

# Exploring a Positive Discipline Approach to Foster Academic Motivation: A Stakeholder Perspective

Hermahayu Hermahayu\*, Rasidi Rasidi, Aning Az Zahra  
Universitas Muhammadiyah Magelang, Indonesia  
[hermahayu@ummgl.ac.id](mailto:hermahayu@ummgl.ac.id)\*

<p><b>Submitted:</b> 2025-08-19</p> <p><b>Revised:</b> 2025-10-10</p> <p><b>Published:</b> 2025-11-25</p> <p><b>Keywords:</b> Academic Motivation, Education Stakeholders, Positive Discipline</p> <p><b>Copyright holder:</b> © Author/s (2025)</p> <p><b>This article is under:</b></p>  <p><b>How to cite:</b> Hermahayu, H., Rasidi, R., &amp; Zahra, A. A. (2025). Exploring a Positive Discipline Approach to Foster Academic Motivation in Senior High School: A Stakeholder Perspective. <i>Bulletin of Counseling and Psychotherapy</i>, 7(3). <a href="https://doi.org/10.51214/002025071589000">https://doi.org/10.51214/002025071589000</a></p> <p><b>Published by:</b> Kuras Institute</p> <p><b>E-ISSN:</b> 2656-1050</p>	<p><b>ABSTRACT:</b> This study explores the perceptions of educators, students, and parents regarding the implementation of positive discipline in schools and its influence on students' academic motivation. It examines how principals, teachers, students, supervisors, and parents understand and apply positive discipline, including its various forms, perceived effectiveness, challenges, and supporting factors. Data were gathered through Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with 30 participants divided into four stakeholder-based groups. Using thematic analysis, the findings reveal that teachers' understanding of positive discipline remains inconsistent, affecting the quality and uniformity of its implementation. While positive reinforcement and reflective group discussions are commonly practiced, punitive approaches still appear in some classrooms. The study shows that positive discipline contributes to increased student motivation, stronger classroom engagement, and healthier relationships within the school environment. Challenges include limited teacher training, inconsistent application, and occasional resistance from students or parents, whereas supportive school policies and strong communication with families serve as enabling factors. The study acknowledges several limitations, including a relatively small and heterogeneous participant group and the reliance on FGDs, which may introduce social desirability bias. Additionally, because the research focuses on senior high and vocational schools, its findings may not fully represent other educational levels. Despite these limitations, the study underscores the need for institutional support, ongoing teacher professional development, and active parental involvement to enhance the practice of positive discipline. It provides a culturally grounded perspective on positive discipline in Indonesian schools and highlights its role in fostering student motivation and cultivating a positive educational climate.</p>
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## INTRODUCTION

Academic motivation plays a crucial role in students' development and academic achievement (Gunadi & Gunawan, 2014; Gupta & Mili, 2017; Křeménková, 2019). For high school students, academic motivation plays a significant role in fostering career maturity (Meyshera & Hamdan, 2023). Academic motivation in secondary schools is particularly important as it is linked to career development (Deng et al., 2022). Research has shown that intrinsically motivated students exhibit higher engagement, persistence, and academic achievement (Dautkalieva & Ormanova, 2020; Froiland & Worrell, 2016).

However, academic motivation, particularly intrinsic motivation, tends to decline during adolescence, possibly due to the inadequate fulfillment of psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness in traditional school environments (Gnambs & Hanfstingl, 2016). In

Indonesia, recent studies highlight a trend of low motivation and engagement among secondary school students. Students often show low investment in actual learning (Muslim et al., 2020; Usman et al., 2023), meaning they are not fully engaged or committed to the learning process. Students also face challenges such as boredom and anxiety. Socioeconomic factors, including school location, classroom environment, and parental support, also influence motivation levels (Muslim et al., 2020; Usman et al., 2023). Research has also revealed a significant imbalance in the teacher-student talk ratio, with teachers dominating discussions while students exhibit low engagement, characterized by unreasoned talk and poor turn-taking (Lotulung, 2023).

Research has identified several strategies implemented by teachers in Indonesia to enhance student motivation, such as building positive relationships with students, selecting engaging activities, providing feedback, and managing the classroom effectively (Astuti, 2013, 2016), considering values, expectations, and affective components when implementing teaching strategies (Hariri et al., 2021), and creating a conducive learning environment, offering rewards, and fostering student aspirations (Habbah & Husna, 2024). Although these strategies acknowledge the importance of affective aspects, they have not emphasized emotional regulation and the development of students' social skills. In fact, research has found a strong correlation between emotional independence and learning motivation in secondary school students (Solita et al., 2012).

Furthermore, these strategies place greater emphasis on the teacher's role as the manager who organizes and directs the learning process in the classroom, prioritizing external rewards as incentives for motivation. However, Self-Determination Theory emphasizes the importance of intrinsic motivation, which leads to greater engagement and curiosity (Violeta & Galina, 2023). Intrinsically motivated students learn because of internalized desires, not due to external pressures or rewards (Perlman & Webster, 2011). Moreover, freeing students from the control of rewards and punishments can foster creative thinking and independent learning (Abdallah, 2022).

To refine the previous strategies, the positive discipline approach can be employed as an effective means to support efforts to enhance academic motivation among high school students. Positive discipline, rooted in Adlerian psychology, is an approach emphasizing mutual respect, encouragement, and a sense of belonging while fostering self-regulation and responsibility (Carroll & Brown, 2020; Oxley & Holden, 2021). Unlike punitive measures, it prioritizes collaboration, proactive problem-solving, and positive reinforcement (Carroll & Brown, 2020). This study explores the implementation of positive discipline in Indonesian high schools, focusing on its impact on academic motivation and the challenges faced.

Research has proven that positive discipline is significantly correlated with learning motivation and student commitment to education (Somayeh et al., 2013), academic achievement (Jeslin et al., 2019), and academic performance by promoting social-emotional skills, self-regulation, and a conducive school climate (Sánchez et al., 2023). Classroom-based positive behavior support has also been shown to improve order, fairness, teacher-student relationships, and discipline, ultimately creating a better learning environment (Mitchell & Bradshaw, 2013). These findings suggest that implementing positive discipline strategies can enhance academic motivation, improve the classroom climate, and support overall student learning outcomes.

The implementation of this positive discipline approach requires the active involvement of stakeholders. These include principals, students, parents, teachers, administrators, community leaders, civic organizations, and government bodies (Khadija, 2022). Principals and teachers are consistently regarded as the most influential figures in establishing school discipline policies (Curran, 2017). Students must also be involved in the implementation process to increase their commitment and acceptance of interventions aimed at reducing exclusive disciplinary practices (Furjanic et al.,

2022). The positive discipline strategies employed by teachers are also linked to improved student well-being and teaching effectiveness (Wang & Kuo, 2019). As part of the government or educational institutions, school supervisors also play a role in enhancing teachers' pedagogical competence, including assisting them in developing syllabi, designing lesson plans, and developing effective teaching strategies (Suryanto, 2020). Collaboration between parents and teachers is also crucial to achieving educational goals. Research shows that both teachers and parents recognize the importance and benefits of collaboration and cooperation between them (Steh & Kalin, 2011). This indicates that a collaborative approach involving teachers, students, principals, government, and parents is essential for successfully implementing positive discipline in schools, with a focus on positive classroom management.

While various studies have discussed the implementation of positive discipline in secondary schools, several limitations remain. Most previous research has focused on managing student misbehavior and the challenges of implementing positive discipline, but their perspectives have been limited to one or two stakeholder groups, such as principals, teachers, or school administrators (Mlalazi et al., 2016; Ndlovu et al., 2023; Sibanda & Mpofu, 2017). Thus, a broader exploration involving multiple stakeholder perspectives, including teachers, principals, students, supervisors, and parents, is needed to provide a more holistic understanding of positive discipline implementation in secondary schools.

Moreover, previous research has tended to focus on implementation challenges, such as a lack of teacher training and policy support (Sibanda & Mpofu, 2017), but has not directly linked these challenges to student academic motivation, which is crucial for learning. Therefore, there is a need to identify how positive discipline specifically affects academic motivation and the effective practices in the field, such as group discussions and positive reinforcement. Furthermore, previous studies were conducted in different educational contexts, such as African countries like Zimbabwe (Ndlovu et al., 2023; Sibanda & Mpofu, 2017), with education systems and cultural challenges that may not fully align with Indonesia. The Indonesian education system is characterized by diverse cultural and religious values, reflecting the pluralistic nature of the country (Nugraha, 2022). Character education in Indonesia integrates religious values, cultural values, and the principles of Pancasila, creating a uniquely Indonesian approach (Mukhibat, 2012). This highlights the need for new contributions that focus on the cultural and educational context of Indonesia, which is underrepresented in the global literature.

Research on the implementation of positive discipline in Indonesian schools also reveals several limitations. Although some studies have explored disciplinary practices in vocational schools (Rahmawati, L et al., 2024) and junior high schools (Simamora, 2022), research focused on high school settings remains scarce. Most of these studies focus on general disciplinary approaches (Rahmawati, L et al., 2024; Simamora, 2022) or broader applications of positive psychology in education (Ramadhanti, 2023), without specifically addressing positive discipline. Additionally, these studies generally focus on student learning outcomes or teacher perspectives, with limited exploration of the views of diverse stakeholders regarding the effectiveness and challenges of positive discipline implementation (Rahmawati, E et al., 2024; Rahmawati, L et al., 2024). Moreover, this study has not yet thoroughly examined the relationship between positive discipline and academic motivation in Indonesian secondary schools, particularly by incorporating the perspectives of all stakeholders. As indicated in previous studies, academic motivation is influenced by various factors within the domains of individuals, families, schools, and social environments (Hussain & Nadim, 2024; Isik et al., 2018). This gap highlights the need for more comprehensive

research that includes diverse stakeholder perspectives and evaluates the impact of positive discipline on academic motivation in Indonesian secondary schools.

This study presents a more practical solution tailored to the local context, thereby strengthening the practical value of its findings. The results of this study are presented in the following sections. The first section presents the exploration of how teachers, principals, supervisors, students, and parents understand the concept of positive discipline, which is a critical foundation for its implementation in schools. The second section identifies various forms of positive discipline implemented at the high school level, examining how these approaches differ in their influence on the learning environment. The third section evaluates the effectiveness of positive discipline in enhancing students' academic motivation, assessing its tangible impact on student engagement and academic achievement. Finally, the study presents the supporting factors and challenges faced by schools in implementing positive discipline, offering insights into the policy needs and strategies that can strengthen the implementation of this approach.

## **Literature Review**

### ***Academic Motivation***

Academic motivation has been conceptualized as a multidimensional construct comprising various interrelated components, including self-efficacy beliefs, goal orientation, personal and situational interest, and attribution for outcomes (Troia et al., 2012). Academic motivation can be either intrinsic or extrinsic and is closely tied to beliefs, goals, and values (Rowell & Hong, 2013). As an internal process driving educational performance and facilitating learning achievement, academic motivation is influenced by personal, familial, social, educational, and professional factors (Rafii et al., 2019). Highly motivated students tend to exert greater effort, persist through challenges, and achieve higher academic success (Wardani et al., 2020).

Academic motivation encompasses various components, including intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, self-efficacy, attribution, achievement goals, and self-regulation (Bahrami, 2016; Linnenbrink & Pintrich, 2002). Intrinsic motivation involves knowledge acquisition, achievement, and stimulation, while extrinsic motivation includes external regulation, identified regulation, and introjected regulation (Bahrami, 2016).

Academic motivation is influenced by multiple factors across individual, family, school, and social domains (Hussain & Nadim, 2024; Isik et al., 2018). Student-school interactions, including the quality and frequency of contact, collaboration, personal discussions, and out-of-class interactions, positively impact academic motivation (Trolan et al., 2016). Teacher support and student-teacher relationships also significantly influence motivation (Kitova & Troshkin, 2020). Home and school-related factors are particularly critical for secondary school students (Hussain & Nadim, 2024).

### ***Positive Discipline***

Previous studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of positive discipline in fostering intrinsic motivation, self-regulation, and improved student-teacher relationships (Saputra, 2023; Somayeh et al., 2013). This approach shifts away from punitive methods, focusing instead on strategies like positive reinforcement, classroom meetings, and empathy-based interactions (Mergler et al., 2014; Sharaf et al., 2023). In the Indonesian context, research on positive discipline remains limited, particularly regarding its link to academic motivation, necessitating further exploration.

The implementation of positive discipline in schools can be influenced by various factors. A lack of stakeholder engagement, inadequate teacher training, an excessive emphasis on students' rights, and deeply ingrained practices of corporal punishment can impact its effectiveness (Ndlovu et al., 2023). Additionally, the absence of role models, ineffective communication, and limited

financial resources may further hinder the application of this approach (Sibanda & Mpofu, 2017). Factors that can facilitate the adoption of positive discipline in schools, such as a multi-stakeholder approach, become crucial, integrating local wisdom values, regular monitoring, and curriculum revision (Ndlovu et al., 2023). Furthermore, district-level support through dedicated coordinators, training, leadership backing, robust data infrastructure, and direct school support is essential to ensure sustained positive outcomes (George et al., 2017).

### ***The Impact of Positive Discipline Implementation on Students' Academic Motivation***

Research indicates that positive discipline strategies significantly impact students' academic motivation and achievement. Studies have shown a strong correlation between positive discipline and students' learning motivation (Somayeh et al., 2013). Positive discipline has also been reported to positively influence students' well-being and their approach to learning skills (Elkadi & Sharaf, 2023). Furthermore, learning discipline has been demonstrated to substantially impact academic achievement (Azeti et al., 2019). Classroom-based positive behavioral support is associated with higher scores in orderliness, discipline, fairness, and student-teacher relationships, while exclusive disciplinary strategies were linked to lower scores in orderliness and discipline (Mitchell & Bradshaw, 2013). These findings suggest that implementing positive discipline approaches can enhance students' academic motivation.

## **METHODS**

### **Design**

This study employs a qualitative research method, a widely used approach in exploratory research in educational psychology, which offers valuable insights into complex educational contexts (Meyer & Schutz, 2020). This study employed the Focus Group Discussion (FGD) method as the primary technique for collecting qualitative data. FGD has been utilized as a data collection method in research exploring positive discipline (Fulgencio & Maguate, 2023). It provides rich, in-depth data through purposely selected group interactions, and is valuable for understanding people's perspectives, assessing practices, examining challenges, and documenting indigenous knowledge (Nyumba et al., 2018). The FGD was conducted in four separate sessions based on role groups, namely: teachers, school principals and supervisors, students, and parents, with each session lasting between 60 to 90 minutes. Each FGD group was organized according to role to maintain the focus of the discussion and encourage openness in sharing experiences.

### **Participants and Procedure**

The research subjects involved a range of stakeholders in education at the high school and vocational school level, including teachers, school principals, school supervisors, students, and parents (Khadija, 2022). Participant selection was based on inclusion criteria, considering a minimum of five years of experience in education for teachers, principals, and supervisors, as well as active involvement in activities or programs related to positive discipline. This is because, with this experience, they are able to provide direct insights into the challenges and opportunities in curriculum implementation to achieve high academic performance (Kachingwe & Nithyanantham, 2023). Parents also need to be involved in FGDs, as they play an important role in their children's academic performance and can provide valuable feedback on the school policy implementation process (Manalo et al., 2023).

For students, participants were selected from the 11th or 12th grade, as students at this level are considered to have more mature cognitive and emotional abilities, enabling them to better understand the impact of educational approaches on their motivation (Sarnoto & Romli, 2019). At this stage, students also begin to develop more complex value systems and motivations, with a tendency to balance emotional attitudes and conscious preferences (Vartanova, 2014). Students of

Table 1. Description of stakeholder FGD groups

FGD Group	Stakeholder Components	School Categories		n	Informant code	Σ
A	Principal	Public school	Senior high school	1	Pc1	6
			Vocational school	1	Pc2	
		Private school	Senior high school	1	Pc3	
			Vocational school	1	Pc4	
B	Government Teacher	School supervisor	Education Office	2	Spv1, Spv 2	8
		Public school	Senior high school	2	T1, T2	
			Vocational school	2	T3, T4	
		Private school	Senior high school	2	T5, T6	
			Vocational school	2	T7, T8	
C	Student	Public school	Senior high school	2	S1, S2	8
			Vocational school	2	S3, S4	
		Private school	Senior high school	2	S5, S6	
			Vocational school	2	S7, S8	
D	Parent	Public school	Senior high school	2	Pr1, Pr2	8
			Vocational school	2	Pr3, Pr4	
		Private school	Senior high school	2	Pr5, Pr6	
			Vocational school	2	Pr7, Pr8	

this age can critically evaluate educational practices, such as testing methods, and their critiques can be seen as a form of motivation (Thorkildsen & Nicholls, 1991), offering feedback on their learning experiences and school discipline (Kur'ani, 2022).

Educators' perceptions of positive discipline encompass its definition, effectiveness, and both positive and negative views on its implementation (Makola et al., 2022). Therefore, the in-depth interviews in this FGD refer to: 1) how each stakeholder understands the definition of positive discipline, 2) the forms of discipline that have been used in schools to stimulate student motivation, 3) the effectiveness of the positive discipline implemented in enhancing student motivation, and 4) the challenges and supporting factors for the implementation of positive discipline in schools.

The total number of participants was 30, divided into four FGD groups based on their respective roles to ensure diverse perspectives and allow for an in-depth exploration of each group's unique views on positive discipline and its impact on academic motivation. Details of the FGD groups are shown in Table 1.

## Data Analysis

Thematic analysis was conducted manually following Braun & Clarke (2021) six-phase framework: familiarization with the data, initial coding, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the report. Manual coding was performed using printed transcripts, where codes were developed inductively based on recurring patterns and reviewed iteratively to refine themes. To ensure validity, member checking was conducted, allowing participants to confirm the accuracy of the identified themes. Manual coding was chosen due to the manageable dataset size and the need for in-depth contextual analysis, ensuring the analysis captured the nuances of stakeholder perspectives.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Result

The purpose of this study is to explore the perceptions of all stakeholders regarding the implementation of positive discipline in schools and its impact on student motivation. Based on the thematic analysis results presented in Table 2, this results section is organized into five key points derived from previous studies, indicating that perceptions of positive discipline encompass its

Table 2. Description of Emerging Themes

Main Theme	Description	Subtheme	Informant code	Frequency of Occurrence (N)
Understanding Positive Discipline	Stakeholder views on the concept and principles of positive discipline	Positive appreciation	Pc3, T4, T5, S2, S8	12
		Clear rules	Pc2, T2, T6, T8	
		Emotional support	T4, S7, S8	
Forms of Implementing Positive Discipline	Positive discipline practices implemented in schools	Giving praise	T1, T5, S1, S4, S7	13
		Project based learning	T1	
		Behavior discussion	T1, S3, S4	
		The role of teacher role models	Spv1, S1, T7, Pr6	
Effectiveness of Positive Discipline	The impact of positive discipline on students' academic behavior and motivation	Increased sense of responsibility	T1, T6, T8, S3, S3, Pr1, Pr7,	10
		Class engagement	Pc3, T5, S3	
Challenges in Implementation	Obstacles faced in implementing positive discipline	Lack of training	T3, T4, Spv2	10
		Time constraints	T3, T8, Spv1	
		Lack of support	Pc1, T2, S5, Pr7	
Supporting Factors	Factors that support the implementation of positive discipline in schools	Communication with parents	T1, T4, T7, Pc3, Pc4, Pr2	8
		School policy support	Pc2, Spv1	

definition, effectiveness, and both positive and negative views on its implementation (Makola et al., 2022).

### ***Stakeholders' Understanding of the Concept of Positive Discipline***

Understanding of the concept of positive discipline varies among stakeholder groups. Teachers generally perceive positive discipline as an approach that emphasizes reinforcing good behavior rather than punishment. One teacher explained.

*"...Positive discipline is not just about imposing sanctions but more about building good relationships with students so that they feel valued and heard..." (T4).*

Meanwhile, school principals highlighted the importance of implementing positive discipline to create a safe learning environment. One principal stated,

*"...We believe that the implementation of positive discipline regulations can reduce conflicts in schools and encourage better behavior among students..." (Pc2).*

From the students' perspective, they recognized the positive impact of this approach on their motivation. One student remarked,

*"...When we receive praise or recognition, we feel more motivated to learn and participate in class" (S7).* Similarly, school supervisors noted, *"Positive discipline is carried out by providing support, empathy, and recognition for appropriate behavior, motivating students to engage in activities voluntarily..." (Spv1).*

These diverse perspectives reveal that understanding of positive discipline is heavily influenced by each stakeholder's role within the educational ecosystem.

Some students and parents also expressed a lack of understanding of the concept of positive discipline, which may affect its implementation in schools. Many students still view discipline as a form of punishment rather than a supportive approach for their development. One student stated,

*"...I think discipline just means getting punished if you break the rules, so I don't see how it's different from positive discipline..."* (S2). This sentiment is echoed by a parent who remarked, *"...Discipline means giving punishment if children don't follow the rules. Without punishment, they won't learn to be responsible..."* (Pr1).

Similarly, another parent expressed doubts about the concept they understood, saying, *"...Positive discipline seems like letting children do whatever they want, right? I'm worried that if we're not firm, they will become harder to manage..."* (Pr3).

These findings suggest that some parents still associate discipline with punishment or negative consequences, without understanding that positive discipline focuses on educational approaches, such as reinforcing good behavior and using dialogue to guide students' actions. Meanwhile, some parents feel uncertain about how to apply positive discipline in daily life. One parent admitted,

*"...I know positive discipline is good, but I don't know how to apply it at home. Sometimes, I feel like I have to punish my child so they understand their mistakes..."* (P5).

The study shows that understanding of positive discipline among stakeholders, including teachers, principals, students, school supervisors, and parents, remains inconsistent. Some teachers and principals recognize the benefits of positive discipline in building better relationships with students and enhancing their academic motivation. These findings align with previous literature emphasizing that discipline approaches based on recognition and empathy can increase student engagement in the learning process (Bear, 2020). This is also consistent with findings that highlight how the implementation of positive discipline tends to encounter obstacles without shared understanding (Ramadhanti, 2023). However, resistance from students and parents underscores the need for further emphasis on socialization and training regarding this concept.

The varying understanding of positive discipline among stakeholders reflects the uneven adoption of this approach in schools. Some teachers demonstrate a deep understanding of positive discipline as an approach grounded in recognition, empathy, and behavioral modeling. This aligns with Bandura's social learning theory, which emphasizes the importance of observation, rewards, and positive consequences in shaping behavior (Bandura, 1977). However, the resistance from students and parents, as observed in this study, suggests that cultural and societal norms also influence the success of implementing positive discipline. In societies with more hierarchical traditions, reward-based approaches may be perceived as lacking firmness, making them harder for some stakeholders to accept.

### ***Forms of Implementing Positive Discipline in Schools***

The successful implementation of positive discipline requires teachers to understand its principles and adapt them to the needs of individual students (Makola et al., 2022; Muthmainnah, 2021). In senior high schools and vocational schools, various forms of positive discipline are applied, including positive reinforcement, project-based learning, and group discussions. Positive reinforcement, where teachers reward or praise students for good behavior, has been a widely used approach, as one teacher noted:



*"...We often give rewards in various forms to students who actively participate in class, and it has proven to increase their motivation..." (T5).*

In addition, project-based learning is also applied to encourage students to collaborate and take responsibility for their work. A teacher explained:

*"...I once assigned a group project where students had to design class rules that supported active learning. In this process, they discussed, made agreements, and determined mutual consequences if someone broke the rules. I just facilitated, but the result was that they became more responsible because they felt the rules were created by them. Even when someone broke the rules, it was their group members who reminded them, not me. I feel that this approach made them learn discipline without feeling forced..." (T1).*

This statement shows that the project-based method encourages students to understand and apply the principles of positive discipline through direct experience, so they do not just comply with the rules but also understand the reasons and benefits behind them.

Group discussions are another method commonly used, where students are invited to share their experiences and views on classroom behavior. One student explained,

*"...Discussions help us to understand each other and find solutions together for the problems we face. For example, when doing a presentation task, we divide the tasks clearly, and I became more responsible for completing my part..." (S3).*

Moreover, the attitude of teachers serves as a role model for students, as expressed by one:

*"...My teacher always arrives on time and shows seriousness when teaching. I feel bad if I don't complete my task because they always set an example of discipline..." (S1).* Through various forms of positive discipline practices, the school aims to foster a learning environment that promotes the development of character and academic motivation in its students.

Although there are efforts to implement positive discipline, in practice, many teachers still use conventional disciplinary approaches. Some teachers acknowledge that they often resort to punishment when students break the rules. One teacher stated,

*"...Sometimes, I feel there is no other choice but to give a sanction when students do not comply with the rules. I'm worried that if there are no consequences, they will continue to repeat the same behavior..." (T8).*

This is consistent with the observations of students who feel that despite efforts to provide praise, punishment remains part of the disciplinary system. One student expressed, *"...We often get warnings or even punishment if we're late or don't complete our tasks, so sometimes I feel that the praise is inconsistent..." (S6).*

While the implementation of positive discipline in schools has shown promising results through approaches such as positive reinforcement, project-based learning, and group discussions, its application remains inconsistent. Some teachers demonstrate a strong understanding of positive discipline principles and apply them effectively, fostering a supportive and engaging learning environment. However, many teachers still rely on conventional disciplinary methods, including

punishment, due to concerns about maintaining order and ensuring compliance. This duality creates a gap between the conceptual understanding of positive discipline and its practical execution, as reflected in students' experiences of both praise and sanctions. To fully realize the benefits of positive discipline, a more consistent and holistic adoption of its principles is needed, supported by training and resources that address the challenges teachers face in transitioning from punitive to positive approaches. The observed gap between theoretical understanding and practical implementation reinforces the conclusions of previous research, which highlight that consistent teacher training and resources are essential for the successful implementation of positive discipline in schools (Muthmainnah, 2021).

### ***The Effectiveness of Implementing Positive Discipline in Encouraging Students' Academic Motivation***

Positive discipline is recognized as a significant factor in influencing students' academic motivation, with many stakeholders supporting its implementation. Teachers and school principals note that when students are treated in a positive and constructive manner, they tend to feel more motivated to learn. One principal affirmed,

*"...When we implemented positive discipline, we saw a noticeable increase in student engagement. They were more enthusiastic about attending lessons and participating actively..."* (Pc3). For example, one student stated, *"...When I am given the opportunity to solve problems on my own, I feel more confident and want to study better..."* (S8).

This statement reflects the effectiveness of an approach that gives students space to contribute to their own learning process.

In the context of senior high schools and vocational schools in Indonesia, the findings of this study reflect both unique challenges and opportunities. Senior high school (SMA) and vocational school (SMK) students are in the late stages of adolescent development, where they begin to seek recognition for their identity and autonomy. Positive discipline, which offers a reward-based and collaborative approach, is well-suited to meet these developmental needs. However, there are critical views regarding its effectiveness, especially if it is not supported by adequate understanding. One teacher argued,

*"...Positive discipline is indeed good, but if there is no consistency in its implementation, students may feel confused. They might not take the existing rules seriously..."* (T6).

Furthermore, the effectiveness of positive discipline is still questioned due to varying levels of understanding and acceptance among teachers (Makola et al., 2022).

In terms of the forms of positive discipline implemented, these findings strengthen previous literature on the effectiveness of positive reinforcement and collaborative learning methods (Rahmawati, L et al., 2024). Compared to studies at the elementary school level, where positive discipline is often associated with improving prosocial behavior (Simamora, 2022), its implementation in senior high schools and vocational schools seems more focused on academic goals, such as increasing student responsibility for their tasks. This difference may be attributed to the developmental needs of students at each level of education. Despite these challenges, many believe that positive discipline can make a positive contribution to students' academic motivation if applied consistently and accompanied by a clear understanding from all parties involved.

### Challenges in Implementing Positive Discipline in Schools

Although positive discipline has the potential to enhance students' academic motivation, there are several challenges and barriers in its implementation in schools. One of the main obstacles identified is the lack of adequate training for teachers regarding positive discipline strategies and practices. A teacher complained,

*"...We actually want to implement positive discipline, but often we don't know how to do it effectively. The lack of training causes us to revert to old methods..."* (T3). A school supervisor also noted, *"...Many teachers feel confused about how to integrate positive discipline into learning activities because they haven't received technical guidance or practical training related to this approach..."* (Spv2).

The issue of inadequate teacher training highlights the need for systematic efforts to equip educators with the relevant skills. Several teachers admitted to reverting to conventional discipline patterns when faced with difficult situations, as they felt more comfortable with these methods. This reflects that effective training requires not only the delivery of new content but also opportunities for teachers to continuously apply new approaches within the classroom context (Guskey, 2002). Therefore, this limitation in training can be a major barrier to the consistent implementation of positive discipline.

Time management also presents a challenge in implementing positive discipline in schools. One teacher said,

*"...I actually want to engage more with students who break the rules to understand their issues, but due to the heavy teaching schedule, plus the administrative tasks that need to be completed, I don't have time to do that..."* (T3). Another teacher added, *"...With so many students in each class, it's difficult for me to find time to give individual attention..."* (T8). School supervisors also experienced time constraints, saying, *"...Evaluating the implementation of positive discipline is important, but the schedule of visiting several schools in one week doesn't give us enough time to provide detailed feedback to each school..."* (Spv1).

From here it appears that teachers and school supervisors need time and work management, which is more directed at achieving the quality of learning, rather than completing administrative targets.

Furthermore, to be implemented effectively, there needs to be greater support from all involved parties, not just through teacher training, but also a better understanding from students and parents about positive discipline. One school principal remarked,

*"...Although we have tried to implement positive discipline in this school, the collaboration between the school, parents, and the community is still not optimal, so the implementation of positive discipline is not consistent..."* (Pc1). A teacher also said, *"...We at school have tried to apply a more holistic approach to understanding students, but without strong support from home, students often feel they receive inconsistent guidance between home and school..."* (T2).

In practice, resistance from students and parents is also a significant obstacle. Some students are skeptical of this approach and consider it less effective than traditional punishment. One student noted,

*"...Sometimes I feel like there are no real consequences for me if I do something wrong, so I hesitate to follow the rules..." (S5). Parents also often have different expectations. Some of them prefer more conventional discipline methods. One parent said, "...I worry that if my child doesn't get strong consequences, they won't learn from their mistakes..." (Pr7).*

This reflects the need for support from all parties in implementing positive discipline effectively in the school environment.

Obstacles like limited teacher training and resistance from students or parents reflect Indonesia's educational culture, which remains influenced by conventional discipline practices. In this culture, discipline is often understood as compliance with rules enforced through punishment. For example, a parent stated,

*"...I still believe punishment is the most effective way to make my child learn..." (Pr2). This view shows that the transition to positive discipline requires a broader cultural shift in education, involving all stakeholders. The resistance found among some students and parents reflects the influence of traditional culture that emphasizes obedience and hierarchy. This culture often views punishment as a necessary tool to maintain discipline, as one parent expressed, "...Without punishment, children might feel free to break the rules..." (Pr4).*

This perspective indicates the need for broader socialization and adjustment of positive discipline approaches to align with local values, so they can be accepted by all stakeholders.

### **Supporting Factors for the Implementation of Positive Discipline in Schools**

Despite the challenges, several factors contribute to the successful implementation of positive discipline in schools. One of these factors is the strong communication between teachers and parents, which allows for collaboration in supporting positive student behavior. One teacher emphasized,

*"...We hold regular meetings with parents to discuss student progress, and their support makes us feel more confident in implementing positive discipline..." (T1). Parents also highlighted the importance of consistency between home and school in implementing positive discipline. One parent shared, "...We want to see the school and home working together to educate our children, and positive discipline is a good way to do that..." (Pr2).*

Additionally, policy support from school management plays a significant role. The principal affirmed, *"...We are committed to implementing positive discipline as part of the school policy, so that all teachers have clear and consistent guidelines in applying this practice..." (Pc2). School supervisors also mentioned, "...Schools that integrate positive discipline policies with student character development programs not only encourage the implementation of this approach but also help create an inclusive and supportive learning environment..." (Spv1).*

These supports creates a shared vision among stakeholders, which in turn enhances the effectiveness of positive discipline in building students' academic motivation. With this support, schools can foster a more positive and inclusive atmosphere for all students.

## DICUSSION

The findings of this study align with several previous studies that support positive discipline as an effective educational strategy. However, these results also reveal significant differences. Research found that the implementation of positive discipline in vocational schools focuses more on the development of non-academic skills, such as work ethics and collaboration (Rahmawati, L et al., 2024). In contrast, this study places greater emphasis on the relationship between positive discipline and academic motivation, which is a critical issue in high schools and vocational schools.

This study highlights unique dynamics in the implementation of positive discipline, such as the emphasis on collaborative rule-setting in vocational schools and the focus on academic motivation in senior high schools. For example, while previous studies emphasized the success of positive discipline in developing work ethics in vocational schools (Rahmawati, L et al., 2024), this study focuses more on academic motivation in senior high school and vocational schools. This difference is likely due to the characteristics of the curriculum and learning orientation. Senior high school is more academically oriented, while vocational school emphasizes skill development. This suggests that, although the principles of positive discipline are similar, their implementation needs to be tailored to the contextual needs of each education level.

Previous studies have also shown that conventional disciplinary approaches are more commonly used in SMP, where students are perceived to need more control (Simamora, 2022). In the context of senior high school or vocational school, this study reveals a shift towards more collaborative methods. This shift indicates that senior high school or vocational school students are beginning to demand approaches that respect their autonomy, a need that aligns with their cognitive and emotional developmental phase, as described in developmental theory (Erikson, 1959).

The findings in the context of senior high school and vocational school education can be explained by the unique characteristics of these educational levels. At this stage, students are in a more independent developmental phase, and they tend to respond better to approaches that respect their autonomy, such as positive reinforcement and group discussions. As one student said, *"When the teacher listens to our views, I feel more valued and more motivated to learn"* (S2). This context contrasts with primary education, where students are more dependent on explicit guidance from teachers.

## Limitation

This study also has several limitations that should be noted. First, the sample size used was relatively small, although it included various stakeholders. This may limit the generalizability of the findings. To provide a more comprehensive picture, future research should involve more participants from schools with diverse geographical, social, and economic backgrounds. Second, the results of this study were significantly influenced by the context of senior high school and SMK, where the research was conducted. Therefore, the application of positive discipline at other educational levels, such as primary schools or higher education, may yield different findings. Expanding the context will provide a more holistic perspective. Third, the data collection method through Focus Group Discussions (FGD) may have introduced social bias, as participants might have provided answers they considered more socially acceptable rather than those that truly reflect their experiences or views. This could impact the validity of the collected data.

Based on these findings and limitations, several suggestions for future research are proposed. One is a longitudinal study to track the long-term impact of positive discipline on students' academic motivation. Such research could provide deeper insights into the sustainability of positive discipline's effects on student learning outcomes. Additionally, research in different educational contexts, such as primary schools, special education, or higher education, is necessary. This will offer a clearer picture of how positive discipline can be adapted to meet the needs of students at various

educational levels and learning environments. Furthermore, future research could explore the relationship between positive discipline and other aspects of student well-being, such as mental health, social relationships, and engagement in learning. A more comprehensive approach would provide new insights into the broader benefits of positive discipline beyond academic motivation. With these recommendations, it is hoped that research on positive discipline can further enrich educational practices and offer greater benefits for students, teachers, and the school community as a whole.

### Implication

These research findings have important implications for educational practice and school policy, particularly in promoting the adoption of positive discipline to improve academic motivation. First, teacher training should be a top priority in the strategy for implementing positive discipline. Teachers require practical skills and in-depth knowledge to apply this approach effectively, particularly when navigating complex classroom situations. As one teacher expressed, “We know the importance of supporting students positively, but sometimes we don’t know where to start” (T4). Specifically designed training programs can help teachers overcome these obstacles and strengthen their confidence in using positive discipline strategies.

Second, parental involvement is crucial to ensure the success of positive discipline. Socializing the benefits of this approach to parents and involving them in the educational process will help create a supportive environment both at home and at school. As one principal mentioned, “When parents understand the goals of positive discipline, they are more likely to collaborate with teachers, and this makes a huge impact on students' progress” (Pc3). Therefore, a collaborative approach involving teachers, students, and parents should be an essential part of educational policy.

Third, school policies should explicitly incorporate positive discipline as part of their learning and student development strategies. This can be implemented through policies that support teacher training, provide resources for implementing positive discipline, and integrate the principles of positive discipline into the school's vision and mission. With strong policy support, schools can create an environment that simultaneously supports students' academic and emotional growth.

### CONCLUSION

This study highlights the importance of positive discipline in enhancing academic motivation among high school and vocational school students. It reveals that while positive reinforcement and group discussions have been implemented in some schools, traditional disciplinary approaches still dominate, indicating a need for a broader paradigm shift. The success of positive discipline is influenced by factors such as school policy support, teacher training, and effective communication with parents. However, research gaps remain, particularly regarding the interaction between positive discipline and cultural contexts, as seen in regions like Magelang, where resistance from students and parents suggests misalignment with traditional values. Future studies should focus on adapting positive discipline to local cultures while maintaining its effectiveness, expanding research beyond secondary education, and incorporating more quantitative analyses to measure its impact on learning outcomes. Overall, positive discipline serves as a strategic approach to improving academic performance and social development through collaboration among schools, teachers, students, and parents, ultimately fostering long-term academic achievement and character growth in modern educational systems.

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