needed in children's growth and development, particularly in fostering self-efficacy. Parents can support their children by recognizing their efforts and achievements, providing advice, encouragement, and motivation, and actively participating in their learning activities.

Teachers and schools should also play a role in enhancing students' self-efficacy and interest in pursuing higher education. This may be achieved by creating a supportive school environment, providing positive feedback, offering guidance and counseling programs focused on self-development and future career planning, delivering comprehensive information about higher education opportunities, and organizing activities such as soft-skills training, motivational seminars, and university visits. Future studies are recommended to examine other variables that may influence underprivileged students' interest in pursuing higher education and to explore related topics, such as learning interest or investment interest. Additionally, comparative studies involving other schools with similar characteristics, such as tuition-free schools serving orphans and underprivileged students, are recommended.

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