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The Role of Learning Motivation in Mediating the Relationship Between the Perception of the Teaching Profession and Self-Efficacy on the Interest in Becoming an Economics Teacher

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to determine the effect of perceptions of the teaching profession and self-efficacy on the interest in becoming an economics teacher, with learning motivation as a mediating variable. The research employed a quantitative approach and was conducted on 55 students of the Economics Education Study Program at Langlangbuana University. Data were analyzed using the Structural Equation Modeling–Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) method through the SmartPLS 4.1.1.2 application. The results showed that perceptions of the teaching profession had a significant effect on learning motivation but did not have a significant effect on the interest in becoming a teacher. Likewise, self-efficacy had a significant effect on learning motivation but did not significantly affect the interest in becoming a teacher. Learning motivation had a significant effect on the interest in becoming a teacher. Moreover, learning motivation significantly mediated the relationship between perceptions of the teaching profession and the interest in becoming a teacher, as well as between self-efficacy and the interest in becoming a teacher. These findings confirmed that learning motivation was a key factor in fostering students' interest in becoming economics teachers. Therefore, it could be concluded that hypotheses H2 and H4 were rejected, while H1, H3, H5, H6, and H7 were accepted in this study. This research contributed substantially to the development of interest in becoming an economics teacher through a deeper understanding of the roles of perceptions of the teaching profession, self-efficacy, and learning motivation as psychological factors that could be strengthened to cultivate students' commitment and enthusiasm toward the teaching profession in the field of economics.

Keywords*: *perception, self-efficacy, learning motivation, interest

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INTRODUCTION

Education in Indonesia, based on Law No. 20 of 2003, aimed to create an environment and learning process that allowed students to develop their potential in terms of spirituality, self-control, personality, intelligence, noble character, and skills. The goal was to produce individuals who were not only cognitively intelligent but also equipped with relevant skills without neglecting their unique characteristics. Since 2015, the United Nations General Assembly or UNESCO had adopted the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in which Goal 4 emphasized quality education. In this context, Indonesian education played an important role in achieving better educational quality.

Higher education played a strategic role in developing high-quality human resources (HR) with the aim of optimizing students potential, producing competitive graduates, and contributing to the advancement of knowledge. Graduates from universities, particularly those in teacher education programs, were expected to become competent educators who played an important role in shaping an excellent generation to improve the quality of national education. However, the existing phenomenon showed that some students were less interested in becoming teachers, even though they came from education-related majors. This condition was

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caused by negative perceptions of the teaching profession, which was considered less promising as a future career. In line with the findings of Hafidah et al. (2024), such perceptions were influenced by work environments characterized by disparities between high workloads and low rewards, as well as students' low self-confidence in their teaching abilities. Therefore, stakeholders in the field of education needed to address this issue, while prospective students were advised to understand their interests, talents, and career orientations before choosing teacher education programs.

Data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) showed a significant decline in young people's interest in the teaching profession over the past five years, as indicated by the decrease in the number of applicants for teacher education programs from 15% in 2018 to only 9% in 2023. This phenomenon reflected a shift in perception toward the teaching profession, which was viewed as having low welfare, a high workload, and less prestige compared to other professions. Although national curriculum reforms, such as the transition from the 2013 Curriculum to the Merdeka Curriculum, were designed to provide students with the freedom to choose subjects based on their interests and career potential, in reality, students' decisions were still influenced by environmental factors such as family support, teachers, and peers. In addition, Generation Z tended to be more attracted to professions in the creative and digital industries, as these fields offered work flexibility, higher income, and faster opportunities for self-development, including freelance work that was no longer constrained by fixed working hours (Putra, 2025). This condition posed a serious challenge to the sustainability and quality of the teaching workforce in the future.

Interest in the teaching profession was a crucial aspect in developing a high-quality and sustainable educational career. However, the initial findings based on a questionnaire distributed to 32 students of the Economics Education Study Program at a private university in Bandung City showed that most graduates tended to choose careers in the private sector rather than pursuing the teaching profession. This condition indicated a low level of interest and understanding among students regarding the teaching profession; therefore, further research was needed to analyze the factors that influenced students' career direction and decision-making in the field of education.

Based on the preliminary observations presented in the diagram below, it was found that the proportion of students who showed interest in the teaching profession remained relatively low. A total of 44% of respondents stated that they were not interested in becoming teachers, 25% were undecided, and only 31% expressed interest. These findings indicated that the career orientation of students in the Economics Education Study Program tended to shift toward non-educational sectors. This condition demonstrated the urgency of further examining the factors influencing students' low interest in the teaching profession as a strategic step toward strengthening the quality and sustainability of future educators.

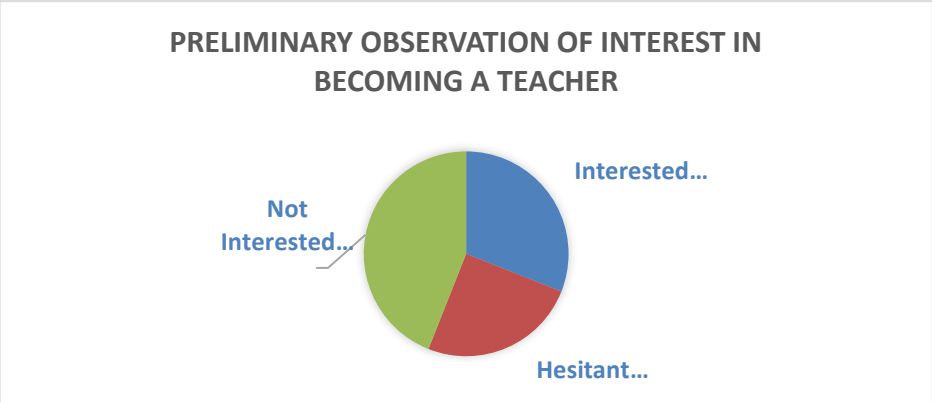

Figure 1. Results of the Initial Observation of Students' Interest in Becoming Teachers

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In addition, based on data on the number of students in the Economic Education Study Program at several private universities (PTS) in Bandung City, there had been a declining trend in student enrollment over the past four years. At Pasundan University (UNPAS), the number of students decreased from 43 in the 2021/2022 academic year to 32 in 2024/2025. A more significant decline also occurred at Langlangbuana University (UNLA), where the number dropped from 23 students in 2021/2022 to only 6 students in 2024/2025. Overall, the total number of students from both private universities reached only 194 within four years. This data indicated a decreasing interest among prospective students in teacher education programs, particularly in Economic Education. This phenomenon might reflect a shift in perception regarding the career prospects of the teaching profession and highlighted the need for strategic efforts by higher education institutions to attract and retain prospective students in the field of education.

Table 1. Number of Economic Education Students

ACADEMIC YEAR	PRIVATE UNIVERSITY	
	UNPAS	UNLA
2021/2022	43	23
2022/2023	36	18
2023/2024	28	8
2024/2025	32	6
TOTAL	139	55

(Source: Data from Private Universities in Bandung City, 2025)

Based on the presented data, there was a declining trend in the number of students enrolled in the Economics Education Study Program at private universities in Bandung City over the years. This phenomenon reflected a decreasing interest among students in pursuing studies in the field of education, which indirectly affected their interest in the teaching profession. This condition emphasized that the interest in becoming a teacher was a strategic issue that needed to be examined more deeply to support the achievement of the fourth Sustainable Development Goal (SDG), namely ensuring inclusive, equitable, and quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all by 2030.

Based on previous studies, interest played an important role in determining the quality of a person's performance, including in the teaching profession. Individuals who had an interest in the field of education tended to demonstrate better performance. The interest in becoming a teacher was formed through internal factors such as perception, emotion, and motivation, as well as external factors such as family support and environmental influence. In addition, self-efficacy strengthened this interest through the belief in one's ability to perform effectively in the teaching profession (Putri et al., 2024; Rahmadiyani et al., 2020).

This phenomenon encouraged the researcher to further examine students' interest in the teaching profession as a future career choice. Based on previous research, inconsistencies were found regarding the influence of perceptions of the teaching profession on the interest in becoming a teacher. Several studies, such as those conducted by Putri et al. (2024), showed that positive perceptions of the teaching profession could enhance motivation and consequently increase the interest in becoming a teacher. However, other studies (Wahyuni & Setiyani, 2017; Kinanti & Putri, 2023; Hidayah & Wulandari, 2022; Pinardi et al., 2023) demonstrated that perceptions of the teaching profession did not have a significant effect on such interest. Therefore, further investigation was needed to clarify the relationship between perceptions of the teaching profession and the interest in becoming a teacher, particularly in the context of economics education students at private universities.

Based on the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991), the interest in becoming a teacher was influenced by intentions formed through attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. In line with Hurlock as cited in Wahyuni and Setiyani (2017), interest was also viewed as a primary driving force that

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motivated individuals to choose and engage in activities they preferred. Perceptions of the teaching profession were classified under the attitude component, as they reflected students' evaluations of the characteristics and values of the teaching profession. Positive perceptions generated favorable attitudes that encouraged the intention to become a teacher, whereas negative perceptions tended to inhibit it. Self-efficacy was categorized under perceived behavioral control, as it indicated the extent to which students felt capable of performing the role of a teacher. Students with high self-efficacy felt they had control over such behavior, thereby strengthening their intention to pursue a teaching career. Meanwhile, learning motivation could fall under either attitudes or behavioral control, depending on the context: when regarded as an intrinsic drive, it reflected attitudes; and when interpreted as readiness to meet academic demands, it represented behavioral control.

This study aimed to analyze the influence of perceptions of the teaching profession, self-efficacy, and learning motivation on the interest in becoming a teacher among Economics Education students at private universities in Bandung City. The urgency of this research lay in understanding the factors contributing to the low interest in the teaching profession, in order to provide empirical contributions to the development of higher education strategies that strengthen motivation, self-efficacy, and positive perceptions among prospective educators toward enhancing the sustainable quality of the teaching workforce.

Based on the background of the problem that had been presented and supported by empirical data, the researcher conducted a study entitled "The Role of Learning Motivation in Mediating the Relationship Between Perceptions of the Teaching Profession and Self-Efficacy on the Interest in Becoming an Economics Teacher", with a case study of Economics Education students at Langlangbuana University, Bandung City.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Teaching Profession Perception

According to Berger and D'Ascoli (2011) and Cornali (2019), the perception of the teaching profession was influenced by how individuals viewed themselves in the present and projected themselves in the future. Rahmadiyani et al. (2020) defined perception as a person's subjective judgment of an object, while Pinardi et al. (2023) emphasized that perception was the result of sensory processing and the psychological interpretation of received stimuli. Hidayah and Wulandari (2022) added that a positive perception of the teaching profession could encourage individuals' interest in pursuing it. Furthermore, Demir (2016), Masrotin and Wahjudi (2021), and Rohmah and Isroah (2022) explained that perceptions of the teaching profession were formed through individuals' understanding of teachers' roles, competencies, and working conditions. Meanwhile, Ibrahim in Sukma et al. (2020) categorized the factors shaping perception into two groups: internal factors (such as goals, experiences, and knowledge) and external factors (such as social environment and professional information). Thus, perceptions of the teaching profession were cognitive and affective reflections shaped by personal experiences and social contexts, which ultimately determined an individual's level of interest in pursuing a teaching career.

The indicators for the perception of the teaching profession were as follows: (1) perception of teachers' academic qualifications and certification; (2) perception of teachers' rights; (3) perception of teachers' obligations; and (4) perception of teacher development and professional growth. Attitudes toward the teaching profession played an important role in determining the quality of task implementation and achievement in educational careers. Teachers who had a positive view of their profession were generally able to perform their educational roles more effectively and make a positive impact on their students. Conversely, teachers who viewed their profession negatively, even when equipped with professional knowledge and skills, tended to exert a less favorable influence on the learning process and students' academic outcomes (Vu et al., 2023).

Self Efficacy

Self-efficacy, as proposed by Bandura (1997), was a psychological construct that reflected an individual's belief in their capacity to organize and execute a series of actions necessary to achieve specific

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goals. Vaughan-Johnston and Jacobson (2020) explained that self-efficacy described the degree of confidence a person had in their ability to perform behaviors effectively in order to obtain desired outcomes. In line with this, Hidayah and Wulandari (2022) emphasized that individuals with high levels of self-efficacy tended to possess greater motivation, confidence, and likelihood of success compared to those with low self-efficacy. Furthermore, Bandura (1997), as cited in Vaughan-Johnston and Jacobson (2020), identified four main pathways through which self-efficacy influenced performance: cognitive, motivational, affective, and selective. Therefore, self-efficacy could be viewed as an essential determinant in shaping persistence, intrinsic motivation, and individual performance effectiveness, which developed through direct experience, social support, and interaction with a conducive learning environment.

According to Bandura (1997), self-efficacy consisted of three main indicators that represented the dimensions of an individual's belief in their competence to perform a task, namely: (1) Level, which referred to the individual's belief in their capacity to complete tasks of varying degrees of difficulty, influencing the responses and strategies chosen when facing obstacles; (2) Strength, which described the extent to which this belief persisted and remained consistent within the individual, particularly when encountering pressure or failure; and (3) Generality, which referred to the breadth of the individual's self-efficacy belief, or their ability to apply such confidence across various contexts or situations. These three indicators comprehensively formed the psychological foundation that influenced a person's motivation, behavior, and achievement in different areas of life.

Learning Motivation

According to Maslow (1970), motivation was an internal drive that arose from human needs arranged hierarchically, encouraging individuals to act in order to achieve specific goals. Motivation was viewed as a response to unmet needs and was influenced by environmental factors that provided feedback on individual behavior. Uno (2016) asserted that motivation was a stimulus derived from both internal and external factors that drove individuals to make positive behavioral changes. Similarly, Kashefian-Naeeini et al. (2024) explained that motivation was a psychological process that determined the direction, intensity, and persistence of behavior, functioning as an energy source in learning activities. In the context of education, learning motivation played an essential role as the main driver of academic success, as students with high motivation levels tended to demonstrate greater perseverance, active participation, and better academic achievement (Maghfuroh, 2019; Gök & Kabasakal, 2019). Therefore, learning motivation could be understood as a psychological mechanism that directed and sustained learning behavior to achieve optimal outcomes.

Based on its underlying sources, motivation was classified into two types: intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation originated from an individual's internal drive without requiring external stimuli. This type of motivation emerged when tasks met certain conditions, such as: (1) aligning with students' interests; (2) incorporating varied instructional planning; (3) providing feedback on students' responses; (4) offering opportunities for active participation; and (5) allowing students to adjust tasks according to their abilities and preferences. Conversely, extrinsic motivation arose as a result of external influences or stimuli. This form of motivation included several similar aspects, such as: (1) aligning tasks with interests; (2) introducing variety in lesson planning; (3) responding to students' input; (4) promoting active student participation; (5) maintaining flexibility in task adjustments; and (6) creating engaging learning activities.

According to Maslow, motivation was formed through five levels of needs, namely: (1) physiological needs; (2) safety needs; (3) love and belonging needs; (4) esteem needs; and (5) self-actualization needs. These five aspects served as an essential foundation in shaping an individual's learning motivation.

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Interest in Becoming a Teacher

According to Ajzen (1991), an individual's interest in choosing the teaching profession could be explained through the Theory of Planned Behavior, which stated that behavioral intention was influenced by three main components: attitude toward the behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. These three factors collectively formed the basis for individual decision-making in determining career choices, including the teaching profession. Basri et al. (2021) defined interest as an internal drive accompanied by a strong desire to achieve something desired, while Pinardi et al. (2023) described it as an individual's tendency or attraction toward a particular object or activity. Hurlock (2010) asserted that interest influenced a person's behavior and attitude in acting, whereas Burgueño et al. (2022) positioned behavioral interest such as choosing a teaching career as a key element in the Theory of Planned Behavior. Furthermore, Rahman in Sukma et al. (2020) explained that interest was shaped by internal factors, including emotions, motivation, and self-confidence, as well as external factors, such as family support and social environment. Thus, interest in becoming a teacher could be understood as a psychological drive formed through the interaction between individual and environmental factors, which encouraged a person to consciously and committedly pursue the teaching profession.

According to Icek Ajzen in the Theory of Planned Behavior, interest was influenced by three main components. First, attitude toward the behavior, which referred to an individual's belief about the consequences of an action, including positive or negative evaluations of the potential benefits and risks. Second, subjective norms, which referred to an individual's perception of social pressure and the motivation to meet the expectations of people around them, such as support or rejection from their immediate environment. Third, perceived behavioral control, which described a person's belief about the extent to which they were capable of performing a behavior, influenced by both perceived facilitating and inhibiting factors (Sussman & Gifford, 2019).

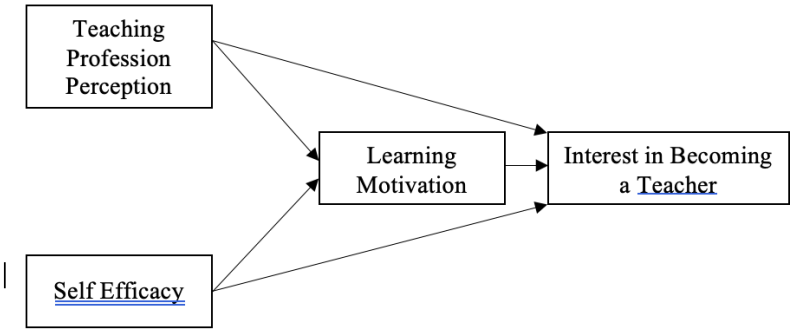

Figure 2. The Relationship Among Variables

Based on the research paradigm above, interest was a fundamental factor that influenced the quality of an individual's performance in pursuing a profession, including the teaching profession. Putri et al. (2024) emphasized that interest did not emerge by chance but was formed through internal factors such as emotions, perceptions of the profession, and self-motivation, as well as external factors such as family support and social environment. In addition, self-efficacy played an important role in influencing the interest in becoming a teacher, as confidence in one's own abilities increased self-assurance in performing teaching roles (Rahmadiyani et al., 2020). Amalia and Pramusinto (2020) further explained that individuals with high self-efficacy tended to have greater interest in pursuing a teaching career compared to those with low self-efficacy. Thus, perceptions of the teaching profession, self-efficacy, and learning motivation were closely interrelated in shaping students' interest particularly among Economics Education students at Langlangbuana University to choose the teaching profession with strong dedication and commitment.

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METHOD

This study employed a quantitative approach, as described by Sugiyono (2022), which aimed to evaluate specific populations or variables through empirical data collection and hypothesis testing using structured instruments. Data were collected via a survey using questionnaires. The study population consisted of 55 students from the Economic Education Study Program at Langlangbuana University. A saturated sampling technique was applied, whereby all members of the population were included as research participants due to the relatively small population size.

This study was designed to collect data from respondents, necessitating the use of valid and reliable measurement instruments to quantify each response. Each response option was assigned a weighted score according to its level of agreement. A Likert scale was employed, as it is widely recognized for measuring attitudes, opinions, and perceptions of individuals or groups toward social phenomena (Sugiyono, 2022). The scale consisted of five categories: (1) Strongly Disagree; (2) Disagree; (3) Slightly Disagree; (4) Agree; and (5) Strongly Agree. The instrument comprised 15 statements, which were validated and tested for reliability using outer loading and composite reliability. Data analysis was conducted using Partial Least Squares (PLS) to examine relationships among latent variables. Analyses were performed with SmartPLS version 4.1.1.2 for Mac OS. Hypotheses regarding the relationships between independent and dependent constructs were tested using the bootstrap resampling method, as proposed by Geisser (Ghozali, 2014).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Outer Model Result

The outer model, or measurement model, was used to assess the extent to which each indicator within a block represented the latent variable being measured. This analysis was conducted independently of the relationships among latent variables in the structural model (Narimawati & Sarwono, 2024). The following presented the measurement results obtained using SmartPLS version 4.1.1.2 for Mac OS.

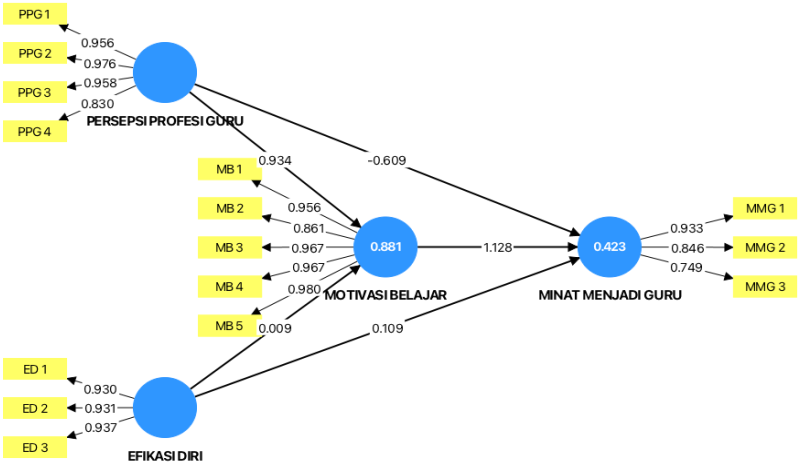

Figure 3. SmartPLS Model

The outer model analysis included testing for convergent validity, Average Variance Extracted (AVE), discriminant validity, composite reliability, and Cronbach's alpha (Hair et al., 2019). Convergent validity was assessed based on the outer loading values of each indicator, which ideally should be greater than 0.7 to be considered valid. The results of the convergent validity test for each construct showed that all indicators met

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these criteria, with outer loading values above 0.7. This indicated that no indicators needed to be eliminated from the measurement model, as illustrated in the figure above. After confirming that all indicators contributed adequately to their respective latent constructs, the analysis proceeded with testing the AVE values, which are presented in the following table:

Table 2. Average Variance Extracted (AVE) Values

Number	Variable	AVE Values
1	Teaching Profession Perception	0.868
2	Self Efficacy	0.870
3	Learning Motivation	0.897
4	Interest in Becoming a Teacher	0.716

(Source: Processed data, 2025)

Based on the test results, the data were considered valid because all outer loading and AVE values for each construct exceeded 0.5, indicating that convergent validity was fulfilled. To assess discriminant validity, a cross-loading analysis was conducted. The results showed that each indicator had the highest loading on its original construct compared to other constructs, thus confirming that discriminant validity was satisfied. Reliability testing was subsequently performed through the calculation of composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha. All constructs demonstrated values above 0.7, indicating that the instruments possessed good internal consistency and were reliable. The reliability values for each construct are presented in the following table:

Table 3. Composite Reliability and Cronbach's Alpha Values

Number	Variable	*Composite Reliability Value*	*Cronbach's Alpha Value*
1	Teaching Profession Perception	0.963	0.948
2	Self Efficacy	0.953	0.928
3	Learning Motivation	0.978	0.971
4	Interest in Becoming a Teacher	0.882	0.798

(Source: Processed data, 2025)

Based on the data analysis results above, it was shown that the constructs used possessed an acceptable level of reliability, and the composite reliability test results also met the acceptable criteria.

Inner Model Results

The structural model (inner model), also known as the internal model, illustrated the relationships among latent variables (Ghozali, 2015). Analysis of the structural model was conducted to assess the strength and accuracy of these relationships. After the measurement model evaluation was completed, the next step was to assess the structural model. This evaluation involved several key aspects, including collinearity testing, significance and relevance testing of path coefficients, assessment of R^2 values, measurement of f^2 effects, and predictive relevance testing using Q^2. The extent of the influence of independent variables on the dependent variable in this study was determined through the R^2 analysis results as follows:

Table 4. R Square Value

Number	Variable	R^2 Value
1	Interest in Becoming a Teacher	0.423
2	Learning Motivation	0.881

(Source: Processed data, 2025)

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R^2 indicated the extent to which the independent variables could explain the dependent variable. The R^2 test results in this study revealed that Teacher Profession Perception (X1), Self-Efficacy (X2), and Learning Motivation (Me) explained 42.3% of the variance in the Interest in Becoming a Teacher, which fell into the moderate category, while the remaining 57.7% was influenced by other variables not included in this study. Meanwhile, Teacher Profession Perception (X1) and Self-Efficacy (X2) explained 88.1% of the variance in Learning Motivation, indicating that the R^2 results in this study were categorized as very strong.

The next step was to test the predictive power of the model by examining the Q^2 (Q-Square) values. These values were obtained through the blindfolding technique, which indicated how well the observed values could be reconstructed by the model and its parameter estimates, as follows:

$Q^2 = 1 – (1 - R1^2)(1 - R2^2)$
$Q^2 = 1 – (1 – 0{,}423^2)(1 – 0{,}881^2)$
$Q^2 = 1 – (1 – 0{,}1789)(1 – 0{,}7761)$
$Q^2 = 1 – (0{,}8211)(0{,}2239)$
$Q^2 = 1 – 0{,}1838$
$Q^2 = 0{,}8162$

Based on the research results, the model possessed acceptable predictive relevance, as indicated by the Q^2 value > 0, which was 0.8162, suggesting that the model's predictive capability for the dependent variable was very good. Furthermore, F^2 was used to determine the effect size of exogenous constructs on endogenous constructs when the constructs were included or excluded from the model. These values were interpreted based on the following categories: small effect ($0.02 \leq f^2 \leq 0.15$), medium effect ($0.15 < f^2 \leq 0.35$), and large effect ($f^2 > 0.35$). Based on the analysis results, the F-square values for each relationship analyzed in this study are presented as follows:

Table 5. F-Square Value

Number	Variable	Interest in Becoming a Teacher	Learning Motivation
1	Teaching Profession Perception	0.0727 (Big)	4.9545 (Big)
2	Self Efficacy	0.0139 (Small)	0.00047 (Negligible effect)
3	Learning Motivation	0.2612 (Medium)	

(Source: Processed data, 2025)

Subsequently, the Goodness of Fit (GoF) test was conducted to assess the overall model fit, both in terms of the measurement model quality and the structural relationships among variables. A high GoF value indicated that the model possessed a good fit and was able to adequately explain the research phenomena. The GoF calculation was based on the square root of the average AVE (Average Variance Extracted) multiplied by the square root of the average R^2. According to the criteria proposed by Hussein (2015), GoF values were categorized into three levels: small GoF = 0.10, medium GoF = 0.25, and large GoF = 0.38.

$$GoF = \sqrt{\left(\frac{AVE}{n}\right) \times \left(\frac{R^2}{n}\right)}$$
$$GoF = \sqrt{\left(\frac{(0{,}868+0{,}870+0{,}897+0{,}716)}{4}\right) \times \left(\frac{(0{,}423+0{,}881}{2}\right)}$$
$$GoF = \sqrt{(0{,}83775) \times (0{,}652)}$$
$$GoF = \sqrt{(0{,}546213}$$
$$GoF = 0{,}7390622437$$
$$GoF = 0{,}739$$

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Based on the GoF value of 0.739, it was classified as large, and even very high when compared to the large GoF threshold (≥ 0.38). This indicated that the model used in the study possessed excellent predictive and construct quality, with a very high level of fit in representing the sample data. Therefore, the analysis results were considered reliable for comprehensively describing the phenomenon under investigation.

Hypothesis Testing

The examination of the relationships between independent and dependent variables in this model was conducted using the bootstrap resampling technique, a statistical method developed by Geisser (Ghozali, 2014). This approach was employed to estimate the significance levels of the effects among constructs by randomly replicating samples from the available data. In the hypothesis evaluation, two types of tests were performed: testing direct effects and testing indirect effects among variables. A relationship was considered significant if it met the statistical criteria, namely a t-statistic value > 1.96 and a p-value < 0.05 at a 5% significance level (α = 0.05) (Hussein, 2015).

Direct Effect

Table 6. Path Coefficients

Number	Variable Relationships	*T-Statistic*	*P-Value*	Description
1	Teaching Profession Perception ➡ Learning Motivation	2.785	0.003	Has An Effect
2	Teaching Profession Perception ➡ Interest in Becoming a Teacher	0.398	0.345	Has No Effect
3	Self Efficacy ➡ Learning Motivation	2.983	0.001	Has An Effect
4	Self Efficacy ➡ Interest in Becoming a Teacher	0.282	0.389	Has No Effect
5	Learning Motivation ➡ Interest in Becoming a Teacher	5.168	0.001	Has An Effect

(Source: Processed data, 2025)

Indirect Effect

Table 7. Spesific Indirect Effect

Number	Variable Relationships	*T-Statistic*	*P-Value*	Description
1	Teaching Profession Perception ➡ Learning Motivation ➡ Interest in Becoming a Teacher	2.370	0.009	Has An Effect
2	Self Efficacy ➡ Learning Motivation ➡ Interest in Becoming a Teacher	2.901	0.002	Has An Effect

(Source: Processed data, 2025)

Based on the data analysis results obtained using SmartPLS 4.1.1.2 for Mac OS, a comprehensive overview was provided regarding the outcomes of each hypothesis in this study. The statistical tests, including t-statistic and p-value values, were used to assess the significance of relationships among variables, both direct and indirect. Accordingly, the subsequent discussion focused on interpreting the hypothesis testing results and their relevance to the conceptual model that had been developed.

Discussion

The Effect of Teacher Profession Perception (X1) on Learning Motivation (Me)

Based on the research analysis results, the first hypothesis (H1), which stated that Teacher Profession Perception (X1) affects Learning Motivation (Me), was accepted. This was evidenced by a t-statistic value of 2.785 > 1.96 and a p-value of 0.003 < 0.05. Therefore, the relationship between Teacher Profession Perception (X1) and Learning Motivation (Me) was considered statistically significant.

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A positive perception of the teaching profession was found to significantly enhance students' learning motivation. This indicated that a positive perception of the teaching profession played a crucial role in boosting students' motivation in line with the theories of Bandura (1977), Ajzen (1991), and Maslow (1970). According to Bandura, a positive perception shaped self-efficacy, which is an individual's belief in their ability to succeed in a role, thereby increasing learning motivation. Meanwhile, Ajzen, through the Theory of Planned Behavior, explained that a positive perception of the teaching profession strengthened individuals' attitudes and intentions to behave in accordance with their goal, namely pursuing a teaching career. Similarly, Maslow emphasized that human motivation arises from the effort to fulfill self-actualization needs, which is the desire to achieve one's highest potential.

Thus, students who held a positive perception of the teaching profession were motivated not only by cognitive drive and self-belief but also because the teaching profession was perceived as a means to achieve self-actualization and personal meaning in life. In other words, the higher the students' positive evaluation of the teaching profession, the higher their motivation in the learning process, particularly for those pursuing education as prospective teachers. Furthermore, these results reinforced the importance of strengthening the public image of the teaching profession. A positive image of teachers not only increased appreciation for the profession but also fostered enthusiasm and commitment to learning among students in education programs. Therefore, strategies to enhance the quality and recognition of the teaching profession needed to be continuously promoted as part of efforts to improve the overall quality of education.

The results of this study were consistent with previous research by Janah & Dwijayanti (2024), with a t-statistic of 8.712 > 1.96 and a p-value of 0.000 < 0.05, indicating a significant relationship between Teacher Profession Perception and the Interest in Becoming a Teacher. The study conducted on students of the Business Education Study Program, Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Negeri Surabaya, demonstrated that a positive perception of the teaching profession significantly contributed to enhancing students' learning motivation. In other words, the better students' views were toward the teaching profession, the higher their internal drive was to actively engage in the learning process.

The Effect of Teacher Profession Perception (X1) on Interest in Becoming a Teacher (Y)

Referring to the data analysis findings, the second hypothesis (H2), which posited an effect of Teacher Profession Perception (X1) on Interest in Becoming a Teacher (Y), was not supported by the empirical data. This was indicated by a t-statistic of 0.398 < 1.96 and a p-value of 0.345 > 0.05. Therefore, the relationship between Teacher Profession Perception (X1) and Interest in Becoming a Teacher (Y) was considered not statistically significant on a partial basis.

These findings indicated that although students of the Economic Education Study Program at Universitas Langlangbuana held a good or positive perception of the teaching profession, this did not automatically translate into an interest in pursuing the profession. In other words, in line with Bandura's (1977) Social Cognitive Theory, which emphasized that an individual's behavior was influenced not only by perception or knowledge but also by self-efficacy and prior success experiences. This means that even if students had a positive perception of the teaching profession, if they lacked confidence in their own abilities or relevant experiences supporting that role, the interest in becoming a teacher would not emerge strongly.

Furthermore, according to Ajzen (1991) in the Theory of Planned Behavior, behavioral intention, including career choice, was influenced by attitudes toward the behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. In this context, a positive perception of the teaching profession reflected only the attitude aspect, whereas without social norm support and confidence in self-control, the interest in becoming a teacher would not form significantly.

Furthermore, these findings were consistent with the study by Hidayah & Wulandari (2022), where the t-statistic was 1.707 < 1.96 and the p-value was 0.088 > 0.05, indicating that the relationship between Teacher Profession Perception (X1) and Interest in Becoming a Teacher (Y) was not significant. Therefore,

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the positive perception held by students of the Office Administration Education Study Program at Universitas Negeri Surabaya regarding the teaching profession did not significantly influence their interest in choosing teaching as a career path. In other words, having a favorable view of the profession did not necessarily correspond with an actual desire to engage directly in the field of education as a teacher.

The Effect of Self-Efficacy (X2) on Learning Motivation (Me)

Based on the research analysis results, the third hypothesis (H3), which stated that Self-Efficacy (X2) affects Learning Motivation (Me), was accepted. This was evidenced by a t-statistic of 2.983 > 1.96 and a p-value of 0.001 < 0.05. Therefore, the relationship between Self-Efficacy (X2) and Learning Motivation (Me) was considered statistically significant.

These findings were in line with Bandura's theory (1997), which emphasized that self-efficacy is a key factor in directing an individual's motivation and behavior. Individuals with high self-efficacy possessed strong confidence in their ability to overcome challenges, thereby being more motivated to achieve learning goals. This confidence enhanced perseverance, effort, and resilience in facing academic difficulties. Furthermore, these results were also consistent with Maslow's (1970) motivation theory, in which self-efficacy played a role in fulfilling the highest level of self-actualization needs in the hierarchy, driving individuals to reach their full potential. Thus, self-efficacy not only influenced self-confidence but also served as a primary driver of intrinsic motivation in the learning process.

The results of this study were consistent with previous research by Teza et al. (2024), where the calculated t-value (Thitung) was 2.087 > 2.048 with a significance level of p < 0.05, indicating a significant relationship between self-efficacy and the interest in becoming a teacher. Students of the Economic Education program at Universitas Ekasakti demonstrated that self-efficacy had a positive and significant effect on learning motivation. These findings indicated that the higher the level of self-efficacy possessed by students, the higher their learning motivation was.

The Effect of Self-Efficacy (X2) on Interest in Becoming a Teacher (Y)

Based on the data analysis findings, the fourth hypothesis (H4), which posited an effect of Self-Efficacy (X2) on Interest in Becoming a Teacher (Y), was not supported by the empirical data. This was indicated by a t-statistic of 0.282 < 1.96 and a p-value of 0.389 > 0.05. Therefore, the relationship between Self-Efficacy (X2) and Interest in Becoming a Teacher (Y) was considered not significant.

These findings, when related to Bandura's theory (1997), indicated that although self-efficacy played an important role in shaping confidence in one's abilities, it did not necessarily lead to the emergence of behavioral interest without the support of other contextual and motivational factors. In this context, students with high self-efficacy might have believed in their teaching abilities but lacked sufficient personal drive or values to choose the teaching profession. Meanwhile, according to the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991), intention or interest in engaging in a behavior (such as choosing a career as a teacher) was influenced not only by perceived behavioral control but also by attitudes toward the profession and subjective norms. In other words, high self-efficacy without supportive positive perceptions of the teaching profession and reinforcing social pressures was not sufficient to foster an interest in becoming a teacher.

The results of this study were in line with previous research by Sholichah, which showed that the hypothesis was rejected with a significance value of 0.093 > 0.05 and a coefficient of 0.362. This indicated that self-efficacy did not have a significant effect on the interest in becoming a teacher. Although students possessed good self-efficacy, it did not increase their interest in pursuing a teaching profession. This was suspected to be because students of the Office Administration Education program at Universitas Negeri Surabaya still felt less confident in becoming professional teachers and perceived the teachers' workload as quite heavy, even though they had adequate teaching abilities.

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The Effect of Learning Motivation (Me) on Interest in Becoming a Teacher (Y)

Based on the data analysis findings, the fifth hypothesis (H5), which posited an effect of Learning Motivation (Me) on Interest in Becoming a Teacher (Y), was accepted. This was evidenced by a t-statistic of 5.168 > 1.96 and a p-value of 0.001 < 0.05. Therefore, the relationship between Learning Motivation (Me) and Interest in Becoming a Teacher (Y) was considered statistically significant.

These findings were in line with Maslow's motivation theory (1970), which explained that individuals were driven to act in order to fulfill self-actualization needs, including in the context of education and career. Students with high learning motivation tended to strive to reach their full potential through professions perceived as meaningful, such as becoming a teacher, because this profession allowed the fulfillment of needs for purpose, social contribution, and self-esteem. Furthermore, according to the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991), learning motivation could strengthen positive attitudes toward behavior (attitude toward behavior) and enhance behavioral intention, in this case, choosing the teaching profession. Thus, learning motivation served as an internal driver that translated individuals' beliefs and values into concrete actions in determining a career choice as an educator.

Furthermore, according to the study by Meirani & Qoirunnada (2022), regression analysis was used to examine the effect of learning motivation on the interest in becoming a teacher among students of the Economic Education program at FKIP Universitas Muhammadiyah Bengkulu. The results showed a calculated F-value of 5.37 > F-table of 4.18 at a 5% significance level with degrees of freedom (df) = 29. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H_0) was rejected and the alternative hypothesis (H_a) was accepted. This indicated that learning motivation had a significant effect on students' interest in becoming teachers. The results suggested that the higher the level of learning motivation possessed by students, the greater their interest in pursuing a teaching profession.

The Effect of Teacher Profession Perception (X1) Mediated by Learning Motivation (Me) on Interest in Becoming a Teacher (Y)

Based on the data analysis findings, the sixth hypothesis (H6), which posited an effect of Teacher Profession Perception (X1) mediated by Learning Motivation (Me) on Interest in Becoming a Teacher (Y), was accepted. This was evidenced by a t-statistic of 2.370 > 1.96 and a p-value of 0.009 < 0.05. Therefore, Learning Motivation (Me) successfully mediated the relationship between Teacher Profession Perception (X1) and Interest in Becoming a Teacher (Y), which was considered statistically significant.

The study findings revealed that the variable Learning Motivation acted as a mediator in the relationship between Teacher Profession Perception and Interest in Becoming a Teacher among students of the Economic Education Study Program at Universitas Langlangbuana. The indicators within learning motivation, such as physiological needs, feelings of safety and security, sense of belonging and love, esteem or respect, and self-actualization, contributed significantly to explaining this mediating role. Individuals with high levels of learning motivation tended not to be easily discouraged by challenges; rather, they were more enthusiastic about improving their academic performance to face and resolve various problems in the future. Learning motivation influenced students' interest in becoming teachers through their perceived control over behavior. Thus, motivation to become an educator enhanced full awareness of the teaching profession, increasing confidence in pursuing a career as a teacher.

These findings were in line with previous research by Zofiroh et al. (2022), which stated that the variable Teacher Profession Perception (X1) had a direct effect on the endogenous variable, namely Interest in Becoming an Economics Teacher (Y), of 0.021 or 2.1%. Meanwhile, the indirect effect through the mediating variable Learning Motivation was 0.184 or 18.4%, calculated by multiplying the effect of Teacher Profession Perception on Learning Motivation (0.260) and the effect of Learning Motivation on Interest in Becoming a Teacher (0.711). These results showed that the indirect effect was greater than the direct effect (0.184 > 0.021). Therefore, it could be concluded that Learning Motivation acted as an effective mediator in

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bridging the relationship between Teacher Profession Perception and Interest in Becoming an Economics Teacher. Consequently, the fourth hypothesis was accepted.

The Effect of Self-Efficacy (X2) Mediated by Learning Motivation (Me) on Interest in Becoming a Teacher (Y)

Based on the data analysis findings, the seventh hypothesis (H7), which posited an effect of Self-Efficacy (X2) mediated by Learning Motivation (Me) on Interest in Becoming a Teacher (Y), was accepted. This was evidenced by a t-statistic of 2.901 > 1.96 and a p-value of 0.002 < 0.05. Therefore, Learning Motivation (Me) successfully mediated the relationship between Self-Efficacy (X2) and Interest in Becoming a Teacher (Y), which was considered statistically significant.

These findings were also in line with Maslow's motivation theory (1970), which emphasized that individuals with high self-efficacy tended to be driven to fulfill higher-level needs, such as self-actualization—the desire to develop one's potential and contribute to others. In this context, learning motivation served as a means for students to achieve these self-actualization needs through the teaching profession. Furthermore, these results were consistent with the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991), in which self-efficacy was related to perceived behavioral control, referring to an individual's confidence in their ability to perform a particular action. When high self-efficacy generated strong learning motivation, it strengthened students' intentions to act in line with their goals, namely choosing the teaching profession as a form of self-realization and confidence in their competencies.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

Based on the results of data analysis and hypothesis testing, several main findings were concluded as follows: First, there was a significant effect of Teacher Profession Perception (X1) on Learning Motivation (Me), so hypothesis H1 was accepted and H0 was rejected. Second, Teacher Profession Perception (X1) did not have a significant effect on Interest in Becoming a Teacher (Y), so hypothesis H2 was rejected and the null hypothesis (H0) was accepted. Third, there was a significant effect of Self-Efficacy (X2) on Learning Motivation (Me), so hypothesis H3 was accepted and H0 was rejected. Fourth, Self-Efficacy (X2) was proven not to have a significant effect on Interest in Becoming a Teacher (Y), so hypothesis H4 was rejected and H0 was accepted. Fifth, the test results also showed that Learning Motivation (Me) had a positive effect on Interest in Becoming a Teacher (Y), supporting the acceptance of hypothesis H5 and the rejection of H0. Sixth, Teacher Profession Perception (X1) mediated by Learning Motivation (Me) demonstrated a significant effect on Interest in Becoming a Teacher (Y), so hypothesis H6 was accepted. Finally, it was found that Self-Efficacy (X2) had a positive effect on Interest in Becoming a Teacher (Y) through the mediation of Learning Motivation (Me), so hypothesis H7 was accepted and H0 was rejected.

Based on the results of data analysis and hypothesis testing, this study provided an in-depth understanding of the factors influencing students' interest in becoming teachers, particularly students of the Economic Education program at Universitas Langlangbuana. The findings showed that learning motivation served as the primary link between Teacher Profession Perception and Self-Efficacy with the interest in becoming a teacher. Positive perceptions and high self-efficacy enhanced learning motivation; however, both did not directly influence the interest in becoming a teacher without internal drive. These findings were consistent with Bandura's theory (1997), which emphasized the role of self-efficacy in shaping motivation and behavior, as well as Ajzen's Theory of Planned Behavior (1991), which explained that career intentions were influenced by attitudes, self-control, and confidence in abilities. Learning motivation proved to be a psychological factor that strengthened students' intentions to pursue a teaching career, aligning with Maslow's view (1970) that individuals were motivated to actualize their potential through meaningful work. Practically, higher education institutions needed to focus on strengthening learning motivation through experience-based learning, academic mentoring, and enhancing the image of the teaching profession.

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The implications of this study for economic teacher education in Indonesia highlighted that enhancing learning motivation was a strategic factor in fostering students' interest in pursuing a career as economics educators. The Economic Education study program needed to integrate learning strategies that were not only oriented toward mastery of subject matter but also toward the development of self-efficacy and positive perceptions of the teaching profession. Through contextual learning approaches, direct teaching practice, and continuous career guidance, students could build confidence in their abilities and understand the social and professional significance of the role of an economics teacher. Therefore, higher education institutions played a crucial role in preparing prospective economics teachers who were motivated, reflective, and committed to improving the quality of economic education in Indonesia.

Based on the findings of this study, it was recommended that higher education institutions, particularly education study programs, developed strategies to strengthen positive perceptions of the teaching profession through academic and non-academic activities that fostered pride in the role of educators. Universities needed to design experiential learning and provide continuous academic mentoring to enhance students' self-efficacy and learning motivation. Furthermore, collaboration with partner schools and professional education institutions was necessary to offer authentic field practice opportunities, enabling students to comprehensively understand the realities of the teaching profession.

For future researchers, it was suggested to expand the study by including variables such as social support, intrinsic values toward the profession, the role of supervising lecturers, and teaching practice experiences to gain a more holistic understanding of the determinants of interest in becoming a teacher. Future studies should also be conducted across diverse institutional contexts and geographic regions to strengthen external validity and produce findings that were more representative for informing teacher education policy development in Indonesia.

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