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Self-Efficacy, Academic Distraction, and Social Studies Learning Effectiveness: The Moderating Role of Self-Control

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ABSTRACT

Social studies learning effectiveness is shaped by students' psychological and behavioral characteristics, yet limited research has examined self-control's dual role as a direct predictor and moderator of self-efficacy and academic distraction. This study investigated these relationships using an explanatory sequential mixed-methods design. Questionnaire data from 244 Grade 8 students were examined through Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), followed by interviews with 13 students to explain the quantitative findings. Self-control and self-efficacy positively affected learning effectiveness, whereas academic distraction had a negative effect. Notably, self-control showed the strongest effect size (f^2 = 0.278), compared with self-efficacy (f^2 = 0.069) and academic distraction (f^2 = 0.056). Self-control also strengthened the positive relationship between self-efficacy and learning effectiveness, indicating that self-regulation helps students translate confidence in their academic capabilities into effective learning. However, self-control did not significantly moderate the effect of academic distraction. Qualitative findings revealed that peer interaction and chatting were more prominent sources of classroom distraction than smartphone use, helping explain this non-significant moderation. Overall, self-control emerges as a key self-regulatory capacity that directly enhances learning effectiveness and reinforces self-efficacy, while its capacity to buffer socially driven distractions remains limited. These findings underscore the significance of integrating students' self-regulatory development with classroom strategies to manage peer-driven distractions.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Effective learning goes beyond academic achievement. In social studies, students are expected not only to attain learning outcomes but also to engage actively, understand concepts, think critically and analytically, and connect classroom material with everyday life

[1], [2]. In social studies learning, effectiveness is reflected not only in grades or learning outcomes, but also in how the learning process is managed, student responses, communication, and learning activities, as well as the ability to connect knowledge to everyday life [3], [4]. This focus matters because learning effectiveness provides a more comprehensive picture of overall learning quality than academic achievement alone. Preliminary findings from classroom observations indicate issues with student engagement and learning outcomes. These conditions suggest that learning effectiveness may be related to psychological and behavioral factors among students.

One psychological factor relevant to learning effectiveness is self-efficacy. Social Cognitive Theory defines self-efficacy as an individual's confidence in their capacity to organize and execute the actions required to accomplish a particular goal [5], [6], [7]. In learning, this belief influences students' willingness to participate, their persistence when facing difficulties, and their readiness to tackle academic tasks [8], [9]. Previous research has consistently linked self-efficacy to learning outcomes and academic achievement [10], [11]. While low self-efficacy can lead to self-doubt, task avoidance, and reluctance to participate [12]. Therefore, self-efficacy must be distinguished from self-control, as self-efficacy relates to what students believe they can do, whereas self-control relates to their ability to regulate their thoughts, emotions, and behavior to achieve goals [13], [14]. Thus, belief in one's academic abilities does not always guarantee that a student will regulate their behavior adequately to sustain effective learning.

Another factor is academic distraction, defined as a shift in attention from the learning process to activities unrelated to the task at hand, such as chatting, using social media, playing games, daydreaming, or sleeping [15]. Cognitive Load Theory provides a basis for predicting that such distractions interfere with learning because working memory capacity is limited and task-irrelevant stimuli can deplete the cognitive resources needed for comprehension [16]. Previous research has also linked academic distractions to a lack of concentration, learning outcomes, and academic achievement [17], [18]. Academic distractions must also be distinguished from attention control. Attention control refers to the ability to direct or maintain attention on relevant tasks, whereas academic distractions refer to competing activities or stimuli that divert attention. Self-control is broader than both: it involves regulating thoughts, emotions, and behavior in accordance with long-term objectives [19], [20]. These distinctions matter because students may believe they can succeed through self-efficacy yet still be distracted, or they may face distractions but vary in their ability to regulate their responses.

This distinction also provides a theoretical foundation for examining self-control as both a direct predictor and a moderator. Directly, self-control can support effective learning by helping students maintain goal-oriented behavior and resist impulses that are irrelevant to the task [21], [22]. However, as a moderator, self-control may determine how strongly other psychological and behavioral factors influence learning effectiveness. From a Social Cognitive Theory perspective, students with strong self-efficacy may better convert self-confidence into persistent, effective learning when they can regulate their behavior [5], [23]. Therefore, self-control can reinforce the positive effects of self-efficacy. From a cognitive load perspective, self-control can also help students resist responding to distracting stimuli

and conserve cognitive resources for learning, thereby mitigating the negative effects of academic distractions [16]. Previous research has largely examined self-efficacy, distress, and self-control separately in relation to performance, academic achievement, learning outcomes, and other factors [24], [25], [26], [27], [28], [29], [30]. Therefore, the existing gap lies not only in the absence of an integrated model but also in the limited understanding of whether self-control modifies how abilities and psychological disturbances function in the learning process. Furthermore, by focusing on learning effectiveness rather than merely achievement, these mechanisms can be examined in relation to engagement, comprehension, and learning outcomes.

In light of this discussion, the present research examines the influence of self-efficacy, academic distress, and self-control on Social Studies learning effectiveness among Madrasah Tsanawiyah students and investigates self-control's moderating role. A sequential explanatory mixed-methods design was used to quantitatively test these relationships and then explain the observed patterns through students' experiences. By integrating these psychological and behavioral factors, this research provides a broader, more comprehensive understanding of how students' beliefs, distractions, and self-control capacity collectively shape learning effectiveness. In practical terms, these findings are expected to provide a foundation for developing approaches to enhance students' self-efficacy and self-control while managing classroom distractions. Based on the theoretical arguments above, this study proposes five hypotheses, summarized in the conceptual model presented in Figure 1.

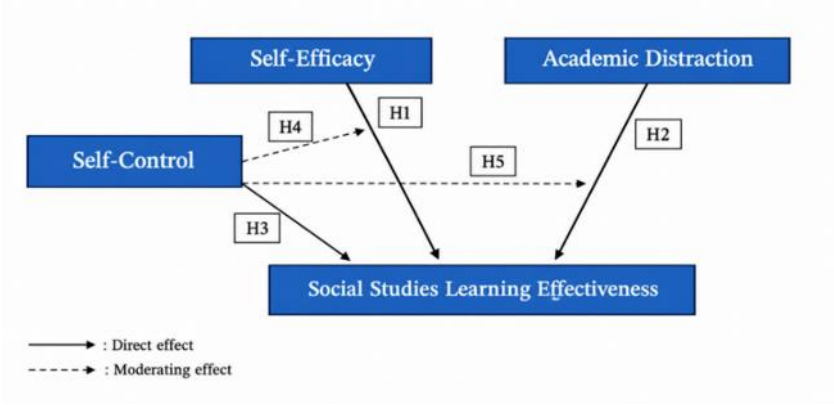


Figure 1. Conceptual Model and Proposed Hypotheses

2. METHOD

This research adopted an explanatory sequential mixed-methods design, beginning with quantitative data collection and analysis, followed by a qualitative phase to clarify and further explore the quantitative results [31]. The study was conducted at a public Madrasah Tsanawiyah in Malang City. Following the rule of thumb of 10 for PLS-SEM, the minimum sample size for quantitative data was determined by multiplying 10 by the maximum number of structural paths leading to an endogenous construct, with five paths leading to learning effectiveness, the required minimum sample size was 50. Therefore, the final sample of 244 was considered adequate for analysis [32]. Eight classes were purposively selected based on alignment with the social studies curriculum schedule, availability of research time, and access to the classes. Subsequently, 13 students were selected purposively from the

quantitative participants based on willingness to participate, class representation, and gender [33].

The questionnaire was developed based on relevant theoretical and empirical sources and adapted to the context of 8th-grade social studies, as summarized in the table. Before data collection, expert validators assessed the content's relevance, the language's clarity, and the items' appropriateness. A four-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 4 = strongly agree) encouraged directed responses without a neutral midpoint [34]. Table 1 summarizes the instrument's development.

Table 1. Measurement Instruments and Sources

Construct	Theoretical / Measurement Basis	Initial Items	Adaptation
Self-efficacy	Social Cognitive Theory, academic self-efficacy [5], [12].	10	The items are tailored to students' courage and self-confidence, as well as the tasks and challenges they face in 8th-grade social studies.
Academic distraction	Cognitive Load Theory, academic distraction [16].	6	The items are tailored to the types of distractions students experience during social studies classes, whether from peers, digital devices, or non-academic activities.
Self-control	Tangney et al., self-control: self-discipline, non-impulsive action, healthy habits, work ethic, and reliability [12], [35].	10	The item is contextualized within the framework of impulse control and student behavior during social studies lessons.
Social studies learning effectiveness	Yusuf, Learning Effectiveness: Management of the learning process, communicative processes, student responses, learning activities, and learning outcomes [3].	10	The item wording was adapted to the characteristics of eighth-grade students and the Social studies learning effectiveness context without altering the constructs being measured.

Quantitative data were processed through Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) via SmartPLS 3.0 [36]. PLS-SEM was chosen because the model includes several latent constructs measured by multiple indicators, explains variance in learning effectiveness, and simultaneously tests direct and moderating effects. The measurement model was evaluated using outer loadings, Average Variance Extracted (AVE), Cronbach's alpha, rho_A, composite reliability, and the Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio. During this evaluation, 15 of the initial 36 items were removed because their outer loadings did not meet the specified criteria, leaving 21 items in the final measurement model. The structural model was evaluated using path coefficients, R^2, f^2, Q^2, and SRMR [36], [37].

Significance was tested using bootstrapping with 5,000 subsamples, while moderation was analyzed using a two-step approach through the interactions of self-control × self-efficacy and self-control × academic distraction [38]. Qualitative data were examined through data collection, condensation, data presentation, and conclusion [39], then integrated with the quantitative results to explain the context of the findings, particularly the role of self-control. The study was conducted after obtaining official permission from the school

and the relevant teachers. Students were informed of the study's objectives and procedures and were free to participate or decline. The researchers maintained participant confidentiality by omitting personal identifiers and restricting data use to research purposes only.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section reports the quantitative and qualitative results in sequence. The quantitative results include respondent characteristics, descriptive statistics, an evaluation of the measurement model, and tests of hypotheses and moderating effects. Next, the interview results are used to deepen and offer contextual interpretations of the quantitative results. The discussion then integrates these two sets of findings based on theory and prior research.

3.1 Quantitative Analysis Results

3.1.1 Description of Respondents

Table 2. Characteristics of Quantitative Respondents

Characteristics	Description	Number	Percentage
Gender	Male	149	61.07%
	Female	95	38.93%
Total		244	100%
Mobile Phone Usage Intensity	Less Than 3 Hours	15	6.15%
	3-5 Hours	112	45.90%
	5-7 Hours	89	36.48%
	More Than 7 Hours	28	11.48%
Total		244	100%

This quantitative study involved 244 eighth-grade students from eight classes as the research sample. The respondents' characteristics are presented by gender and daily cell phone usage duration. The gender distribution showed a higher proportion of male students, totaling 149 (61.07%), while female students numbered only 95 (38.93%). In addition, most respondents used cell phones for 3-5 hours per day (45.90%), followed by 5–7 hours (36.48%), more than 7 hours (11.48%), and less than 3 hours (6.15%). Furthermore, the qualitative phase involved 13 students as interview informants. Informants were selected based on the need to delve deeper into the quantitative results and to provide information regarding students' experiences during social studies classes.

3.1.2 Descriptive Statistics

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics of Main Constructs

Construct	N	Mean	SD
Self-Efficacy	244	3.268	0.536
Academic Distraction	244	2.133	0.834
Self-Control	244	3.223	0.624
Social Studies Learning Effectiveness	244	3.168	0.648

Based on Table 3, all constructs were analyzed for 244 respondents. Self-efficacy had a mean score of 3.268 (SD = 0.536), academic distraction 2.133 (SD = 0.834), self-control 3.223 (SD = 0.624), and social studies learning effectiveness 3.168 (SD = 0.648).

These values indicate the trend of student responses for each construct, while the standard deviation illustrates the variation in responses among respondents. These descriptive statistics were used to provide an initial overview prior to the evaluation of the measurement model.

3.1.3 Evaluation of the Measurement Model

PLS-SEM was used to examine the relationships between self-efficacy, academic distraction, and self-control and social studies learning effectiveness, including the moderating effect of self-control. The results of the PLS algorithm revealed the measurement model and construct interactions used in the analysis.

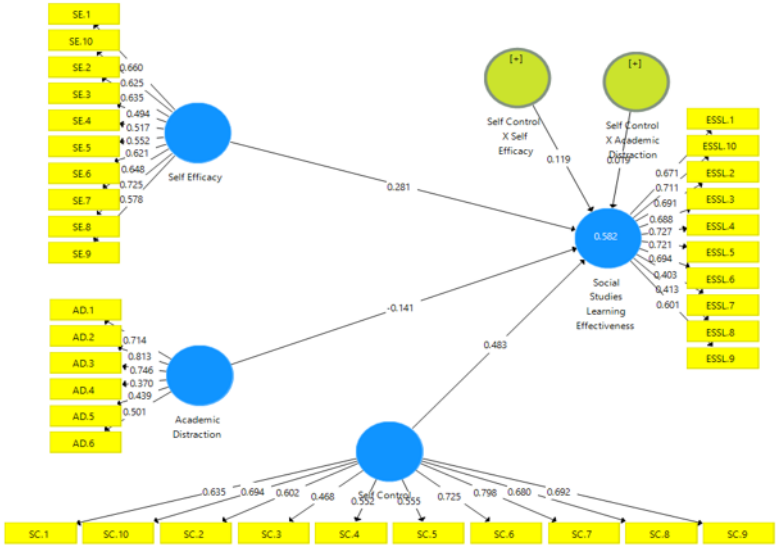


Figure 2. Research Model and Results of the PLS Algorithm Calculations

Figure 2 shows a research model consisting of self-efficacy, academic distraction, self-control, and social studies learning effectiveness, along with an interaction construct to test moderating effects. The results of these calculations were then used to evaluate the measurement model's quality through construct validity and reliability testing.

A total of 36 initial indicators were evaluated using PLS-SEM. The final model retained five self-efficacy indicators, three academic distraction indicators, six self-control indicators, and seven social studies learning effectiveness indicators. The results of the measurement model evaluation are presented in Table 4.

Based on Table 4, the measurement model was evaluated using 36 initial indicators, consisting of 10 self-efficacy indicators, 6 academic distraction indicators, 10 self-control indicators, and 10 social studies learning effectiveness indicators. The initial outer-loading evaluation showed that several indicators had relatively low values. Therefore, a model refinement process was conducted by eliminating 15 indicators, namely SE.3, SE.4, SE.5, SE.9, and SE.10 from the self-efficacy construct; AD.4, AD.5, and AD.6 from the academic distraction construct SC.2, SC.3, SC.4, and SC.5 from the self-control construct as well as SSLE. 7, SSLE.8, and SSLE.9 from the social studies learning effectiveness construct. The

outer loadings of the eliminated indicators ranged from 0.370 to 0.625. After refining the model, 21 indicators were retained to form the final measurement model.

Table 4. Convergent Validity Evaluation Results

Construct	Indicator	Outer Loading	Cronbach's alpha	Rho_A	Composite reliability	AVE
Self Efficacy	SE.1	0.740				
	SE.2	0.713				
	SE.6	0.715	0.775	0.778	0.846	0.525
	SE.7	0.708				
	SE.8	0.744				
Academic Distraction	AD.1	0.761				
	AD.2	0.877	0.719	0.762	0.839	0.636
	AD.3	0.748				
Self Control	SC.1	0.669				
	SC.6	0.743				
	SC.7	0.826	0.838	0.864	0.880	0.550
	SC.8	0.724				
	SC.9	0.753				
	SC.10	0.728				
Social Studies Learning Effectiveness	SSLE.1	0.714				
	SSLE.2	0.734				
	SSLE.3	0.726				
	SSLE.4	0.744	0.851	0.852	0.887	0.528
	SSLE.5	0.726				
	SSLE.6	0.742				
	SSLE.10	0.698				

In the final model, outer loading values ranged from 0.669 to 0.877. Most indicators had outer loading values above 0.70, while SC.1 (0.669) and SSLE.10 (0.698) were slightly below the 0.70 threshold. These two indicators were retained because their outer loading values remained above 0.60, and the AVE and composite reliability values for each construct met the established criteria. Furthermore, Cronbach's Alpha values ranged from 0.719 to 0.851, rho_A ranged from 0.762 to 0.864, and composite reliability ranged from 0.839 to 0.887. All of these values exceeded 0.70. The AVE values also ranged from 0.525 to 0.636, meaning all constructs met the criteria for convergent validity and internal consistency reliability [37], [32]. Thus, the 21 retained indicators were deemed to meet the criteria for use in structural equation modeling. Next, discriminant validity was evaluated using the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT).

3.1.4 Discriminant Validity

Based on Table 5, all Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) values were below the 0.90 threshold, ranging from 0.087 to 0.682. The highest HTMT value was between self-control and social studies learning effectiveness (0.682). These results indicate that all constructs in the model show sufficient differentiation, meeting the criteria for discriminant validity [40].

Table 5. Results of Discriminant Validity Test with Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio Method (HTMT)

	Academic Distraction	Self Control	Self Control X Academic Distraction	Self Control X Self Efficacy	Self Efficacy	Social Studies Learning Effectiveness
Academic Distraction						
Self Control	0.246					
Self-Control X Academic Distraction	0.280	0.087				
Self-Control X Self-Efficacy	0.154	0.143	0.149			
Self Efficacy	0.136	0.566	0.142	0.292		
Social Studies Learning Effectiveness	0.365	0.682	0.126	0.278	0.583	

3.1.5 Evaluation of the Structural Model and Hypothesis Testing

A structural model evaluation was conducted to test the relationships among variables in the research model and to assess the model's ability to explain and predict social studies learning effectiveness. The tests included path coefficients, t-statistics, p-values, effect sizes (f^2), coefficients of determination (R^2), predictive relevance (Q^2), and Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR). Hypothesis testing was performed using a bootstrapping procedure with 5,000 resamples. The results of the structural model evaluation and hypothesis testing are presented in Table 5.

Table 6. Structural Model Evaluation and Hypothesis Testing

Structural Path	Path Coefficient	T-Statistic	P-Values	f^2	Decision
Self-Efficacy > Social Studies Learning Effectiveness	0.226	3.960	0.000	0.069	H1 Accepted
Academic Distraction > Social Studies Learning Effectiveness	-0.183	3.941	0.000	9.956	H2 Accepted
Self-Control > Social Studies Learning Effectiveness	0.446	7.087	0.000	0.278	H3 Accepted
Self-Control × Self-Efficacy> Social Studies Learning Effectiveness	0.119	2.360	0.018	0.024	H4 Accepted
Self-Control × Academic Distraction > Social Studies Learning Effectiveness	0.018	0.604	0.679	0.001	H5 Accepted
R^2	0.460				
Q^2	0.233				
SRMR	0.072				

Based on Table 6, the research model explains 46.0% of the variation in social studies learning effectiveness ($R^2 = 0.460$), while the remaining 54.0% is explained by variables beyond the model. The Q^2 value of 0.233 suggests that the model demonstrates predictive

relevance for social studies learning effectiveness. Furthermore, the SRMR value of 0.072 reflects an acceptable model fit.

The results show that self-efficacy and self-control are positively and significantly related to social studies learning effectiveness, while academic distraction is negatively and significantly related. Thus, H1, H2, and H3 are accepted. The f^2 value indicates that self-control contributes more to learning effectiveness than the other predictors ($f^2 = 0.278$), whereas self-efficacy and academic distraction contribute relatively little [41].

In the moderation test, the self-control × self-efficacy interaction was positive and significant, so H4 was accepted. These findings suggest that self-control influences the magnitude of the association between self-efficacy and social studies learning effectiveness. Conversely, the self-control × academic distraction interaction was not significant, so H5 was rejected [36], [41]. Thus, self-control moderates the relationship between self-efficacy and social studies learning effectiveness, but not the relationship between academic distraction and social studies learning effectiveness.

3.2 Qualitative Analysis Results

The qualitative phase was conducted to deepen the quantitative findings by exploring students' experiences in social studies learning. Researchers selected 13 students from 244 respondents and interviewed them using a semi-structured interview. The data were analyzed thematically through coding, grouping codes based on shared meanings, and developing themes from recurring patterns. Data sufficiency was assessed when follow-up interviews yielded no new substantive information, while the accuracy of interpretation was ensured by cross-referencing codes and themes with the participants' original statements. The findings were presented across four research aspects: self-efficacy, academic distraction, self-control, and social studies learning effectiveness.

Table 7. Qualitative Themes, Participant Quotations, and Interpretations

Variable	Theme	Participant Quotation	Interpretation
Self efficacy	Seeking help when facing difficulties	"When the teacher explains it, I usually don't pay attention, so I end up asking a friend," said S3. S9 expressed a similar sentiment: "First, I ask the teacher; if I still don't understand, I ask a friend or search for the answer using AI".	Students demonstrate the determination to complete their assignments by seeking alternative sources of help when they encounter difficulties, whether from teachers, classmates, or digital resources.
	Improving business performance after receiving unsatisfactory Results	"Study harder, understand the material better, and pay closer attention when the teacher is explaining," said S1. This is in line with S7 statement: "Identify what you're lacking. Then, during the next lesson, work on improving those areas. Also, listen more carefully so you can understand better".	Poor results encourage students to assess their weaknesses and increase their effort and focus in future learning.

Variable	Theme	Participant Quotation	Interpretation
Academic distraction	Problems arising from interactions with friends	"When there are a lot of friends in class like that, it makes it hard to focus," said S2. S6 expressed a similar sentiment: "Actually, I'm afraid the teacher will get mad at me if my friends try to chat with me like that".	Interactions with classmates and background noise are among the sources of distraction that can divert students' attention from the learning process.
	Problems Associated with the Use of Digital Devices	S1 said, "Mostly I just open WhatsApp and chat with friends." S10 also mentioned, "I open my phone sometimes I go on TikTok, sometimes I play games, but when it comes to games, I usually take breaks".	Digital devices can be a source of distraction when used for non-academic activities during class.
Self Control	Managing Your Response to a Friend's Distraction	"I usually respond like that, but it's just a casual response". Said S3.	Students try to limit their involvement in interactions with peers so that distractions do not escalate into activities that further disrupt learning.
	Refocusing on learning	S12 said the rule is enforced as follows: "If a friend tries to talk to me, I tell them to be quiet because it's distracting". Student S4 said something else: "If I'm not focused, I usually ask permission to step out for a moment to clear my head, and then I go back to class so I can focus better".	Self-control is evident in students' efforts to recognize their state of attention and take steps to restore their readiness to participate in learning.
Social studies learning effectiveness	Clear and engaging learning	"If the teacher likes to tell stories like that, it usually doesn't get boring," said S2. Student S5 added, "The teacher explains things clearly, in detail, and in a way that's easy to understand and it's not monotonous which helps me understand better".	Social studies learning effectiveness is perceived to be related to the presentation of material that is clear, easy to understand, and capable of sustaining students' interest.
	Attention, understanding, and engagement in learning	S10 said, "I try to understand the material that's been taught and participate in group discussions." Student S8 described effective learning as: "I listen to what's being taught, then I do the work, and my classmates aren't noisy that's effective, in my opinion".	Social studies learning effectiveness is measured not only by learning outcomes, but also by attention, understanding of the material, engagement in tasks, and a classroom environment that supports the learning process.

Overall, the qualitative findings indicate that self-efficacy is reflected in students' tendency to persist and seek help when facing difficulties, while academic distraction

primarily manifests through peer interactions and the use of digital devices. Self-control is evident in students' ability to limit their responses to distractions and refocus their attention on learning. Meanwhile, social studies learning effectiveness is reflected in clear, engaging lessons, as well as students' attention, understanding, and involvement in the learning process.

3.3 Integration of Quantitative and Qualitative Findings

Quantitative and qualitative findings were integrated to identify how students' reported experiences align with the relationships identified in the structural model. Table 8 presents the quantitative results, relevant qualitative themes, and integrated findings.

Table 8. Integration of Quantitative and Qualitative Findings

Hypotheses and Quantitative Findings	Relevant Qualitative Themes	Integrated Findings
H1: Self-efficacy → learning effectiveness. Self-efficacy is positively and significantly associated with learning effectiveness in social studies.	Students persist in completing tasks, seek help from teachers, peers, or digital resources, and improve their efforts after receiving unsatisfactory results.	The qualitative findings reinforce this positive relationship through students' persistence in completing assignments, seeking help from teachers, peers, or other learning resources, and increasing their effort and attention after receiving poor results.
H2: Academic distraction → learning effectiveness. Academic distraction is negatively and significantly correlated with learning effectiveness in IPS.	Peer conversations, classroom noise, and non-academic use of digital devices divert students' attention from learning activities.	Qualitative findings support this negative relationship. Students reported that conversations and noise from classmates, as well as using WhatsApp, TikTok, and games, can distract them from learning and reduce their focus.
H3: Self-control → learning effectiveness. Self-control has a positive and significant relationship with learning effectiveness in social studies.	Students limit their responses to peer distractions and take steps to restore their focus when their concentration declines.	The qualitative findings highlight this relationship through students' efforts to limit interactions with peers, control their responses to distractions, and regain focus when their concentration wanes.
H4: Self-control × self-efficacy → learning effectiveness. Self-control significantly moderates the relationship between self-efficacy and social studies learning effectiveness.	Students combine confidence in completing learning tasks with efforts to regulate their behavior and maintain attention.	Qualitative findings indicate that the belief in one's ability to complete a task does not stand alone but is accompanied by efforts to maintain attention and regulate learning behavior. This pattern is consistent with quantitative findings that self-control strengthens the relationship between self-efficacy and learning effectiveness.
H5: Self-control × academic distraction → social studies learning effectiveness. Self-control does not significantly moderate the relationship between academic distraction and social studies learning effectiveness.	Although students attempt to limit peer interactions and refocus their attention, distractions from peers and digital devices persist.	Qualitative findings indicate that students attempt to manage distractions by limiting interactions and refocusing their attention. However, distractions from peers and digital devices continue. This pattern is consistent with the finding that self-control does not moderate the relationship between academic distraction and learning effectiveness.

Overall, the integration of findings reveals a convergence between the quantitatively identified relationships and the experiences students reported in the classroom learning context. Qualitative findings add context by showing that self-efficacy manifests through

persistence and help-seeking efforts, academic distractions arise from peer interactions as well as internal lapses in focus, and self-control manifests through regulating attention, behavior, and emotions. The qualitative findings also clarify the distinction between these two moderating effects: beliefs regarding learning capabilities associated with self-efficacy emerge alongside efforts to regulate learning behavior, whereas efforts to control distractions persist even in the face of recurring peer-related disruptions. The theoretical significance of these combined findings is elaborated in the Discussion section.

3.4 Discussion

Taken together, the findings suggest that social studies learning effectiveness relates not only to students' perceptions of their academic competence but also to their capacity to regulate behavior within the learning environment. The qualitative findings further indicate that these relationships are shaped by the interaction between students' personal regulation and classroom conditions.

3.4.1 The Effect of Self-Efficacy on Social Studies Learning Effectiveness

The positive relationship between self-efficacy and social studies learning effectiveness indicates that students' beliefs in their abilities are linked to their willingness to undertake tasks, sustain effort, and cope with learning difficulties. Qualitative findings provide contextual support: students reported seeking help from teachers, classmates, and digital resources when facing challenges, and using unsatisfactory results to improve their subsequent study efforts. Although these behaviors do not directly prove students' self-efficacy beliefs, they are theoretically relevant to Social Cognitive Theory, which explains how self-efficacy shapes an individual's activity choices, effort, and persistence [23].

These findings align with previous research connecting self-efficacy to academic achievement and student learning processes [42], [43], [44]. Other studies have also demonstrated a positive, reciprocal relationship between self-efficacy and academic performance [45]**.** However, belief in one's academic ability does not always translate into active participation, as evidenced by some students' reluctance to ask or answer questions in class. Therefore, teachers can enhance students' self-efficacy through successful experiences. This can be achieved through clear feedback, task-completion examples, and a gradual increase in task difficulty, fostering greater confidence and persistence as students meet learning demands.

3.4.2 The Effect of Academic Distraction on Effectiveness of Social Studies Learning

The negative relationship between academic distraction and social studies learning effectiveness indicates that diverting attention away from learning activities is associated with reduced student engagement and comprehension. Interview findings reveal that distractions stem not only from digital devices but also from conversations with peers, joking, thoughts unrelated to the lesson, and other attention-diverting activities. While interactions with peers were frequently mentioned by participants, these findings do not imply that social distractions are the sole source of distraction.

From the perspective of Cognitive Load Theory, activities unrelated to the subject matter can consume cognitive resources required to comprehend and process learning information [16]. This finding aligns with research linking academic distraction to academic performance [46], [20], including smartphone use in the classroom, although the relationship may weaken after controlling for student characteristics and the learning context [18]. This study extends previous research by demonstrating that academic distraction in Social Studies learning effectiveness is not solely linked to technology use but also encompasses social and internal disruptions that can divert students' attention from learning activities [47], [48], [27]. These findings indicate that addressing learning distractions requires considering real-world classroom conditions rather than merely restricting digital device use. Teachers need to identify sources of distraction, manage student interactions, and design activities that sustain engagement in learning. However, the effectiveness of such classroom management strategies has not been directly tested in this study.

3.4.3 The Effect of Self-Control on Social Studies Learning Effectiveness

Self-control shows a positive relationship with social studies learning effectiveness and contributes more than other direct predictors in the structural model. Theoretically, this finding can be understood because self-control enables students to regulate their thoughts, emotions, and behavior to remain aligned with learning goals [49]. Interview findings revealed regulatory strategies such as refraining from conversation, reminding disruptive peers, refocusing attention on the material, calming oneself, and taking a break with the teacher’s permission to regain concentration. These findings align with research linking self-control to performance, engagement, and academic achievement [50], [51], [52], [53], [54]. However, these results also indicate that self-control does not necessarily mean students can eliminate all distractions, as some distractions stem from the social environment and classroom situations. Thus, the findings of this study are best understood as a relationship between self-regulation ability and learning effectiveness, rather than as evidence that self-control directly increases learning effectiveness.

3.4.4 The Role of Self-Control in Moderating the Effect of Self-Efficacy on Social Studies Learning Effectiveness

The finding that self-control strengthens the relationship between self-efficacy and social studies learning effectiveness indicates that belief in one’s abilities needs behavioral regulation to remain consistent with learning goals. Self-efficacy relates to students’ confidence in completing tasks, while self-control helps them sustain effort and direct their behavior toward learning goals when facing difficulties or distractions. Interviews revealed that although students felt capable of completing tasks, they still needed strategies to maintain attention and control their responses to the classroom environment. These findings align with Social Cognitive Theory, which highlights the interplay between individual and environmental factors in shaping behavior [23], as well as research on the role of self-control in sustaining behaviors that support academic goals [55], [56].

Theoretically, these findings indicate that the positive relationship between self-efficacy and learning effectiveness varies according to students' level of self-control. Thus,

academic self-efficacy is not always sufficient to support effective learning behavior without adequate self-regulation. In practice, teachers can combine manageable learning challenges and constructive feedback with habits of monitoring attention, managing classroom interactions, and maintaining engagement in tasks. However, this approach still requires further testing.

3.4.5 The Role of Self-Control in Moderating the Effect of Academic Distraction on Social Studies Learning Effectiveness

Unlike self-efficacy, self-control does not significantly moderate the relationship between academic distraction and social studies learning effectiveness. These findings suggest that general self-regulation abilities do not necessarily alter the relationship between academic distraction and social studies learning effectiveness. Although students may be able to control their responses to distractions, this ability does not always reduce their exposure to distractions or their impact on learning. Furthermore, measuring academic distraction as a general construct may not capture the differences in mechanisms between social, digital, and internal distractions.

These findings also underscore the distinction between self-control and attention control. Self-control involves managing cognitive processes, emotions, and behavior more broadly, whereas attention control specifically relates to the ability to direct and sustain attention [57], [58]. This distinction may help explain why self-control was not found to moderate the relationship between academic distraction and social studies learning effectiveness. This contrasts with studies that have found a moderating role for attention control in the relationship between academic distraction and academic performance, as well as for self-control in the context of digital distraction [20], [25]. Thus, strategies to address academic distraction should align the characteristics of the distraction with regulatory mechanisms by strengthening individual regulation and managing the learning environment.

Although the present research offers an understanding of the associations among self-efficacy, academic distraction, self-control, and social studies learning effectiveness, several limitations must be acknowledged. First, the research was carried out in only one madrasah; therefore, the results should be generalized with caution. Second, the cross-sectional design and self-reports limit causal interpretations and may introduce common-method bias, and learning effectiveness was measured based on students' perceptions rather than objective academic outcomes. Third, the relationships found may also reflect unanalyzed factors, such as learning motivation, prior knowledge, and classroom climate. Fourth, academic distraction was analyzed as a general construct, so the differences in the effects of social, environmental, and digital distractions have not yet been identified. Furthermore, while the interviews provided context regarding students' experiences, they did not directly explain the mechanisms underlying the significant or non-significant moderation effects.

Future research should involve more schools, use a longitudinal design, combine students' perceptions with objective learning outcomes and classroom observations, and distinguish between sources of academic distraction while testing more specific regulatory constructs, such as attention control.

4. CONCLUSION

This study found that students' self-control, academic difficulties, and self-confidence are all related to learning effectiveness. Self-control is directly related to social studies learning effectiveness and moderates the relationship between self-confidence and learning effectiveness. Conversely, self-control does not significantly moderate the relationship between academic distractions and social studies learning effectiveness. Although the qualitative findings do not directly reveal the mechanisms underlying these relationships, they provide context regarding students' learning efforts, their experiences with distractions, and their self-regulation strategies. Theoretically, this study broadens our understanding of social studies learning effectiveness by integrating psychological, behavioral, and classroom context factors.

Practically, teachers can support students' self-efficacy by assigning achievable tasks and providing constructive feedback, while also encouraging self-regulation and identifying classroom distractions. These recommendations are implications of the findings, not strategies whose effectiveness has been tested in this study. Future research could involve multiple schools, use objective measures of learning outcomes and classroom observations, and examine more specific self-regulation constructs, such as attention control, to deepen our understanding of the relationship between individual and contextual factors and learning effectiveness.

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