



Motivation Unlocks Gen Z's Path to Workforce Success

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Abstract

This study looks into how learning motivation influences the relationship between self-efficacy, competence, and employment preparedness among Generation Z students. The study focuses on twelfth-grade accounting students at SMK Negeri 2 Buduran Sidoarjo in the academic year 2023/2024. The study intends to investigate how self-efficacy and competence influence job preparedness, as well as how learning motivation acts as a mediator in this relationship. A quantitative approach was used to collect data from a sample of 60 pupils from a population of 108, as calculated by Slovin's formula. A questionnaire was utilized to collect data, and the findings were assessed using Partial Least Squares (PLS) analysis. The findings show that self-efficacy and competence have a favorable and significant impact on students' work preparation, with learning motivation successfully moderating the link. These findings indicate that promoting self-efficacy, competence, and learning motivation in vocational education can improve students' preparedness for the workforce.

Keywords: *Generation Z, learning motivation, self efficacy, student competence, work readiness*

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1. INTRODUCTION

Education is a crucial foundation for preparing individuals to face the workforce. Generation Z, born between 1995 and 2010, is transitioning from education to the workforce. With technological advancements and global dynamics, the challenges faced by Generation Z in entering the workforce are becoming increasingly complex.

In human resource management, job readiness involves mastering the technical skills relevant to a specific job and includes aspects such as discipline and responsibility. Job readiness refers to a condition where an individual possesses the abilities, motivation, and characteristics to complete tasks or activities effectively, demonstrating their preparedness to achieve set goals (Amiruddin et al., 2022). To reduce unemployment rates, vocational high school (SMK) graduates need competencies aligned with their areas of expertise. However, in reality, the goal of SMKs to produce job-ready graduates has not yet been fully achieved.

This research focuses on the 12th-grade students of the 2023/2024 academic year majoring in accounting at SMK Negeri 2 Buduran. SMK is chosen because the vocational education provided is expected to create students who are ready to enter the workforce upon graduation. Vocational education in Indonesia has a specific purpose: to prepare students to enter the world of work. Vocational High Schools (SMK) play a crucial role in providing education that is more focused on practical skills needed in the job market. Therefore, concentrating research on vocational schools provides insights that are very relevant for developing curricula and educational programs that are under industry needs.

In addition, this research aligns with the government's priorities, which currently focus on developing vocational education as the main strategy to increase workforce competitiveness. Thus, research focusing on vocational school students, such as the one conducted at SMK Negeri 2 Buduran Sidoarjo, aligns with the government's initiative to strengthen the linkage between education and the world of work. However, although SMK is designed to prepare students for the workforce, it is important to understand how factors such as Self-efficacy, student competence, and learning motivation influence the job readiness of Generation Z.

Table 1 / Pre-Survey of Class XII Job Readiness for Accounting Department

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
I am confident i can make logical decisions based on accounting principles.	0 (0%)	1 (3%)	18 (60%)	8 (27%)	3 (10%)	30
I am confident i can complete accounting tasks according to work procedures effectively.	0 (0%)	4 (13%)	14 (47%)	9 (30%)	3 (10%)	
I am confident i can work well in a team following professional ethics.	1 (3%)	3 (10%)	15 (50%)	6 (20%)	5 (17%)	
I am confident I can critically identify decisions.	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	18 (60%)	9 (30%)	3 (10%)	
I am confident I can take responsibility for my actions in the work environment.	1 (3%)	2 (7%)	18 (60%)	5 (17%)	4 (13%)	
Average				2.61		

Source: Pre-Survey Questionnaire (2023)

The results of Table 1 indicate that most students exhibit low confidence levels in various aspects required in the workforce, particularly in the accounting field. For the first statement, nearly all students displayed a neutral, uncertain, or negative stance regarding their ability to make logical decisions based on accounting principles. Additionally, most students showed a negative attitude towards completing accounting tasks effectively according to work procedures and in their ability to collaborate in teams and take responsibility for their actions in a work environment.

However, some students demonstrated relatively higher confidence levels in certain aspects, such as working in teams. Nonetheless, these findings cannot be considered representative of the majority, indicating that further efforts are needed to

enhance the overall job readiness of vocational high school (SMK) students. In conclusion, the pre-survey results highlight a lack of job readiness among the students, likely impacting their decisions after completing their education at SMK Negeri 2 Buduran.

Table 2 / Tracking Data for Graduation of SMKN 2 Buduran Accounting Program

Description	2020/2021		2021/2022		2022/2023	
	Sum	%	Sum	%	Sum	%
Working	54	50.00%	47	44.76%	42	40.00%
Continuing Education	38	35.19%	49	46.67%	49	46.67%
Entrepreneurship	3	2.78%	4	3.81%	4	3.81%
Waiting	9	8.33%	3	2.86%	6	5.71%
Cannot Be Contacted	4	3.70%	2	1.90%	4	3.81%
Total Graduates	108		105		105	

Source: BKK SMK Negeri 2 Buduran Sidoarjo (2023)

The decision of students to pursue higher education is a phenomenon observed at SMK Negeri 2 Buduran. Data obtained from the school, as shown in Table 2, indicates an increase in the number of students choosing to continue their studies in the 2021/2022 academic year. During this period, there was an increase of 11 students from the accounting department who opted to attend university compared to the previous year. This increase is due to a higher demand for bachelor's degree graduates, better career development opportunities and higher salary offers for those with advanced degrees.

This situation suggests students' uncertainty or difficulties in preparing to enter the workforce. Therefore, it is important to understand the factors influencing Generation Z's perception of job readiness, including Self-efficacy, student competence, and learning motivation. This study investigates the relationship between these factors and how their related interventions influence Generation Z's job readiness.

Self-efficacy refers to an individual's belief in their ability to complete specific tasks or achieve set goals. This concept, developed by Albert Bandura, emphasizes that Self-efficacy is the belief in one's ability to execute tasks or reach goals (Puspitasari & Bahtiar, 2022). In addition to Self-efficacy, student competence is also a key factor in determining Generation Z's job readiness. Competence includes the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to succeed in the workforce. Student competence reflects the extent to which they have mastered subject material, technical skills, and critical thinking abilities required for job readiness. According to Finch & Crunkilton, competence is a set of skills, attitudes, and values essential for completing a task (Pratiwi & Rini, 2023).

Learning motivation is another crucial variable in the context of Generation Z's job readiness. Gray states that motivation consists of internal and external processes that produce enthusiasm in engaging in specific activities (Firdaus et al., 2020). Learning motivation influences the extent to which students participate in learning activities and their efforts to achieve educational goals.

In this context, learning motivation can mediate between factors such as Self-efficacy, student competence, and Generation Z's job readiness. However, limited research has explored the role of learning motivation as an intervening variable in the relationship between these factors. By understanding the factors influencing Generation Z's job readiness, more effective strategies can be developed to prepare them for the increasingly complex workforce demands.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Self Efficacy

Self-efficacy is an individual's belief in their ability to perform a task or achieve a specific goal successfully. In the context of education and job readiness, Self-efficacy reflects a student's confidence in their ability to complete academic tasks and face challenges within the realms of education and career preparation. According to Bandura, Self-efficacy is a person's belief in their ability to complete tasks or achieve set goals (Puspitasari & Bahtiar, 2022). This view aligns with (Nurussyifa & Listiadi, 2021), who stated that Self-efficacy influences an individual's behavior, which determines their readiness to enter the workforce. The same thing is also expressed by (Neswari & Dwijayanti, 2022) that self-efficacy is the ability to believe in one's ability to prepare

students for life outside of school and the workplace because it is very important to know how far their ability is.

Research (Sari & Rini, 2023) identifies several aspects of Self-efficacy, including confidence in completing tasks, self-motivation, perseverance, resilience in the face of difficulties, and problem-solving abilities, all of which positively contribute to students' job readiness. This is supported by (Nugroho et al., 2020), who found that students with high levels of Self-efficacy are more confident in their ability to complete tasks effectively based on their skills. This study uses indicators inspired by Bandura's concept, as explored in research by (Hariyati et al., 2022), which identifies Self-efficacy through three main indicators: Level, Strength, and Generality.

Student Competence

According to (Ramadhani et al., 2020), competence refers to the ability to perform tasks based on skills and knowledge supported by work attitudes relevant to the job's requirements. (Pratiwi & Rini, 2023) emphasize that student competence enhances job readiness by developing skills that prepare them to enter the workforce easily after graduation. Additionally, (Nurussyifa & Listiadi, 2021) state that student competence is shaped through their own learning experiences and processes, encompassing knowledge, skills, and continuously improved abilities, thereby instilling confidence in their competencies. The competence indicators applied in this study refer to the concept outlined by Bloom, Khustiani in research by (Magdalena & Fajriyati Islami, 2020), consisting of three indicators: Cognitive, Affective, and Psychomotor.

Learning Motivation

Gray stated that motivation is a series of internal and external processes that foster enthusiasm in engaging in certain activities (Firdaus et al., 2020). Purwanto added that motivation is a conscious effort to influence behavior, encouraging individuals to take action and effectively achieve targets (Wati & Has, 2022). (Nurrahman, 2021) defines motivation as a process where clear and sustained goals drive activities. Similarly, (Agustin, 2020) explains that motivation in learning involves factors such as the desire and ambition to succeed, the drive and need to learn, recognition in learning, engaging activities in learning, and a conducive learning environment. This study adopts learning motivation indicators inspired by Uno's concept, as detailed in research by (Faristin et al., 2023): the desire and aspiration to succeed, the drive and need to learn, recognition in learning, engaging activities in learning, and a conducive learning environment.

Work Readiness

According to Bandura, job readiness is an individual's belief in his or her ability to complete a task (Sari & Rini, 2023). This view is in line with what was conveyed by (Zulutama et al., 2022), which defines work readiness as a person's preparation, both in terms of maturity, ability, and physical and mental condition, to carry out a job or activity. (Amiruddin et al., 2022) defines work readiness as a condition in which a person has the will, desire, and special characteristics necessary for an activity to achieve the desired goal. This study adopts the indicators in the research conducted by (Wijaya & Aini, 2021): Have logical considerations, can complete tasks, can adapt to the surrounding environment and easily get along with colleagues, can be critical, and can accept responsibility for their work.

Research Conceptual Model

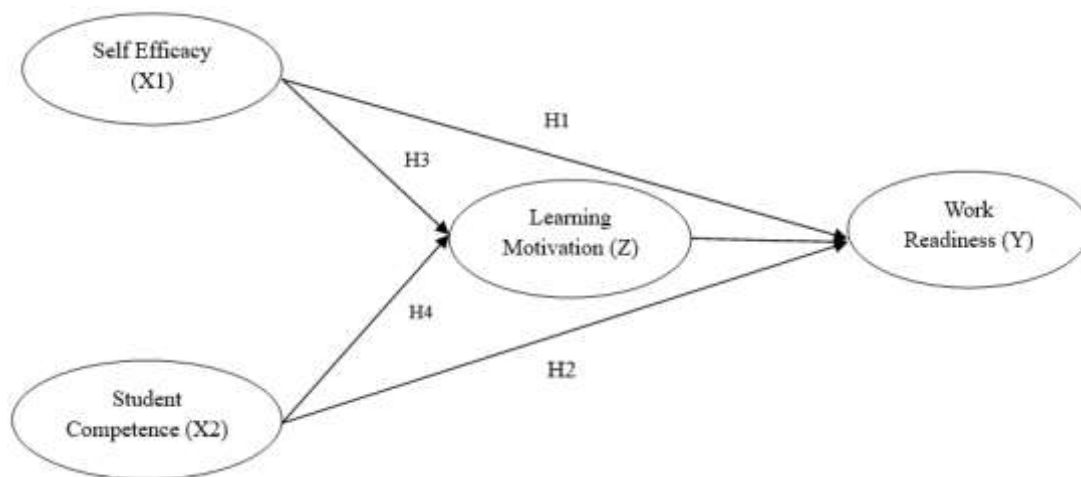


Figure 1. Research Conceptual Model

Hypothesis

H1 : It is suspected that self-efficacy has a positive and significant effect on Work Readiness of SMK Negeri 2 Buduran Sidoarjo students.

H2 : It is suspected that Student Competence has a positive and significant effect on Work Readiness of SMK Negeri 2 Buduran Sidoarjo students.

H3 : It is suspected that Learning Motivation can be an intervening variable in Self-efficacy towards Students Work Readiness at SMK Negeri 2 Buduran Sidoarjo.

H4 : It is suspected that Learning Motivation can be an intervening variable in Student Competence towards Student Work Readiness at SMK Negeri 2 Buduran Sidoarjo.

3. RESEARCH METHOD

In the framework of this study, there are two independent variables: Self-efficacy (X1) and Student Competence (X2). One intervening or mediating variable is Learning Motivation (Z), and the dependent variable is Work Readiness (Y). The measurement of variables in this study uses a questionnaire instrument that has been tested for validity and reliability. Variable measurements are carried out using a Likert scale, and the variable to be measured is identified in several indicators. Participants responded to each instrument item on the Likert scale, and responses were given in the form of scores ranging from 1 to 5. In this study, the population that is the focus is grade XII students majoring in accounting in the 2023/2024 school year at SMK Negeri 2 Buduran Sidoarjo, with a total of 108 students. SMK Negeri 2 Buduran Sidoarjo has a good reputation and has been well accredited, making it representative of research on vocational education and job readiness. Grade XII students at SMK Negeri 2 Buduran Sidoarjo are Generation Z, born between 1995 and 2010. They are in the transition phase from education to the world of work, so they are relevant subjects for research on job readiness. The accounting major was chosen because of its high relevance to the world of work and the demands of specific technical competencies and self-efficacy. Students of this major are expected to have specific skills.

The number of samples was calculated using the Slovin formula. In this study, the data obtained was processed using SmartPLS. The calculation number of samples uses the Slovin formula, as follows:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

N = number of population n = Number of samples e = sampling error

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(0,1)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{108}{1 + 108(0,1)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{108}{1 + 1,08}$$

$$n = 51,9$$

From the calculation using the Slovin formula, a total of 51.9 was obtained, adjusted to 60 students.

In this study, several data collection methods are applied, and interviews are carried out with various related parties such as grade XII students majoring in accounting, the Head of the Accounting Department, and BK teachers, to obtain more in-depth and accurate data. The data collection process begins by distributing questionnaires to selected respondents; before the questionnaire is used as a primary data collection instrument, it will be tested first on the research trial sample.

The validity test was carried out through theoretical analysis. The construct of self-efficacy, student competence, learning motivation, and job readiness has been described in detail based on related theories. Such as the theory of self-efficacy by Bandura, the theory of learning competence, the theory of learning motivation, and the theory of job readiness. Therefore, each indicator in the X and Y variables will be evaluated based on the total score of that variable. An indicator should correlate with a variable score of ≥ 0.5 each to ensure the study's accuracy. Indicators with a correlation of < 0.5 will be eliminated.

In this study, reliability tests were used to ensure that the instruments used to measure the constructs in the study had high consistency. Reliability was calculated using the Cronbach Alpha calculation method with the help of Smart PLS software. A question in the questionnaire is considered reliable if the Cronbach Alpha score is > 0.60 .

PLS consists of two main relationships: the external model that connects latent variables with their indicators and the internal model that describes the relationships between latent variables (Muhson, 2022). In this analysis, the validity of each indicator will be evaluated based on the overall score of the relevant variable (Pasaribu et al., 2022). First, several aspects are evaluated in the outer model, such as convergent and discriminant validity. Convergent validity measures the correlation between the construct and the latent variable in the model; the correlation is considered valid if the value is > 0.5 . Discriminant validity is considered good if the AVE value is > 0.5 . In the outer model, an evaluation of composite reliability is also carried out. If the composite reliability value is > 0.8 , this indicates high reliability of the construction. Furthermore, to measure the consistency of answers in PLS, Cronbach Alpha is used. Cronbach Alpha is considered good if $\alpha \geq 0.5$.

In the inner part of the model, the evaluation involves determining the percentage of variance described, expressed by R-Square for the dependent latent construct. Finally, in the inner model testing stage, the significance of the influence of exogenous variables on endogenous variables was assessed based on a P-value of < 0.05 and a T-value exceeding 1.96, indicating that the coefficient of the pathway had significance at a confidence level of 95%.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 RESULTS

Outer Model

The outer model aims to evaluate how well these indicators reflect the measured latent constructs. The outer model analyzes two aspects: convergent validity and reliability and validity constructs.

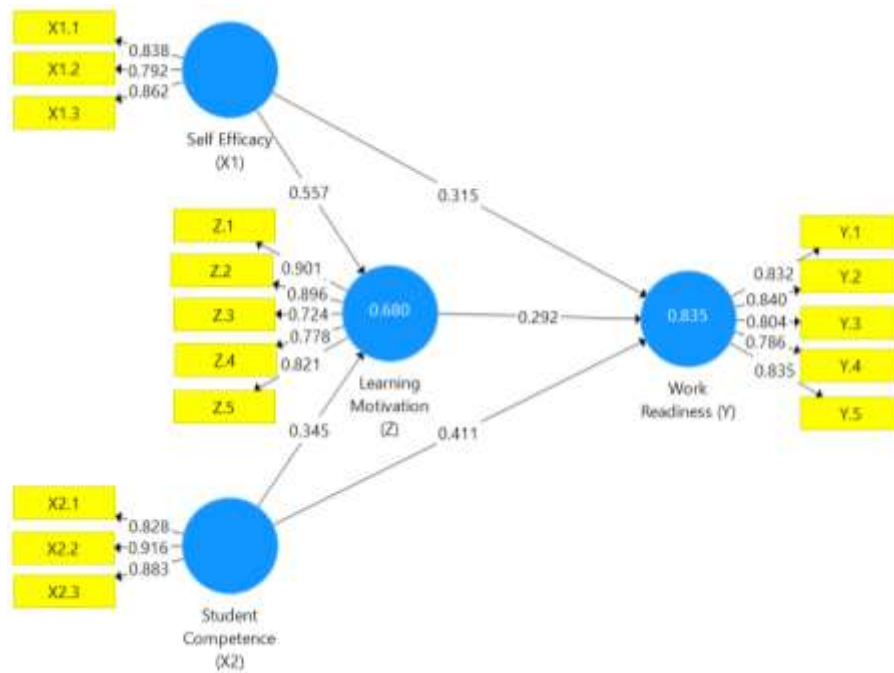


Figure 2. SmartPLS Conceptual Model

The figure presents a structural equation modeling (SEM) analysis, illustrating the relationships between the latent variables: Self-efficacy (X1), Student Competence (X2), Learning Motivation (Z), and Work Readiness (Y). Convergent validity measures the correlation between the construct and the latent variable in the model, which is considered valid if the value is greater than 0.5. In this figure, indicators for Self-efficacy (X1) have loadings of 0.838, 0.792, and 0.862; for Student Competence (X2), the loadings are 0.828, 0.916, and 0.883; for Learning Motivation (Z), the loadings range from 0.724 to 0.901; and for Work Readiness (Y), the loadings range from 0.786 to 0.840, all of which demonstrate good convergent validity.

Reliability and validity are two important concepts in quantitative research measurement that are used to ensure that the instruments used to measure a particular construction are consistent and accurate. One of the reliability indicators is composite reliability, which measures the overall reliability of a construction, while the validity indicator is average variance extracted (AVE).

Table 3 / Construct Validity and Reliability

	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Self-efficacy (X1)	0.778	0.870	0.691
Student Competence (X2)	0.849	0.909	0.768
Learning Motivation (Z)	0.883	0.915	0.684
Work Readiness (Y)	0.878	0.911	0.672

Source: Data Processed (2024)

Discriminant validity is considered good if the AVE value is greater than 0.5. As noted, the AVE values for all constructs in this study surpass 0.5, indicating strong discriminant validity. Composite reliability values indicate the internal consistency of the constructs, with values greater than 0.8 suggesting high reliability. The composite reliability values for Self-efficacy (X1), Student Competence (X2), Learning Motivation (Z), and Work Readiness (Y) are 0.870, 0.909, 0.915, and 0.911, respectively, all above the threshold of 0.8. Cronbach's Alpha measures the consistency of responses, with values considered good if $\alpha \geq 0.5$. The Cronbach's Alpha values for Self-efficacy (X1), Student Competence (X2), Learning Motivation (Z), and Work Readiness (Y) are 0.778, 0.849, 0.883, and 0.878, respectively, indicating good internal consistency.

Inner Model

The inner model analyzes the relationships between latent constructs in the research model. The focus is to understand the influence between constructs and how well the model explains variations in endogenous constructs (dependent constructs).

Table 4 / R Square

	R Square
Work Readiness (Y)	0.835

Source: Data Processed (2024)

The R² value indicates the proportion of variants in the endogenous construct (dependent variable) that can be explained by the model's exogenous construct (independent variable). Table 4.11 shows the R Square value for Job Readiness. R Square = 0.835, which means that the variables of self efficacy, student competence, and learning motivation influence 83.5% of Job Readiness. At the same time, other variables influenced 16.5%.

Table 5 / Direct Effect Test

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
Self-efficacy (X1) -> Work Readiness (Y)	0.315	0.320	0.098	3.202	0.001
Student Competence (X2) -> Work Readiness (Y)	0.411	0.411	0.080	5.110	0.000

Source: Data Processed (2024)

Hypothesis 1

The results from the table show the pathway from Self-efficacy (X1) to Work Readiness (Y). These values indicate that Self-efficacy has a positive and significant effect on work readiness. The T-value of 3.202 is well above the threshold of 1.96, and the P-value of 0.001 is below 0.05, confirming the significance of the relationship. Therefore, H1 is supported.

Hypothesis 2

The pathway from Student Competence (X2) to Work Readiness (Y). These values indicate that student competence positively and significantly affects work readiness. The T-value of 5.110 is significantly above 1.96, and the P-value of 0.000 is well below 0.05, confirming the significance of the relationship. Therefore, H2 is supported.

Table 6 / Indirect Effect Test

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
Self-efficacy (X1) -> Learning Motivation (Z) -> Work Readiness (Y)	0.163	0.156	0.067	2.431	0.015
Student Competence (X2) -> Learning Motivation (Z) -> Work Readiness (Y)	0.101	0.100	0.046	2.183	0.029

Source: Data Processed (2024)

Hypothesis 3

Learning motivation (Z) intervened with Self-efficacy (X2) on work readiness (Y) with a P value of $0.015 < 0.05$. The path coefficient was 0.163, and the statistical T value was $2.431 > 1.96$. These values indicate that both pathways, Self-efficacy to learning motivation and learning motivation to work readiness, are significant; it can be inferred that learning motivation potentially serves as an intervening variable in the relationship between Self-efficacy and work readiness. Therefore, H3 is supported.

Hypothesis 4

Learning motivation also intervenes in students' competencies on work readiness with P values of $0.029 < 0.05$. The path coefficient is 0.101, and statistical T values are $2.183 > 1.96$. These values indicate that both pathways, student competence to learning motivation and learning motivation to work readiness, are significant; it can be inferred that learning motivation potentially serves as an intervening variable in the relationship between student competence and work readiness. Therefore, H4 is supported.

4.2 DISCUSSION

The Effect of Self-efficacy on Job Readiness

Students at SMK Negeri 2 Buduran Sidoarjo have a higher level of Self-efficacy, which contributes to a rise in their confidence in their capacity to prepare for the working world, as indicated by the research findings. One of the most important aspects of preparing students to enter the workforce is the development of their Self-efficacy, which reflects their confidence in their ability to overcome problems and tasks. Student's preparation to enter the workforce is directly proportional to the degree to which they have confidence in themselves.

The feature of Self-efficacy that has the most impact is generality. This indicates that the degree to which students majoring in accounting at SMK Negeri 2 Buduran Sidoarjo are confident in their ability to tackle challenging tasks has a considerable bearing on their preparation for employment. A clear example of this result can be seen in learning programs collaborating with companies or organizations by bringing in professionals as guest teachers. The goal is to increase students' confidence. For example, students can carry out accounting-related activities and be directly supervised by professionals from the company. This hands-on experience helps students overcome challenges and strengthen their self-efficacy. It is useful not only in school but also in the work environment later. Thus, they feel more prepared and confident in facing challenging work situations after graduation. This is consistent with the findings of earlier studies that demonstrate a robust connection between Self-efficacy and readiness for employment (Hariyati et al., 2022; Neswari & Dwijayanti, 2022; Nugroho et al., 2020; Pratiwi & Rini, 2023; Puspitasari & Bahtiar, 2022; Sari & Rini, 2023) In light of this, the degree to which students are prepared to enter the workforce is influenced by the degree to which they have faith in their own capabilities.

The Effect of Student Competence on Job Readiness

According to the study's findings, the level of competence possessed by students at SMK Negeri 2 Buduran Sidoarjo impacts their readiness to enter the workforce and meet the challenges of the working world. This indicates that the capabilities of students, which comprise the technical skills and knowledge they learn throughout their schooling, directly impact how they view their preparation to enter the job. Students at SMK Negeri 2 Buduran Sidoarjo who have a high level of competence tend to feel more prepared and positive about themselves since they possess abilities relevant to their future careers and are required in those positions.

The psychomotor competencies of students are the ones that contribute the most to job preparedness. These competencies measure students' technical abilities and demonstrate the highest influence since they measure students' technical abilities. A real example is the internship program organized by SMKN 2 Buduran, where students can apply their theoretical knowledge in a real work environment. This experience improves their technical competence and provides a practical understanding of what to expect in the workplace, thus increasing their confidence that they are ready to work after graduation. It may be deduced from this that

the practical skills that students acquire through hands-on or practical experience are of utmost importance in constructing their perception of job preparedness. Previous research on the relationship between competence and job readiness conducted by (Nurussyifa & Listiadi, 2021; Ramadhani et al., 2020) lends support to the contention that the degree to which students have mastered the pertinent skills and knowledge plays a significant role in determining the degree to which they feel prepared to enter the workforce.

The Effect of Self-efficacy on Job Readiness Through Learning Motivation

Students at SMK Negeri 2 Buduran Sidoarjo have successfully established a connection between their sense of Self-efficacy and their readiness for employment through learning motivation. By this, we can deduce that learning motivation plays a part in mediating. This indicates that students at SMK Negeri 2 Buduran Sidoarjo have a high level of Self-efficacy, which ultimately leads to a rise in their learning motivation, which in turn leads to an improvement in their job readiness to confront the real world of work situations. This indicates that students at SMK Negeri 2 Buduran Sidoarjo have confidence in their ability to learn and succeed in academic assignments. This confidence motivates students to study more diligently, which supports their belief that they are prepared to enter the workforce.

In this process, the student's internal urge to continue learning and improving is crucial, as evidenced by the drive and need to learn is the most significant contributor to learning motivation. A real example is the engaging and challenging learning methods implemented in schools, such as collaborative projects and problem-based learning, which can increase students' motivation to learn. Therefore, learning strategies that aim to increase students' motivation to learn need to be strengthened because this not only impacts students' academic performance but also their preparation to face the challenges of the increasingly complex world of work. Students who are motivated to learn are more likely to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to succeed in the workforce, which eventually boosts their self-assurance in their ability to interact with the working environment. The fact that the findings of this study are confirmed by prior research carried out by (Jatmiko, 2017; Metanfanuan & Sorong, 2023; Sucitno et al., 2020) lends credence to the contention that the level of learning motivation that students possess plays a significant part in determining their level of preparedness for employment in the future.

The Effect of Student Competence on Job Readiness Through Learning Motivation

Students at SMK Negeri 2 Buduran Sidoarjo have successfully established a connection between their level of competence and their readiness for the workforce using the concept of learning motivation. The findings of the study indicate that a high level of student competency can lead to an increase in the student's willingness to learn, which in turn has an effect on the academic preparedness of students at SMK Negeri 2 Buduran Sidoarjo to deal with the realities of the working world. Students can observe firsthand the benefits of the skills and information they acquire in preparation for the world of work, which provides them with a firm foundation for being motivated to continue their education. This is because the competencies that students possess create a solid foundation.

Similar to the one before it, learning motivation is a factor that contributes to the relationship between student competency and work preparedness. More specifically, it combines encouragement and the need to learn. When students feel competent and motivated, they have a stronger sense that they are ready to work and face workplace challenges. For example, additional skills training provided in schools, such as technical skills courses in collaboration with external organizations/companies, improves students' competencies and motivates them to learn harder. Apart from focusing on developing student competencies, it is also important for educational institutions to pay attention to efforts to increase student learning motivation. This study's findings are corroborated by prior research findings (Agustin, 2020; Ellyana et al., 2016; Wati & Has, 2022). Students have a higher notion that they are ready to work and confront obstacles on the job when they feel competent and driven. This is because they are more likely to feel prepared to work. This highlights the need to establish a learning environment in schools that is both encouraging and supportive to enhance students' preparation for the workforce.

5. CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the role of Self-efficacy and student competence, as well as the role of learning motivation that students at SMK Negeri 2 Buduran possess, has an impact on the job preparedness of students at SMK Negeri 2 Buduran when it comes to preparing themselves to enter the world of work. Generally speaking, students with a high level of Self-efficacy (confidence in their abilities) and excellent technical skills (competence) are more likely to feel better equipped to enter the workforce. The educational programs that collaborate with companies, involve professionals as guest teachers and provide practical experiences such as internships and collaborative projects are highly recommended to improve students' work readiness at SMK Negeri 2 Buduran further. This is with the goal of further improving the work readiness of students at SMK Negeri 2 Buduran. Not only does this boost students' self-confidence and enhance their level of competence, but it also encourages them to continue their education and growth, ultimately resulting in them feeling more prepared to enter the workforce after completing their education.

6. LIMITATION AND IMPLICATION

The study's limitations include a small and specific sample size of 60 students from SMK Negeri 2 Buduran, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other contexts and educational settings. Additionally, self-reported data from pre-questionnaires necessitate the use of objective measures or additional data sources in future research. Furthermore, the study's focus on 12th-grade accounting students in a vocational high school setting may not fully represent students in other educational tracks or non-vocational contexts. Despite the validation of the questionnaire, there may be limitations in the measurement's comprehensiveness and accuracy, suggesting the need for further refinement of the instruments used.

The findings of this study have several implications for educational policy and practice. Integrating self-efficacy, competence, and learning motivation strategies into curriculums can enhance student work readiness. Policies should include goal-setting workshops, success visualization, and self-reflection modules. Interactive teaching methods, like project-based learning, should be adopted to engage students more effectively. Providing adequate facilities, quality learning resources, and reward systems can also boost student motivation. Establishing school-industry partnerships for internships and job placements is essential, and policies should support and facilitate these collaborations to ensure students gain relevant skills and experience before entering the workforce.

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