



Learning Motivation Levels of Indigenous Papuan Students

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Abstract: This study aims to determine the learning motivation level of indigenous Papuan students at Universitas Cenderawasih, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education. Using the Explanatory Sequential Design model, a mixed-methods approach was employed, combining quantitative and qualitative methods sequentially. A sample of 118 FKIP students was randomly selected from each study program, including indigenous Papuan students and students from other regions. We analyzed the data using descriptive statistical techniques and obtained qualitative data through interviews. The results indicated that students' learning motivation was influenced by two main factors: intrinsic motivation, which was found to be high, reflected in students' intrinsic motivation to learn, a sense of personal responsibility, and satisfaction when mastering complex material. Extrinsic motivation also played a role, though at a moderate level. Extrinsic factors such as family support, lecturers, and the desire to make parents proud were key motivators for academic achievement. This study contributes to understanding the motivational dynamics of indigenous Papuan students and offers insights for developing more effective and culturally sensitive educational policies and strategies.

Keywords: education; learning; motivation; papuan; students

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INTRODUCTION

Education is recognized as a significant investment for the nation's future and an important mechanism for achieving progress in various aspects of life. Through education, individuals can develop their potential to the maximum so that they can contribute positively to society and build a meaningful and dignified life under the principles of humanity (Chougule et al., 2024; Gea-García & López Martínez, 2024). Education also plays an important role in shaping character and ethics, enabling everyone to live with integrity and respect the rights and dignity of others (Núñez et al., 2024; Pelikan et al., 2021; Vergaño-Salazar et al., 2024; Wang et al., 2024; Wibowo et al., 2024). Education improves intellectual abilities and develops character, morals, and ethics (Almanwari et al., 2024; Vergaño-Salazar et al., 2024; Wibowo et al., 2024; Yang & Chanyoo, 2022). This makes education a strategic step to ensure the sustainability of a country's development and progress.

The biggest challenge to advancing education in Indonesia is reaching 3T regions, such as Papua (Aines et al., 2025; Manik et al., 2023; Rahayu et al., 2025; Tjilen et al., 2025). Developing quality and equitable education throughout Indonesia is a great idea that must be realized (Beukman & Chen, 2023; Tijow & Juniasti, 2024). However, various problems still hinder the achievement of this goal, especially in Papua. Inadequate educational conditions, such as a lack of educational facilities and infrastructure, a limited number of educators, and suboptimal quality of educators, have become significant obstacles (Boyle, 2022; Sander et al., 2024). As a result, indigenous Papuan students, particularly those from the interior, often have low motivation to study. Many challenges, such as a lack of support from their surroundings and financial difficulties, hinder their enthusiasm for pursuing higher education (Kocsis & Pusztai, 2024). Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, the two types of learning motivation, are crucial to the educational process. (Vergaño-Salazar et al., 2024). Intrinsic motivation refers to the intrinsic motivation to learn for personal satisfaction and enjoyment, while extrinsic motivation relates to extrinsic motivations such as family expectations or peer acceptance. Factors such as teaching methods, course materials, and technological support can influence students' learning motivation in higher education (Chen & Lee, 2021; Mahmood et al., 2021; Wang, 2021).

It is important to remember that higher education has the dynamics that distinguish it from other levels of education. Students are encouraged to think freely, creatively, and innovatively (Kocsis & Pusztai, 2024; Sherman et al., 2024). However, the problem of low learning motivation among indigenous Papuan students from the interior is a serious concern. Higher education has different dynamics from other levels of education, where students are encouraged to think freely, creatively, and innovatively (Ippolito & Kingsbury, 2024). However, the participation of students from remote areas, especially indigenous Papuans, remains a major challenge. Based on the Central Statistics Agency of Papua Province (BPS) (2024), the net participation rate for higher education in Papua in 2023 only reached 15.66% for men and 13.74% for women. The main factor

causing this low participation is limited access to quality basic education up to university level in the region. The literacy of the Papuan people shows significant challenges. The literacy of the Papuan people shows significant challenges. Data shows that the illiteracy rate in West Papua reaches almost 30% in the 15 to 45-year age group, much higher than the national average of 3.5% (Yawan, 2022). Factors contributing to low literacy include geographical barriers, diversity of regional languages, and lack of adequate educational resources (Yawan, 2022).

Based on observations of several students at FKIP Universitas Cenderawasih, it was found that they often face social pressure and a lack of support from the surrounding environment that does not prioritize education, coupled with educational and academic costs, causing their low motivation to achieve academic achievement. Many studies have been conducted on university students' motivation, including those conducted by Centeno et al. (2020). Research shows that both types of motivation significantly affect learning outcomes. Positive behavior increases motivation, while negative behavior decreases it (Ahmed et al., 2024; Sagimbayeva et al., 2024; Shutenko et al., 2023). Papuan students use a variety of strategies to address academic challenges and demonstrate a calculated approach to risk and success. The transition to online learning presented challenges, but many students maintained high motivation levels driven by curiosity and a conducive learning environment (Llerena-Izquierdo, 2024; Shcherbakova & Kovalchuk, 2023). Researchers have studied general learning motivation but have underexplored specific aspects, like writing beliefs and self-efficacy, in the Papuan context, highlighting the need for more research on how cultural factors uniquely shape the learning motivation of indigenous Papuan students.

We expect this study to provide more comprehensive and practical insights into efforts to improve the quality of education in Papua and contribute to developing more inclusive and effective education policies. The urgency of the problem of learning motivation among indigenous Papuan students encourages the authors to highlight the importance of understanding and addressing the specific challenges they face. The study aims to develop effective solutions that can significantly enhance academic performance and the future well-being of the Papuan community.

METHODS

This research was conducted by the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education (FKIP) at Universitas Cenderawasih, using a mixed-method approach, combining quantitative and qualitative methods to gain an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon being studied. The research employs the Explanatory Sequential Design model, which sequentially combines quantitative and qualitative methods (Creswell, 2021). We conducted a questionnaire survey using a quantitative approach to measure the learning motivation of indigenous Papuan students. The questionnaire was based on the intrinsic and extrinsic motivation scales. The sample was randomly selected from indigenous Papuan students and students from other regions at the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education (FKIP) of Universitas Cenderawasih, with a total sample size of 118 participants. The data obtained were analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques to identify the level of motivation and related factors. The qualitative approach was carried out through interviews. We selected 10 informants using the snowball sampling method, consisting of 5 students with a GPA below 2.75 and 5 students with a GPA above 2.75. This interview aims to dig deeper into their motivation and challenges. The interview data complemented the questionnaire results, thus providing a more comprehensive picture. The research participants came from various regions in Papua, such as Jayapura, Nabire, Wamena, Intan Jaya, Central Mamberamo, Tolikara, and Biak Numfor. This diversity shows a unique learning experience among indigenous Papuan students at Universitas Cenderawasih.

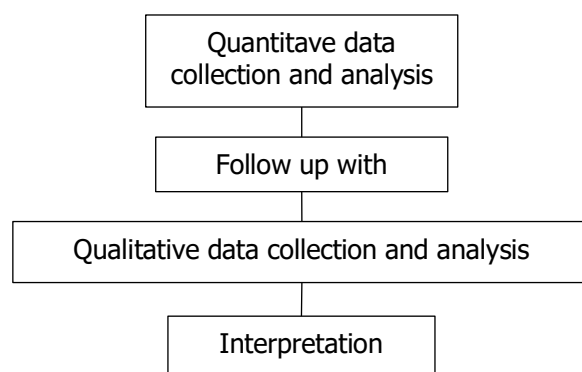


Figure 1. Explanatory sequel research design

The traits of responders who are indigenous Papuan students enrolled in Universitas Cenderawasih's Faculty of Teacher Training and Education are described in Table 1.

Table 1. Descriptive table of characteristics of students of the faculty of teacher training and education, Universitas Cenderawasih

Variables	Frequency	Percent
Students participating in semester studies		
≤ II	34	0.288
III-VII	68	0.576
≥ VIII	46	0.390
Total	118	
Ethnic groups of research students		
Jayapura	11	0.093
Nabire	10	0.085
Wamena	23	0.195
Intan Jaya	13	0.110
Central Mamberamo	19	0.161
Tolikara	9	0.076
Biak Numfor	33	0.280
Total	118	

This study randomly selected students from various semesters and ethnic groups. The random sample selection process aims to ensure the diversity of respondents representing the entire student population at the Faculty of Education and Teacher Training, Universitas Cenderawasih. The sample data collected and presented provides an overview of the characteristics of students involved in this study. Data collection and analysis are based on historical data and survey data. Design penalties are based on current design data (Figure 1). To ensure that penalties are not exceeded, the most important factor in determining future outcomes is the country's data quality and social performance.

Quantitative data were collected using the Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ), which aims to measure college students' motivation and learning strategies (Kocsis & Pusztai, 2024). The MSLQ in this study, developed by (Kim, 2021), includes two dimensions of motivation: intrinsic and extrinsic. Intrinsic motivation includes mastery goals and the need for achievement, while extrinsic motivation includes expectations of authority, family, lecturers, peer acceptance, power motivation, and fear of failure. This questionnaire uses a 4-point Likert scale to measure the level of agreement: "Strongly agree (4)," "Agree (3)," "Not sure (2)," and "Disagree (1)". This instrument is valid and reliable with Cronbach's Alpha = 0.796 > 0.60 so the data is said to be reliable according to (Khechba et al., 2025). *The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences* (SPSS version 27) explained data reliability processing outcomes.

While qualitative data were collected through in-depth interviews to explore participants' unique information and experiences as a research approach (Hajar & Manan, 2024), Interview information was gathered based on the definitions, interpretations, and opinions of students at FKIP Universitas Cenderawasih. (Quadir, 2021). Interview information was gathered based on the definitions, interpretations, and opinions of students at FKIP Universitas Cenderawasih. Every student who participated in the study had two individual semi-structured interviews during the six-month study period. Reasons for attending Universitas Cenderawasih, prior schooling, family circumstances, friendships, academic difficulties, learning strategies, and financial considerations or scholarships were all covered in the interview questions. These interviews aimed to investigate data and other elements that affect FKIP Universitas Cenderawasih students' learning motivation. The researchers employed four steps of qualitative data analysis: (1) data organization, (2) data exploration and sorting, (3) descriptive analysis, (4) need analysis, and (5) interpretation. The triangulation method, which entailed comparing interview data with other pertinent sources or documents, was employed to guarantee the authenticity of qualitative data. According to Quadir (2021), triangulation is a technique that involves looking at data from multiple angles in order to boost confidence in study findings. To make the conclusions more methodical, legitimate, and trustworthy, this is accomplished by integrating several processes or data sources.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

One of the most significant issues facing educators today is inspiring students to learn, which is also a significant obstacle to providing high-quality instruction. In addition to motivating children to succeed academically, motivation is crucial for developing lifetime learning abilities. Properly motivated students can

overcome obstacles, accomplish learning objectives, and help raise the standard of education as a whole. According to the data analysis results, student learning motivation varies for intrinsic and extrinsic incentive factors and falls into the moderate category (3.405). Table 2 displays the findings of the SPSS analysis for intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. The academic extrinsic motivations of Papuan students predominate over intrinsic motivation. The aspiration for acceptance among peers and social groupings primarily drives this learning motivation.

Table 2. Learning Motivation Levels of Indigenous Papuan Students

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Kurtosis
<i>Extrinsic</i>				
<i>Authority expectations</i>	118	3.420	0.695	0.269
<i>Peer acceptance</i>	118	3.471	0.649	0.819
<i>Power Motivations</i>	118	3.336	0.704	1.507
<i>Fear of Failure</i>	118	3.529	0.635	2.481
<i>Intrinsic</i>	118			
<i>Mastery Goal</i>	118	3.319	0.780	0.780
<i>Need for achievement</i>	118	3.395	0.805	18.793

A descriptive frequency analysis was used to assess the learning motivation levels of indigenous Papuan students. The outcomes of frequency statistics are displayed in the subsequent Table 5.

Table 3. Descriptive Frequency Table the Level of Learning Motivation Among Indigenous Papuan Students (n=118)

Items	frequency	Fk	Percent
<i>Extrinsic</i>			
11 - 12 point	1	1	0.008
13 - 14 point	7	8	0.059
15 - 16 point	32	40	0.271
17 - 18 point	44	84	0.373
19 - 20 point	34	118	0.288
N	118		
<i>Intrinsic</i>			
11 - 12 point	4	4	0.034
13 - 14 point	18	22	0.153
15 - 16 point	34	56	0.203
17 - 18 point	26	82	0.220
19 - 20 point	36	118	0.305
N	118		

The descriptive analysis findings indicate that indigenous Papuan students' learning motivation levels differ according to extrinsic and intrinsic motivation characteristics. Regarding extrinsic motivation, most students exhibit motivation levels ranging from medium to high. Forty-four students (37.3%) fall within the score range of 17-18, suggesting that extrinsic variables such as familial support, societal expectations, and reward systems significantly impact students' learning motivation. Moreover, 34 students (28.8%) exhibit elevated extrinsic motivation within the range of 19-20, suggesting that academic rewards and a conducive extrinsic environment enhance their passion for studying.

Conversely, merely 1 student (0.8%) falls within the lowest scoring category (11-12), suggesting that most students rely considerably on extrinsic sources to sustain their motivation for studying. Conversely, the frequency distribution exhibits a rather distinct pattern in the intrinsic motivation component. Thirty-six students (30.5%) exhibit high intrinsic motivation, scoring between 19 and 20, suggesting that most are motivated by personal interest and fulfillment in their educational pursuits. Furthermore, 26 students (22.0%) fell within the age range of 17-18, indicating that while they possess intrinsic learning interests, several extrinsic circumstances affect the sustainability of their motivation. Conversely, four students (3.4%) were categorized in the lowest score range (11-12), indicating that a limited percentage of students continue encountering difficulties in cultivating intrinsic motivation for studying. The statistics indicate that extrinsic variables influence indigenous Papuan students more than intrinsic causes. This indicates that the academic environment, social support, and educational policies promoting active student engagement are crucial factors in enhancing their learning motivation. Figure 1 and Figure 2 illustrates a graph depicting extrinsic and intrinsic motivation items.

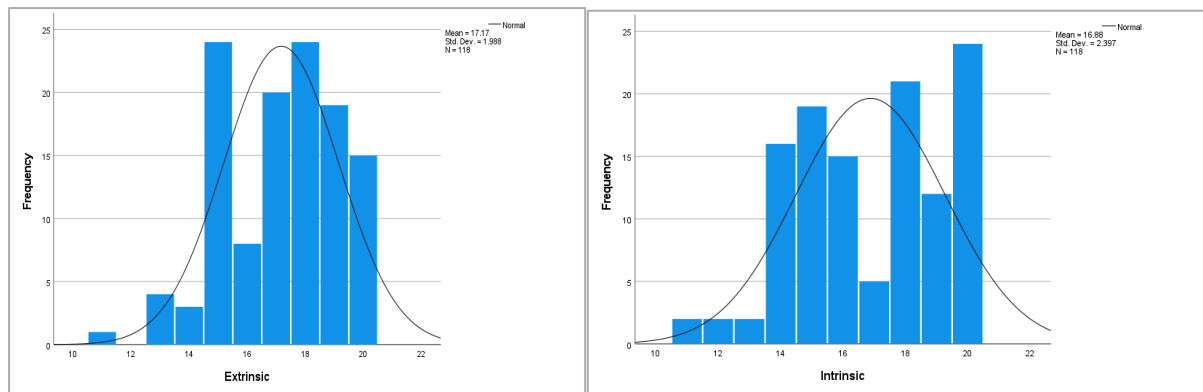


Figure 2. Extrinsic and Intrinsic Motivation Level of Indigenous Papuan students

Figure 2 shows that indigenous Papuan students are more motivated when they are at medium to high levels of extrinsic motivation. Most of the students scored between 17 and 20, which shows that outside factors like family support and rewards greatly affect their motivation. Meanwhile, the histogram of intrinsic motivation is more balanced, with most students scoring 15-20, indicating the role of personal interest in their learning motivation. Overall, extrinsic factors influence indigenous Papuan students' learning motivation more than intrinsic factors. The findings of the one-way parametric Difference test, which examines variations in students' motivation for learning according to their place of origin, are shown in Table 4. According to their place of origin, these findings show differences in student learning motivation, suggesting that social and environmental factors can affect their zeal for learning.

Table 4. Difference test: one-way parametric

	N	Mean	SD	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Min.	Max.
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Jayapura	11	32.18	4.771	1.439	28.98	35.39	25	40
Nabire	10	34.70	4.029	1.274	31.82	37.58	27	40
Wamena	23	33.87	4.224	.881	32.04	35.70	27	40
Intan Jaya	13	35.62	2.631	.730	34.03	37.21	30	40
Central Mambramo	19	33.74	3.557	.816	32.02	35.45	29	40
Tolikara	9	35.22	3.962	1.321	32.18	38.27	27	39
Biak Numfor	33	33.85	3.581	.623	32.58	35.12	27	40
Total	118	34.05	3.816	.351	33.36	34.75	25	40

Indigenous Papuan students enrolled in college frequently encounter significant difficulties in acclimating to a culture distinct from their own. Cultural change often presents difficulties in self-regulation, especially when faced with different social frameworks, habits, and academic expectations. College students from diverse cultural backgrounds must acclimate to a setting markedly distinct from their home culture, which might subsequently influence their motivation and academic performance (Huang & Wang, 2025). Such alterations frequently induce isolation or confusion in students, potentially affecting their motivation and academic performance.

The caliber of instruction in higher education significantly influences students' motivation to learn. Lecturers with exceptional performance, skills, and attitudes can enhance student motivation to attend classes. This aligns with the perspective of Ravdansuren et al. (2025), who state that the caliber of instruction in higher education significantly influences students' motivation to learn. Lecturers with exceptional performance, skills, and attitudes can enhance student motivation to attend classes. Students exhibit increased motivation when instructors demonstrate supportive behavior and foster a conducive classroom environment (Chahal et al., 2025; Halász & Kenesei, 2025; Liu & Lu, 2024; Sharafeeva, 2022). Lecturers who possess mastery of the subject matter and exceptional communication abilities can stimulate students' attention and curiosity. This is essential, especially in cultivating a conducive learning atmosphere and mitigating the monotony or anxiety that students frequently experience, particularly during their cultural adjustment. Samaden et al. (2025) found that students were more motivated to learn when they chose their lecturers, as opposed to lecturers they disliked. Positive interactions between lecturers and students through collaborative learning help increase students' self-confidence in the classroom, which ultimately impacts their academic success (Tan et al., 2024). discovered that students who had a choice in their professors were more eager to study than those who had a disdain for them. Students' self-confidence in the classroom is boosted by positive relationships between instructors and students through collaborative learning, which eventually affects their academic performance. These qualitative findings are in line with the quantitative findings, showing that extrinsic motivation has a significant influence on Papuan

students. Quantitative data from Table 5 show that most students have high extrinsic motivation, with 44 students (37.3%) in the 17-18 range and 34 students (28.8%) in the 19-20 range. This indicates that extrinsic factors, such as family support, social expectations, and academic rewards, play a significant role in their learning motivation. Qualitative findings describing students' challenges adapting to different cultures and languages also support this, as supportive extrinsic factors can help increase their learning motivation.

Students do not always have good experiences. Some students said that when lecturers utilize a language, they are unfamiliar with, such as Javanese, they have trouble understanding the subject. A student commented, "I do not understand when the teacher uses Javanese; I feel like an alien, so it is hard to understand." Learning can be severely hampered by unclear language, making it difficult for students to understand the lessons. This demonstrates that using more inclusive and understandable language is crucial to ensuring that all students, regardless of their linguistic and cultural backgrounds, can follow the lectures and feel inspired to learn.

Various factors, including low awareness of the importance of education, often influence the intrinsic motivation of indigenous Papuan students. Some students view college solely as a means to obtain a degree without considering the importance of mastering skills and abilities. The belief that they can rely on connections or "insiders" to secure a job exacerbates this, often neglecting the larger purpose of education. This phenomenon presents a significant concern for jointly enhancing students' comprehension of the fundamental nature of education and the advantages associated with learning. However, some native Papuan kids feel inferior to their friends or environment. Discrimination by careless individuals also adds to their lack of confidence. Additionally, as they continue their education into college, the discrepancy in the level of education they obtained from elementary school to high school in rural places presents a major obstacle. The lack of educational resources hampers their capacity to keep up with the rapid pace of college education.

Geographical, political, and economic factors greatly impact Papuan students' motivation to learn. Regional conflicts can impair education (Herrera-Quintero & Olarte-Dussan, 2024). According to one of the students interviewed, the lecture closures were brought on by inadequate security. However, not every student suffers as a result of these circumstances. Some students have admirable objectives that drive them to study. Some wish to follow their aspirations, improve Papua's interior, or become the first in their family to obtain a bachelor's degree. Because of this motivation, they are inspired to keep learning, take on obstacles, and give it their all. Some students contributed importantly to developing their regions after being encouraged to become Papuan women. This relates to studies that show increased motivation can lead to beneficial acts that help a person become the best version of themselves and inspire others (Gill et al., 2024; Miksza et al., 2021). Despite numerous challenges, these tales demonstrate that people still possess a strong intrinsic motivation to obtain a better education for their society and future. They require constant assistance from various sources to get past these challenges and increase their motivation to seek worthwhile knowledge.

College-bound Indigenous Papuan students frequently struggle to adapt to a culture that differs from theirs. Self-control issues are frequently brought on by this process of cultural shift, particularly when kids encounter new social structures, behaviors, and academic standards. Kelly et al. (2024) said that culturally diverse college students must adjust to a setting that differs greatly from their home culture, which may impact their motivation and academic achievement. Students frequently feel alone or perplexed due to these shifts, which might affect their motivation and success in the classroom.

Students' motivation to learn is greatly influenced by the caliber of instruction they get in higher education. Students can be more encouraged to attend lectures when their lecturers exhibit exceptional performance, abilities, and attitudes. This is consistent with the viewpoints that highlight professors' importance in helping students get motivated to learn (Aslan, 2025). Students' interest and comprehension of the information being taught will be significantly impacted by how lecturers present the material, the learning strategies they employ, and the interactions they form during the lecture process. Furthermore, lecturers' demeanor and manner of speaking can create a deep emotional connection with their students, inspiring them to be more engaged and hardworking in their studies. The appearance and behavior of lecturers also affect students' learning motivation. Lo (2023) and Yan et al. (2023) showed that students tend to be more motivated if lecturers show supportive behavior and create a classroom environment that should be comfortable and inviting. Lecturers with subject-matter expertise and effective communication skills can stimulate students' curiosity and interest (Rayaz et al., 2024; Sander et al., 2024; Schlenz et al., 2020). Such an approach is crucial, particularly when fostering a positive learning atmosphere and lowering the levels of tension or boredom that students frequently encounter, particularly given the cultural shift they are going through.

Based on the quantitative data analysis, 36 students (30.5%) showed high intrinsic motivation with scores between 19 and 20, indicating that most students were driven by personal interest and fulfillment in pursuing their education. Meanwhile, 26 students (22.0%) were in the range of 17–18, indicating that, although they had intrinsic learning interests, several extrinsic factors also influenced the sustainability of their motivation. This was also seen in qualitative interviews, where most students showed strong intrinsic motivation, such as

the desire to achieve personal goals, develop Papua, or be the first in their family to obtain a bachelor's degree. However, they also acknowledged extrinsic challenges, such as discrimination or difficulty adapting to different languages and cultures on campus, which influenced the sustainability of their intrinsic motivation.

According to Vizcaino-Escobar et al. (2024), Barham et al. (2023), Fischer and Barabasch (2023), students exhibit a heightened motivation to engage in learning when they have the autonomy to select their instructors, in contrast to being assigned lecturers whom they do not favor. Positive interactions between educators and students facilitated through collaborative learning significantly enhance students' self-confidence within the classroom, ultimately influencing their academic success. For Papuan students, a congenial lecture environment and instructors who employ humor and exhibit flexibility in classroom management significantly enhance their motivation to learn. The conducive environment fosters a sense of comfort, thereby facilitating a deeper comprehension of the material being presented.

However, not all experiences are pleasant for students. Some students reported challenges in understanding the course material when instructors used unfamiliar language, such as high-level academic language. One student commented, "I find it difficult to understand when teachers use high-level academic language; it makes me feel alienated, which hinders my understanding." Unfamiliar language can significantly impede learning, making it challenging for students to comprehend the subject. This suggests that using more inclusive and accessible language is essential to ensure that all students, regardless of culture and background, can understand the subject matter being presented. These findings are important to understanding how cultural and linguistic diversity can impact educational outcomes, particularly in multicultural settings. The impact of this research lies in its ability to inform the development of more inclusive teaching practices. It underscores the importance of instructors adapting their communication to accommodate students from diverse linguistic backgrounds, fostering greater student engagement and motivation. This study contributes to educational science by providing practical insights into how environmental and linguistic factors, alongside intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, can be optimized to enhance the academic success and well-being of Indigenous students, particularly in areas such as Papua. This research also highlights the need for more culturally responsive teaching strategies that consider the unique challenges students face in diverse educational contexts.

CONCLUSION

This study indicates that the learning motivation of Indigenous Papuan students is predominantly moderate, with extrinsic incentives surpassing intrinsic motivation. Various factors, such as unawareness of education's importance, feelings of inadequacy, discrimination, and substandard prior education, often constrain intrinsic motivation, whereas social influences, like the aspiration for peer acceptance, predominantly affect extrinsic motivation. The cultural transfer process significantly impedes Papuan students' adaptation to a new higher education environment, as it alienates them and hinders their behavioral regulation, thereby diminishing their motivation and academic performance. The cultivation of learning motivation predominantly hinges on the quality of instruction provided by lecturers; proficient and sociable educators who create a conducive learning atmosphere can enhance students' enthusiasm for academic pursuits. Conversely, the employment of exclusive language can substantially impede motivation. Strategic initiatives, such as implementing inclusive pedagogical approaches, cultivating a supportive and nurturing classroom atmosphere, and enhancing educational standards in rural regions, are essential to elevate the learning motivation of Papuan students. With consistent and thorough support, we expect that Papuan students will surmount present hurdles, achieve academic success, and contribute to the progress of their region.

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